

**Excerpts from ‘A Veteran’s War Movie Sheds Damning Light on How the Marines Fight in Afghanistan’ interview by Camille Baker, April 7 2019, <https://theintercept.com/2019/04/07/combat-obscura-afghanistan-war-documentary/>**

**In “Combat Obscura,” a new documentary set in Afghanistan, Marines don’t do what they normally do in American-made documentaries about war – they don’t echo narratives of God and country, kill bad guys, and win hearts and minds. In “Combat Obscura,” Marines shoot guns and patrol, but they also insult women, shake their weapons at children, die needlessly and with little dignity, murder innocent people and cover it up.**

**We want to give people the experience of the war, the uncertainty of it, and the paradoxes. And it’s sort of a meditation on what it’s like to be a soldier, how absurd this war is — there wasn’t even a definition of what the outcome was going to be, what winning would even look like, or anything, really. And just the waste of life.**

**Ultimately, you think of all the documentaries that have come out about Afghanistan or Iraq, they tend to show a lot of dead Iraqis, dead Taliban, dead Afghan women, children. It’s like there’s no problem to show that, but then when there’s a dead U.S. soldier, that’s off limits. We didn’t want to value one life over the other.**

**Maybe you’re thinking that the military’s this really organized body that keeps track of everything, and it’s**

**not. It's just as disorganized as any other business or bureaucracy or government institution.**

**While we were there, we created an almost uninhabitable environment for the Afghan civilians. Because before we were there, they were oppressed by the Taliban. While we were there, they were caught in the middle between two oppressive forces. And how many times did we bomb their houses? How many times did we mistakenly kill innocent people?**

**I want there to be some accountability. I don't want people just to look at the soldiers and Marines as hapless victims that were sent out there, and it was just the big politicians that are responsible. No. I think the soldiers are responsible, the politicians are responsible, but also the American people are complicit. Our tax money funded the war. It's not just the soldiers and the politicians. It's the everyday citizens. We're all responsible because we didn't really give a shit. We didn't notice it. We didn't pay attention.**