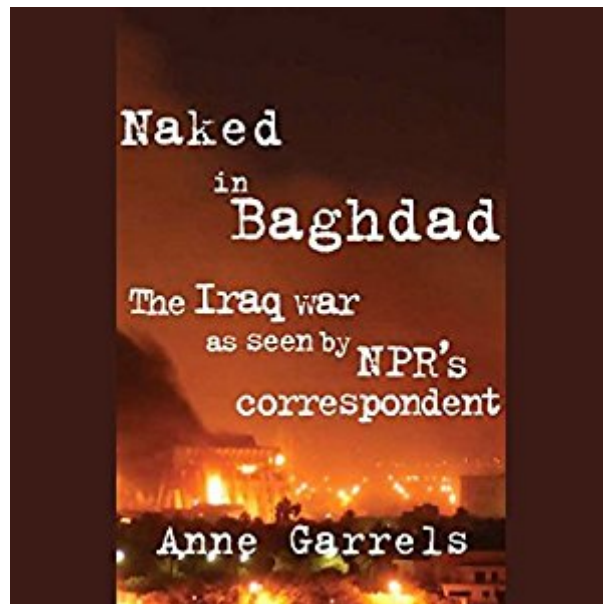


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# Naked In Baghdad: The Iraq War As Seen By National Public Radio's Correspondent



## Synopsis

As National Public Radio's much loved and respected senior foreign correspondent Anne Garrels has covered conflicts in Chechnya, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq. In *Naked in Baghdad* she reveals how as one of only sixteen non-embedded journalists who stayed in the now legendary Palestine Hotel throughout the American invasion she managed to deliver the most immediate, insightful and independent reports with unparalleled vividness and immediacy. Her evolving relationship with her Iraqi driver/minder Amer, and the wonderful e-mail bulletins sent to friends by her husband, Vint Lawrence, counterpoint the daily events of her life in Baghdad, and result in a deeply moving, and intimate portrait by one of bravest and most enlightening news reporters. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

What an excellent piece of journalism. While excited to read this book, admittedly, I did go into it knowing NPR's propensity to left leaning bias, but nonetheless assured that it was going to be very good. Which it was. Being admittedly sensitive to anti-Americanism, I was a little uncomfortable at first reading Annes reports of anti-US sentiment in the country but after being honest with myself realized that this is not liberal bias, just honest reporting of what the Iraqis feel. To be noted is the fact the Mrs. Garrels quotes many Iraqi's who are Pro-American. Having said all that, I believe that Anne Garrels honestly reports the general feeling of the Iraqi public without letting her own biases

get in the way. Evidence of Mrs. Garrels non-partial reporting can be found in her reporting and uncovering of the mis-information fed out by the Iraqi Ministry of Information. Reporters with an agenda could have very well taken some of the stories that Anne debunks and dishonestly used them to promote their views on the war. I found the last 1 1/2 pages of the book both interesting (in a socio-political way) and disheartening. While in Iraq, Mrs. Garrels seems to become quasi-Iraqi and successfully convey a brand of thinking outside the influence of American politics. However, once back in the USA, she again becomes American and instead of the profound questions she asks on page 190 ("Who are the Iraqi's? How did they get a Saddam? .. Where do they go from here?"), we are left with "Where are the W.M.D's? .. Could it be that Saddam was actually telling the truth..?". I feel that she did a great job of reporting just the facts for 217 pages, but then dropped the ball at the very end.

This brief (222 pages) diary covers October 2002 through April 2003, reported by National Public Radio's Anne Garrels, interspersed with e-mails from her husband, who sent updates on her whereabouts and actions to her friends around the world. Most of the action takes place in Baghdad. The run-up to the March war has Garrels struggling (without much success) to find reliable information and trusted assistants. Language is a huge barrier. Cultural differences are almost as big a barrier. Intrigue and torture by the government makes conclusions almost as unreliable as the raw data. Who can you believe? Did the interpreter interpret the story accurately? How filtered and restricted is her access to sources? Is the source who he says he is? After about four months of uncertainty, the war is over faster than anyone expected. After some short-term Baghdad belief that the Iraqis will hold, their defense folds like a shabby card table. The resulting chaos should not be surprising. The messages she hears and sees are often unclear, inconsistent and contradictory: Iraqis love Saddam, Iraqis hate Saddam; Americans are welcomed, Americans are despised; American bombs hit civilians, Iraqi defenses hit their own civilians; a wounded man is a civilian, the doctor says he is an officer lying to the reporter. It is impossible to decipher the truth. Even with all this technology, the fog of war is compounded to the bitter end by the cruel, petty banality of the Hussein regime. Straightforward stories get reversed and revised. Remember the idiotic information minister claiming that the Americans were not occupying the airport? Some lies become part of the history of the war. Late in her story, Garrels reports on the now debunked story of the looting of the national museum.

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