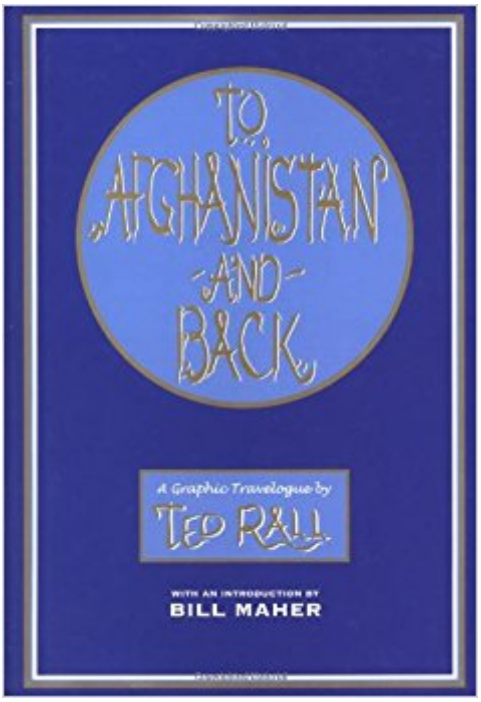
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To Afghanistan And Back: A Graphic Travelougue



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Synopsis

Introduction by Bill Maher. When U.S. bombs started raining on the Taliban, Rall jumped on a plane straight to the war zone to get the real story for himself. Featuring his Village Voice articles and a graphic novel.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Rall (2024) is a talented comics artist and a contrarian journalist who has challenged what he perceives to be sacred cows by calling Pulitzer Prize-winning comics artist Art Spiegelman overrated and labeling some September 11 widows as golddiggers. This book records his experiences during a trip to Afghanistan during the U.S. bombing. It includes prose columns Rall wrote for the Village Voice and a graphic novel that captures his talent for smart, ironically comic observation even in hellishly dangerous circumstances. A longtime visitor to and commentator on Central Asia, Rall knows his way around war-torn nations. He journeys by convoy with about 45 journalists, separating himself from them by his determination to travel simply and cheaply. And what a trip: eight journalists are killed by the time he reaches eastern Afghanistan. He must deal with finding a warm place to sleep, keeping his phone charged ($40 a day) and the constant worry of being killed by Afghani soldiers or U.S. bombs. Rall slams victory claims in a war in which adversaries simply change sides when they lose. He suffers a procession of Afghanis out to hustle him for money and lampoons the media for covering the conflict as if it were another celebrity murder trial. But Rall’s claims about clueless media reporting aren’t fully true (there were regular

U.S. press accounts of both civilian casualties and violent ground conditions), and his diatribes about U.S. military action suggest that, to be valid, every war effort must be perfectly executed. Nevertheless, his book joins Joe Sacco’s accounts of life in Palestine and Bosnia as a tremendous contribution to comics war journalism.Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

Adult/High School-For those who have come to the realization that learning about Afghanistan, the "war on terrorism," and Islam is of paramount importance but who have little inclination to turn to the many weighty tomes on these subjects, Rall’s "graphic travelogue" just may start them on their way. The author, a journalist who spent time in Afghanistan during the U.S.’s military strikes, fascinates and appalls with this undiluted account. He spent three weeks in a "14th-century" country with only five paved roads, where sleeping in unheated rooms with fleas and scorpions were the norm, and where both 11-year-old soldiers and exploding grenades and bombs were commonplace. He describes corruption and treachery, violence, and death; he records the murder of a journalist "killed for his money" the same night he barely escaped a similar fate. By turns cynical, angry, and ironic, Rall’s slim record reminds readers of the difficulties-and danger-of culture clash and points out the "Escheresque conundrum" facing the United States as a result of 9/11. His views run counter to current, uncritical jingoism, yet for that reason are noteworthy and valuable. With introductory chapters on Afghanistan, 9/11, and the military campaign; a graphic center section; and a post-mortem, this essay/editorial/illustrated travelogue will challenge readers, provoke many thoughtful discussions, and kindle interest in a people and place.Dori DeSpain, Fairfax County Public Library, VACopyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Ted Rall is one of the last of a dying breed: a journalist/political cartoonist who does not just repost corporate or government press clippings. Sane people ’go along to get along’, and in this tough job market we must expect that someone willing to get blacklisted by the big media outlets in the name of truth should be a little, well, driven (or perhaps, even, crazy). Too bad. If you want smooth and polite oligarch-approved pablum go elsewhere, if you want the real story go here. Rall goes to Afghanistan, and instead of being embedded with the regular military he lives in ordinary peoples’ houses out in the villages (on second thought forget the ’perhaps’: he IS crazy). What results is a bit jumbled, I would have liked a longer book with more details. The cartoon maps didn’t do it for me: I could have used some better maps and pictures so I had a better idea of where all this was happening. But still. A powerful and compelling look not just into the stupidest and most corrupt thing that the United States has ever done (and that includes Disco), but a look into a very different

