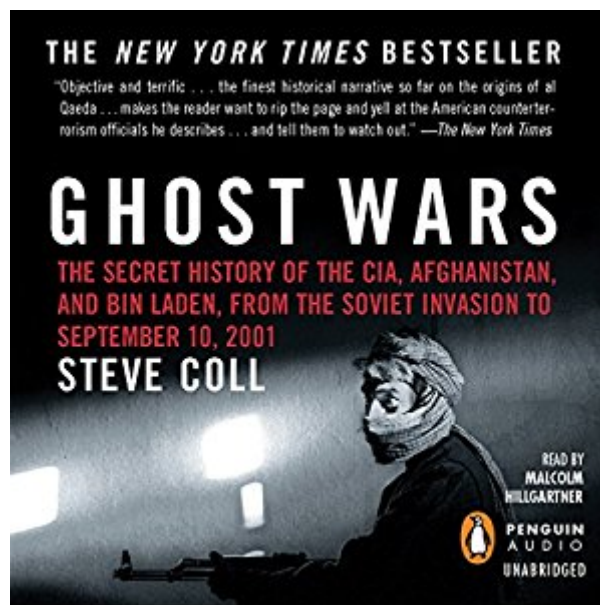




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# **Ghost Wars: The Secret History Of The CIA, Afghanistan, And Bin Laden, From The Soviet Invasion To September 10, 2001**



## Synopsis

Pulitzer Prize, General Nonfiction, 2005 The explosive first-hand account of America's secret history in Afghanistan. With the publication of *Ghost Wars*, Steve Coll became not only a Pulitzer Prize winner, but also the expert on the rise of the Taliban, the emergence of Bin Laden, and the secret efforts by CIA officers and their agents to capture or kill Bin Laden in Afghanistan after 1998.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

What comes through loud and clear in Coll's excellent history of the lead-up to America's involvement in Afghanistan after we covertly assisted in driving the Soviets out, is the duplicity of our "allies," both Saudi and Pakistani, and their tepid support for assisting us in finding and delivering up bin Laden. With reports of bin Laden's determination to strike American targets intensifying in urgency and validity, turf battles between the CIA and the State Department in formulating a coherent policy regarding whom to support, whom to believe and how to respond, are constantly clouded by misinformation coming from both the Pakistani and Saudi intelligence services. Coll does an excellent job setting out how disputes between government agencies in sharing and interpreting intelligence were key to the failure of either the Clinton or Bush administrations in formulating aggressive, consistent policies toward the growing bin Laden and Taliban threats. As Islamist fundamentalism, aided by infusions of bin Laden's money and the inflammatory anti-American rhetoric from Muslim clerics and madrassas across the border in Pakistan increased in intensity and fervor, the Clinton administration is embroiled in defending Clinton against impeachment following the Lewinsky affair. Efforts to impress upon the incoming Bush

administration the imminent prospects of an attack on American soil received little credence or urgent attention. Coll's depiction of the difficulties in simply coordinating meetings - sometimes taking as long as two months to bring parties in Washington together - to address these threats describes a government unable to "defend and protect" despite boasting the biggest and best-equipped military in the history of the world. Nine-eleven did not sneak up on us. It gave ample warning of its coming. Washington simply could not put the pieces of the puzzle together in time to prevent it. Filled with many difficult names (the list of Principal Characters at the front of the book got frequent consultation) and repetitive in places, Coll's book is worth the effort and helps to understand how the inconceivable happened on 9-11.

"Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001", by Steve Coll, is the hauntingly detailed and accurate description of the twenty year lead-up to the events of September 11, 2001. As the title describes, it details Soviet and United States involvement in Pakistan and Afghanistan; but it accounts for so much more than that. It highlights the rise of Bin Laden and Al Qaeda. It describes the ebbs and flows of CIA and Intelligence Community interest in Afghanistan and general terrorism issues. It especially details the failing of the United States intelligence community and various presidents to adequately understand and deal with the growing problems in Central and South Asia. This is a book to be read and studied thoroughly so that we do not repeat past mistakes. It can be read as companion to the 9/11 Commission Report. However, the details of 9/11 itself are not contained in this book, which ends on September 10, 2001. However, the reader gets a full understanding of the horrible plotting and failings that led up to that fateful day.

Why are we where we are with respect to the GWOT? Great book. Insightful and incredibly documented. One of my faves as it is real history.

A detailed account of what transpired prior to 9/11 in Afghanistan and Pakistan between the various intelligence agencies and militarily. Well-written and researched in painstaking detail, an excellent, and recommended read, particularly for those who wish to know and understand what transpired prior to today's conflicts and why.

Surprised the index, though fully listed, is unusable in Kindle format. No links, no page numbers. Makes the book a much less usable resource in electronic form. Any hope this will be remedied in

future?

Great memories of times gone past when I was a soldier over the past 33 years I served faithfully in a lot of these ops

If you have interest in covert operations and the intelligence agencies of the united States, this is an amazing book. Book came in the condition as promised.

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