



Conversations with Major Dick Winters: Life Lessons from the Commander of the Band of Brothers

Cole C. Kingseed

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On the hellish battlefields of World War II Europe, Major Dick Winters led his Easy Company—the now-legendary Band of Brothers—from the confusion and chaos of the D-Day invasion to the final capture of Hitler’s Eagle’s Nest.

But Winters’s story didn’t end there. It was only the beginning.

He was a quiet, reluctant hero whose modesty and strength drew the admiration of not only his men, but millions worldwide. Now comes the story of Dick Winters in his last years as witnessed and experienced by his good friend, Cole C. Kingseed.

Kingseed shares the formative experiences that made Winters such an effective leader. He addresses Winters’s experiences and leadership during the war, his intense, unbreakable devotion to his men, his search for peace both without and within after the war, and how fame forced him to make adjustments to an international audience of well-wishers and admirers, even as he attempted to leave a lasting legacy before joining his fallen comrades. Following Winters’s death on January 2, 2011, the outpouring of grief and adulation for one of this nation’s preeminent leaders of character, courage, and competence shows just how much of an impact Dick Winters left on the world.

This is a story of leadership, fame, and friendship, and the journey of one man’s struggle to find the peace that he promised himself if he survived World War II.

Conversations with Major Dick Winters: Life Lessons from the Commander of the Band of Brothers Details

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Frank says

The only difficulty I had was with Kingseed's to often repeated praise of his friendship with Major Winters, which does not detract enough from this excellent job by Cole Kingseed to slight it.

I highly recommend it.

Darren Sapp says

Band of Brother's fans will love this deeper dive into Winter's life post-war as well as his thoughts on courage, fame, etc.

Hannah says

First time I've ever given a Band of Brothers book less than five stars..*sigh*

It wasn't anything to do with Major Winters, it's just that Mr. Kingseed personally got on my nerves a bit. And what he told his wife about her not being his best friend, but his best female friend annoyed me. I don't know Mr. Kingseed and I'm not judging him, or trying to, but that just didn't seem fair to his wife. That one little reason is not why I didn't like this book that well. For one thing, it didn't have a lot of dialogue from Major Winters in it. It was more about the friendship that Mr. Kingseed had with him.

A disappointing book.

Tim says

If anything, this was more about the author's friendship (read: obsession) with Major Dick Winters during his final years. Kingseed repeats himself again and again in his words to Major Winters reminding him how much he values his friendship with him. I think it's great that he got involved in the life of such a truly great man, but the near constant patronizing is sometimes hard to read. Case in point, Kingseed's wife tells him that he is her best friend. Kingseed, in his adoration of Major Winters would only offer her that she was his "female best friend" with Major Winters holding the title of "best friend." What man uses the term "best friend" after grade school, or puts so much thought into who fills that role? Major Winters was undoubtedly an American hero worth noting at every given opportunity, but this book is just wasteful banter, and most of what was left on the editing room floor from the penning of 'Beyond Band of Brothers.' Kingseed's obsession is somewhat understandable, but perhaps he should have taken some of Winters' advice by not talking about himself so much.

Thomas says

Too much time by the Author spent on himself rather than the man.

Liza says

I really enjoyed looking further at Major Winters' expectations of leadership, but I really felt the ending dragged on. The book could have ended 50 pages before it did.

Carolye says

A well laid out book on an incredible man. It was clear that the author truly had strong feelings and respect for Major Winters.

Jody says

Major Winters was a great man, a great leader, and a great American. What struck me so much was how humble he was. So grateful for our vets.

Leslie says

Really enjoyed this audiobook. Major Dick Winters is just someone I admire a lot from reading his memoirs along with Band of Brothers and various other Easy Company men's books that mention him. His character is strong and dependable and overall the kind of guy you look up to and wonder why more men aren't like him. This particular book reminded me of Tuesday's With Morrie by Mitch Albom. I was captivated the whole way through. Highly recommend for any WWII enthusiasts or people who like to learn life lessons from generations before.

W.M. Tarrant says

"Conversations with Major Dick Winters" by Colonel (Ret.) Cole C. Kingseed provides insights into the commander of Easy Company of "Band of Brothers" fame. The conversations with Winters took place in his later years, a time when he could look back in the reflection and wisdom that living a full life offers. The book gives readers a feeling for Winters, what he stood for, and what was important to him as well as his thoughts on leadership.

