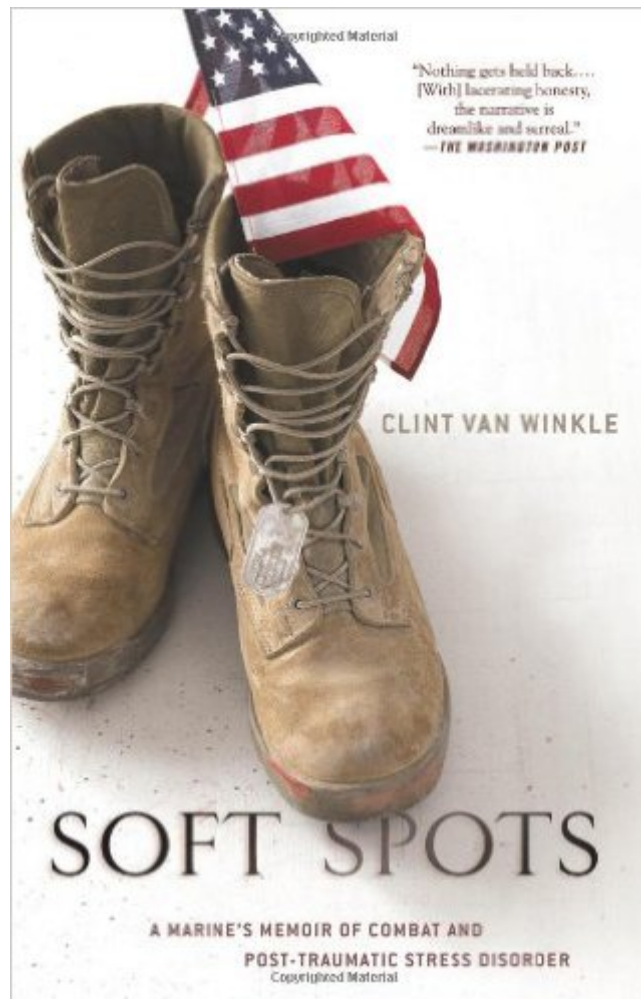


The book was found

Soft Spots: A Marine's Memoir Of Combat And Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder



Synopsis

A powerful, haunting, provocative memoir of a Marine in Iraq and his struggle with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in a system trying to hide the damage done. Marine Sergeant Clint Van Winkle flew to war on Valentine's Day 2003. His battalion was among the first wave of troops that crossed into Iraq, and his first combat experience was the battle of Nasiriyah, followed by patrols throughout the country, house to house searches, and operations in the dangerous Baghdad slums. But after two tours of duty, certain images would not leave his memory—a fragmented mental movie of shooting a little girl; of scavenging parts from a destroyed, blood-spattered tank; of obliterating several Iraqi men hidden behind an ancient wall; and of mistakenly stepping on a soft spot, the remains of a Marine killed in combat. After his return home, Van Winkle sought help at a Veterans Administration facility, and so began a maddening journey through an indifferent system that promises to care for veterans, but in fact abandons many of them. From riveting scenes of combat violence, to the gallows humor of soldiers fighting a war that seems to make no sense, to moments of tenderness in a civilian life ravaged by flashbacks, rage, and doubt, *Soft Spots* reveals the mind of a soldier like no other recent memoir of the war that has consumed America.

Book Information

Hardcover: 224 pages

Publisher: St. Martin's Press; 1 edition (March 3, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0312378939

ISBN-13: 978-0312378936

Product Dimensions: 5.8 x 0.9 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.4 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars See all reviews (44 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #938,890 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #360 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Leaders & Notable People > Military > Afghan & Iraq Wars > Iraq War #780 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Mental Health > Post-traumatic Stress Disorder #887 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Specific Groups > Special Needs

