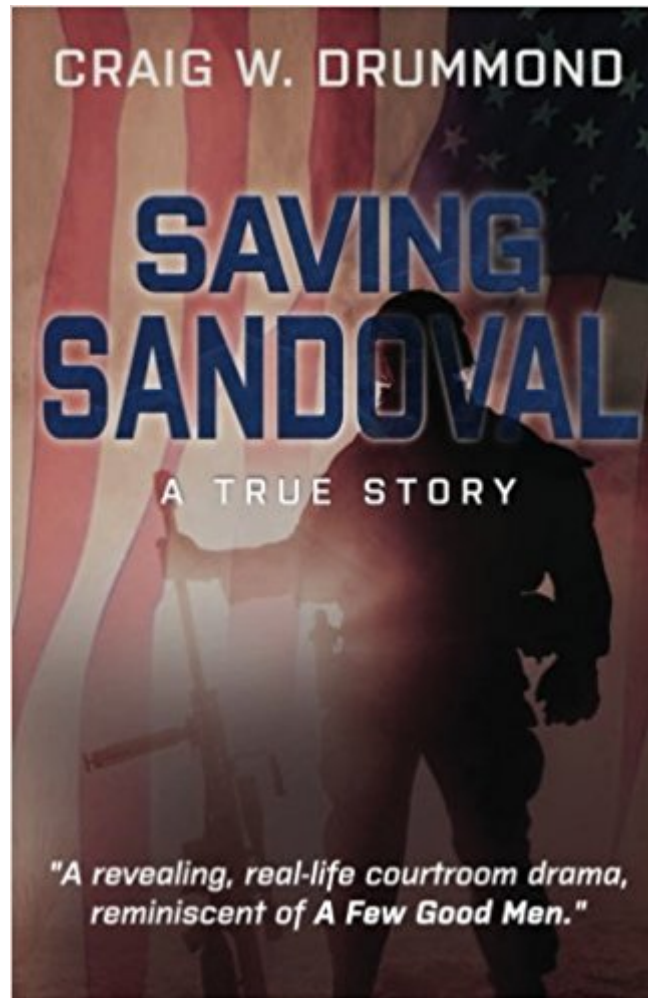




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Saving Sandoval: A True Story



Synopsis

"A revealing, real-life courtroom drama, reminiscent of *A Few Good Men*."--Hunter R. Clark, Director, International Law and Human Rights Program, Drake University Law School In 2007, U.S. Army Specialist Jorge G. Sandoval Jr. was charged with murder by the very government he had sworn to serve. While deployed to the most dangerous area in Iraq known as the "Triangle of Death," Sandoval, an airborne infantryman and elite sniper, was instructed to "take the shot" and kill an enemy insurgent wearing civilian clothes. Two weeks later, Army Criminal Investigation Command descended upon Sandoval's unit and began interrogating the soldiers, trying to link Sandoval and others to war crimes, including murder. Captain Craig W. Drummond was the JAG military defense attorney assigned to Sandoval's case. "The case blew up and was closely followed by reporters around the world. After all, a soldier is trained to follow orders, not ask questions or second-guess authority. I knew I needed to prove his innocence or risk other soldiers being tried and convicted for simply doing their job." *SAVING SANDOVAL* covers the events from the moment the trigger is pulled through the trial in a U.S. military compound on the outskirts of Baghdad during the height of U.S. military surge of troops into Iraq. The book brings the reader into the reality of modern warfare in a post September 11th environment where the enemy does not always wear a uniform and if an event makes headlines military leaders are quick to point the blame on the lowest ranking soldiers regardless of the injustice. The fast-paced and detailed account of the investigation and trial testimony from elite Army snipers brings the reader into the courtroom and onto the battlefield of Iraq.Â

Book Information

Paperback: 270 pages

Publisher: WildBlue Press (July 4, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1942266782

ISBN-13: 978-1942266785

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.6 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars 17 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #299,799 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #104 inÂ Books > History > Middle East > Iraq #304 inÂ Books > History > Military > Iraq War

