Commandant’s Professional Reading List

- Why *My Men are My Heroes*? –

> “Demonstrate to the world there is "No Better Friend, No Worse Enemy" than a U.S. Marine.”

- General James N. Mattis’ words in a message to the 1st Marine Division in March 2003, on the eve of the Iraq War, as quoted in "Eve of Battle Speech" in *The Weekly Standard* (1 March 2003). This quote sets the tone for the Marines in Fallujah, and the story of 1stSgt Brad Kasal

*My Men Are My Heroes* is important to the USMC as whole because it tells the story of a significant battle, the Battle of Fallujah, and how all elements of a Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) came together to be victorious. It also tells a story of camaraderie, *esprit de corps*, teamwork, and the core values of honor, courage, and commitment engaged in a combat environment. First Sergeant Kasal’s story shows how he is one Marine, despite the environment or arena, continuously driven to set the example and looks out for the welfare of his Marines. This is a book for every Marine to read and analyze themselves in the same situations. It is a book that makes you want to evaluate yourself and see if you are exuding the highest of standards. This book could influence Marines to be better.

*My Men are My Heroes* is very important for all levels. It is important for junior Marines to understand their importance in the fight. It explains how teamwork and training are significant to winning wars. It is important for those NCO’s who are junior in leadership positions. It tells of their peers who had to make decisions and based those decisions off their training and experiences in order to accomplish the mission. It is important for SNCO’s because they can learn a great deal about leadership from this book. The example given in this book is how First Sergeant Kasal leads from the front and exuded all facets of leadership. Lastly, officers could learn a great deal from this book as well. The book speaks on decision points made by officers that can affect the battlefield. It also speaks on the relationship between officers and enlisted and how important that is to mission accomplishment.

Some of the things that should be thought of while reading *My Men are My Heroes* are leadership, understanding the combat environment, and why training is so important. Leadership is an enormous part of this book. It shows how First Sergeant Kasal led his Marines to the fight. It shows how he cared for his Marines but yet was firm and strict. Understanding the combat environment is another subject to be thought of while reading this book. There were many times in the book that understanding the combat environment helped to save lives of Marines and helped to accomplish the mission at hand. Lastly, training should also be thought of while reading this book. In this book, it explains how training ultimately led to the Marines getting out of the Battle of Fallujah.