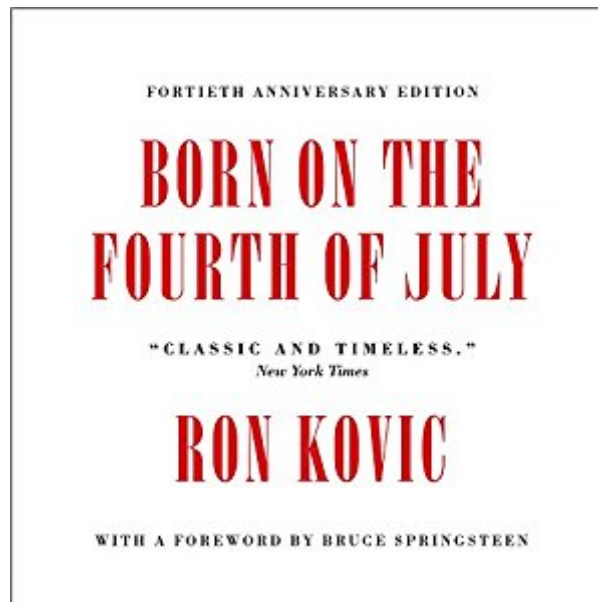


The book was found

Born On The Fourth Of July



Synopsis

Kovic's powerful and moving New York Times best-selling book, now with a new introduction that sets this classic antiwar story in a contemporary context. This New York Times best seller (more than one million copies sold) details the author's life story (portrayed by Tom Cruise in the Oliver Stone film version) - from a patriotic soldier in Vietnam, to his severe battlefield injury, to his role as the country's most outspoken anti-Vietnam War advocate, spreading his message from his wheelchair.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Sometimes people write their own stories and they make themselves out to be better people than they are. Better people than any of us are, really! Ron Kovic doesn't do that in his book. He shows himself as a regular, naive kid who goes to war because it looks so great in the movies, and because he wants to be a hero like the veterans who march in the parades each year on his birthday. And he makes mistakes in Vietnam, which he owns up to, and he shares how much they eat at him. And then when he is injured, he doesn't stoically talk about what he thinks WE will consider important. He spends a lot of time grieving his sex life, and his ability to have a relationship with a woman and father children. And then more about his sex life being over before it started. Which is probably what most 20 year old guys would really have at the top of their list most of the time. He tells some horror stories about the VA hospitals, which is sad because they're still in the

headlines to this day for shoddy practices. And he delves into his anti-war work. I took away a star because the book is so jarringly uneven. The narrative switches from 1st to 3rd person for no reason I could discern, sometimes changing more than once in a chapter. And it jumps around a lot, again not for any aesthetic reason. It almost seems like he typed the manuscript out and they published it with no editing. It would be wonderful to see a Special 50th Anniversary Edition (or whatever it would be) soon with a good bit of text revision just to clean it up, and then a few extra chapters detailing his peace efforts since the 70s. It's my understanding he's been busy this entire time, I bet he's got a lot of amazing insight to share! To sum up: Fascinating man, fascinating book, crummy editing, would love to read more!

When the movie with Tom Cruise first appeared, I was perhaps 8 or 9 years old. Being that young, I had no idea of the importance of the movie. I thought it was more comical when Tom Cruise was yelling, "Penis" in the house. I was more excited about the action sequences than what they really meant. Grown up now, and being the generation that goes to the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, I had a new look on the film. When Ron, who was played by Tom Cruise, was searching the village, I felt pain and panic. When he shot that other fellow soldier by accident, I felt a sadness. Even more so I felt extreme disgust and anger when Ron came back to a VA hospital that they could care less that he can't walk or that he's laying in his own waste. I think we were all blind once. You see on TV new gadgets and weapons that's suppose to make life easier for a fellow soldier. What they don't show you is what these weapons do to a actual person. Someone who is alive and thinking and breathing. These weapons are developed with the idea of spending millions of dollars to make sure that they hit the bad guys. Then you see the destruction it leaves behind with families torn apart, or children in pieces. And you wonder why? Even more surprising, they spend millions of dollars on these weapons of destruction, yet they don't spend a dime on healing the soldiers that used these weapons. The administration takes careful measure to make sure that you do not see the disabled. Even more so media only reports disabled people who have done well and can be shown in good light on tv with their families. You don't see the truly disabled, the ones that can't walk or talk or don't have a fully functional brain anymore. These people are carefully hidden away and dismissed as crazed lunatics. I think Ron has many valid points in his book. I felt Ron was correct in saying that we live in a nation that glorifies war but yet we don't want to live with the results or the consequences of those actions. Even more so, when we send thousands of troops oversea to an unknown land to fight something that isn't clear, then we really should ask ourselves what is going on. Whether there is an alternative? Or if it should even be discussed. I felt that Ron is right that we

as a nation tells "lies." I didn't grow up during Vietnam, but I did grow up in the 9-11 era. I felt that yes, we should get the people who did this to justice but I felt at the same time we're fighting a war that really accomplished nothing at all. I felt Ron's words were truer than ever when he says that the "lies" told here is that we should honor America by being a soldier and fight corruption but at the same time we have no honor in killing the wrong people, people who had nothing to do with it. I feel that sadly Ron's word will not hit people until it's too late. A generation of people fought Vietnam. They are now in their 60s and sad to say the lessons they learned is not passed down. I suppose we can't live in "peace" by ignoring bad people but the answer is not always to go after them. It's sort of like to protect your house from robbers, you should go invade and take over a bad part of the city killing anyone that dare looks like they could rob your house. Everyone knows this is untrue, yet that is essentially what we're doing. My recommendation is to read the book by Ron. I feel that it goes into a bit of detail better than the movie. Also the movie was a bit different but I think it captured the meaning of the book. I bought it on my kindle and felt it was a good short read but one that has a lot of meaning.

What an excellent book about one man's experience with the Vietnam War and his subsequent turn to anti-war protester. Horrifying as to what happened to Kovic (paralyzed from the waist down, can't go to the bathroom like a normal human being again, can't ever have sex again, stuck in a wheelchair and with the horrors of battle forever fresh in his mind) and even more horrifying the way he was treated by others later - and *not* by liberal hippies, either. By the cops, mostly, who disliked the fact that he'd "turned coat"...never mind that none of them had been in Nam. Anyone who thinks only peaceniks abused vets when they came home from the war can disabuse themselves of that notion with this book. It reminded me of the first Rambo movie, First Blood, in which Our Hero is also abused by cops rather than freaks and longhairs.

I got this because Ron Kovic was here to do a book signing. It was at a small local bookstore and there were maybe 15 people there. Many were Vietnam vets. Ron read several passages from different sections and answered questions for about an hour.. If you ever have a chance to meet or listen to him speak, don't miss it. His passion for his work - advocating for veterans - is pretty amazing. It flows from him as naturally as breathing. I've just started reading the book and so far it shows the same passion that he does. Some of it isn't easy to read but then we're talking about what was for some of the men there, a pretty horrible experience. So yes, buy it. And read it. And when you're done say thanks to Ron for writing it.

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