

M3630 THE MEN WHO STARE AT GOATS (USA, 2009)

Credits: director, Grant Heslov ; writer, Peter Straughan ; book, Jon Ronson.
Cast: George Clooney, Jeff Bridges, Ewan McGregor, Kevin Spacey, Stephen Root.
Summary: Satire set in the U.S. and Iraq in 2003 with flashbacks to the 1980s. Reporter Bob Wilton (McGregor) is to interview self-proclaimed psychic Gus Lacey (Root), but stumbles on a bigger story. In the 1980s, in the period following the Vietnam War when the Army had lost its sense of purpose, U.S. Army Intelligence and Special Forces had formed a secret unit of “psychic spies” who, among other things, trained to kill animals by staring at them. The most gifted of the group was Lyn Cassady (Clooney). According to Cassady, the 1st Battalion of the New Earth Army was to change the way wars were fought. They were Jedi “warrior monks” with unparalleled psychic powers who could read the enemy’s thoughts, pass through solid walls, and even kill a goat simply by staring at it. Now, for the war in Iraq, Cassady has been reactivated. Unfortunately, the program’s founder, Vietnam vet-turned-New Age hippie Bill Django (Bridges), has gone missing and Cassady’s mission is to find him. The pair tracks Django to a clandestine camp in Iraq run by renegade psychic-soldier-turned-civilian-contractor Larry Hooper (Spacey), the reporter is trapped in the middle of a grudge match between the remnants of Django’s New Earth Army and Hooper’s contract psychics who are conducting psychological warfare against the Iraqis and torturing Iraqi prisoners by various psychological means.

- Abramowitz, Rachel. “Goat’ herders; Grant Heslov and his friend and partner George Clooney are up to their old tricks” [Los Angeles times](#) (Nov 7, 2009), Calendar, p. D1.
- Adams, Thelma. “The men who stare at goats” [US weekly](#) no. 770 (Nov 16, 2009), p. 78.
- Akbar, Arifa. “Clooney caught in crossfire as war breaks out over latest film; Former friends behind ‘Men who stare at goats’ draw star into bitter row over credits” [The independent](#) [London, Eng.] (Nov 3, 2009), p. 16.
- Alexander, Al. “NO kidding: Clooney’s military satire ‘Men who stare at goats’ lacks firepower” [Patriot ledger](#) [Quincy, MA] (Nov 6, 2009), p. 21.
- Barnard, Linda. “Uncontrollable bleating” [The Toronto star](#) (Nov 6, 2009), Entertainment, p. E3.
- Boucher, Geoff. “Holiday movie sneaks; The actors; A psychic warrior; To play the leader of a unit devoted to the use of brain energies to help the U.S. military, Jeff Bridges recalled his trippy days in the ‘60s and ‘70s” [Los Angeles times](#) (Nov 1, 2009), Calendar, part D, p. 15.
- Bradshaw, Peter. “Film & music; Film reviews; The men who stare at goats” [The guardian](#) [London, Eng.] (Nov 6, 2009), Guardian film and music pages, p. 10.
- Braun, Liz. “A bit of ‘Goat’ cheese; Great cast and funny bits pretending to be a movie” [The Toronto sun](#) (Nov 6, 2009), p. 59.
- Bunch, Sonny. “Empty ‘Stare’; Unfocused farce falls flat” [Washington times](#) (Nov 6, 2009), Show, p. 10.