Kingseed writes clearly and does a good job of conveying the conversations with Winters and conveys the

respect he has for Winters. It may be this adulation that gets in the way for we are reminded many times that Winters is a dear friend of the author's. To Kingseed's credit, he does not claim to be Winters' best friend, but gives that honor to Bob Hoffman. In addition to the many friendship references, there are other repetitions in the book, though they may have been intended to serve as reinforcing a point.

The book is not a biography and does not claim to be. Therefore, we don't see the entire Major Winters---we see highlights of conversations between Winters and Kingseed. This is the intent.

Erin says

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I asked for and received Conversations with Major Dick Winters: Life Lessons from the Commander of the Band of Brothers by Cole C. Kingseed for Christmas 2014, but I didn't find time to dive into it until recently. One of the downsides of being a reviewer is that you work on a schedule and don't always have time for the pieces no one asks you to review. Finding a gap was difficult, but when I did Kingseed's work was at the top of my list.

Jumping into the first few chapters, I admit my first impressions were optimistic. The book started strong and I liked how Kingseed allowed Winters to speak for himself. The famed commander's personality shines through his dialogue and I felt his reflections on his experience both during and after the war heartfelt, shrewd, and intuitive. Unfortunately, my admiration of the title was soon tainted by the author's blatant hero worship, tendency toward repetition and overtly superior tone.

I don't doubt the author's sincerity, but as a reader I felt Kingseed's sentimentality suffocating. It prevented him from impartiality and detracted from Winters' views. Kingseed's retirement ceremony and discussions with his daughter seemed superfluous and I often felt annoyed with how far the author wandered from the intimate one-on-one discussions he shared with Major.

When push comes to shove, Conversations with Major Dick Winters is not study on leadership, fame or struggle. It is a chronicle of Kingseed's friendship with Winters and while I've nothing against that, I can't help feeling disappointed that the publication failed to deliver the insights advocated on its jacket description. There are moments, quotes that I very much appreciated, but I don't think the book compares to pieces like Easy Company Soldier or Brothers in Battle, Best of Friends.

Laura says

I haven't read Dick Winters' memoirs, so I'm just guessing here, but it seems like since the author drew from his interviews with Dick during the co-writing of the memoirs, that everything in this book was already covered elsewhere. Maybe this gives you a good overview of the Dick Winters' career if you know nothing of the story of Easy Company, but the promise of the life lessons wasn't really fulfilled. However, no matter how many times Cole promised Dick that they were best friends and that's all that really mattered, this book seemed to mostly just show off how Cole got to be friends with Dick, and here's the proof that Dick liked him too.

Bryan says

The easy review of Conversations with Major Dick Winters is this: If you have read Ambrose's Band of Brothers and Kingseed's Beyond Band of Brothers, Conversations is a slam-dunk read that will inform the other 2, make you laugh and cry, and wholly remind you what a magical group of Americans did 70+ years ago alongside a singular example of American courage and determination that was Major Dick Winters. Read it.

But absent those other reads? Standing alone as a "lesson in leadership"? I'm not sure. Maybe it holds? One of the things that made Winters so effective during the war and such a great citizen afterward was his simplicity: Say Follow Me, and the Be An Example. That's it. That's what he lived by. There is more to the book, but that is really all that matters. I suppose, as I search deeper, the rest of the book basically serves to prove to the reader that, yes, a man can truly live his life by that simplicity. Without the surrounding detail it might be easy to dismiss the words as mere slogan, a motto.

But at the close of Conversations with Major Dick Winters, an engaged reader will soundly know that it is real and it is possible to live that way. With any luck, there'll be enough of a spark to light a fire of doing the same for all of us who read it. I know I will try. Follow Me....

William says

I found this work actually very interesting...and that was after having read the Ambrose novel and viewed the miniseries long before. Nothing is ever more interesting than the "real" story from one of the major players. And this is more than just about war adventures because it encompasses Winters' life lessons learned from childhood and continuing after the war.

Stephen B. Ferber says

I loved reading about the specific conversations with Dick Winters and the insights it gives you on what made him tick and his personality characteristics. I loved the way the book was broken down into certain characteristics like leadership, character, etc...and some of the stories regarding the relationship the author had with him and his wife, also insight into his wife's strength, personality and her role in his celebrity. The only reason for my 3-star rating is I found myself rushing through what I thought was a little too much excess background on the author and some repetitive subjects...some, just seemed a little out of scope. However, I completely understand why the author would err on the side of being overinclusive with the information based on his access to one of the Greatest men from our Greatest Generation. I am very happy he wrote the book and certainly glad I read it.