society: it’s where the West used to be about 600 years ago. And if we don’t start giving people like Rall more respect, it’s where we are going back - and the return journey won’t take a fraction of that time.

These two books by Ted Rall will give you a powerful insight of what is Afghanistan and how America is really screwing up. 1). To Afghanistan and Back: A Graphic Travelogue 2). After We Kill You, We Will Welcome You Back as Honored Guests: Unembedded in Afghanistan

Rall is at his best here - channeling Hunter Thompson. Ted Rall’s irreverent black humor comic about the Third Afgan War is still relevant (and funny/sad) over ten years after 9-11. The sarcasm is dripping in these concise, outrageous illustrations summarizing how Rall experienced the start of the war in 2001. And in 2012 the violence, tribalism, and lawlessness continues.Evan Tick CITI

Wish we had had this before we invaded! Hard hitting, humorous, and so true!

If you want to get a grasp about what Afghanistan is really about you need to read this book.

First-hand reporting on the feelings of the various combatants in Afghanistan. Thoroughly enjoyable. Not for those who believe the U.S. is always saintly in foreign policy.

I liked this book alot. But, the truth is that Ted could have made this book much much better, simply by organizing it better. First things first, while it possibly looked interesting to the editors, I found it disjointing how the book was a little bit book, then a little bit comic then a little bit book again. Creative? yes, Functional? No. I’d stick the whole editorial "book" as a second chapter or as an Appendix. They’re interesting on their own, but not when I’m in the middle of a quick moving comic. Besides which, the "book" part went over the same events in the comic. Also, I had to kick myself when I found that 20 pages into the comic, the comic finishes. Oh man, I needed at least 60 pages to get some satisfaction...what are you going to do, the dude came home. Lastly, some of his "facts" weren’t facts, or I’m an idiot reading all the wrong sources. I dont think Ted does it on purpose, but he does state stuff that I haven’t found true....ie. "French reporter gang raped by the Taliban" All in all, I enjoyed it, definatly worth the time he put into it.

In this book, Rall chronicles his trip to Afghanistan that starts shortly after the U.S. begins bombing

it. Rall has pretty in-depth knowledge of Afghanistan, Pakistan, Uzbekistan and other neighboring countries, their customs, languages and other things.Afghanistan is basically like any other country - rapists in the middle of the street, 15 year olds standing on roof tops with guns, bombs dropping from the sky, horribly hot or cold weather, panhandlers, kill anyone you feel like there is no law, Middle Ages lifestyle.. you know the normal :) (as you can tell i'm being sarcastic about Afghanistan being normal)Actually I was really surprised about how Afghanistan was described. Our media, which I followed non-stop from October 2001 and on, described everything very differently. "Everything is wonderful" or "Great progress is being made" they said. I don't understand how some journalists can actually go to Afghanistan, see what is going on and still not do critical reporting.Rall's experiences ranged from: possibly being killed, to not knowing who to trust. In Afghanistan - Taliban fighters getting a shave and turn into Northern Alliance members. Pornography, alcohol and opium are rampant. It is chaos and a mess. People are walking around and they step on a land mine and they are blown to smithereens. If you want to get anywhere you have to pay starving and dirt poor Afghans a ton of money for help and transportation. A British BBC reporter's skin gets ripped!! From some maniac Taliban members.After all this death and despair, you may be wondering what solution Rall comes up with. Well it is neither the left or right solution - it is basically to leave Afghanistan and let them take care of themselves. After the Soviet invasion, Northern Alliance feuds, Taliban and U.S. bombings, maybe Rall has a good point.Even after his near death experiences, horrible rashes and other problems, Rall says in the beginning of his book: my friends said don't go to Afghanistan and I answered by saying "there are millions of people who live there everyday, i'm only going to be there for a couple of weeks. Please think about them when you read this book."

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