- Burr, Ty. "Movies; 'Goats' suffers from a lack of concentration" Boston globe (Nov 6, 2009), Living arts, p. G10.
- Cartwright, Josh. "Men who stare at goats: a cinematic mess" The evening sun [Hanover, PA] (Dec 3, 2009), p. ?
- Clarke, Donald. "Goats" The Irish times (Nov 6, 2009), The ticket, p. 13.
- "Clooney's knockabout star-spangled satire fails to get its goat" The Sunday independent [Ireland] (Nov 1, 2009), p. ?
- Collin, Robbie. "Cloonacy!; But George's barmy goat romp's a hoot" The news of the world [England] (Nov 1, 2009), p. 48-9.
- Covert, Colin. "Movie review; G.I. Jedis with 'The men who stare at goats'; Note even Obi-Wan Kenobi can save these warriors from their muddled mind games" Star tribune [Minneapolis, MN] (Nov 6, 2009), p. ?
- Dargis, Manohla. "Review; 'The men who stare at goats'; Mission mind control in defense of America" New York times (Nov 6, 2009), sec. C, p. 12.
- Dudek, Duane. "Movie review; Military satire lacks firepower; Unfocused story in 'Goats' tests patience" Milwaukee journal sentinel (Nov 6, 2009), Cue, p. E3.
- Ebert, Roger. "Goofy paranormal activity in the desert; Army ops invade Iraq – with their minds" Chicago sun times (Nov 6, 2009), Movies, p. B1.
- Edwards, David. "If looks could kill; Movies" The mirror (Nov 6, 2009), p. 8-9.
- Elley, Derek. "The men who stare at Goats" Variety 416/5 (Sept. 14-20, 2009), p. 32, 39.
- Farquharson, Vanessa. "Based on a truly strange story; Goats author talks gay bombs, psychic powers and insanity" National post [Canada] (Nov 4, 2009), Arts & life, p. AL3.
- Frank, Alan. "George is acting the goat" Daily star (Nov 6, 2009), p. 48.
- Gensler, Howard. "'Goat'-to-guy: Jedi knight Ewan McGregor plays a reporter on the trail of a big, baaad story" Philadelphia daily news (Nov 6, 2009), p. 35.
- Germain, David. "'Men who stare at goats' has fuzzy vision" The courier [Houma, LA] (Nov 13, 2009), p. ?
- Gire, Dann. "Clooney milks goats for sly laughs" Chicago daily herald (Nov 6, 2009), Timeout, p. 43.
- "Goat advocacy group SuperGoat.org issues pro goat statement in response to new film 'The men who stare at goats'" Business wire (Nov 5, 2009)
- Griffin, John. "Not enough brainpower to plot a film – or to kill a goat" The gazette [Montreal, Que.] (Nov 6, 2009), Arts & movies, p. C1.
- Gross, Joe. "'Goats' stares blankly at '70s hokum" Austin American statesman (Nov 6, 2009), p. D1.
- Guzman, Rafer. "The men who stare at goats" Newsday [Long Island, NY] (Nov 6, 2009), Explore LI, p. B13.
- Hewitt, Chris. "Review; Sometimes an unusual idea is just plain baaad" St. Paul pioneer press [MN] (Nov 5, 2009), p. ?
- Hoberman, J. "The men who stare at goats; Too dippy to be serious; We don't mean to sound paranoid, but: Did aliens abduct George Clooney's sense of humor?" Village voice [NY] (Nov 3, 2009), p. ?
- Hornaday, Ann. "Despite Clooney, this war effort falls short" Washington post (Nov 6, 2009), Weekend, p. WE29.
- _____. "The lite brigade: Clooney & Company milk 'Goats' for all the war wackiness it'll yield" Washington post (Nov 6, 2009), Style, p. C1.
- Horton, Robert. "'The men who stare at goats' aims at many targets, and mostly misses" The herald [Everett, WA] (Nov 6, 2009), p. ?
- Janusonis, Michael. "Clever war satire fizzles out" Providence journal-bulletin (Nov 6, 2009), Lifebeat, p. 1.
- Kennedy, Lisa. "'Men who stare at goats' a little too clever for its own good" Denver post (Nov 6, 2009), p. D6.

