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Here I Am: The Story Of Tim Hetherington, War Photographer



Synopsis

Tim Hetherington (1970-2011) was one of the world's most distinguished and dedicated photojournalists, whose career was tragically cut short when he died in a mortar blast while covering the Libyan Civil War. Tim won many awards for his war reporting, and was nominated for an Academy Award for the critically acclaimed documentary, *Restrepo*. Hetherington's dedication to his career led him time after time into war zones, and unlike some other journalists, he did not pack up after the story had broken. In *Here I Am*, journalist and freelance writer Alan Huffman tells Hetherington's life story, and through it analyzes what it means to be a war reporter in the twenty-first century. Huffman recounts Hetherington's life from his first interests in photography, through his critical role in reporting the Liberian Civil War, to his tragic death in Libya. Huffman also traces Hetherington's photographic milestones, from his iconic and prize-winning photographs of Liberian children, to the celebrated portraits of sleeping U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan. *Here I Am* explores the risks, challenges, and thrills of war reporting, and is a testament to the unique work of people like Hetherington, who risk their lives to give a voice to people ravaged by war.

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Customer Reviews

In April 2011, Hetherington, 40, was killed in a mortar attack while covering the Arab Spring uprising in Misrata, Libya. Hetherington, likely best known for codirecting the Academy

Award-nominated documentary *Restrepo*, about the Afghanistan war, spent eight years as

a war photographer covering conflicts from Africa to South Asia. But, as Huffman documents, Hetherington went way beyond photographing the carnage and violence of war to detail the lives of the people affected. He tended to immerse himself in the local life and culture, covering a school choir of blind children in Sierra Leone and spending three years helping the UN track down human-rights criminals in Liberia. Oxford-educated Hetherington used photos, videos, and written narratives to chronicle the lives of people in war-torn areas. Huffman details the life of a man who wasn't satisfied to record images but wanted to understand the causes behind the war, the histories of conflict, and the individuals—many, adolescents—caught in the horror and drama of war. Through Hetherington's extraordinary life, Huffman explores a dangerous profession and how one man pursued it with his own personal twist. --Vanessa Bush

“I don't think I fully understood how brave my good friend Tim Hetherington was until reading these pages. Not only does Huffman bring Tim back to life—his brilliant work, his extraordinary vision—but he also leads us through some of the most harrowing combat of our generation. His description of the siege of Misrata should be read by anyone who imagines they understand war—or courage, or fear. For all my time as a war reporter, I don't think I fully understood those things until reading Huffman's incredible book.”—Sebastian Junger; [Huffman] investigates not only the significant life of his subject, whom he admires greatly, but also the craft of the war photographer and the tensions and contradictions involved . . . Huffman excels at heightening the drama, depicting the rapid-fire action and constant danger of working among soldiers and guerrillas engaged in battle.”—The Boston Globe; Huffman looks at what it means to be a war reporter in the 21st century through the lens of the iconic Hetherington's life, looking at his early work; prize-winning photographs of Liberian children; to his Oscar-nominated documentary Restrepo . . . to the mortar blast in Libya that cut his life short.”—New York Post (Required Reading); [Here I Am] captures the unflinching life of war photographer Tim Hetherington. . . . Huffman re-creates the suspense of battle, the tension between competing photographers who, by nature, are judgmental of one another's approach to depicting war; he builds detailed characters of Libyan ambulance drivers, fighters, and commanders as successfully as he depicts the contentious clique of photographers.”—Lynsey Addario, Daily Beast; Huffman vividly chronicles the short life of a man drawn to danger zones to capture the horrors of modern warfare.”—Los Angeles Times; A powerfully written biography . . . titled Here I Am in reference to a moment that Hetherington finds himself in his

own viewfinder, reflected back in a mirror. This is poignant imagery and metaphor for the entire body of this extraordinary artist and humanist's life. . . .

Huffington Post;Celebrate[s] Tim Hetherington's life . . . recount[s] his last days in Libya in excruciating detail. . . .

TIME;Huffman takes readers into the midst of some dangerous and gruesome battle zones that Hetherington recorded. The book is part biography and part war chronicle, but it is also a skillfully constructed eulogy, in which Huffman allows many of Hetherington's friends and colleagues to reminisce about a fallen comrade. . . . By deftly combining such personal memories with vivid descriptions of battle zones, Huffman makes *Here I Am* a must-read as a uniquely constructed memorial. . . .

Winnipeg Free Press;Huffman recounts Hetherington's career in chapters that expand on the many conflicts the photographer covered: The Liberian civil war; the genocide in Sudan. . . the American occupation of Afghanistan. . . and succeeds in immersing us in Hetherington's daily reality while in conflict zones. . . . Many excellent interviews with friends and colleagues add a personal dimension to the photographer's extraordinary life. . . .

The Columbia Journalism Review;The biographer wanted closure not only for himself and his book, but also for Hetherington's loved ones;and especially for future war photojournalists who would look back and look up to Hetherington. . . . A tribute. Fortunately for readers, though, it is not undiluted hagiography. . . .

Cleveland Plain Dealer;Huffman recounts the career arc of British-born and -educated Hetherington while simultaneously providing insights into the mentality of war photographers during the past century. . . . A first-rate biographical portrait that also deserves accolades for its insights into the minds of adventure-seeking photographers. . . .

Kirkus Reviews;Huffman's biography crackles with the authenticity of his own experiences in Liberia and interviews with Hetherington and his colleagues . . . An in-depth, intense chronicle. . . .

Shelf Awareness;Compelling . . . Huffman details Hetherington's early career, friendships, and experiences with rebels in Africa, and influences and aesthetic struggles. . . and offers perspectives from firsthand sources to unveil the heroism and errors of his final days. . . .

