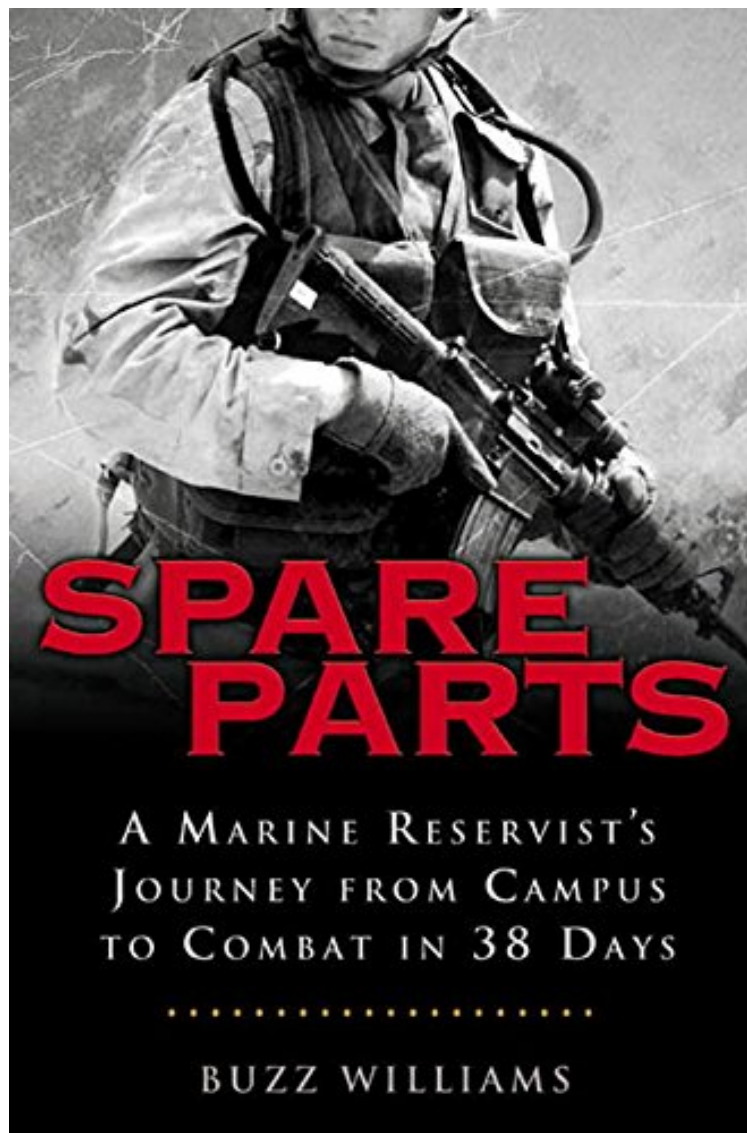


(Read free) Spare Parts: From Campus to Combat: A Marine Reservist's Journey from Campus to Combat in 38 Days

Spare Parts: From Campus to Combat: A Marine Reservist's Journey from Campus to Combat in 38 Days

Von Buzz Williams

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Von Buzz Williams : Spare Parts: From Campus to Combat: A Marine Reservist's Journey from Campus to Combat in 38 Days before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Spare Parts: From Campus to Combat: A Marine Reservist's Journey from Campus to Combat in 38 Days:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Faithful strugglesVon FrKurt MessickI was intrigued by Williams' book on several levels - it appealed to me because of my general interest in things historical and military; it was timely, given that the Gulf War II is in many ways a continuation of Gulf War I; it was also written by someone who is currently a teacher; finally, it gets into an arena that I could look at and say, "That was almost me!" I seriously contemplated the military for a time while in college as a reservist (one weekend a month and two weeks in the summer, and I'd get experience and scholarship money for college) - had I followed that path, it would have been something akin to the call of the yellow footprints. Williams talks about 'the call of the yellow footprints' in his own life. In a physical sense, this refers to the painted formation figures on the street of Parris Island, South Carolina, home of the Marine Corps Recruit Depot for the eastern United States. Men (and women, at Parris Island) are scrambled off the bus upon their first arrival and receive their first true 'Marine' experience by being lined up in formation on top of the yellow footprints, and from that moment until the end of boot camp, there is nothing that they do (or is done to them) that is not heavy-laden with Marine Corps training principles. The call of the yellow footprints is a call to a way of life, a way deliberately different from civilian life, as well as different from even the other branches of the military. His own primary influence of going into the Marine Corps was most likely his much-admired older brother, who was a Marine, killed rather young in an accident. Williams takes the narrative through his early influence of deciding upon the Corps (including his brother's influence, both in person and through letters Williams saved and treasured), through his boot camp experience, reservist weekends and MOS training, activation as active-duty Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm participant, and finally reintegration into the civilian world. While most people will probably read this book for the boot camp and the deployment/combat stories, it is actually the final part of the book that is most profound. In this part, Williams has returned to being a 'weekend warrior', someone whose Marine Corps existence is only officially present two days per month; yet he is a veteran of the Gulf War, having experienced all the terrors and struggles of combat, including losing friends to injury and death, finding a blurry line between allies and enemies, and seeing first-hand the atrocities of war and occupation. How does a combat veteran revert back to the amateur hour that made up reserve duty? Perhaps more importantly, how does a combat veteran with ongoing military obligations re-enter society? Williams is painfully honest about the nightmares and post-traumatic stress he endured, as well as the problems of personality adjustment. 'Emotions like embarrassment, grief, sadness, and vulnerability are all converted into anger - the omniemotion that helps recruits survive.' Williams, in pursuing his education beyond the bachelor's degree to get a counseling credential, discovered that he had not-always-latent Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder - not necessarily a bad thing in the Marine Corps. Williams channeled both his Marine Corps experience and his OCD into working with special needs children (autistic, etc.), who needed high structure and discipline. He turned his physical education class at the school into a voluntary boot camp, and the kids thrived on the structure and reveled in the imagery. Williams adapted this programme, which ended up being so successful in the class parts were adapted for the rest of the school, into a full-fledged Young Marines programme, for which he was named National Teacher of the Year. Kids previously unreachable and unmanageable were learning internal discipline, and thrived on the attention given to them to motivate them to always do their best. Williams suffered from post-traumatic stress syndrome, like many veterans of many wars. Williams viewed this as weakness in some respects (as indeed many, military and non-military, tend to do), but also wanted to maintain his connection to the Corps; his teaching style and Young Marine Corps programmes were keeping him from making a closure he desperately needed. While post-traumatic stress never completely goes away, it can be better managed. Williams writes about the countless nights filled with terrifying nightmares, and his own vigils of watching war movies and crying into the night at the images that caused him to relive his own bad experiences. Williams' final break with the special-needs school is part of his process of disengagement; one gets the feeling that Williams' process of writing this book is also part of this process, perhaps a cathartic exercise designed to help name and lay to rest at least some of the inner demons. The title, 'Spare Parts', comes from the derisive name active-duty (full-time) Marines would use toward reservists; it is a rather unfair moniker in several respects, not the least of which being the strange policy of the U.S. military to activate and deploy reservists, those one would think lesser trained than the active-duty forces, to forward and combat positions before the active-duty troops. This seems to be happening in today's combat situation, too. This is an interesting look into the soul of someone trained for fighting, yet really in search of peace; someone still struggling to make the world a better place in an admirable profession, drawing from the strong values of his training and identity as Marine, while honestly confronting the down-side. Williams is a good writer, and he pulls you along as relentlessly as the Green Machine will do. He writes about his own, personal issues with the current Iraqi conflict, not in terms of politics and economics, but in intensely personal ways that are worth reading.

