

# Marine Combat Photographers and Their Journey Back from War: A Story of Courage, Resilience, and Healing

## Meet the Photographers

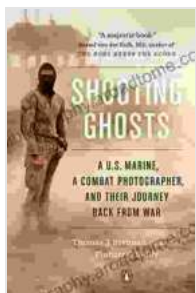
The six photographers featured in this book are:

- **Cpl. John Plasencia**, who was deployed to Iraq in 2003. He was responsible for photographing the aftermath of the Battle of Fallujah, one of the deadliest battles of the Iraq War.
- **Cpl. Michael Yon**, who was deployed to Iraq in 2004 and 2005. He was embedded with the 2nd Battalion, 8th Marines, and photographed some of the most intense fighting of the war.
- **Sgt. Seth Moulton**, who was deployed to Iraq in 2003 and 2004. He was awarded the Bronze Star for his valor in combat.
- **Sgt. Benjamin Watson**, who was deployed to Afghanistan in 2009 and 2010. He was severely injured in a roadside bomb attack.
- **Sgt. Tyler Cherry**, who was deployed to Afghanistan in 2011 and 2012. He was awarded the Purple Heart for his injuries.
- **Cpl. Sarah Price**, who was deployed to Afghanistan in 2013 and 2014. She was the first female Marine combat photographer to be awarded the Silver Star.

## Their Stories

Each of these photographers has a unique story to tell. They come from different backgrounds and have experienced different things in war. But they all share a common bond: they are survivors.

## Cpl. John Plasencia



### Shooting Ghosts: A U.S. Marine, a Combat Photographer, and Their Journey Back from War

by Thomas J. Brennan

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

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John Plasencia was just 20 years old when he was deployed to Iraq in 2003. He was a young man with a bright future ahead of him. But his life was forever changed by the horrors he witnessed in Iraq.

Plasencia was responsible for photographing the aftermath of the Battle of Fallujah. He saw things that no one should ever have to see. He saw dead bodies and wounded soldiers. He saw the destruction of a city.

Plasencia's experiences in Iraq left him with PTSD. He struggled with nightmares, flashbacks, and anxiety. He couldn't sleep or eat. He couldn't hold a job.

But Plasencia refused to give up. He sought help from therapists and support groups. He started writing about his experiences. And he eventually found a way to heal.

Today, Plasencia is a successful photographer and author. He travels the country speaking about his experiences in Iraq and the challenges of PTSD. He is a role model for other veterans who are struggling with their own wounds.

### **Cpl. Michael Yon**

Michael Yon was a freelance photographer when he was embedded with the 2nd Battalion, 8th Marines in Iraq in 2004 and 2005. He was with the Marines during some of the most intense fighting of the war.

Yon's photographs from Iraq are some of the most iconic images of the conflict. They show the brutality of war and the courage of the men and women who fight it.

Yon's experiences in Iraq also left him with PTSD. He struggled with depression, anxiety, and insomnia. He was haunted by nightmares and flashbacks.

But Yon found a way to heal through writing. He wrote a book about his experiences in Iraq called *Danger Close: A Marine at the Sharp End of the Iraq War*. The book was a bestseller and helped to raise awareness of the challenges faced by combat veterans.

Today, Yon is a successful author and filmmaker. He continues to write about war and its aftermath. He is also a strong advocate for veterans and

their families.

## **Sgt. Seth Moulton**

Seth Moulton was a Harvard graduate and a Rhodes Scholar when he joined the Marine Corps in 2001. He was deployed to Iraq in 2003 and 2004, where he served as a platoon commander.

Moulton was awarded the Bronze Star for his valor in combat. He led his platoon through some of the most dangerous fighting of the war. He also helped to rescue a wounded Iraqi soldier.

After returning home from Iraq, Moulton struggled with PTSD. He had nightmares, flashbacks, and anxiety. He couldn't sleep or eat. He couldn't hold a job.

But Moulton refused to give up. He sought help from therapists and support groups. He started writing about his experiences. And he eventually found a way to heal.

