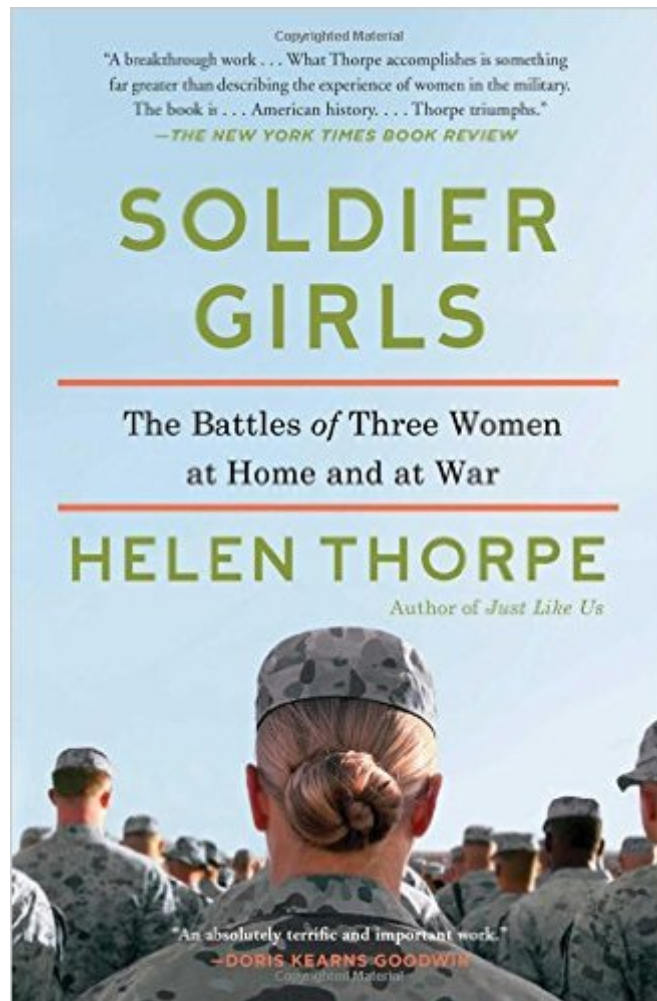


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Soldier Girls: The Battles Of Three Women At Home And At War



Synopsis

â œA raw, intimate look at the impact of combat and the healing power of friendshipâ • (People): the lives of three women deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq, and the effect of their military service on their personal lives and familiesâ ”named a best book of the year by Publishers Weekly.â œIn the tradition of Adrian Nicole LeBlanc, Richard Rhodes, and other masters of literary journalism, Soldier Girls is utterly absorbing, gorgeously written, and unforgettableâ • (The Boston Globe). Helen Thorpe follows the lives of three women over twelve years on their paths to the military, overseas to combat, and back homeâ |and then overseas again for two of them. These women, who are quite different in every way, become friends, and we watch their interaction and also what happens when they are separated. We see their families, their lovers, their spouses, their children. We see them work extremely hard, deal with the attentions of men on base and in war zones, and struggle to stay connected to their families back home. We see some of them drink too much, have affairs, and react to the deaths of fellow soldiers. And we see what happens to one of them when the truck she is driving hits an explosive in the road, blowing it up. She survives, but her life may never be the same again. Deeply reported, beautifully written, and powerfully moving, Soldier Girls is â œa breakthrough work...What Thorpe accomplishes in Soldier Girls is something far greater than describing the experience of women in the military. The book is a solid chunk of American history...Thorpe triumphsâ • (The New York Times Book Review).

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Three women in Indiana, before September 11, 2001, joined the Indiana National Guard. They joined for different reasons, one for the college tuition she could never hope to earn otherwise, one on a dare, one to carry on the tradition of military in her family. As National Guard members, they expected their duties would be to help out in times of local disaster or in the unlikely event that the United States was being invaded. Little did they know. Author Helen Thorpe follows the three women from before they join, to their decision to enlist, their training, and their deployment to Afghanistan, their difficult return to the States, the rebuilding of their lives, further deployments, and aftermath. *Soldier Girls* turns out to be not so much a story of the different experiences that men and women soldiers have, but a story of three soldiers who happen to be women. There's some harassment and some skepticism about whether they are strong enough, physically and emotionally, for duty in a war zone, but with one glaring exception, their experiences seem to be not much different than that of thousands of other soldiers who have gone to Iraq and Afghanistan over the last thirteen years. They make it through their first tours in one piece, but they are all surprised to find how difficult returning to normal life is. Their families and friends are sympathetic but don't really understand. Only someone who was there can understand. Thorpe takes her time telling their stories, and although I'm normally an impatient reader who skips through slow parts, I didn't skip a word of *Soldier Girls*. The pace is necessary.

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