



Lines in the Sand: New Writing on War and Peace

Books Reviewed:

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Reviewer:

[Clive Barnes](#) [3]

~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

0

This collection of short prose, poetry and illustrations comes quickly off the press in response to the war in Iraq. It is testament to an opposition among many children's writers and illustrators to this most recent conflict, but its subject is war in general. All proceeds from its publication go to UNICEF's emergency appeal for the children of Iraq. I find it impossible to review the book in the same way as I would any other, and absurd to offer it a star rating. The book is in some ways a contribution to contemporary political debate and there are different questions to be asked and answered there. There is a range of contributions, in a variety of styles, aimed at different age groups, but all obviously characterised by anti-war convictions. Many are preoccupied with the differences in the secure and protected lives of our children in the developed world and those who are the victims of war, famine and disease everywhere else. Many wonder how to convey the reality of war to an audience fed on fantasy violence and TV news items that disappear with a touch on the remote. Many give us views from the other side of the lines or speak of those times and places where different worlds intersect and darkness opens up where we thought there was solid ground: Halloween games in England that remind a Kosovan child of massacre; the Vietnamese child who, on the 21st anniversary of his adoption, spoke to his family and friends in England of the different fates of the children he had known in the orphanage in Vietnam. There are pieces here that will speak as powerfully to adults as to children, even to those of my generation whose fathers had fought in the Second World War and, like mine, could never bear to speak of what they'd done and seen. It is the editors' and contributors' belief that we need to speak honestly about war to children, not to make them despair but 'to make the world a more peaceful place'.

Running Order:

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