Flyboys is the true story of young American airmen who were shot down over Chichi Jima. Eight of these young men were captured by Japanese troops and taken prisoner. Another was rescued by an American submarine and went on to become president. The reality of what happened to the eight prisoners has remained a secret for almost 60 years. After the war, the American and Japanese governments conspired to cover up the shocking truth. Not even the families of the airmen were informed what had happened to their sons. It has remained a mystery—until now. Critics called James Bradley's last book the best book on battle ever written. Flyboys is even better: more ambitious, more powerful, and more moving. On the island of Chichi Jima those young men would face the ultimate test. Their story—a tale of courage and daring, of war and of death, of men and of hope—will make you proud, and it will break your heart.

I was disturbed after reading some of the other reviews that stated that James Bradley was accusing the brave men who he wrote about of being war criminals. This was not the case at all. He explains in depth the horrors of war and the atrocities committed by both the United States and the Japanese. He never places any blame on the pilots, but rather the generals and leaders who manipulated soldiers and pilots to do terrible things. This book is unsettling, and it is very graphic in describing war crimes, but that doesn't mean that the truth should remain buried. The greatest respect we can pay the men who died for our country is to ensure that they didn't die in vain. Remember that they died protecting our way of life, which includes freedom of speech, and to say that Bradley should have suppressed the truth is an insult to them. Just as it is important to remember our successes, it is important to warn future generations of our mistakes. This book does a superb job of both, and it reminds us that war brings out the worst in people, but also the best in people. It is a powerful book and I would recommend it to anyone mature enough to handle the material it details.

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