

Frontline: Combat and Cohesion in Twenty-First Century

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Since 2001, Western forces have been involved in a series of major military campaigns, primarily in Iraq and Afghanistan but also in Africa. For all the sophistication of the contemporary Western way of war with its digital technologies and precision weapons, infantry soldier have been frequently involved in close combat of an intensity which is comparable to the wars of the twentieth century. At the small unit level, combat has been as brutal as ever. Yet, in many cases, they have prevailed even when they were surprised or disadvantaged. How and why have professional Western soldiers been willing and able to fight effectively together during these campaigns?

Through a series of rich historical and ethnographic case-studies, this collection seeks to analyse the experience of combat soldiers on operations in the last decade. The book explores the motivation, training, and culture of the professional Western soldier, highlighting differences and commonalities between the troops of different nations.

This book is a project of the Changing Character of War programme at the University of Oxford.



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