



# **Fields of Combat: Understanding PTSD Among Veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan (Culture and Politics of Health Care Work)**

*Erin P. Finley*

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For many of the 1.6 million U.S. service members who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan since 2001, the trip home is only the beginning of a longer journey. Many undergo an awkward period of readjustment to civilian life after long deployments. Some veterans may find themselves drinking too much, unable to sleep or waking from unspeakable dreams, lashing out at friends and loved ones. Over time, some will struggle so profoundly that they eventually are diagnosed with post-traumatic stress Disorder (PTSD). Both heartbreaking and hopeful, *Fields of Combat* tells the story of how American veterans and their families navigate the return home. Following a group of veterans and their their personal stories of war, trauma, and recovery, Erin P. Finley illustrates the devastating impact PTSD can have on veterans and their families. Finley sensitively explores issues of substance abuse, failed relationships, domestic violence, and even suicide and also challenges popular ideas of PTSD as incurable and permanently debilitating. Drawing on rich, often searing ethnographic material, Finley examines the cultural, political, and historical influences that shape individual experiences of PTSD and how its sufferers are perceived by the military, medical personnel, and society at large.

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