



A Carrier at War: On Board the USS *Kitty Hawk* in the Iraq War

By Richard F. Miller

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What distinguishes Richard F. Miller's *A Carrier at War* is its focus on individual officers and sailors and shipboard morale as distinct from the usual "bomb and bullet" reporting. The USS *Kitty Hawk's* mission paralleled the tortuous course of events leading up to the Iraq War. Originally stationed in the northern Persian Gulf to enforce the Southern No-Fly Zone, the *Kitty Hawk* became one of the lead elements in the campaign to "shock and awe" the Iraqi armed forces, from the moment her battle group launched twelve of some forty Tomahawk cruise missiles in the first effort to kill Saddam Hussein to the round-the-clock sorties of fighter jets launched from her deck once hostilities began. The author, who was present before, during, and after the beginning of the war, interviewed the ship's captain, chaplains, aviators, the ship psychologist, doctors, the dentist, and the chief of security. He visited the brig, interviewed the jailors, ate with both officers and enlisted men and women, and, on the brink of war, attended both Christian and Jewish religious services. Perhaps of greatest importance, owing to his cigar habit, he spent many hours in the one place on board where the real face of life at sea can be observed—the enlisted personnel's smoking sponson. Here the crew relaxed and proved honest enough to enable the author to make his most surprising discoveries about the modern military.

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Editorial Review

Review

"The author of *A Carrier at War* is an accomplished storyteller with a keen eye for the telling detail and interesting anecdote. He quickly befriended officer and enlisted people alike and had a front row seat for the action as USS *Kitty Hawk* played its part in the Iraq War. Those who have served at sea will be reminded of feelings long forgotten; those who have not will feel that they were there, as well. The book will interest a wide lay audience and will also give students of civil-military relations some extraordinary insights into life in the Navy."—Capt. John Allen Williams, USNR (Ret.); professor of political science, Loyola University Chicago; chair and president, Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society (Capt. John Allen Williams, USNR (Ret.))

"*A Carrier at War* provides the unique perspective of a Civil War historian on naval aviation's role in Operation Iraqi Freedom: twenty-first-century technology and the aviators and sailors who make it work 24/7. The differences between the two eras are obvious, but the similarities are well and engagingly told. Miller's book is likely to be discussed for years to come."—Barrett Tillman, aviation historian and author of *Clash of the Carriers: The True Story of the Marianas Turkey Shoot of World War II* (Barrett Tillman)

"Unlike most embedded reporters covering the Iraq War, Richard F. Miller went aboard *Kitty Hawk* armed with a background as a military historian. The resulting book provides an engaging and penetrating look into the soul of a fighting warship--the men and women of her crew--and represents a voyage of discovery for a student of the Civil War seeking to understand the war-fighters of the modern age."—M. Hill Goodspeed, historian, National Museum of Naval Aviation (M. Hill Goodspeed)

"Well-written . . . As befits an historian who has focused on the common soldier and his world, Miller's account is particularly strong on people, from an admiral or two down to the youngest sailors on their first sea tours."—*NYMAS Review* (*NYMAS Review*)

"This is a very well-written and engaging book. Highly recommended."—*Naval Review* (*Naval Review* 2007-08-27)

"The author has drawn upon his attention to detail and his ability to make others feel at ease with him and produced a captivating personality study of those who live within the cramped and limiting quarters of a 'bird farm'. The book will retrieve some long-lost images for those who have experienced shipboard life in years long past, and bring the true landlubbers a bit closer to its reality."—*Armada International* (*Armada International*)

From the Publisher

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"Miller is an accomplished storyteller with a keen eye for the telling detail and interesting anecdote." —

Capt. John Allen Williams, USNR (Ret.), professor of political science, Loyola University Chicago

About the Author

Richard F. Miller is a retired investment banker, an historian of the American Civil War, and a consultant to Talk Radio News Service. He is a co-author of *The Civil War: The Nantucket Experience*. He is a graduate of Harvard College and Case Western Reserve University School of Law. Miller is a fellow of the Massachusetts Historical Society and lives in Concord, Massachusetts.

Users Review

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Jackie Gonzalez:

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