Customer Reviews

"The dramatic and compelling story of the trial of another American sniper and what it took to prevent a grave injustice."--Peter Eichstaed, award-winning author of BORDERLAND "Armed forces continue to operate in uncertain and complex environments and this story is an insightful and powerful look into the challenges and judgments faced by a young sniper deployed to the battlefield of Iraq." --Brigadier General Jeffery L. Underhill, U.S. Army Retired, (Iraq Veteran)"This book is a strong caution for all military commanders who would consider judging the warriors who run towards the sound of gunfire. Front-line actions should be judged from a front-line perspective, not for how those actions may play in the news." --Dave Earp, Former U.S. Navy SEAL Officer, USNA '97, BUDS Class #230, (Iraq and Afghanistan Veteran)"Saving Sandoval gives an inside look at the scrutiny Soldiers face on the battlefield and the politics involved in modern day warfare." --Major Chris Ophardt, U.S. Army, Public Affairs Officer to the Secretary of the Army, 2016-2017, (Iraq Veteran)"A revealing, real-life courtroom drama, reminiscent of A Few Good Men."--Hunter R. Clark, Director, International Law and Human Rights Program, Drake University Law School

THE WRITING PROCESS FOR SAVING SANDOVALI started Saving Sandoval back in 2007 by taking notes while still in Iraq after I represented Specialist Sandoval in his court-martial. In the back of my mind, I knew that the case had been a game-changer for me both personally and professionally. Sandoval's case was the first time that I represented someone wrongly accused of a serious crime. In his case, the most serious of crimes, murder. I also knew that time was not on my side if I was going to recount everything that had transpired the six months before. Fortunately, I realized that I needed to make some notes and put all the documents from the casefile together in one location. I was not sure then that I would write a book, I only knew that I wanted to capture my thoughts and collect all the documents about the case. Around 2009, two years after the trial, I decided that the best way to tell the story would be through a book. Thereafter, for literally years I would occasionally pull out the banker's box full of papers and the thumb drive with miscellaneous notes, drafts and transcripts and sit down to piece everything together. Life kept getting in the way and after leaving the Army in 2010 and starting my own law firm it seemed that life continued to be on overdrive. Realizing that the pace of life was not going to slow, I decided to make it a priority to finish the book. With the help of family, friends, and some professional input, the book has taken shape into what is now a final product.

BEING A JAG ATTORNEYThe role of a Judge Advocate, or JAG, is varied depending on the specific assignment. The initial criteria to be a Judge Advocate is to have gone to law school, be licensed to practice law in at least one State, and complete the required military training to be a military officer and military attorney. There are Judge

Advocates serving in the military in nearly every type of position. There are prosecutors, defense attorneys, administrative law attorneys, human rights attorneys, professors and legal assistance attorney handling general criminal issues for servicemembers.Â My experience started out as representing and advising servicemembers and their families in Legal Assistance. In that role, I prepared wills, basic trusts, powers of attorney, simple legal documents, and wrote letters on behalf of servicemembers attempting to resolve any personal legal issues. Thereafter, I was assigned as a Trial Counsel, or prosecutor, and represented the United States in the criminal investigation and prosecution of servicemembers. The Trial Counsel typically has two enlisted soldier-paralegals and is responsible for prosecuting cases at trial, overseeing criminal investigations, preparing letters of reprimand, and generally supervising the disposition of all misconduct. After serving as a Trial Counsel for over a year for the 108th Air Defense Artillery Brigade (Airborne), and jointly assigned to the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy (USASMA), I was transitioned from prosecuting soldiers to defending them and was offered the opportunity to deploy to a combat zone to defend soldiers. I was re-assigned to the command of the U.S. Army Trial Defense Service and deployed to Iraq. Once in Iraq I was immediately assigned as the lead defense counsel for Specialist Jorge G. Sandoval Jr. THE CHANGING BATTLEFIELD OF WARFARE Saving Sandoval tells the story of the trial and defense of Specialist Sandoval, however it also focuses on the changed battlefield and the changed dynamic of modern warfare. For the most part, the battlefields of the Revolutionary War, Mexican-American War, Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, Korean War, and Desert Storm involved distinct battlefields and common uniforms on both sides. Vietnam was one of the first large-scale conflicts where the battlefields began to blur and the enemy did not wear a common uniform. Any student of history knows that that Vietnam War was not a success both in the public's perception of the war, and on the battlefields. America excels at defeating a clear enemy, however where the enemy, and the battlefield, are not clear we have seemed to struggle at achieving long-term victory over the enemy. Today, and in the foreseeable future, the battlefields of war have changed and it is highly unlikely that there will ever again be clear lines on a battlefield with one side charging against the other on open plains or beaches. Our military leaders--and, perhaps more importantly, the American public--must contend with and accept this new reality and the uncertainty of combat when we send our men and women to war.

