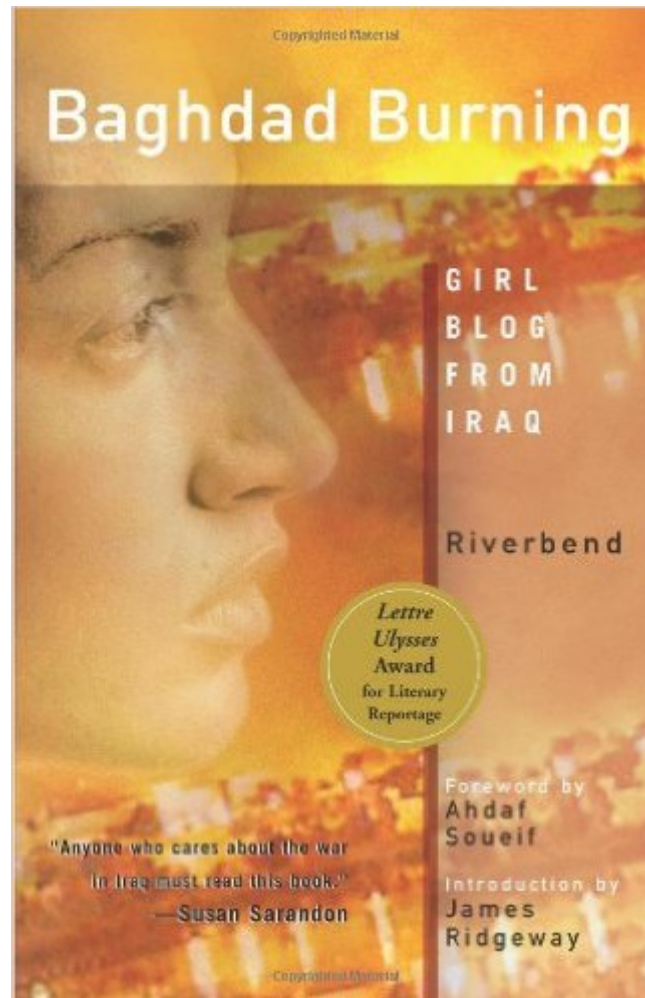


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# Baghdad Burning: Girl Blog From Iraq



## Synopsis

In August 2003, the world gained access to a remarkable new voice: a blog written by a 25-year-old Iraqi woman living in Baghdad, whose identity remained concealed for her own protection. Calling herself Riverbend, she offered searing eyewitness accounts of the everyday realities on the ground, punctuated by astute analysis on the politics behind these events. In a voice in turn eloquent, angry, reflective and darkly comic, Riverbend recounts stories of life in an occupied city—of neighbors whose homes are raided by US troops, whose relatives disappear into prisons and whose children are kidnapped by money-hungry militias. At times, the tragic blends into the absurd, as she tells of her family jumping out of bed to wash clothes and send e-mails in the middle of the night when the electricity is briefly restored, or of their quest to bury an elderly aunt when the mosques are all overbooked for wakes and the cemeteries are all full. The only Iraqi blogger writing from a woman's perspective, she also describes a once-secular city where women are now afraid to leave their homes without head covering and a male escort. Interspersed with these vivid snapshots from daily life are Riverbend's analyses of everything from the elusive workings of the Iraqi Governing Council to the torture in Abu Ghraib, from the coverage provided by American media and by Al-Jazeera to Bush's State of the Union speech. Here again, she focuses especially on the fate of women, whose rights and freedoms have fallen victim to rising fundamentalisms in a chaotic postwar society. With thousands of loyal readers worldwide, the Riverbend blog is widely recognized around the world as a crucial source of information not available through the mainstream media. The book version of this blog will have a value-added feature: an introduction and timeline of events by veteran journalist James Ridgeway, excerpts from Riverbend's links and an epilogue by Riverbend herself.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

First, this book is NOT written by James Ridgeway. He just wrote a short introduction to the book. It should change its copy to reflect that Riverbend is the author of this collection of blog entries. Riverbend is a woman in her mid-twenties living in the hell that is Baghdad. Her blog "Baghdad Burning" is an example of how vital the blogging phenomenon can be. She gives us, in "real time", a deeply intimate view of what is actually happening to the people of Iraq by describing what she and her family members are going through. Her entries are sometimes funny, often angry, always compassionate. She is well educated and well read, knows a great deal about American culture and is ferociously honest. Her entries are not ideological, like those of many other Iraqi bloggers. She speaks from her heart, not her politics. Writing is writing, but great writing is rare and deserves to be honored. We are not a time, yet, when the literature of the Internet can be respected as equal to that in print. But, if there ever is a Nobel Prize for Internet Literature, Riverbend should be its first recipient. She is the equal to any essayist writing today. Even when angry, she writes with a delicacy, with true elegance that no other writer I know can match. Each day, thousands of people around the world view her blog. Many days we are disappointed she has not made an entry. That is not because we love her writing and have learned so much from her expression of her point of view; we all open her page just to make sure she is still alive, that she has not been shot or bombed, or raped or subjected to any more suffering than she and her family have already experienced.

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