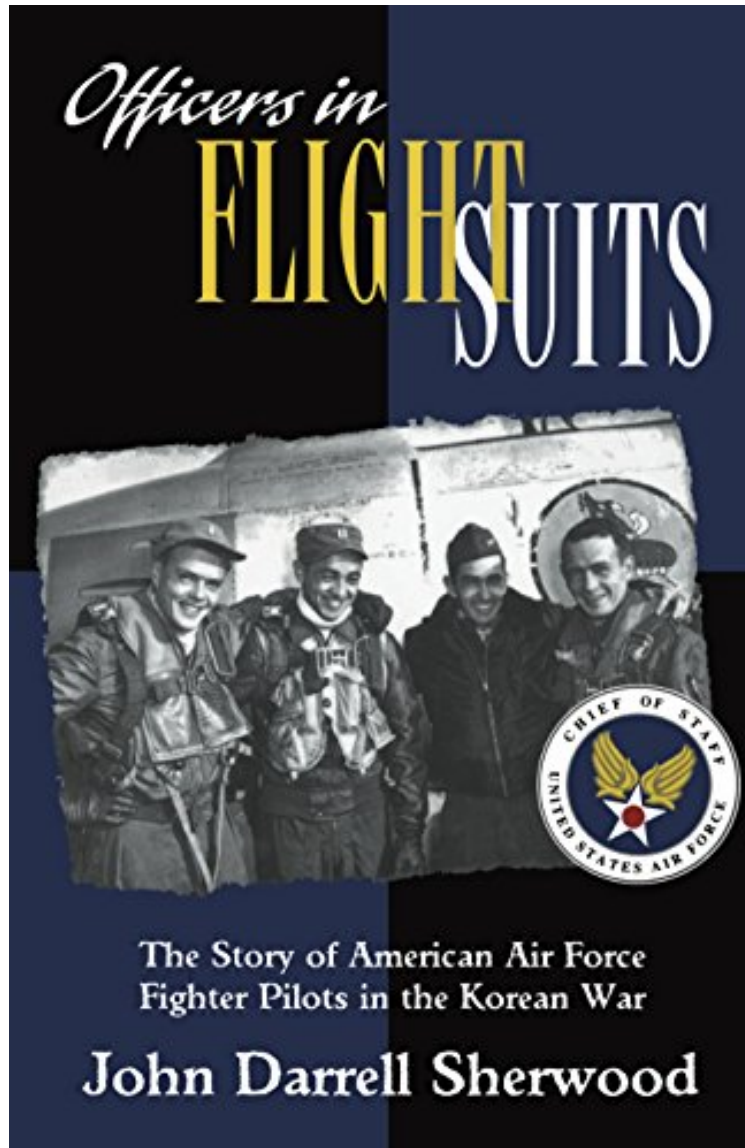


[Free] Officers in Flight Suits: The Story of American Air Force Fighter Pilots in the Korean War

Officers in Flight Suits: The Story of American Air Force Fighter Pilots in the Korean War

John Darrell Sherwood

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The United States Air Force fought as a truly independent service for the first time during the Korean War. Ruling the skies in many celebrated aerial battles, even against the advanced Soviet MiG-15, American fighter pilots reigned supreme. Yet they also destroyed virtually every major town and city in North Korea, demolished its entire crop irrigation system and killed close to one million civilians. The self-confidence and willingness to take risks which defined the lives of these men became a trademark of the fighter pilot culture, what author John Darrell Sherwood here refers to as the flight suit attitude. In *Officers in Flight Suits*, John Darrell Sherwood takes a closer look at the flight suit officer's life by drawing on memoirs, diaries, letters, novels, unit records, and personal papers as well as interviews with over fifty veterans who served in the Air Force in Korea. Tracing their lives from their training to the flight suit culture they developed, the author demonstrates how their unique lifestyle affected their performance in battle and their attitudes toward others, particularly women, in their off-duty activities.

"Sherwood paints a vivid and realistic portrait of the culture of Korean War pilots, examining the motivations, their methods, and the effect that being a fighter pilot had on their personal lives." -Air Force
"Sherwood thoroughly documents the superb performance of air force fighter pilots during the Korean War. They met the best pilots China and the Soviet Union had to offer—and won. In doing so, the author has competently mined the extensive documentary resources of the Air Force History and Museums Program and made constructive use of memoirs and interviews." -Journal of American History
"Sherwood provides a definitive account of Air Force pilots, their training, operations and battles, in the Korean War." -Virginia Pilot
"An extraordinary synthesis of social and military history which throws new light on the story of the air combat in Korea." -Ronald H. Spector, author of *After Tet: The Bloodiest Year in Vietnam*
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The United States Air Force fought as a truly independent service for the first time during the Korean War. As a result, fighter pilots reigned supreme. In Korea, American air power was challenged by one of the most advanced fighters of the time-- the Soviet MiG-15--and ruled the skies in many celebrated aerial battles. In addition, however, they destroyed virtually every major town and city in North Korea, demolished its entire crop irrigation system, and killed close to one million civilians. Korea, then, is the perfect laboratory for studying the culture of fighter pilots, a culture based on self-confidence and risk-taking, one which has promoted what author John Sherwood calls "flight suit attitude." In *Officers in Flight Suits*, Sherwood explores the flight suit officer's life, drawing on memoirs, diaries, letters, novels, unit records, and personal papers as well as interviews with over fifty veterans who served in the Air Force in Korea. From their training to dramatic encounters during battle, from their socio-economic backgrounds to the flight suit culture they developed, Sherwood investigates every dimension of these pilots' lives. The book provides an illuminating portrait of fighter pilot culture, demonstrating how this culture affected their performance in battle and their attitudes toward others, particularly women, in their off-duty activities.
From the Back Cover
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