KurzbeschreibungA compelling look into the world of reservists--more than just the "spare parts" of our nation's military--as seen through one man's transformation from weekend warrior to combat marine. In 1989, Buzz Williams walked into a marine recruiting office to follow in the footsteps of the deceased older brother he grew up idolizing by

signing up to join the Marine Reserves. Over the course of the next year, he would earn money to pay his college tuition by devoting one weekend a month and two full weeks in the summer to the grueling and often dangerous rigors of military training, while enduring the jarring readjustment that occurred each time he returned to civilian life. But Williams had no idea that even the newest reservists could find themselves on the frontlines of a battlefield in a matter of weeks. On August 2, 1990--the day that he graduated from Light Armored Vehicle School--Saddam Hussein's forces invaded Kuwait, and Williams' life would change forever. *Spare Parts* tells the story of Williams' harrowing deployment to the Persian Gulf, where he would be thrust into battle only 38 days after being called up. Enduring both the condescension of full-time Marines and the danger of his limited training, he managed to form a core group that struggles to gain respect from a military machine that viewed them as mere "spare parts." In gripping, you-are-there detail, Williams brings to life the physical and emotional trials he would face on the killing fields of Kuwait--where some of the woefully underprepared Marines are able to rise to the challenge and others are broken by the horrors of battle. A powerful portrait of one man's experience in battle--and of the reservists who stand ready to leave civilian life to defend our nation at a moment's notice--*Spare Parts* adds a moving new perspective to the literature of war.

deLong the stuff of historical, literary, and cinematic legend, the United States Marine Corps maintains arguably the most fervent cult of devotion of any branch of the Armed Services. Yet despite the colorful Corps traditions and clichés that have long since become a part of American culture, the crucial human dimensions of what drives a man to become a Marine have remained largely unexplored. Buzz Williams bravely stakes out his turf in this insightful memoir of his years as a Marine reservist and tour of duty in the first Gulf War of 1991. Inspired by the USMC service of an older brother who died a tragic, early death, Williams' initial attraction to the Corps is almost cult-like in its intensity (his adopted nickname stems from the close-cropped military haircut he'd worn since childhood). As a way to balance his drive for service with the desire for a college education, Williams joined the USMC Reserves, and quickly found himself a second-class citizen in his cherished institution--when the Marines' "Green Machine" breaks down, they call for "Spare Parts," the Corps' derogatory term for reservists. But, when Iraq invaded Kuwait on the eve of his graduation from armor training at Camp Pendleton, new warrior Williams quickly found himself headed inexorably towards desert warfare in which American forces were often their own worst enemy. What is striking about Williams' tale is its attentive, persistent psychoanalyses of both his fellow warriors and himself--an examination that finds many a conflicted hero with feet of clay. His unflinching observations about a venerable institution hobbled by bureaucracy, recruitment compromises, woefully inadequate training, and a chronic shortage of supplies seem especially timely in light of the contemporary military quagmire in Iraq. Yet through all his doubts and travails, Williams' dedication to the Corps emerges stubbornly *Semper Fi*. --Jerry McCulley.com

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