

Valor: Unsung Heroes from Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Home Front

By Mark Lee Greenblatt

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Valor features the thrilling stories that are the fruit of Mark Lee Greenblatt's interviews with brave American servicemen from twenty-first-century wars. These soldiers, sailors, and Marines have risked their lives several times over for their country as well as for their fellow troops and civilians. Still, until now, their stories have largely gone unnoticed by the public, perhaps lost in the frenzied and often nasty debate surrounding those conflicts. As the author writes, "This generation does not have an Audie Murphy. I set out to change that with this book."

Detailing incredible and evocative feats—including an Army pilot who rescued two fellow pilots from a deadly crash in hostile territory and strapped himself to the helicopter's exterior for the flight to the hospital—Greenblatt provides glimpses into the minds of these men as they face gut-wrenching decisions and overcome enormous odds.

However, this book is much more than tales of riveting action. Each chapter goes beyond linear combat stories to explore each hero's motivations, dreams, and the genuine emotions that were evoked in the face of extreme danger. Readers will be transported to a variety of settings—from close-quarters urban fighting in Iraq to mountainside ambushes in rural Afghanistan to a midnight rescue in the middle of the Atlantic—as they accompany the men who do not see themselves as heroes but as patriots in the line of duty.

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Editorial Review

Review
Criminal and ethics investigative attorney Greenblatt provides nine compelling tales of the bravery of U.S. military personnel facing extreme duress and mortal danger. The author uses insightful interviews with each subject to supply details of the background and motivation that enabled these marines, sailors, and soldiers to prevail in grave life-and-death situations. Voices range from a hard-hitting marine who volunteered to piggyback an injured 'brother' through an Iraqi insurgent shoot-out to an inexperienced army specialist in Afghanistan whose determination and quick thinking prevented an ambush on his base—even after he sustained a devastating injury. Many of these stories have received relatively little publicity. The author explains that it was his desire to demonstrate that the men and women of today's armed forces possess courage and selfless character comparable to military heroes of the past. **VERDICT** There are other collections of the daring exploits of the U.S. military in the Middle East, but for the mature reader interested in gripping and often intensely violent narratives of perilous military action, this collection proves riveting. (*Library Journal*)

Rather than collectively tuning in and remembering the sacrifices made by some for our sake, we tune out and go to the beach. Mark Lee Greenblatt's V*alor: Unsung Heroes from Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Home Front* could single-handedly save this important holiday. (*Washington Times*)

The stories in *Valor* capture very powerfully the extraordinary courage, selfless service, and sacrifice that our young men and women have demonstrated repeatedly in the wars of the post–9/11 period. *Valor'*s accounts of extraordinary heroism in Iraq and Afghanistan reinforce the increasingly widespread conviction—with which I strongly agree—that the young men and women who have served our country 'downrange' in the past decade truly are America's New Greatest Generation. (General David H. Petraeus, U.S. Army (Retired), Commander, Multi-National Force-Iraq (2007-2008), U.S. Central Command (2008-2010), International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (2010-2011))

Valor is an absolutely gripping foray into the realities of modern warfare. This book, the best collection of war stories from the all-volunteer military, is a priceless oral history. In its pages, Mark Lee Greenblatt offers us a glimpse into the lives of men who choose to move to the sound of the guns. The heroes in *Valor* show the highest form of love for their fellow soldiers and Marines. While our society too often raises self-interest to a high art form, Greenblatt helps show us the moral superiority of a truly selfless citizenry. (Thomas A. Kolditz, Brigadier General (ret.), US Army; professor emeritus, US Military Academy West Point; and author of In Extremis Leadership)

It's obvious from these incredible stories that we certainly do still have the spirit of Audie Murphy in our military. The daring accounts featured in *Valor* give us strength and hope for our future as a nation. (Sammy L. Davis, Sergeant First Class (ret.), US Army; Medal of Honor recipient)

Valor is composed of stories where the rubber meets the road in combat. The warrior ethos—never leave a buddy behind, do anything and everything to protect your brother warriors—is undeniable in each man's story. This book serves as a reminder that, amid the glamour of today's technology, the individual soldier, sailor, and Marine remain the linchpin to our success on the battlefield today. (H.C. "Barney" Barnum Jr., Colonel (ret.), US Marine Corps; Medal of Honor recipient)

