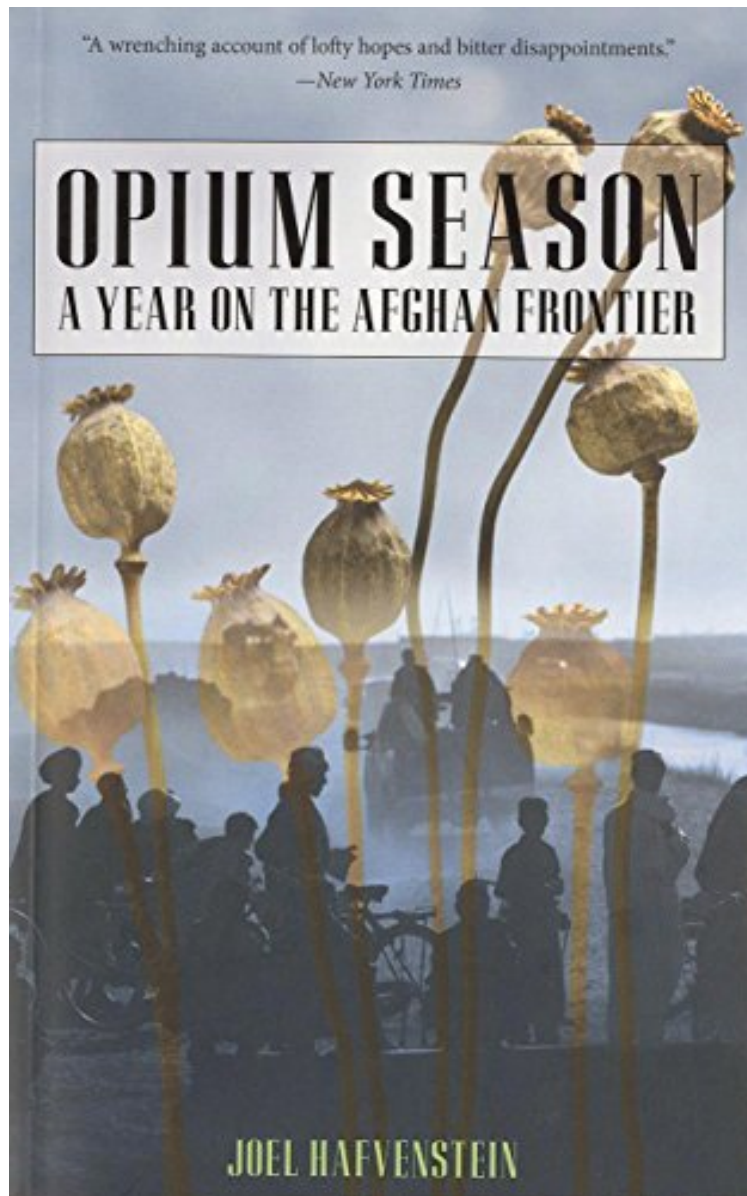


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Opium Season: A Year on the Afghan Frontier

Joel Hafvenstein

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Joel Hafvenstein : Opium Season: A Year on the Afghan Frontier before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Opium Season: A Year on the Afghan Frontier:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Joel Hafvenstein's Heaven and Hell By S. Robison Reading "Opium Season" for a class on drug policy, I was struck with the discrepancy inherent in living in Afghanistan at the period that Hafvenstein did. He details it, through this book, as a very happy period in his life with regard to the personal

connections he made. This I found to be true as a result of my travels around the region: personal relationships, friendships, are easy to forge. At the same time, Hafvenstein brings to the forefront the very big issues inherent in Afghanistan at that point in time. These issues are all too present today:-Opium funding Taliban insurgents-A lack of focus on development-Faulty security-Factionalized tribal structures that support the insurgencyIndeed, the biggest aspect I pulled from this book was that the real impediment to a police force in Afghanistan is the lack of a true, noncorrupt police force. Hafvenstein notes at one point in the book that his workers are unable to work on Alternative Livelihood Projects because their security is provided by tribal warlords that are, in turn, funding the opium trade they are trying to curb and the insurgents that fight them.All in all, this is a touching, heart-breaking firsthand account of one man's struggle in Afghanistan. It is a chilling insight into the problems the country faced and continues to face.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Excellent personal narrativeBy meI read this book last summer and immediately afterwards read "Three Cups of Tea" from Greg Mortenson.I have to say that I found Opium Season a much better book!The writing is well done and you really do feel that you are there in Afghanistan experiencing some of the same horrors that Mr. Hafvenstein saw in his year of working there. You also can feel a real comradery amongst the workers as they take care of each other...such as when he is told to leave for the evening so that the girlfriend doesn't have to get a message saying that he was killed since he needed to write some reports.I have given this book to many friends who are interested in hearing more about this country and how the US seems to hinder rather than help at times and it has always come back with favorable reviews from them. The only complaint from some is that it is a little "academic" at times.All in all--a great read though.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. It's a good read to say the leastBy EstalioI worked for this company and on successor projects in this region. The store is accurate from the author's perspective but may not be 100% factual to what actually outside the author's realm of information. It's a good read to say the least.

A young American working on the brutal fault line where the war on terror meets the war on drugs. Joel Hafvenstein signed up for a year in Afghanistan in the heart of the country's opium trade, running an American-funded aid program to help thousands of opium poppy farmers make a legal living, and to win hearts and minds away from the former Taliban government.

"A wrenching account of lofty hopes and bitter disappointments."--The New York Times