- Knight, Chris. "Making use of the farce" National post [Canada] (Nov 6, 2009), Post movies, p. PM5.
- Koplinski, Chuck. "'Goats' has entertaining bits but little to chew on" News gazette [Champaign, IL] (Nov 5, 2009), p. 11.
- Lacey, Liam. "Guilty of an excessive use of farce" The globe and mail [Canada] (Nov 6, 2009), Review, p. R12.
- Lane, Anthony. "Making peace; 'The men who stare at goats' and 'Precious'" The New Yorker (Nov 9, 2009), p. 86.
- LaSalle, Mick. "Psyching out the Army; Review" San Francisco chronicle (Nov 6, 2009), p. E1.
- Levy, Shawn. "Psychic soldiers" The Oregonian [Portland, OR] (Nov 6, 2009), Arts & entertainment, p. ?
- Maher, Kevin. "Hurrah for the hippies in helmets; arts film reviews. Clooney, Spacey and Bridges go into New Age battle, cheered on by Kevin Maher" The times [London, Eng.] (Nov 6, 2009), p. 16.
- Malcolm, Derek. "Clooney's barmy army" The evening standard [London, Eng.] (Nov 6, 2009), p. ?
- "The men who stare at goats" backstage.com (Nov 6, 2009)
- "The men who stare at goats" Entertainment weekly no. 1075 (Nov 13, 2009), p. 79.
- Monk, Katherine. "'The men who stare at goats' keep this powerful treatise on the military exciting" Alaska highway news [Fort St, John, B.C.] 9Nov 6, 2009), p. D3.
- Moore, Roger. "Clooney's latest disjointed" Chattanooga times free press (Nov 6, 2009), Wire – entertainment, p. 16.
- Munro, Donald. "Ba-a-a-a-d company; 'Men who stare at goats' shoots for clever but ends up simply cheesy" Fresno bee [CA] (Nov 6, 2009), p. 5.
- Neumaier, Joe. "'Stare' tactics are hit-and-miss" Daily news [New York, NY] (Nov 6, 2009), p. 33.
- Nott, Robert. "Scanners in the barnyard" The Santa Fe New Mexican (Nov 13, 2009), Pasatiempo, p. PA-80.
- O'Connor, Clint. "Bad pacing, screenwriting trip up wonderfully absurd warfare story" Plain dealer [Cleveland, OH] (Nov 6, 2009), p. T7.
- Persall, Steve. "'Goats' is a bit sheepish" St. Petersburg Times [FL] (Nov 5, 2009), Weekend, p. 5W.
- Pratt, Steve. "Getting the goat" The northern echo (Nov 6, 2009), p. 18.
- Puig, Claudia. "'men who stare at goats'; It's not baaaaad; Satire milks laughs from an actual military program" USA today (Nov 6, 2009), Life, p. 3D.
- Rainer, Peter. "Review; 'The men who stare at goats'" Christian Science monitor (Nov 6, 2009), Arts & culture, p. 17.
- Rea, Steven. "Glorious satire of far-out military tactics" Philadelphia inquirer (Nov. 6, 2009), Weekend, p. W4, W10.
- Ronson, Jon. "When truth is stranger than fiction" Wales on Sunday (Nov 8, 2009), p. 4.
- Sharkey, Betsy. "At the movies; Critics' picks; 'The men who stare at goats'" Los Angeles times (Nov 12, 2009), Calendar, p. D3.
- Simon, Jeff. "Extra special forces; 'The men who stare at goats' is a 'Dr. Strangelove' for our times" Buffalo news [NY] (Nov 5, 2009), Lifestyles, p. C1.
- Smith, Kyle. "Goat cheese" New York post (Nov 6, 2009), p. 37.
- Smith, Michael. "The men who stare at goats" Tulsa world [OK] (Nov 6, 2009), Spot, p. D1.
- Sragow, Michael. "Battlefield beyond; It's strange but true. Maryland played a role in the events that inspired the military satire 'Men who stare at goats'" Baltimore sun (Nov 1, 2009), p. 1E.

- _____. "Redefined army in comic fantasy; 'The men who stare at goats'; Film balances goofiness, reality with the aid of a smart, slap-happy cast" Baltimore sun (Nov 6, 2009), p. 1C.
- Thompson, Bob. "A friend in high places; Director describes creative partnership with Clooney while making anti-war satire 'The men who stare at goats'" Ottawa citizen [Ottawa, Ont.] (Oct 11, 2009), p. E8.
- Thompson, Gary. "'Men' tells bizarre tale of Army mind control" Philadelphia daily news (Nov 6, 2009), p. 38.
- Turan, Kenneth. "May the farce be with them; 'The men who stare at goats' – a kinda true story of an experimental Army unit – turns into a showcase for Clooney & Co." Los Angeles times (Nov 6, 2009), Calendar, p. D1.
- Vadeboncoeur, Joan E. "Clooney's clout apparent in 'Goats'" The post-standard [Syracuse, NY] (Nov 12, 2009), A&E, p. D4.
- Vance, Kelly. "Goat's head soup; Quick. What do loony spies (The men who stare at goats), neurotic artists (Untitled), and mid-century modernist architecture (Visual acoustics) have in common?" East Bay express [CA] (Nov 4, 2009), p. ?
- Vancheri, Barbara. "'Goats' makes for good, goofy fun" Pittsburgh post-gazette (Nov 6, 2009), Arts & entertainment, [p. E1.
- Verniere, James. "Movie review; ;Goats' ; cheesy" Boston herald (Nov 6, 2009), The edge, p. E14.
- Walters, Ben. "Film; Reviews; 'The men who stare at goats'" Time out (Nov 5, 2009), p. 78.
- Whitty, Stephen. "Mind games; Clooney and company a little too cute in cultish comedy" Star-ledger [Newark, NJ] (Nov 6, 2009), Ticket, p. 14.
- Williams, Joe. "Big break for man who steers 'Goats'; Pal of star Clooney has an affinity for the odd" St. Louis post-dispatch (Nov 8, 2009), p. D4.
- Wirt, John. "Men who stare charming in a wacky way" The advocate (Nov 13, 2009), Fun, p. 25.
- Wloszczyna, Susan. "McGregor: goat-starer extraordinaire; Scottish star had a blast with Clooney" USA today (Nov 2, 2009), Life, p. 2D.
- Young, Deborah. "'The men who stare at goats'" Film journal international 112/11 (Nov 2009), p. 91.