

Delve Deeper into *Where Soldiers Come From*

A film by Heather Courtney

This resource list, compiled by Gina Blume of the Monroe Township Public Library, includes books, films and other materials related to the issues presented in the film *Where Soldiers Come From*.

From a snowy, small town in northern Michigan to the mountains of Afghanistan, Where Soldiers Come From follows the four-year journey of childhood friends who join the National Guard after graduating from high school. As it chronicles the young men's transformation from restless teenagers to soldiers looking for roadside bombs to 23-year-old combat veterans trying to start their lives again, the film offers an intimate look at the young Americans who fight our wars, the families and towns they come from — and the way one faraway conflict changes everything.

ADULT NONFICTION

The U.P.

Cully, Gage. *A Love Affair With the U.P. Au Train, MI: Avery Color Studios, 1988.* Cully opens a window into his life by telling the story of growing up and living in the U.P., and how these experiences have shaped his character, way of being and love for his land.

Emerick, Lon L. *Going Back to Central -- On the Road in Search of the Past in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.* North County Pub, 2003. This book is a journey of discovery --connecting the present with the history of Cornish copper miners in the region. Although the purpose of the author's trip was to honor and celebrate the lives of his Cornish ancestors who came to Central Mine in the 1800s, along the way he savors the autumn splendors of a beautiful and rugged part of the north country and listens for tales of its unique and sturdy residents.

Zechlin, Carol Brisson. *Growing Up Yooper: Childhood Memories of Michigan's Upper Peninsula.* Guest Cottage, 2004. Zechlin shares memories of growing up in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

Enlisting Experiences

Castaneda, Laura Weber, and Margaret C. Harrell and Megan K. Beckett, et al. *Deployment Experiences of Guard and Reserve Families: Implications for Support Retention.* San Diego: Rand Publishing, 2009. This is a collection of interviews with reserve personnel and their families about their deployment experience and future military career plans. The authors offer suggestions for their subjects increased support.

Soldiers at War

Bellavia, David. *House to House.* New York: Free Press, 2007. This is a gripping hour-by-hour account of this sergeant's uncensored experiences during the fierce 2004 battle in Fallujah. As he moves from house to house, he offers the intimate details of their tactics and assumptions about the enemy.

Blehm, Eric. *The Only Thing Worth Dying For: How Eleven Green Berets Fought for a New Afghanistan.* New York: Harper Perennial, 2011. This chronicle of the 2001 special mission into Afghanistan of Special Forces Alpha 574, tells the story of this unit's efforts to organize and train the anti-Taliban insurgency.

Fick, Nathaniel C. *One Bullet Away: The Making of a Marine Officer.* New York: Mariner Books, 2006. This is the combat memoir of a U.S. Marine looking for adventure during his first deployment to Afghanistan and the invasion of Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom. With detail, he recounts his experience in combat and the relationships he formed.

Mullaney, Craig M. *The Unforgiving Minute: A Soldier's Education.* New York: Penguin, 2010. This is a U.S. Army Captain's memoir of his combat experience in Afghanistan in which he reflects on today's modern military and what it means to be a "warrior" in this age of modern warfare.

Shaffer, Anthony. *Operation Dark Heart: Spycraft and Special Ops on the Frontlines of Afghanistan -- and the Path to Victory.* New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2010. This is the eye-opening account of the author's involvement with the U.S. Army's clandestine intelligence program prior to 9/11 and intelligence operations in post-9/11 Afghanistan.

West, Bing. *No True Glory: A Frontline Account of the Battle for Fallujah.* New York: Bantam, 2006. In this book, West reflects on the broad policy decisions made by U.S. leaders concerning Iraq and how they affect the soldiers trying to execute those decisions during a 2004-2005 campaign in Fallujah.

Soldier Reintegration

Friedman, Matthew J., and Laurie B. Slone. *After the War Zone: A Practical Guide for Returning Troops and Their Families.* Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2008. From the professionals at the VA National Center for PTSD, this guide provides expert advice for spouses and families of soldiers returning home from war.

