

1994

The Norton Book of Modern War

Thomas-Durell Young

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

Recommended Citation

Young, Thomas-Durell (1994) "The Norton Book of Modern War," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 47 : No. 1 , Article 35.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol47/iss1/35>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu.

Fussell, Paul, ed. *The Norton Book of Modern War*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1991. 830pp. \$24.95

"Never think that war, no matter how necessary, nor how justified, is not a crime." Hemingway's view of war sums up the theme of this masterful work. With this thick volume Paul Fussell, a respected literary historian, attempts to ensure that this important message is not lost. That war is an ugly, brutal business is brought home through the compelling words of ninety-seven writers whose thoughts and observations about the twentieth-century wars they have witnessed make compelling reading. Depictions of the horrors of the modern battlefield drawn from the works of such literary masters as A.E. Housman, Erich Maria Remarque, George Orwell, and Studs Terkel are arranged alongside the simple, eloquent thoughts expressed in letters and diaries of the men who

fought and died in the two world wars, the Spanish Civil War, and the wars in Asia. It is a story of pain and courage, of humanity and inhumanity, of faith and lies, and above all of life and death.

This is a book that goes to the very heart of war in a way that is often impossible in this era of instant electronic communications. Carefully crafted phrases from literature and interspersed actual descriptions of life and death on the battlefield make war real in a way that television can never do. Television merely shows images to the eye—this book speaks to the human soul. It should be near every strategist in arms or in armchair, to keep clear the costs that will be imposed whenever war becomes the chosen option.

THOMAS-DURELL YOUNG
U.S. Army War College

Thou has frighted the word out of his right sense, so forcible is thy wit.

William Shakespeare
Much Ado About Nothing
(Act V, scene 2)

There are some people who apparently prefer to remain crazy.

J. V. Stalin
Teheran Conference, November 1943