



Every Man in This Village is a Liar: An Education in War

By Megan Stack



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A shattering account of war and disillusionment from a young woman reporter on the front lines of the war on terror.

A few weeks after the planes crashed into the World Trade Center, journalist Megan K. Stack was thrust into Afghanistan and Pakistan, dodging gunmen, prodding warlords for information, and witnessing the changes sweeping the Muslim world. *Every Man in This Village Is a Liar* is her riveting story of what she saw in the combat zones and beyond. She relates her initial wild excitement and slow disillusionment as the cost of violence outweighs the promise of democracy; she records the raw pain of suicide bombings in Israel and Iraq; and, one by one, she marks the deaths and disappearances of those she interviews.



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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

An American reporter takes in one Middle East cataclysm after another in this searing memoir. *Los Angeles Times* correspondent Stack covered the war in Afghanistan after Sept. 11, then bounced around to other hot-spot postings, including Israel during the second Intifada, occupied Baghdad, and southern Lebanon during the 2006 conflict between Israel and Hezbollah. Stack offers gripping accounts of the sorrows of war, especially of the traumas Afghan and Lebanese civilians endured under American and Israeli bombing, but she also writes evocatively of quieter pathologies: Libya's jovially sinister totalitarian regime, corruption under Egypt's quasi-dictatorship, and lyric anti-Semitism at a Yemeni poetry slam. Dropping journalistic detachment in favor of a novelistic style, she enters the story as a protagonist whose travails—fending off a lecherous Afghan warlord, seething under the humiliating restrictions of Saudi Arabia's gender apartheid system—illuminate the societies she encounters. The big-picture lessons Stack draws—The Middle East goes crazy and we go along with it—are none too cogent, but her vivid, atmospheric prose and keen empathy make her a superb observer of the region's horrific particulars. (Jun.)

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From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review Society assigns war to the military, not the media, yet journalists venture into combat zones ahead of, alongside, and well after the troops whose stories they tell. As a 25-year-old correspondent for the *Los Angeles Times*, Stack covered Afghanistan in the days immediately following 9/11, then traveled to other outposts in the war on terror, from Iraq to Iran, Libya, and Lebanon. In a disquieting series of essays, Stack now takes readers deep into the carnage where she was exposed to the insanity, innocence, and inhumanity of wars with no beginning, middle, or end. Her soaring imagery sears itself into the brain, in acute and accurate tales that should never be forgotten by the wider world, and yet always are. Stack grew increasingly demoralized with each new outburst of hostilities, and clearly covering the violence took its emotional toll: the uncomfortable hypocrisy of Abu Ghraib, the unconscionable confusion over women's subjugation, the unfathomable intricacies of tribal allegiances. Anyone wishing to understand the Middle East need only look into the faces of war that Stack renders with exceptional humanity—the bombers as well as the bureaucrats, the rebels and the refugees, the victors and the victims. --Carol Haggas

Review

Praise for *Every Man in this Village is a Liar*

"A bell-clear, powerful indictment of the debacle of recent Middle Eastern war policy.... A scathing look at the human costs of war."

—*Kirkus Reviews*

"Stack takes readers deep into the carnage where she was exposed to the insanity, innocence, and inhumanity of wars with no beginning, middle, or end. Her soaring imagery sears itself into the brain, in acute and accurate tales that should never be forgotten by the wider world, and yet always are.... Anyone wishing to understand the Middle East need only look into the faces of war that Stack renders with exceptional humanity."

—*Booklist* (starred review)

"[A] searing memoir....gripping accounts of the sorrows of war. [Stack's] vivid, atmospheric prose and keen empathy make her a superb observer of the region's horrific particulars."

—***Publisher's Weekly***

"A brilliant piece of writing that is lucid, compelling, and an education in war for the rest of us too."

—***The Bookseller (UK)***

"*Every Man in This Village is a Liar* is a courageous report from the front lines of the hostilities between the West and the Muslim world. Journalist Megan Stack sheds the customary pretenses of her profession to show us—with blistering eloquence and her own raw nerves laid bare—war's impact on the non-combatants who bear the brunt of its horrors. You'll be thinking about this book long after you turn the final page."

—**Jon Krakauer, author of *Where Men Win Glory***

"*Every Man in This Village is a Liar* is an electrifying book by an extraor..."

Users Review

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