



The Interrogators: Inside the Secret War Against al Qaeda

By Chris Mackey, Greg Miller



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More than 3,000 prisoners in the war on terrorism have been captured, held, and interrogated in Afghanistan alone. But no one knows what transpired in those interactions between prisoner and interrogator—until now. In *THE INTERROGATORS*, Chris Hogan, the senior interrogator at Bagram Air Base and in Kandahar, where al-Qaeda and Taliban prisoners were first detained and questioned, lifts the curtain. Soldiers specially trained in the art of interrogation went face-to-face with the enemy. These mental and psychological battles were as grueling, dramatic, and important as any in the war on terrorism. We learn how, under Hogan's command, his small group of 'soldier spies' engineered a breakthrough in interrogation strategy, rewriting techniques and tactics grounded in the Cold War. Hogan reveals the tricks of the trade, and we see how his team—four men and one woman—responded to the pressure and the prisoners. By the time Hogan's group was finished, virtually no prisoner went unbroken. Riveting and illuminating, *THE INTERROGATORS* is a fascinating work of nonfiction that reads like the most exciting of spy novels. It is the first and only inside account into this world we have never been allowed into and is sure to be one of the most talked about books of 2004.



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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This fascinating memoir reports from one of the most crucial and controversial fronts in the war on terror. The pseudonymous Mackey was an interrogator at military prisons in Afghanistan, tasked with sussing out the secrets of suspected Taliban and al-Qaeda members. He and journalist Miller take readers inside the prison cells and interrogation rooms, where interrogators choreograph elaborate mind games and fight epic battles of will with their often formidable captives. Their account's full of the engrossing lore and procedure of interrogation, the thrust and parry of baited queries and cagey half-truths, and the occasional dramatic breakthrough when a prisoner cracks. But it also reveals the squalor and drudgery of the prison camps, the exhaustion, bad temper and frequent ineptitude of the interrogators and the many lapses in the American intelligence effort, especially by the CIA, which Mackey regards as an arrogant, secretive and incompetent organization. Mackey deplores the Abu Ghraib abuses and insists that his unit never violated the Geneva Conventions. They flirted, he acknowledges, with stress positions and sleep deprivation, but this was nothing, he claims, beyond what army recruits and the interrogators themselves routinely endured; their main weapons seem to have been veiled threats to return Arab prisoners to their homelands, where they would face real torture. The book, which was vetted by the Pentagon, will not settle the questions surrounding American treatment of prisoners in Iraq and elsewhere. But it does give a vivid, gritty look at the pressures and compromises attendant on this unconventional war.

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About the Author

Chris Mackey joined the army at seventeen and was assigned to the intelligence corps as an interrogator. After 9/11, he was recalled to the United States, assigned to Task Force 500, and subsequently sent to Kandahar, Afghanistan. He ultimately supervised all military interrogations conducted at the theatre-wide detention facility at Bagram airfield.

Greg Miller is a national correspondent for the Los Angeles Times.

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