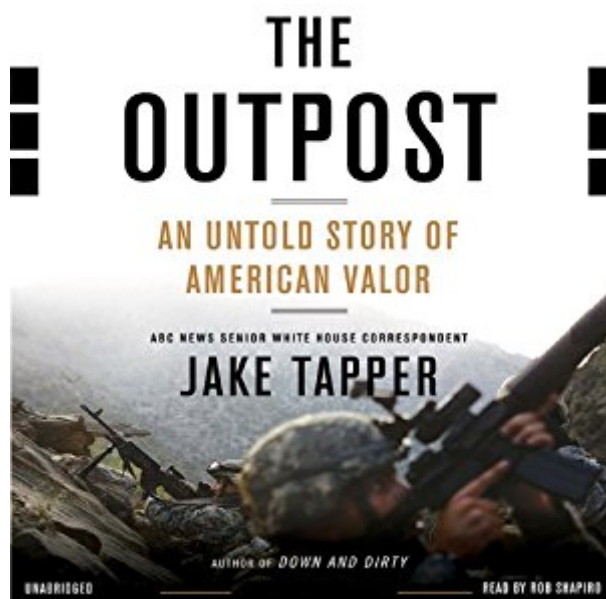


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The Outpost: An Untold Story Of American Valor



Synopsis

At 6:00 a.m. on the morning of October 3, 2009, Combat Outpost Keating was viciously attacked by Taliban insurgents. The 53 U.S. troops, having been stationed at the bottom of three steep mountains, were severely outmanned by nearly 400 Taliban fighters. Though the Americans ultimately prevailed, their casualties made it one of the war's deadliest battles for U.S. forces. And after more than three years in that dangerous and vulnerable valley a mere 14 miles from the Pakistan border, the U.S. abandoned and bombed the camp. A Pentagon investigation later concluded that there was no reason for Outpost Keating to have been there in the first place. The Outpost is a tour de force of investigative journalism. Jake Tapper exposes the origins of this tragic and confounding story, exploring the history of the camp and detailing the stories of soldiers heroic and doomed, shadowed by the recklessness of their commanders in Washington, D.C., and a war built on constantly shifting sands.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Outpost is incredibly well researched. As a soldier who was there, I can say Jake Tapper tells our story well. By focusing on a particular region of Afghanistan, not just a particular unit or person, The Outpost is able to provide a better overall picture of the war in Afghanistan and what the soldiers experienced in the most remote corner of that country. The Outpost, through exhaustive interviews and research, is able to combine the thoughts and decisions of commanders, with the actions of the soldiers in the field, and round it out with the reactions of the family and friends back

at home to provide a complete understanding of the war and its effects on everyone involved. I personally enjoyed reading *The Outpost* and learning the thoughts of many of the officers I served with, who could not be as open about their true thoughts and feelings as they could until after that fact, and also learning of the trials and challenges of the units that replaced mine, and how the war continued to unfold in the remote mountains of Afghanistan that I called home for 16 months. *The Outpost*, is neither pro-war nor anti-war. It is the cold hard truth documenting a flawed strategy to tame an untamable remote corner of Afghanistan, as told through the story of the many soldiers who personally served there from 2006 through 2009. *The Outpost* brings to the reader many stories of heroes and leaders the world needs to know about.

I was with 1st ID 6/4 Cav at COP Keating/OP Fritschie. Jake Tapper's book does great justice for my unit, for an amazing man--Captain Robert J. Yllescas, and for the rest of the officers who were in charge. I was very impressed with how in-depth Jake went into his coverage of our story, and with how well it was written. Like the title of the review reads, I spent a year at Keating/Fritschie, and even I was learning new details while reading the book--because Jake took his time and got the real stories. Smiles and cries, that about sums up my experience reading it. Anyone who wants to understand what true sacrifice is should read this book. Jake, thank you for telling our story to the world! I cannot thank you enough man. Thank you all, read our story, share it with your friends and family.

I just read this book. I complete at least three or four books every week, and I can say without qualification that this is the best book I have read this year. Tapper provides an extraordinary fly-on-the wall recap of the attempt by the U.S. military to establish a post near the Afghani-Pakistani border, in the most unsuitable and unsafe location that could be found. In the process, the reader comes to know, care about and appreciate many of the soldiers, who continued to carry out orders despite the enormous difficulties that existed to frustrate the mission. I was so impressed by the efforts the soldiers made to maintain positive outlooks, to solve engineering and practical problems, to perform with courage in the face of constant enemy gunfire and bombardment, and to create some semblance of comfort in this hostile environment. The fact that a number of them lost their lives while trying to execute a deeply flawed plan is so sad and so maddening, as is the intransigence of many of the officers up the chain of command, who persisted in this mission despite how obvious its futility was. I was left wondering whether the officer who insisted that the super heavy vehicle be driven to and from the outpost (which ultimately and

predictably resulted in the collapse of the road, the destruction of the very expensive vehicle, and most appalling, the death of good soldier Keating.) If anyone knows whether that officer got disciplined, I'd love to hear the details. I hope he did. The book gives us a birds' eye view of what our soldiers go through in Afghanistan, and the many handicaps they face because our government sends them there and then does not supply or support them adequately. I think every American citizen should read this book. It reminded me of Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead*, a great novel about a stupid effort to capture a worthless island in the Pacific during World War II.

Unfortunately, Tapper's book is truth, not fiction, and it teaches that we need to be more engaged in learning what exactly our forces are doing in our name, in Afghanistan and elsewhere, and we need to be more vocal about missions without endgames, and lack of support for the boots on the ground.

As a hard charger who was already on the Helo and was suppose to be inserted into this camp during the fight but got diverted for certain reasons, I've always been fascinated by this and wanted to still get involved anyway I could. Recently, I went through an EMT course with a warrior who actually was here and the surrounding observation posts. We've looked it over and did more research on our own and came to the sad conclusion that this book tells it exactly as it is or was. It also exposes the (command leadership or lack of) of their complete stupidity. In the War College you would expect officers to read and understand Sun Tzu's *Art of War*, but no... our Jack Ass officers have sacrificed and wasted almost half as many of our warriors as what the Taliban and the Hlg did, due to their arrogant Stupidity. I hope you get this book and look into the lives of the brave warriors that were wasted at this COP. (Ignored by their command) Then look at the other remote and defenseless outposts that aren't talked about as much. Please never support our political driven wars... most of them are profiting someone but not the America I grew up knowing. But Always... Please support our brave warriors... men and women of all services and please buy them a drink. Because by God they earned it.

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