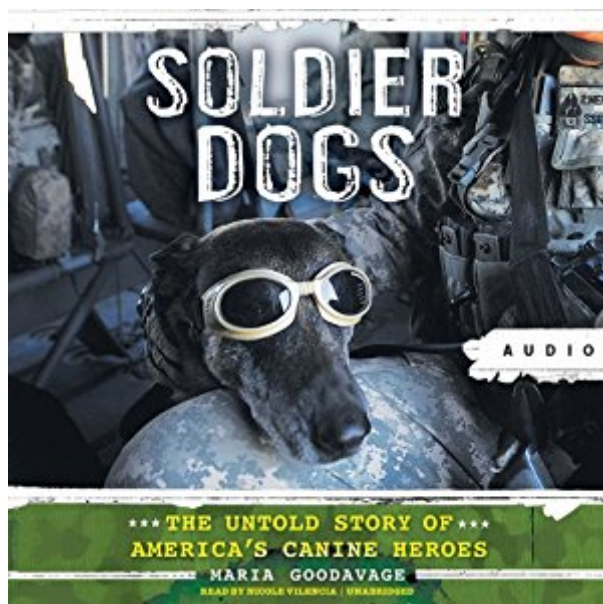


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# Soldier Dogs: The Untold Story Of America's Canine Heroes



## Synopsis

A leading dog-blogger offers a tour of military working dogs' extraordinary training, heroic accomplishments, and the lasting impact they have on those who work with them. People all over the world have been riveted by the story of Cairo, the Belgian Malinois who was a part of the Navy SEAL team that led the raid on Osama bin Laden's compound. A dog's natural intelligence, physical abilities, and pure loyalty contribute more to our military efforts than ever before. You don't have to be a dog lover to be fascinated by the idea that a dog - the cousin of that furry guy begging for scraps under your table - could be one of the heroes who helped execute the most vital and high-tech military mission of the new millennium. Now Maria Goodavage, editor and featured writer for one of the world's most widely read dog blogs, tells heartwarming stories of modern soldier dogs and the amazing bonds that develop between them and their handlers. Beyond tales of training, operations, retirement, and adoption into the families of fallen soldiers, Goodavage talks to leading dog-cognition experts about why dogs like nothing more than to be on a mission with a handler they trust, no matter how deadly the IEDs they are sniffing out, nor how far they must parachute or rappel from aircraft into enemy territory. "Military working dogs live for love and praise from their handlers," says Ron Aiello, president of the United States War Dogs Association and a former marine scout-dog handler. "The work is all a big game, and then they get that pet, that praise. They would do anything for their handler." This is an unprecedented window into the world of these adventurous, loving warriors. Maria Goodavage, a former reporter for USA Today and the San Francisco Chronicle, is the editor and featured writer for one of the most widely read dog blogs in the world: For the Love of Dog. She is also the author of The Dog Lover's Companion to California and The Dog Lover's Companion to the San Francisco Bay Area. She co-produced and wrote an award-winning children's video about animals, starring the voice of Ed Asner. Includes a bonus PDF with photographs.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book really touches base with me, if you look at what I put behind my name, many of you will understand. I have had K-9's Worked with K-9's Trained K-9's I have had my life saved by K-9's, more than once. I have worked with, and own SAR, Search and Rescue, dogs, my current one is a Black Lab. This book will take you into the World of the Military K-9, from the selection and weeding out program, to the matching dog with handler phase, to the actual training phase. That last phase, teaches and trains both handler and K-9. After that, you are taken to the battlefield, and read about what happens, can happen out in combat, to both dog and handler. You will also find out that, there are politicians that want to put an end to the Military K-9 program, which would cost many lives, as these 4 legged heroes, have allowed countless numbers of Service Members to come home. I know, I would not be writing this, if it were not for them.

You don't need to be a dog-lover to appreciate Goodavage's book, but you are likely to become one by the time you've gotten through the first 40 pages. The book is divided into four sections pertinent to every aspect of a military working dog's life: Dog's in Harm's Way; Nature, Nurture and Training; The Dog Trainer and the Scientists; and, Dog's and Their Soldiers. Goodavage's writing style lends a "you are there" feeling and always with a sensitivity and beauty empathetic to these unsung canine heroes. While the soldier dog accompanying the Navy Seal team that captured Bin Laden received renown, you will discover that more than 13,000 dogs are deployed. The author virtually has put herself in the shoes of the trainers and handlers so that the authenticity of her reporting permeates the book. The text provides a sense of the reality dogs face from puppy-hood to adulthood, fully trained and on the battlefield. It is impossible not to admire the dedication of the soldiers and others who live and work with the dogs. And it is anathema not to respect and marvel at the devotion and trust of these canine soldiers who risk their lives to save ours. What do they seek in return? Not much. To please, receive a few kind words and play. Soldier Dogs indeed is a book for those who have family members in the military, but it is also for anyone who is fascinated by dogs and animal training. It is a thoroughly-researched, heartwarming work that reads more like a novel than nonfiction. Selected photos mingled with the text and capture the essence of these

beautiful animals. Do yourself a favor and pick up a copy of *Soldier Dogs*. You may find yourself buying a few more for your friends, too.

An amazing read! For some animal lovers the subject of dogs and war can be hard. Maria does an excellent job of telling the real story and their state of the art training. MWD's are not house pets, but kudos to the US Military for taking such great steps to provide top notch healthcare and compassionate training that is based on positive reinforcement. This is not just a book for folks interested in military dogs and all their glory and sacrifice. There is significant takeaway for us civilian dog lovers too. I was particularly struck by Maria's visit and talks with Gunny Knight USMC at the Yuma PG Pre-Dep center. Gunny Knight is special - he can read dogs, he can speak their language. Not something the casual reader may expect from a military trainer. I soaked in the ethos during this part of the book and put it to the test with my own 7 year old 130lb chocolate lab - MASON. I got home from work last week with Gunny in my head. I approached MASON for some new structured play time and prepared myself to better 'read' my dog and have quality play time. I was learning; MASON was learning. Within 15 minutes MASON and I had established a new bond, a better positive reinforcement language, and non-food -based rewards. I saw his needs and fatigue differently; he rewarded me with attention to the task and better play. No fancy trainers, no long timeline. Just a no nonsense approach to canine behavior thanks to the US Military trainers. Gunny - Thank you! Maria - Thank you! The next years of MASON's life will be better for *Soldier Dogs*. Also, if you buy this book and read it, please consider sending it overseas to deployed soldiers looking for a good read.

This book is wonderful. It tells you everything you could hope to learn about the military working dogs program. It really has something for everyone in this book. It is a definitely a must for any dog lover. If you aren't a dog lover after reading this book you will be. The book is several short stories about dogs, and the details of the whole military dog program. The interviews all took place in 2011. The stories come from Afghanistan and Iraq. The author takes you from the dog purchase all the way to their retirement. You will learn about how the military trains these wonderful animals. I think the techniques they use could help any dog lover. This information is frequently told through the eyes of handlers so you get the information from the trenches. You will become an expert in process after this book. The stories of these dogs at work in the war zone will warm your heart. The book documents what every dog lover already knows. Dogs have a special bond with man. They do communicate with handlers. They read people almost as well as people read them. They take

special risks for their humans. The stories of dogs that did not come home will for sure touch you emotionally. The stories about the bond between handler and dog will warm your heart. This story will make you want to hug your dog.

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