Amazing true story, you can see the author's passion in his writing. A page turner that kept me interested and wanting to find out more. Great book that I would recommend to anyone.

War often comes down to the very personal and terrifying moment when a soldier comes face-to-face with the enemy. If he responds as trained, he lives. No one questions the killing. But for snipers, the situation is different. Their job is to prevent such confrontations by taking out the enemy at long distances. This is what sniper Jorge Sandoval was trained to do and what he did. Rather than being rewarded for doing his job, Sandoval was charged with murder of an Iraqi, despite the fact that his superiors had approved the shot. Having lived and worked in Afghanistan for two years, I am aware of the critical role snipers play in modern warfare. That role was revealed in the book and movie "American Sniper," the story of sniper Chris Kyle, who died tragically, but as an American hero. With Saving Sandoval, we have a very different outcome in similar circumstances. Attorney Craig Drummond details the dramatic and compelling story of the trial of another American sniper and what it took to prevent a grave injustice.

Great book, unbelievable story. I spent 5 years in the Army and ROE and SOP's are drummed into everyone's head from the 1st day. It was upsetting to see what they put this kid (and his family and friends) through. Drummond deserves a handshake and a beer for his defense of what was clearly a bad situation. The book clearly walks you through the events leading to charges being brought, then clearly walks you through the defense team's actions and the trial. As upsetting as it was to read about the charges being brought, it was a relief to see that justice prevailed. Well done

This book is a true rarity, a thoughtfully written description of a factual courtroom drama. Many legal based stories are inaccurate or sensationalized to draw readers in or push an agenda. This book is none of that. It is a hands on account of a truly incredible story which doesn't bend the facts or change history. This book mixes real life courtroom drama with real world issues, all from the perspectives of the individuals that lived it. A highly recommend this book.

What a commentary on the military legal system! A real page turner, leads you through the courageous action by the author and the accused in the face of life altering accusations. There really are a "few good men" left in our service. A well deserved salute!

I love the way the Author, Army Captain Craig Drummond, brings in the aspects and attitudes of the people involved. He provides a closer look at what goes on during wartime behind "the enemy lines" and within our own military ranks. Be ready to be drawn in to a true story of a 22 year old army sniper who is on trial for his own freedom as a result of fighting for the freedom of others.

Having served myself and being sent overseas in defense of our nation on more than one occasion I can tell you this is a worst nightmare for many of us. Standard operating procedures are great but it's impossible to cover every aspect of what we can face, and ROE -- rules of engagement are often vague and really based off your instinct and read of a situation happening in real time. This did an amazing job of explaining without a lean of biased the actual happenings of the case. While I've heard the worst case scenario of this kind of incident it was good to see someone so hellbent on doing the right thing and providing the type of counsel we are all entitled to, not just a soldier -- though also, especially a soldier. Normally not my type of read but it was engaging and paced very well and easy to take in on a lazy afternoon, I would definitely recommend it.

I was worried this book would drag on a bit with minute, unimportant details and bore the reader. It was far from that and delivered a story about a young man I wanted to fight for, too, in a book I couldn't put down. I enjoyed that the story was concise, yet carried an compelling view on what so many of our heroes face on the battleground. Well done.

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