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from the top ten bestselling author of *Normandy 44* and *Sicily 43* the second world war is the most cataclysmic and violent sequence of events in recent times but for the past seven decades our understanding of it has relied upon conventional wisdom propaganda and an interpretation skewed by the information available James Holland has spent over twelve years conducting new research interviewing survivors visiting battlefields and archives that have never before been so accessible and challenging too long held assumptions about the war that shaped our world in Germany ascendant the first part of this ground breaking new history James Holland introduces the war beginning with the lead up to its outbreak in 1939 and taking us up to mid 1941 as the Nazis prepared to unleash Operation Barbarossa the invasion of Russia to tell the real story he weaves together the experiences of dozens of individuals from civilians and soldiers to sailors pilots leading military strategists industrialists and heads of state and uncovers the strategy tactics and events that informed not only the military aspects of the war but also the economic political and social aspects too the war in the west is a truly monumental history of the war on land in the air and at sea in it James Holland has created a captivating and epic narrative which redefines and enhances our understanding of one of the most significant conflicts in history

since the end of the draft in the United States the nation's wars have been fought by all volunteer forces creating an enormous divide between the civilian public and its military recent wars have taken place during the information age allowing cable news and the new media of the internet to change sometimes on a daily or even hourly basis the way wars are understood as a result a multitude of competing and often flawed narratives have emerged that ultimately merely explain events in terms of self serving political and cultural perspectives author Caleb S. Carr a veteran of the war in Iraq brings a unique perspective to the understanding of how we talk about war why does the American public believe that those who served are somehow both heroes and victims while the typical service member rarely embraces either identity how does what happens on the front line get communicated to those back home and what happens to that information as it travels is it possible that works of fiction are telling the most real versions of what is happening over there war narratives is a tightly packed and provocative book containing a series of connected essays on the many competing narratives both fiction and nonfiction that are used to explain recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan how those narratives are perceived through preexisting social political and literary lenses and how they often fall short as Carr points out narratives are not merely the stories shared or even how they are told these expressions reflect choices

documents the efforts of U.S. and British forces at far flung support bases to survive life in

jungles deserts and frozen wastes as well as fight the enemy

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