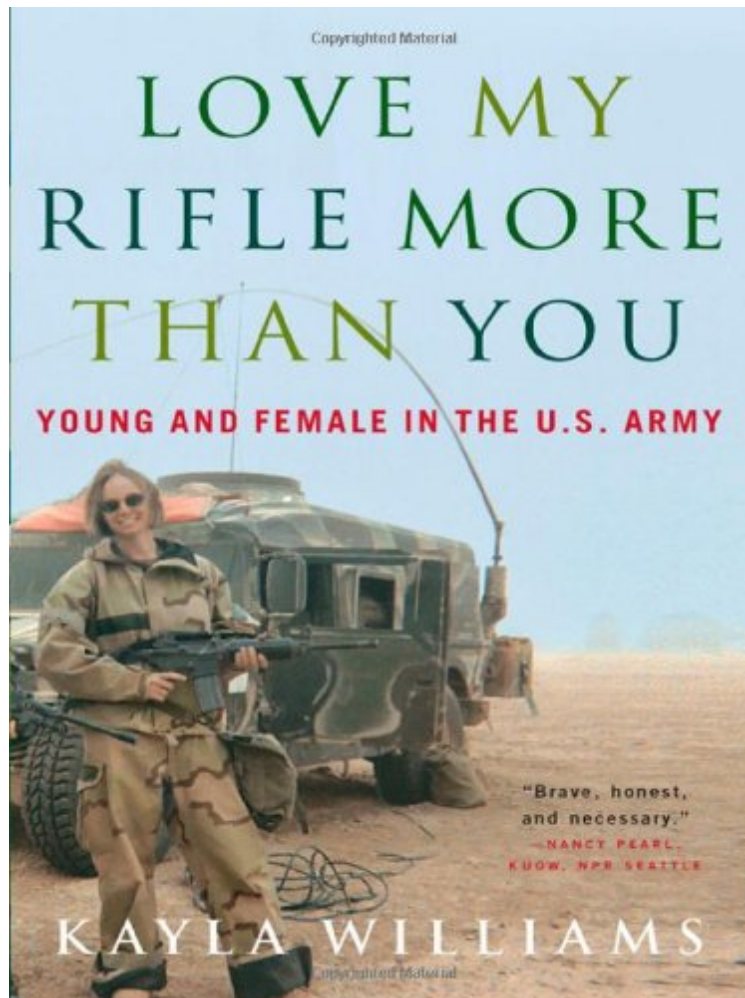


(Free) Love My Rifle More than You: Young and Female in the U.S. Army

## Love My Rifle More than You: Young and Female in the U.S. Army

*Kayla Williams, Michael E. Staub*

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**Kayla Williams, Michael E. Staub : Love My Rifle More than You: Young and Female in the U.S. Army** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Love My Rifle More than You: Young and Female in the U.S. Army:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Timely Read By Roger This book was published around 2005 well before sexual assault in the military became a hot topic. Anyone interested in this topic should read this book. The book doesn't necessarily have an agenda aimed at sexual assault but vividly brings out typical situations women often face in a war zone. The language can be crude and graphic, which fits the author's war zone experience perfectly. Books are few that I couldn't put down--this was one. Her story is riveting and she has a way to keep the book suspenseful. For me, as a retired senior officer, the most disappointing aspect of the author's story is the poor leadership shown by so many company and battalion level commanders. Their lack of sensitivity to having a single female on a

combat team is appalling. Until the services are able to better develop young officers the sexual assault problem will continue. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Must-Read For Anyone Seeking To Understand The Experience Of A Female Soldier By Davdocate09 This is probably the finest Soldier's-eye-view account of this particular war that I've read. Not all of these things happened to me during the war (obviously, because I'm a guy and it's unapologetically written from the female perspective), but many the vignettes that make up this book brought back vivid memories of my own experience in the sandbox. I would go so far as to say this is a must-read for any young woman considering military service, and anyone of any gender in a position to affect the policies that shape the functioning of the armed services. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Outstanding! By Kate Watson Thank you Kayla Williams for this gift. Your grit, your values, your challenges are beautifully articulated. This is raw, real and a must-read for everyone - especially for those of us who have not served. We can't even begun to understand the world of our soldiers, Marines, sailors and airmen and women who are serving without reading the reporting of those who have. This woman salutes all if you and sends special kudos to the 18% of our service population who are women.

