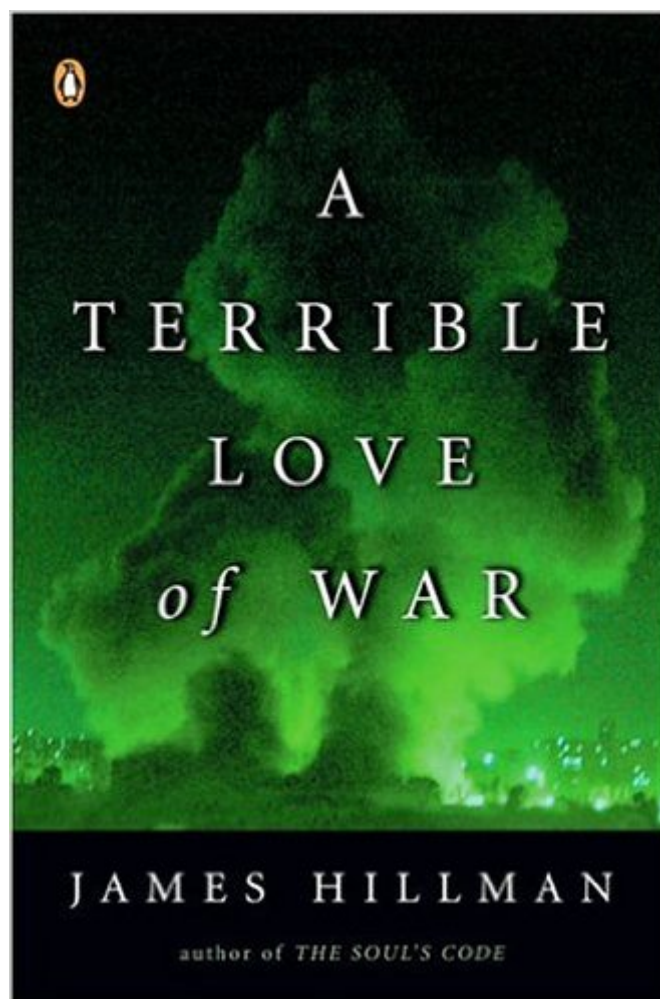


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A Terrible Love Of War



Synopsis

War is a timeless force in the human imagination and, indeed, in daily life. Engaged in the activity of destruction, its soldiers and its victims discover a paradoxical yet profound sense of existing, of being human. In *A Terrible Love of War*, James Hillman, one of today's most respected psychologists, undertakes a groundbreaking examination of the essence of war, its psychological origins and inhuman behaviors. Utilizing reports from many fronts and times, letters from combatants, analyses by military authorities, classic myths, and writings from great thinkers, including Twain, Tolstoy, Kant, Arendt, Foucault, and Levinas, Hillman's broad sweep and detailed research bring a fundamentally new understanding to humanity's simultaneous attraction and aversion to war. This is a compelling, necessary book in a violent world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Archetypal psychology has lacked an exploration of war and its deeper dimensions. This clearly written book not only fills the breach, it invites the reader to look into the heart of war: into the destruction, the religious fascination, and even the love that permeate warfare. Topics under discussion include the media role in aggression; accounts spoken and written by soldiers under fire; the mythic structures behind the American fascination with guns; and what psychology and philosophy have had to say about one of the oldest human pastimes--all in sparkling prose and flavored with anecdotes and examples. To Christian readers I would recommend considering Hillman's view that Christianity has been martial from the start as a challenge to examine the relationship between the Christian emphasis on love and innocence and its long institutional history

of intolerance and brutality. Is warfare endemic to Christianity? Are Christians who reject warfare exceptions to an almost universal aggressiveness? Must Christianity be a religion of missionaries who think they know better than the peoples they seek to convert? These are some of the questions raised by Hillman's study. Hillman also brings new emphasis to a heavily underrated factor in American aggression: hypocrisy. How is it that we select as leaders (and do adults really need leaders to begin with? Indigenous cultures got on fine with wise elders and mentors) the most insincere and immature among us? Why is it (as Aaron Kipnis puts it) an old boy's club instead of a gathering of wise old men? What does it do to us, these deceptive speeches and these Orwellian justifications (war for peace; "democracy" from the top down; "pre-emptions" that precede nothing but endless cycles of violence)?

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