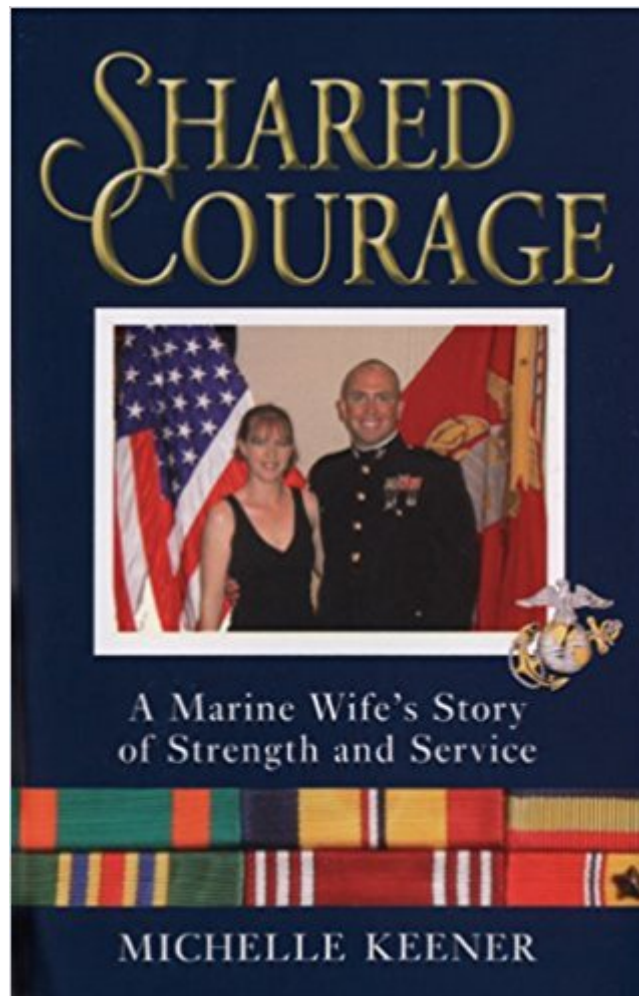




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# Shared Courage: A Marine Wife's Story Of Strength And Service



## Synopsis

Â Â Their husbands went to war in Iraq; they went to war in their living rooms and on their computer screens. *Shared Courage* is the story of Michelle Keener's experiences as the wife of a Marine officer with two deployments during Operation Iraqi Freedom. It provides a colorful, sometimes heartbreaking, and always inspiring account of how military life affected both one family and an entire community of Marine wives. From Keener's wedding and marriage, to her husband's assignment to 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines (the famous "McCoys Marines" who pulled down the statue of Saddam in Baghdad), and the birth of a daughter in the base hospital, Keener describes what it is like keeping a military family together before, during, and after deployment. She and other Marine wives faced the uncertainty of war; the media reports of the Marines advance on Fallujah in what would be one of the most harrowing battles of the war; the fear of not knowing whose husband would be coming home safely--and whose would not; the gut-wrenching knocks on the door with a Marine in his dress blues standing on the front step; the coming together in shared grief over the loss of a friend's husband; and eventually, the elation of having one's own husband return home safely. Through it all, the immediacy of the war - real-time media reports from embedded reporters, e-mails from their loved ones - is felt by the reader, and the community of strong women who faced the news of the war day by day and hour by hour is inspiring. With this book, Keener gives a voice to all military wives, a group who few people notice, who receive no medals, but were asked to sacrifice in countless ways.

## Customer Reviews

Front flap copy: Â Michelle Keener and her husband Paul left many things unspoken in the days leading up to his deployment in Iraq. He had written his will and had given her power of attorney; the thought of him being killed was on both their minds the night before he left. Michelle watched him carry their daughter Emily to her bedroom, wondering if these were perhaps the last few moments with his daughter on earth. The saddest thought of all: would their daughter even remember him and how much he loved her? Such scenes have been played out countless times in military families facing a spouse's long deployment overseas. It is never easy, but knowing there are others out there who face the same hardships and sacrifice, knowing you are not alone, makes it easier to cope. The coming together as one community, sharing the struggles, the pride, the grief, and the joy is what *Shared Courage* is all about. What if he dies? What if he's paralyzed? What if he comes home a changed man? Michelle Keener reveals how military spouses help each other cope through frustration, burnout, and exhaustion. She writes openly and honestly about struggling to stay

connected during a spouse's remote assignment or deployment, how when direct communication is all but impossible, care packages, photographs, children's drawings, a sample of his favorite flavored coffee, and even his favorite kind of Pop Tart do more than provide material comfort, but immeasurably build a spouse's morale by maintaining that special connection to home and family.

Shared Courage • This book is a must for anyone preparing to send a loved one to war, and a must for any commander leading Americans in harm's way. • from the foreword by Colonel Bryan McCoy, Commanding Officer of the 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment from May 2002 through July 2004 • War on the Homefront "a Story of Service and Strength The husbands went to war in Iraq; the wives went to war in their living rooms. Shared Courage tells of one woman's experience as the wife of a Marine officer serving during Operation Iraqi Freedom. A colorful, sometimes heartbreaking, always inspiring account of how the invasion and occupation of Iraq affected one Marine Corps family, it is also the story of an entire military community. From the first news that their men would be going to war, the wives of the 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment began to bond together. Little did they know how important this would prove to be in the days to come when overwhelming fear and loneliness threatened them at every turn. Marine wife Michelle Keener's personal story of keeping it together in the face of potentially overwhelming adversity makes for moving and inspiring reading.

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