

**SOLDIERS.** As his patriotism is called upon, the soldier draws the short straw. He is lured by promises of mateship and adventure, or at least good pay and a decent professional education. **B**ut first the soldier must be trained to kill. This training is merciless. **N**ext our soldier has to pay for his education. He has to endure - and inflict - unspeakable horrors. Then the soldier is returned to society. But the horrors of war are burnt into his mind. **W**ill he cope?

*A soldier, who served for only six weeks, had witnessed an atrocity involving a civilian victim and had to listen to the sounds of a man slowly dying, after he shot him.*

*When he returned from his tour of duty he became a drunk and suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder and severe depression. After a few months he suicided.*

Horrors of war too much for soldier, SMH, 1 Nov 2007

see also WAR

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*A devastating book: WAR is a FORCE THAT GIVES US MEANING by war correspondent Chris Hedges, is "bitterly poetic, powerful and ruthlessly philosophical," LAT. I find it as shocking as Spielberg's Schindler's List:*

*"The discarded war veterans are never a pretty sight. They are troubled and some of them are physically maimed. They often feel betrayed, misunderstood and alone.*

*"It is hard for them to integrate again into peacetime society. Many are shunted aside, left to nurture their pain alone. They may turn the violence they inflicted against themselves."*

*The book offers an unvarnished account of what it feels like to kill humans. William Manchester in Goodbye Darkness: "It is never clean, easy or neat; killing is a dirty business.*

*"Nothing is more sickening than watching a human life snuffed out, nothing haunts more. A dark feeling of disgust and self hatred clotted my throat, gagging me in my stupor."*

*The accounts from war zones are horrifyingly graphic; they describe how soldiers become de-humanized and that war forms its own culture. The rush of battle is a potent, lethal drug as soldiers decide who lives or dies.*