Today, Moulton is a successful congressman. He represents Massachusetts' 6th congressional district in the U.S. House of Representatives. He is also a strong advocate for veterans and their families.

## **Sgt. Benjamin Watson**

Benjamin Watson was a decorated Marine who was deployed to Afghanistan in 2009 and 2010. He was a squad leader with the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines.

Watson was severely injured in a roadside bomb attack in 2010. He lost both of his legs and his right arm. He also suffered severe burns to his face and body.

Watson underwent multiple surgeries and months of rehabilitation. But he never gave up hope. He was determined to walk again and to live a full and active life.

Today, Watson is a successful motivational speaker and author. He travels the country speaking about his experiences in Afghanistan and the challenges of living with a disability. He is also a strong advocate for veterans and their families.

### **Sgt. Tyler Cherry**

Tyler Cherry was a combat photographer with the 2nd Battalion, 8th Marines. He was deployed to Afghanistan in 2011 and 2012.

Cherry was awarded the Purple Heart for his injuries. He was wounded in a roadside bomb attack in 2012. He suffered a traumatic brain injury and other injuries.

Cherry struggled with PTSD after returning home from Afghanistan. He had nightmares, flashbacks, and anxiety. He couldn't sleep or eat. He couldn't hold a job.

But Cherry refused to give up. He sought help from therapists and support groups. He started writing about his experiences. And he eventually found a way to heal.

Today, Cherry is a successful photographer and author. He travels the country speaking about his experiences in Afghanistan and the challenges of PTSD. He is also a strong advocate for veterans and their families.

## **Cpl. Sarah Price**

Sarah Price was the first female Marine combat photographer to be awarded the Silver Star. She was deployed to Afghanistan in 2013 and 2014.

Price was awarded the Silver Star for her actions during an ambush in Afghanistan in 2013. She risked her own life to save the lives of her fellow Marines.

Price struggled with PTSD after returning home from Afghanistan. She had nightmares, flashbacks, and anxiety. She couldn't sleep or eat. She couldn't hold a job.

But Price refused to give up. She sought help from therapists and support groups. She started writing about her experiences. And she eventually found a way to heal.

Today, Price is a successful photographer and author. She travels the country speaking about her experiences in Afghanistan and the challenges of PTSD. She is also a strong advocate for veterans and their families.

## **The Challenges of War**

War is a brutal and unforgiving experience. It can leave lasting scars on the minds and bodies of those who have served.

The challenges faced by combat photographers are unique. They are not only witnesses to the horrors of war, but they are also responsible for documenting them. They must capture the raw emotions of war, the pain and suffering, the death and destruction.

This can be a daunting task, and it can take a toll on the mental health of combat photographers. They may experience symptoms of PTSD, such as nightmares, flashbacks, anxiety, and depression. They may also struggle with substance abuse and relationship problems.

### **The Journey Back from War**

The journey back from war is a long and difficult one. But it is a journey that can be made with the help of support from family, friends, and professionals.

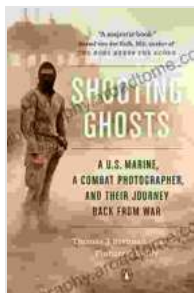
There are many resources available to help combat photographers cope with the challenges of war. These resources include therapy, support groups, and medication.

It is important for combat photographers to seek help if they are struggling. They should not be ashamed to ask for help. There is no weakness in asking for help.

### **The Power of Healing**

The stories of these six combat photographers are a testament to the power of healing. They have all overcome the challenges of war and PTSD. They have all found a way to heal and live full and active lives.

Their stories are an inspiration to us all. They show us that it is possible to overcome even the most difficult challenges

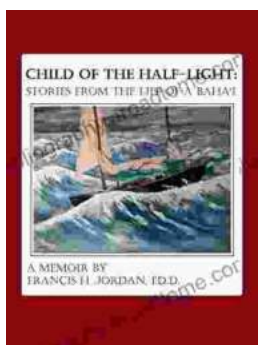


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