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## 'Kill Team' in Afghanistan Brings Shame to America

By Leslie Marshall

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After reading the eight page article “[The Kill Team](#)” in *Rolling Stone* and looking at the disgusting, albeit censored photos of these atrocities I hang my head in shame, with regards to some in our military, yet again.



In a break with protocol, the soldiers also took photographs of themselves celebrating their kill. In the photos, Morlock grins and gives a thumbs-up sign as he poses with Mudin's body. Note that the boy's right pinky finger appears to have been severed. Staff Sgt. Calvin Gibbs reportedly used a pair of razor-sharp medic's shears to cut off the finger, which he presented to Holmes as a trophy for killing his first Afghan.

I felt this way when the photos of Abu Ghraib and our soldiers in Iraq surfaced. I felt this way when five Army soldiers were charged and convicted of raping a 15-year-old Iraqi girl in front of her mother, father, and six year old sister; then killing her and her entire family and burned their home to the ground to hide the evidence of the crime. And years ago, when I was interviewing a Holocaust survivor who had written a self published book entitled *I Was There*, when she told me about the nice American soldier she met in Paris after the liberation of the camps who had raped her and who was also Jewish.

Now before you start saying Leslie, you're a liberal, you hate the military ... let me be clear. My father served in the Korean War as a member of the U.S. Navy. My uncle fought in Vietnam with the U.S. Air Force and my cousin did two tours during Operation Desert Storm as a U.S. Marine.

I know the military. I know the brave men and women who dare to fight for my and others' freedoms, who fight for my freedom as a woman in this country, for my rights, my First Amendment right especially which I use every day in my chosen profession. They're willing to risk and many times give their lives and their limbs in order that I don't have to.

But when I see these photos, and read this story--a story about a group of American soldiers in the Bravo Company in Afghanistan, who in their boredom and their hatred of Afghans decided to find a victim and kill him; who walked into a poor farming village, a village filled with men, women, and children who have no electricity or running water, rotting teeth, empty bellies, and tattered clothing. And from those people, they chose Gul Mudin as their victim. They spoke to him in his native tongue of Pashto, ordered him to come forward and stop, which he did. They hurled a grenade at him and then shot him multiple times. He was 15 years old. He was a child and our tax dollars paid for the bullets that pierced his flesh.

I have never understood man's hatred of man. Whether it be based on skin color, religion or ethnicity. I further don't understand how these few bad apples, these murdering psychopaths, can not only be allowed in our military, but are promoted and, obviously, given weapons. Is our military so desperate that they're recruiting those unfit for service? Does the military create these monsters training them to kill or be killed? No, for the vast majority of our military serve honorably and respect those they were sent to liberate and to protect. And why is it some can't see others as human unless they're white, American and Christian?

One of the most problematic things about this and the other heinous atrocities that have taken place at the hands of our own military is we have spent years rebuilding the Muslim and the Arab world's faith in us. We are in Afghanistan to protect the people against the Taliban, the insurgents, the terrorists. These photos show these military personnel have become terrorists themselves attacking innocent civilians and showing no remorse for their actions--quite the opposite, they show off their victim's photos and even body parts. (One of the soldiers who killed this 15-year-old boy carried his finger with him in a ziplock plastic bag.)

The people of Afghanistan need to see that democracy and peace are better. Instead, today all they see are demons in uniforms.