



# Folds in the Map: Stories of Life's Unlikely Intersections

*Jeff Bauer*

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## **Folds in the Map: Stories of Life's Unlikely Intersections** Jeff Bauer

Folds in the Map is a collection of essays and stories by emerging author Jeff Bauer. In these pages, he embarks on an earnest, touching journey to discover the places where we feel most connected as human beings – to each other, to nature, and to the world around us. From the bottom of a bomb crater in Laos, to a refugee camp on the Sudanese border, to the side of a Panamanian volcano, and back home again to the frozen January streets of Minnesota, Folds in the Map is a moving, intensely personal exploration of shared experience and unlikely intersection.

## **Folds in the Map: Stories of Life's Unlikely Intersections Details**

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Author : Jeff Bauer

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## From Reader Review Folds in the Map: Stories of Life's Unlikely Intersections for online ebook

### L says

If your experience reading "Folds in the Map" is as it was for me, you will at one point be reading a story on a page, and then in another series of undefined moments find yourself sucked into a powerful undercurrent, sharing in the raw, vulnerable, emotional seasons and variations, mysteries and questions of life ... emerging having realized profound truths about yourself, humankind and the deep currents that bind us, and greater compassion for the preciousness of the human experience.

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### D.C. Head says

If I didn't know any better, I'd believe that Jeff Bauer was an aged man who lived to see the whole world from a philosophical perspective hundreds of years ago. By the time I finished grazing the very last page of Folds in the Map, I realized this whole book was from the wise perspective of a young man with an old soul.

Folds in the Map depicts a broad view of the world and life that's much bigger than our tucked away neighborhoods in this western civilization we've come to know. The Greeks have Aristotle, Plato and Socrates, but we have Jeff Bauer - who gives a fresh perspective of life and all that it encompasses. Folds in the Map takes us through Panama City, where we are invited to smell the stale air; feel the dense humidity clinging to our clothes; become overwhelmed by the clustered crowds scuffling for bags just to make a few American dollars.

Jeff Bauer invites us to Chad with him, inside a schoolhouse full of refugees from Darfur. He takes us inside the full meaning and purpose of World Without Genocide and the nearly half million lives that were taken in Darfur. His journey takes us from this saddened state, down a bumpy road leading to Gaga. He makes us feel like we were the ones dodging the goats, camels and cows on the road. We chuckle at the whole experience and the thought of our organs being rearranged because of every bump and jerk in the road. When he still sees the faces of so many refugees after departing, we see them too. He takes us back to America with a new-found perspective and with down home Minnesota experiences...more life. Then he leaves us with something to ponder: How "we measure the value of our lives by the distance and accuracy of our throws" and fail to realize the harmony, the perfect balance, in between.

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### Lisa Kearns says

Jeff Bauer's first book, Folds in the Map, isn't what I thought it would be but I enjoyed it. I was expecting a travelogue, with Jeff writing about people he's met in his travels and how they affected his life. Several of the chapters in the book are exactly that - including a very heartwarming story about his time as a volunteer in Darfur. The children in that story moved me to tears. He also has a chapter devoted to people affected by the secret bombing of Laos during Viet Nam, and one family whose village was destroyed. There are several other memorable people he encounters in his daily life, and one very odd encounter with Sir Isaac Newton. I especially enjoyed the glimpses into Jeff's childhood, complete with tree forts and skateboards.

Much of the rest of the book is about Jeff battling his ever-restless brain, pondering the meaning of his life

and how best to live it. Throughout the book, he is honest and earnest, and tries to look beyond politics and stereotypes and really SEE people. I appreciated his honesty even when I didn't agree with his opinions, because underneath our carefully constructed public images, we are all very much the same.

I give this book 3.5 stars because I loved the travel stories and personal connections.

I received a complimentary copy of Folds In the Map in exchange for writing an honest review.

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### **Kristina says**

I didn't intend to read Folds in the Map in one day, but that is what easily happened. This collection of stories not only touched my heart but captured all of my senses. Jeff Bauer has a gift for description and metaphor that make you feel that you can relate to his journeys even if you have never set foot out of your state or country. I was touched by the honesty and humanity within the book and it left me wanting more. I guess I will have to think about the 'unlikely intersections' in my own life while I hopefully wait for this author to provide us with more of his work.

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### **Al says**

Amazon currently has this book categorized a couple different ways, as “self-help/personal transformation” and in a category with “spirituality/personal growth and inspiration” at the detail end of the category string. I’ve chosen to call it a memoir or travel narrative. All of these attempts to put a label on Folds in the Map are accurate, yet misleading.

These are a collection of essays that, while inspirational, don’t really fit what I picture when I think of a book with the labels used on Amazon. And while most take place in a specific place with the nature of the culture and events that happen playing a large role, both of my picks are also misleading.

However, many of the reasons you might read a book in any of the possible categories we might try pigeon holing Folds in the Map into, fit it well. For example, to gain a better understanding of the human condition, both how we are different and how we are the same. Possibly understanding the connectedness of the world and where we fit in it (or how the author answers that for himself). I could pick a few very minor nits (for example the use of the phrase “dear reader” in a few spots, which has been a cliché forever), but on balance, I found this to be an enjoyable read for what it is, even if that isn’t easy to categorize.

\*\*Originally written for "Books and Pals" book blog. May have received a free review copy. \*\*

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### **Iona Stewart says**

I received this book free in return for a review.

This is not the sort of book I usually review, in fact I haven’t ever encountered a modern collection of essays before. At the start I wasn’t really sure that I would appreciate the book, but it soon began to captivate me.

The essays range from an account of climbing up a volcano together with the spirit of Sir Isaac Newton to

teaching “rules of art” to children in a refugee camp in Eastern Chad, to one containing the author’s pet hates, mostly the Kardashians –and I understand him though I have no clue who the Kardashians are, only seen the name of the TV-programme on them innumerable times – my intuition has warned me to steer well away from this programme, and not even take a peek at it.

As regards the volcano trip with Sir Isaac, the author and his wife, I have this question for the author – why so many accusative-infinitive constructions in the Latin version of Sir Isaac’s comments (I’m afraid my Latin isn’t quite up to par)?

It turned out that the Sir Isaac essay was about relationships, how to ensure that they keep working well. Relationships change, and you have to work to keep them in balance. “You have to build it and rebuild it every single day. Sometimes tear part of it down and try something different.”

I like the essay about the Rules of Art. The author and an interpreter are in a refugee camp in Eastern Chad and the author is conducting an art class. The interpreter insists on the children being given rules, so Jeff comes up with the following rules – Rule 1: There are no mistakes in art. Rule 2: Use your imagination. Art is a way to tell your stories without words. Rule 3: Your mind is powerful, Use it to create the world you want to see.

These are touching accounts of the contact between Jeff and the refugee children.

Another striking essay is the one about the plagued street person who forces his way into Jeff’s car, and their ensuing encounter.

But the essay that particularly warmed my heart to Jeff was the one about his short career in telemarketing.

I hate telemarketers, and think they should be banned by law. Jeff is instructed by his boss not to let anyone off the phone until they’ve said “no” at least three times. Jeff is initially a successful telemarketer, the best, but then his heart opens to the lonely senior citizens he talks to. All they want is someone to talk to. Jeff with his open heart stops trying to sell anything at all. He asks people about their lives and their families. He listens to their stories and answers their questions about his life and plans for the future.

Jeff knows what to prioritize. He has a warm heart, and this is why I so appreciated this book.

Thus, I greatly recommend this well-written book, which ranges over many fields of information; but the connecting thread in the book is communication from person to person, from heart to heart.

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