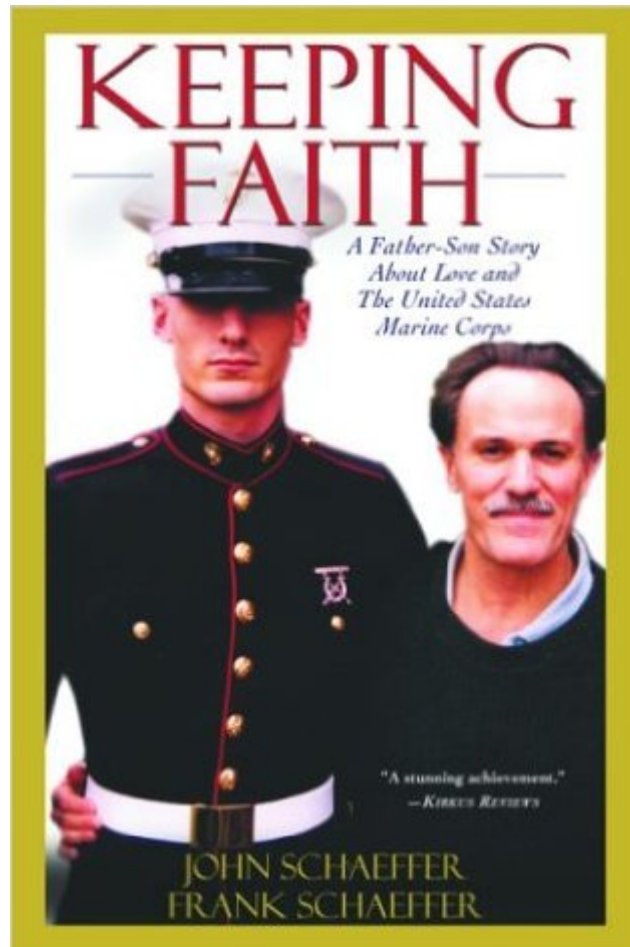


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Keeping Faith: A Father-Son Story About Love And The United States Marine Corps



Synopsis

In 1998, Frank Schaeffer was a bohemian novelist living in "Volvo driving, higher-education worshipping" Massachusetts with two children graduated from top universities. Then his youngest child, straight out of high school, joined the United States Marine Corps. Written in alternating voices by eighteen-year-old John and his father, Frank, *Keeping Faith* takes readers in riveting fashion through a family's experience of the Marine Corps: from being broken down and built back up on Parris Island (and being the parent of a child undergoing that experience), to the growth of both father and son and their separate reevaluations of what it means to serve. From Frank's realization that among his fellow soccer dads "the very words 'boot camp' were pejorative, conjuring up 'troubled youths at risk'" ("But aren't they all terribly southern?" asked one parent") to John's learning that "the Marine next to you is more important than you are," *Keeping Faith* is a New York Times bestseller; is a fascinating and personal examination of issues of class, duty, and patriotism. The fact that John is currently serving in the Middle East only adds to the impact of this wonderfully written, timely, and moving human interest story.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book covers a cross section of subjects. While I think the father intended it's focus to be about his relationship with his son, the son's in-depth narrative of boot camp and his transformation into a Marine were much more touching to me. As to the father-son relationship, this is the tale of a loving father who is losing his son as he grows to a man. And this really starts before he enters the Marines as he becomes more attached to a girl of whom the father does not approve...When the

son John enters boot camp, the real excitement starts as you live through the experience with him. The brainwashing of these recruits seems extreme until you watch these recruits grow into the type Marines the DIs wanted. I'm not sure I could survive the mental and physical effects of boot camp and anyone who has passed boot camp is to be commended. It's interesting to watch these guys struggle the last few weeks with injuries that should be treated but would only delay the recruit's training. After boot camp, the book then shows the negative of the military. This motivated recruit is sent for Morse Code training for 4 months only to be sidelined for over a year, as his security clearance has not been processed in Washington. What a waste of taxpayer money and young people's lives. But even this demeaning treatment does not shake the extreme pride in the Corp. Probably the most important lesson of this book is how a son from an upper-middle class family chooses a career in the Marines while suffering the ridicule of the liberal friends of his parents and how his father's attitude changes about this. I felt this could have been covered in more depth.

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