Publishers Weekly;From American journalist Alan Huffman comes *Here I Am*. . . a biography about the photojournalist famous for his iconic photos of U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan, who was killed in 2011 by a mortar blast during the Libyan civil war. . . .

Quill & Quire (Spring Preview 2013);Huffman details the life of a man who wasn't satisfied to record images but wanted to understand the causes behind the war, the histories of conflict, and the individuals;many, adolescents;caught in the horror and drama of war. Through Hetherington's

extraordinary life, Huffman explores a dangerous profession and how one man pursued it with his own personal twist. [Booklist](#); A tale worth telling, a look into a world of violence and chaos few could understand. [The Jackson Clarion-Ledger](#); [Huffman is] at his riveting best in his description of the battle for Misrata, which puts the reader as close as most of us ever want to get to the absolute hell of chaotic urban war. [Pasatiempo](#); I was happy to see news of a book about Hetherington; I was even happier that Huffman was writing it. The man can write. . . . Huffman could have written a fine book about war, but in *Here I Am* he's done something a little more complicated; he's captured and communicated how Tim Hetherington saw war. [Lemuria Bookstore Blog](#)

I read this book for a college course I am taking. We were asked to read a biography about an individual in our intended field of study, and as I am a wannabe future photojournalist I chose this book. There are other books and media mentioned in this book such as *Diary*, *Restrepo*, and his hard to find and expensive book on Liberia. If you truly want to learn about this amazing journalist I highly suggest watching/ reading all other pieces that Tim has had a part in producing. Even if you don't care about Tim (you're wrong if you don't) the media is highly worth watching. HBO also has another documentary on his life that is quite interesting. And now for the title of this review. That is only a slight exaggeration. I am a film shooter, and it was so amazing to read about Tim's view on photojournalism and his use of film in his documentary of the world's people. I have been inspired to work on a project of my own this summer, and never have I been more excited about being a journalist. Just a great read, and highly recommended.

Photographer, Documentarian (*Restrepo*, *Darfur Bleeds*), Author Timothy Alistair Telemachus Hetherington: in his 41st year of life struck down by a mortar shell in Misrata, amidst the rising Arab Spring, and a life cut so deeply short in its courage, passion, focus, and humanity. This biographical sketch draws the reader into much more than Hetherington's life, and yet the man himself as a beacon of sincere exploration and commitment, outrageous courage, to the good of all, and the unique story in each human being's life. We look into the window of the most extreme and unthinkable frontline situations as we watch Tim and his colleagues risk their lives to capture the reality of war. We see Tim's heartfelt interest in all human beings and his contagious smile and interest in others' lives. And then the inexplicable and tragic last moments of his journey on this earth, filled with the stumbling inefficiency of a war shredded town and hospital bare of the most basic abilities to resuscitate those with potentially salvageable wounds. This human being to me

was on a mission for us all--perhaps in discovering himself as well--to illuminate unbiased the raw truth of this world and its wars. He provided a mirror so crystal clear that afforded no lie--spoken or unspoken--to skew the inhumanity of humankind on itself. In his quiet moments he may have ruminated a bit as to whether we'd get over ourselves and this strange need to decimate ourselves and pawn sides on one another. In his heart was a turmoil from the divine truth that streamed through him elementally and thru his camera: a truth of coming to a sense of ourselves--individually and collectively--and making an honest decision based on the mirror provided us through the lens. I lost someone tragically whose spirit was not unlike Tim's and send my love and prayers to his family and friends, as well as his beloved partner Idil. This book is not only well worth the reading for the account it provides of a life lived extraordinarily, but for the collective mirror it provides us in asking ourselves who we are, and where we want to go with our life on this sacred planet.

RestrepoLong
Story Bit by Bit: Liberia Retold
Tim Hetherington: Infidel

Tim Hetherington was so much more than a war photographer. Tim had a good heart and a compassion often missing in those whose job it is to venture into danger and report. Sadly, Tim did not survive his final journey into war and the world has suffered much as a result of its loss. This great book chronicles Tim's life and serves as a great memorial to one who tried to be honest in telling the story of war. Tim's photos will survive. his great portraits of those ensnared in conflict will continue to provide pathos and inspiration. This book helps to establish the back story. It is a fine tribute to his memory and to our collective loss.

profound, inspiring, gripping tragic life and death of a most intriguing individual. a human being. a human doing. engrossed with the world at a deep personal level, this man managed to touch each person he met and leave them with a distinct impression. 'tim was here'.grappling with the symbiotic nature of photojournalism and war, he just kept going into the 'lion's den'. sometimes capturing the most intimate of scenes that become survivor's memories- the cause of that thousand yard stare.

Alan Huffman focuses on Tim Hetheringtons motivation and purpose in shooting conflicts, not on the perceived glamour and gung-ho of this dangerous occupation. Well written, thought provoking and insightful on why any sane person would enter armed conflict with nothing but imaging gear between himself and death.

Simple and honest. Tim will be missed.

What a remarkable man was Tim Hetherington. I admired his work from seeing Restrepo which he did with Sebastian Junger. Quite an enlightening and truthful movie. I think journalists like he was are heroic and very much appreciate them sharing the truth of things with us. I have his book "Infidel" also and it is a keeper. So sorry he met his end the way he did but he was doing what he loved. So glad for this book which tells about him as a man. Aloha.

The story of an amazing reporter/photographer that makes you feel you are right there. Tim Hetherington led an exciting life that was tragically cut short by the nature of his work. A combat photographer who tried to see the human aspect of the wars he covered.

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