Kelly, Dr. Diann, ed., and Sydney Barksdale, Ph.D., ed. and David Gitelson, Ph.D., ed. *Treating Young Veterans: Promoting Resilience through Practice and Advocacy.* New York: Springer Publishing Company, 2011. This is a text for general and professional readers addressing veterans' needs particular to the Iraqi and Afghan conflicts including employment issues, homeless combat veterans, sexual trauma in the military, and special needs of children of veterans.

Homefront Experiences

Carroll, Andrew. *Operation Homecoming: Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Home Front, in the Words of U.S. Troops and Their Families.* New York: Random House, 2006. This is a compilation of personal stories of service members and their families including topics of combat and life on the home front. A project funded by the National Endowment for the Arts.



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Canfield, Jack and Mark Victor Hansen and Charles Preston and Cindy Pedersen. *Chicken Soup for the Military Wife's Soul: Stories to Touch the Heart and Rekindle the Spirit*. Deerfield Beach: Health Communications, Inc, 2005. The stories in *Chicken Soup for the Military Wife's Soul* are written by military family members and the women who themselves serve in the military.

Gross, Mollie. *Confessions of a Military Wife*. New York: Savas Beatie LLC, 2009. *Confessions of a Military Wife* is an honest, witty, and often hilarious look at the life of the new generation military wife. A comedian and wife of a Marine Corps officer, Mollie explores everything about the "issued" spouse, from deployment and the stress of having a husband in a combat zone, to the realization that marriage changes when your husband returns home from war.

Henderson, Kristin. *While They're at War: The True Story of American Families on the Homefront*. New York: Mariner Books, 2006. This is a story told by a navy chaplain wife who profiles two military wives coping with life at Fort Bragg, NC during their husbands' first deployment.

PTSD

Armstrong, Keith, and Dr. Suzanne Best and Dr. Paula Domenici. *Courage After Fire: Coping Strategies for Troops Returning from Iraq and Afghanistan and Their Families*. Berkeley: Ulysses Press, 2005. A comprehensive guide for returning soldiers and their families dealing with issues including PTSD, anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and assimilation back into work and family life.

Hoge, Charles W. *Once a Warrior--Always a Warrior: Navigating the Transition from Combat to Home--Including Combat Stress, PTSD, and mTBI*. Guilford: GPP Life, 2010. This is a clear and concise handbook addressing PTSD, mild traumatic brain injury, and combat stress associated with returning from a combat zone and how families can reconnect after long deployments, written by a military colonel who is a leading advocate for mental health education.

Paulson, Daryl S., and Stanley Krippner, Ph.D. *Haunted by Combat: Understanding PTSD in War Veterans Including Women, Reservists, and Those Coming Back from Iraq*. New York: Praeger, 2007. This is a reference book of how soldiers address their combat experiences while trying to assimilate from active duty into home life environment, which includes first-hand soldier accounts of combat experiences and mental after-effects, and offers suggestions for treatment options and family interventions.

Ruzek, Josef I., and Paula P. Schnurr, ed. and Jennifer J. Vasterling, ed. *Caring for Veterans with Deployment-Related Stress Disorders: Iraq, Afghanistan, and Beyond*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2011. Authors make a professional assessment regarding causes and consequences of war-zone disorders, including PTSD, with emphasis on prevention and treatment options. Guidelines are offered for families dealing with stress-disordered veterans.

Wars in Iraq & Afghanistan

Bergen, Peter. *The Longest War: The Enduring Conflict between America and Al-Qaeda*. New York: Free Press, 2011. National security analyst for CNN, Peter Bergen provides detailed analysis of Al-Qaeda and U.S. efforts on the War on Terror during the post-9/11 era.

Finkel, David. *The Good Soldiers*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009. It was the last-chance moment of the war. In January 2007, President George W. Bush announced a new strategy for Iraq. It became known as "the surge." Among those called to carry it out were the young, optimistic army infantry soldiers of the 2-16, the battalion nicknamed the Rangers. About to head to a vicious area of Baghdad, they decided the difference would be them. Fifteen months later, the soldiers returned home — forever changed. The chronicle of their tour is gripping, devastating, and deeply illuminating for anyone with an interest in human conflict. With *The Good Soldiers*, Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter David Finkel has produced an eternal story —

not just of the Iraq War, but of all wars, for all time.

