Nurses in War: Voices from Iraq and Afghanistan

This unique volume presents the experience of 37 U.S. military nurses sent to the Iraq and Afghanistan theaters of war to care for the injured and dying. The personal and professional challenges they faced, the difficulties they endured, the dangers they overcame, and the consequences they grappled with are vividly described from deployment to discharge. In mobile surgical field hospitals and fast-forward teams, detainee care centers, base and city hospitals, medevac aircraft, and aeromedical staging units, these nurses cared for their patients with compassion, acumen, and inventiveness. And when they returned home, they dealt with their experience as they could.

The text is divided into thematic chapters on essential issues: how the nurses separated from their families and the uncertainties they faced in doing so; their response to horrific injuries that combatants, civilians and children suffered; working and living in Iraq and Afghanistan for extended periods; personal health issues; and what it meant to care for enemy insurgents and detainees. Also discussed is how the experience enhanced their clinical skills, why their adjustment to civilian life was so difficult, and how the war changed them as nurses, citizens, and people.