Customer Reviews

This slim book feels like something all Americans should read. The author paints a portrait of his experience as a Marine in Iraq which is fascinating, chilling, horrifying, and at times even briefly funny. He succeeded in helping me better understand both the mindset and the experiences of

young Marines coming home from the war. The author vividly describes his life with his Marine buddies and comrades, painting a picture of personalities, places, events, and dilemmas... and eventually the emotional reactions which begin to filter through. It's an incredibly powerful piece of writing, and a real example of "courage after fire". I'm grateful to the author for sharing both his experiences and his process of beginning to face how the war has changed him (and hundreds of thousands of other men and women). I think this book is especially valuable for those who love a Marine (or soldier) serving in Iraq or Afghanistan, since it is unflinching in sharing an inside view of a military culture which rewards toughness and suppression of emotions. While the episodes of violence, fear, rage, and horror are at times difficult to read, they may be very helpful in understanding what the person you love has lived through. Even the harsh language and vulgar humor of the men in this story are helpful in picturing their lives and world view. The episode in which a pathetic dog is repeatedly shot at by a fellow Marine for absolutely no reason (and neither the author nor anyone else intervenes to save it) was very powerful for me, especially knowing that the author owns a yellow lab at the end of the book. (The moment in which his dog nudges his arm to ask for a pat on the head was one of the first moments when it began to feel as if the author was really home.

I should probably begin by saying that Clint Van Winkle, the author of *Soft Spots*, is as much of a hero as most of the other US Marines with whom he served. Not more and not less. Those of us who haven't served seem to idolize our soldiers, but Van Winkle seems, in turn, to not want idolatry. There are as many stories about fighting wars as there are people who are involved in war. Van Winkle wrote about something that's been whispered about for centuries, even today: mental illness. Post-traumatic stress disorder is a severe, debilitating anxiety that develops after a person is subjected to terrifying events, such as rape, witnessing a murder... or being part of a war. PTSD occurs, as per a recent [2009] study, in approximately 17% of US armed forces (all branches). Van Winkle talks about, early in his story, opening a sandy box of mementos he brought back from his most recent tour in Iraq, a land that's mostly desert. "The box released the land when I opened it," he said. The velocity of his mental sandstorms varied. They had no rhyme, reason, or mercy. His sandstorms occur randomly throughout the book. In most books, this jumping around would be unnecessary and, in fact, annoying. However, why should the reader be able to sift through the story neatly when the author could not? The job was to "carry out your mission, and keep your honor clean." Marines leave no man behind - but sometimes they had to. A Forward of the book defined "Soft Spots" as the remains of a US Marine who had died in combat.

[Download to continue reading...](#)

Soft Spots: A Marine's Memoir of Combat and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Explaining 'Unexplained Illnesses': Disease Paradigm for Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Multiple Chemical Sensitivity, Fibromyalgia, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, and Gulf War Syndrome Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (Compact Research: Drugs) Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome California POST Exam Secrets Study Guide: POST Exam Review for the California POST Entry-Level Law Enforcement Test Battery (PELLETB) (Mometrix Secrets Study Guides) The Hidden Disorder: A Clinician's Guide to Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in Adults Soft Corals: Selecting and Maintaining Soft Corals Feeding and Algal Symbiosis Lighting and Water Clarity (Creating the Reef Environment) Minecraft: The Ultimate Combat Survival Handbook: An Unofficial Guide to Minecraft Combat Secrets and Tricks (Essential Minecraft Books for Kids) Minecraft Combat Handbook: All-In-One Minecraft Combat Guide. Helmet for My Pillow: From Parris Island to the Pacific: A Young Marine's Stirring Account of Combat in World War II Left of Bang: How the Marine Corps' Combat Hunter Program Can Save Your Life Mandala Adult Coloring Book Stress Relieving Patterns Relaxation: coloring book for Adult and grown ups, Anti-Stress Art Therapy, Stress Relieving Flower Patterns Creative Oceans Coloring Book: Adult Coloring Book of Stress Relief Sea Animal Patterns and Designs (Ocean Coloring Book, Lost Ocean, Stress Relief Coloring Book, Anti Stress Coloring Book) (Volume 1) Treating Trauma and Traumatic Grief in Children and Adolescents Traumatic Dental Injuries: A Manual Diagnostic Imaging: Musculoskeletal Non-Traumatic Disease, 2e The Silence of War: An Old Marine in a Young Marine's War Lancelot-Grail: 2. The Story of Merlin: The Old French Arthurian Vulgate and Post-Vulgate in Translation (Lancelot-Grail: The Old French Arthurian Vulgate and Post-Vulgate in Translation) California POST Exam Study Guide: Test Prep for California Police Officer Exam (Post Entry-Level Law Enforcement Test Battery (PELLETB)) The Bowery Boys: Adventures in Old New York: An Unconventional Exploration of Manhattan's Historic Neighborhoods, Secret Spots and Colorful Characters

[Dmca](#)