Filkins, Dexter. *The Forever War*. New York: Vintage, 2009. From the point of view of a foreign correspondent for the *New York Times*, this work draws on over a decade of eye-witness accounts in both Afghanistan and Iraq providing a daunting look at the complex situation in both countries that will be with us for decades to come.

Gordon, Michael R., and Bernard E. Trainor. *Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*. New York: Vintage, 2007. This book reconstructs with great detail the plans of war behind the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the decisions that led to it.

Gould, Elizabeth, and Paul Fitzgerald. *Crossing Zero: The AfPak War at the Turning Point of American Empire*. San Francisco: City Lights Publishers, 2011. This is a book in which the authors, who are also journalists and Documentary film makers, survey over three decades worth of U.S. foreign policy in South Central Asia.

Jones, Seth G. *In the Graveyard of Empires: America's War in Afghanistan*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2010. Jones, a political scientist for the RAND Corporation, chronicles the insurgency in Afghanistan and its detrimental effect on both Afghanistan's future and America's interests in this non-fiction work.

Maley, William. *The Afghanistan Wars*. Hampshire (UK): Palgrave MacMillan, 2009. This book surveys through Afghanistan's modern history, including an updated account of post-Taliban Afghanistan and the effects it had on the country.

Ricks, Thomas E. *The Gamble: General David Petraeus and the American Military Adventure in Iraq, 2006-2008*. New York: The Penguin Press HC, 2009. Senior Pentagon correspondent for *The Washington Post* provides his insights into the surge in Iraq and role of the U.S. military involvement there for years to come despite the formal end to U.S. military action.



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West, Francis J. *The Wrong War: Grit, Strategy, and the Way out of Afghanistan*. New York: Random House, 2011.

West, a Marine veteran and assistant Secretary of Defense during the Reagan administration, provides first-hand analysis of the Obama administration's Afghanistan strategy as witnessed while embedded with troops in forward posts in Afghanistan's most volatile areas.

Williams, M.J. *The Good War: NATO and the Liberal Conscience in Afghanistan*. Hampshire (UK): Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. This is an investigation into the evolution of NATO through the 90's and its transformation from an alliance to defend Europe to a defense organization in Afghanistan.

NON-FICTION FOR YOUNG READERS

Smithson, Ryan. *Ghosts of War: The True Story of a 19-year-old GI*. Collins, 2010. Ryan Smithson joined the Army Reserve when he was seventeen. Two years later, he was deployed to Iraq as an Army engineer. In this extraordinary and harrowing memoir, readers march along one GI's tour of duty.

Ross, John and Elizabeth Wrigley-Field. *Iraqigirl: Diary of a Teenage Girl in Iraq*, 2009. A teenage girl blogs from the city of Mosul, Iraq, as the chaos and violence of military occupation unfolds in the aftermath of the American invasion. In a narrative charged with anger, IraqiGirl wants her readers to understand what life is really like under military occupation.

Aronson, Marc and Patty Campbell. *War Is...Soldiers, Survivors and Storytellers Talk About War*. Candlewick, 2008. Aronson and Campbell have collected an array of essays, interviews, blog posts, articles, song lyrics, short stories and letters from people directly involved in war. The book is broken into sections called "Deciding About War," "Experiencing War" and "The Aftermath of War."

FICTION FOR YOUNG READERS

Hilbrecht, Kirk and Sharon. *My Daddy is a Soldier*. New Canaan Publishing Co., 2001.

This is a picture book for military children trying to understand life as a military child.

Ferguson, Cohen. *Daddy, You're My Hero! and Mommy, You're My Hero!* Books for Brats. Little Redhaired Girl Pub Inc, December 2001

Children's book author and "military brat," Michelle Ferguson-Cohen, has written, "Daddy, you're my hero!" and "Mommy, you're my hero!" to help military and reservist's families speak with children about deployment.

Skolmoski, Stephanie and Annelise Bennion. *A Paper Hug*, 2006.

This is a story about a little boy who figures out that a paper hug is the best gift to give his dad before he deploys.

Ehrmantraut, Brenda. *Night Catch*. Jamestown: Bubble Gum Press, 2005.

This book is written in the words of a military father talking to his son during deployment. To stay connected, the father invents a game of pretending to send the star Polaris back and forth between him and his son.