Brave, honest, and necessary. Nancy Pearl, NPR Seattle Kayla Williams is one of the 15 percent of the U.S. Army that is female, and she is a great storyteller. With a voice that is funny, frank and full of gritty details (New York Daily News), she tells of enlisting under Clinton; of learning Arabic; of the sense of duty that fractured her relationships; of being surrounded by bravery and bigotry, sexism and fear; of seeing 9/11 on Al-Jazeera; and of knowing she would be going to war. With a passion that makes her memoir nearly impossible to put down (Buffalo News) Williams shares the powerful gamut of her experiences in Iraq, from caring for a wounded civilian to aiming a rifle at a child. Angry at the bureaucracy and the conflicting messages of today's military, Williams offers us a raw, unadulterated look at war (San Antonio Express News) and at the U.S. Army. And she gives us a woman's story of empowerment and self-discovery.

From Publishers Weekly Williams's account of her Iraq service tries very hard to be a fresh and wised-up postfeminist take: Private Benjamin by way of G.I. Jane. Showy rough language peppers every paragraph, and Williams's obsessive self-concern, expressed in a lot of one-sentence paragraphs beginning with "I," verges on the narcissistic. The surprise is the degree to which the account succeeds and even echoes military memoirists from Julius Caesar to Ernie Pyle. The fear, bad weather, intermittent supplies, inedible meals (especially for the vegetarian author) and crushing boredom of life in the field are all here. Williams's particular strength is in putting an observant, distaff spin on the bantering and brutality of barracks life, where kids from the Survivor generation must come to terms with a grim and confusing reality over which they have little control. The differences are less in the sexual dynamics (which mostly are an extension of office politics) than the contradictions of the conflict in which the troops are engaged, which Williams embodies more than illuminates. She learns Arabic; there's a Palestinian boyfriend and a short, failed marriage during her state-side training. While an ex-punk, Chomsky-reading liberal, Williams questions the day-to-day conduct of the war without ever really engaging with its underlying rationale. Such nuance, though, might be too much to ask. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Bookmarks Magazine Williams's war memoir is just one in a string that originated from recent U.S.-led forays into the Middle East, and its uniqueness comes from its female perspective. Critics agree that *Love My Rifle* is no deep piece of literature. Instead, it's a shocking, on-the-ground view of one military woman's experience in Iraq. Williams spares no details about the stress of combat, the questionable treatment of Iraqi prisoners, and her scathing opinion of the U.S. administration, though she never explains why she enlisted in the first place. As one of only 15 percent of women employed by the Army, Williams possibly overplays the sexual harassment she suffered or so claim a few of the more suspect male reviewers. But the story's not over: Williams can be called back to duty any time. Copyright 2004 Phillips Nelson Media, Inc. From Booklist Whip smart, sassy, with a mouth as foul as a sailor's, 28-year-old Sergeant Kayla Williams, who has served as an Arabic interpreter in the U.S. Army since late spring 2000, tells what it's like to be a female soldier in Iraq. The best description might be "contradictory." Williams shares the humiliation she feels before her male army brethren, while admitting she enjoys the perks of being female in the military. She's ferociously loyal to her country and her unit but blisteringly critical of military ineptitude by those above and around her. She conveys stretches of mind-numbing boredom punctuated by the horrific realities of war. And she's only too aware of the complicated requirements of occupation: "We're here to help you!" she writes. "Oh, and shoot you--if we feel it's necessary." There are gaps in the story--for example, Williams doesn't entirely explain why she enlisted--but that's only one reason why this highly readable account will leave readers wanting more. Stay tuned, as Williams is on call--Inactive Ready Reserve (IRR)--until 2008. Alan Moores Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved