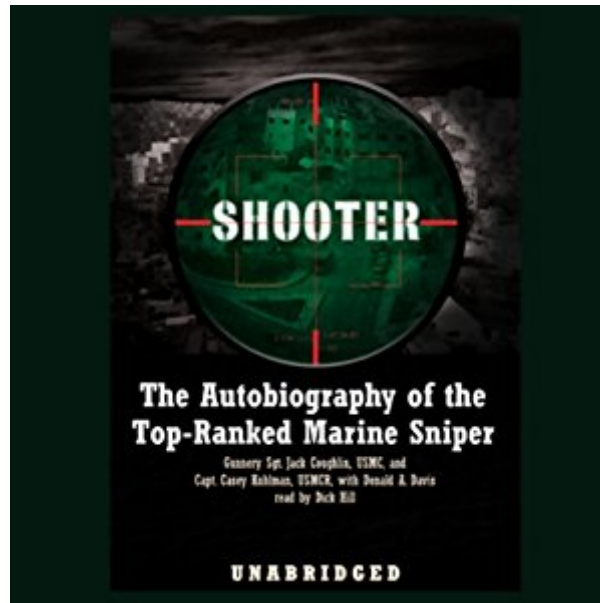


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Shooter: The Autobiography Of The Top-Ranked Marine Sniper



Synopsis

With more than 60 confirmed kills, Jack Coughlin is the Marine Corps' top-ranked sniper. Shooter is his harrowing first-person account of a sniper's life on and off the modern battlefield. Gunnery Sergeant Jack Coughlin is a divorced father of two who grew up in a wealthy Boston suburb. At the age of 19, although he had never even held a gun, he joined the Marines and would spend the next 20 years behind the scope of a long-range precision rifle as a sniper. In that time, he accumulated one of the most successful sniper records in the Corps, ranging through many of the world's hotspots. During Operation Iraqi Freedom alone, he recorded at least 36 kills, 13 of them in a single 24-hour period. Now Coughlin has written a highly personal story about his deadly craft, taking readers deep inside an invisible society that is off-limits to outsiders. This is not a heroic battlefield memoir but the careful study of an exceptional man who must keep his sanity while carrying forward one of the deadliest legacies in the U.S. military today.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

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Customer Reviews

Let's face it -- there are great authors and there are great warriors, but great author-warriors are few and far between. "Shooter" proves this point, even when the warrior has an author helping him to write the book. "Shooter" is about Gunnery Sergeant Jack Coughlin, a USMC sniper. That he is one of the best there is no doubt. Although his career spans further, we see Coughlin in Somalia and Iraq, not really stopping anywhere else in between (which is too bad). Nevertheless, Coughlin comes across as the outstanding Marine that he is, and the reader will agree with the assessment of

one of Coughlin's superior officers who states, "I'm just glad [Coughlin's] on our side." "Shooter", however, gets mixed up on what it wants to be: an insightful, introspective look into the mind of a man who is, after all, a professional killer (among other things) or a look at the life of a Marine specialist on the front lines. In the end, Shooter fails to deliver enough of either, and that is disappointing. With regard to the "insight" part of the book, Coughlin dutifully tell us that he holds no illusions about what his job is and what that means, how he never feels good taking human life, and how sometimes his targets show up in his dreams. On the other hand, he spends an incredible amount of time in the book complaining about how he is being left behind from the action in Iraq, which is essentially him complaining about not having enough opportunities to go out and kill people. Coughlin doesn't go into enough detail about how his job affects him personally for the reader to really care about how the job might affect him personally. For example, Coughlin experiences marital troubles that are all too common in military families.

Make no mistake, I have great respect for Coughlin and his 20 years of service to Corps and country. I am a former Marine. I served with Hotel Company 2nd BN 5th Marines in Viet Nam, mainly in the Arizona Territory, Go Noi Island, and into the Que Son mountains around An Hoa. I bought this book with anticipation of an honest, no nonsense account of the opening of the Iraq war from the perspective of a senior enlisted Marine. Sadly, it was supremely disappointing on many levels. One should not automatically assume that having a story to tell makes you a writer. Like every other craft (including that of a sniper) it takes training, experience, and time to develop. Clearly, Mr. Coughlin is not a writer. His style was amateurish, his use of language unnatural, and the overall focus misplaced. For this I also fault the editors and any others I assume were supporting his work. There is no mistaking that Mr. Coughlin thinks a lot of himself. After all, he single handedly saved "The Main" by killing one Iraqi machine gunner. He singlehandedly changed Marine Corp doctrine with his 'mobile sniper concepts'. (Perhaps he was not aware that Marine snipers ARE mobile and have been for some time. Helicopter insertions of snipers occurred regularly in Viet Nam. He should read Hathcock's book.) After the first chapter I was bored and put off at how often he patted himself on the back. Who identified him as the Top Rated Sniper? He never explained (although he never let you forget!) Every Marine is a rifleman. A sniper is a highly trained rifleman. They performed a specialized task. However, if body count is the measure, then I fully believe that the average grunt Marine during the same period of time in that conflict had a higher 'count' than him.

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