I was privileged and honored to lead US troops in combat in both Iraq and in Afghanistan and saw the best of them every day under the most demanding conditions in our military history. They were—they are—America's new Greatest Generation, and they were precious to me beyond words. I've stood next to their broken bodies as they desperately clung to life. I've walked innumerable sets of their honored remains onto the backs of our transport aircraft for the flight home to heartbroken families and a grieving nation. Sadly, little of the literature of these wars has celebrated the individual heroism of these young actors in their moments of truth . . . until now. In *Valor*, Mark Lee Greenblatt has honored this incredible service, and, in doing so, has performed a great service for America. In his words, crafted with marvelous eloquence, Mark has captured the raw, gut-wrenching emotion of battle and its aftermath in all its forms and thus has erected the ultimate monument to America's veterans, including the fallen, the wounded, and their precious families. We owe him, indeed all America owes him, a great debt of thanks. (General John R. Allen, US Marine Corps (ret.); commander of US and coalition forces in Afghanistan, 2011–2013)

Military heroes will always be a part of America, but they are increasingly unknown to the public. They continue to do amazingly brave things as if they were all in a day's work. As Greenblatt has shown, humility and valor seem to coincide when the stakes are mortal. Heroes don't only save lives and accomplish seemingly impossible feats at great risk to themselves—their stories can also inspire us to face lesser dangers and fears in our own lives. (Howard T. Prince, II, Brigadier General (ret.), US Army; recipient of a Silver Star and two Purple Hearts; University of Texas at Austin)

What Mark Lee Greenblatt has deftly shown are genuine reflections of what ordinary men accomplish when placed under extraordinary circumstances. *Valor* has established, in my mind, that these men have proven themselves as the new greatest generation. (Jim Livingston, Major General (ret.), US Marine Corps, Medal of Honor Recipient)

With these dramatic accounts of heroism—in combat in Afghanistan and Iraq and in a daring rescue of a civilian from a storm in the Atlantic—Mark Greenblatt gives us a close-up view of the uncommon valor that is common among America's military today, as it has been throughout our history. Such heroes are often reluctant to discuss their remarkable deeds, but Greenblatt has managed to persuade some of them to talk not only about what they did, but about their emotions at the time, why they volunteered for this dangerous duty, and—most awe-inspiring—what makes a person risk his own life to save another. *Valor* is an eloquent tribute from someone who grew up hearing tales of Audie Murphy and the Second World War to the heroes of another Great Generation. (Ambassador Paul Wolfowitz, former deputy secretary of defense)

The issues with 'unsung heroes' is first finding them, and secondly, corroborating their stories, thirdly writing a good tale. Greenblatt has done all three. . . . Good soldiers, all, this is a fine testament to the men with principles, ethics, and humanity. (*Cottage Country Reflections*)

I was spending a little time today listening to Mark Greenblatt talking about Valor. He recently wrote a book of that name to celebrate some of the unsung heroes from our recent wars. So many incredible sacrifices have been made in the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and Greenblatt wanted to highlight a few of them in order to represent the many. (*Front Porch Fighter*)

About the Author

Mark Lee Greenblatt is an attorney based in the Washington, DC, area specializing in criminal and ethics investigations. Mark is involved in several community service activities, including serving as vice president of the Marian Greenblatt Education Fund, a foundation created in honor of his mother to honor excellence in education. He received his undergraduate degree from Duke University and his law degree from Columbia University. He was also a Senior Managers in Government Fellow at the Kennedy School of Government at

Harvard University. Mark has earned a black belt in tae kwon do and was the drummer in The Fiasco, widely considered the greatest rock-'n'-roll band since The Beatles. He lives with his wife and two sons in Bethesda, Maryland. To learn more about Mark and the heroes profiled in this book, visit www.markleegreenblatt.com.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Gregorio Leslie:

Here thing why this specific Valor: Unsung Heroes from Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Home Front are different and reputable to be yours. First of all examining a book is good but it really depends in the content of the usb ports which is the content is as delightful as food or not. Valor: Unsung Heroes from Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Home Front giving you information deeper including different ways, you can find any book out there but there is no publication that similar with Valor: Unsung Heroes from Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Home Front. It gives you thrill reading through journey, its open up your eyes about the thing that happened in the world which is might be can be happened around you. It is easy to bring everywhere like in playground, café, or even in your method home by train. If you are having difficulties in bringing the printed book maybe the form of Valor: Unsung Heroes from Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Home Front in e-book can be your substitute.

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Dorothy Alvarez:

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