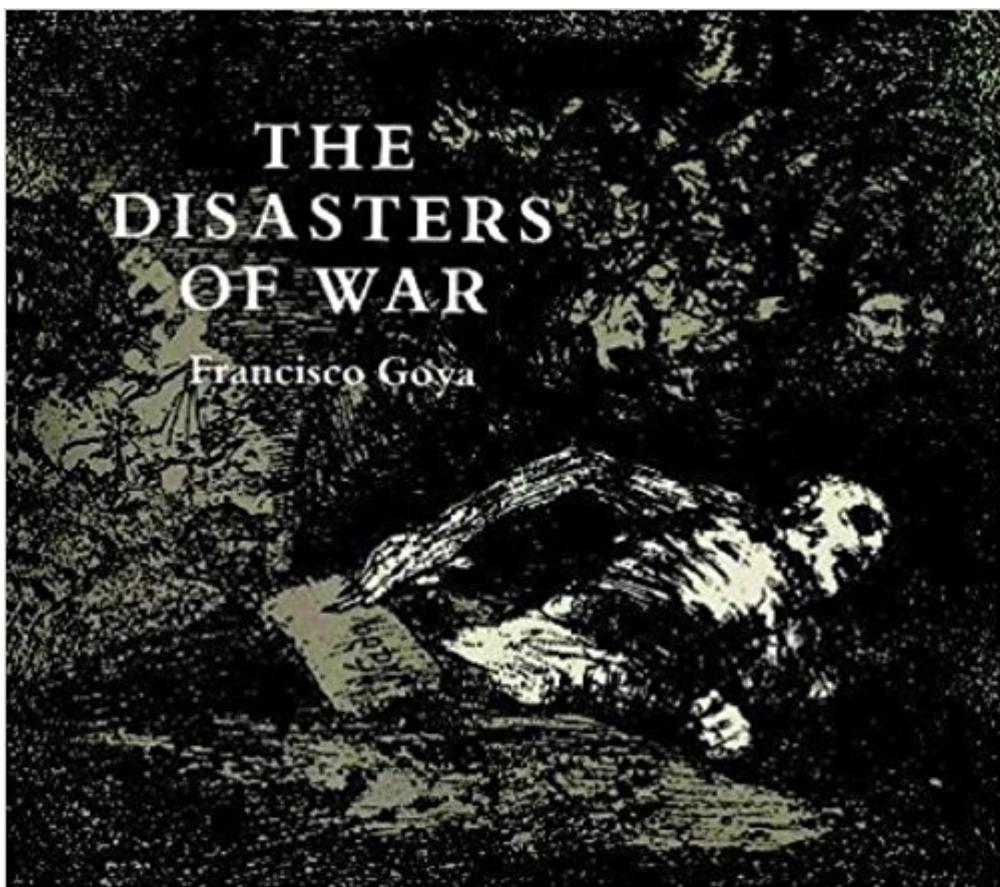


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# The Disasters Of War (Dover Fine Art, History Of Art)



## **Synopsis**

The strikingly original characterizations and sharply drawn scenes that came to be known posthumously as *Los Desastres de la Guerra* (The Disasters of War) are among Francisco Goya's most powerful works and one of the masterpieces of Western civilization. Goya's model for his visual indictment of war and its horrors was the Spanish insurrection of 1808 and the resulting Peninsular War with Napoleonic France. The bloody conflict and the horrible famine of Madrid were witnessed by Goya himself, or were revealed to him from the accounts of friends and contemporaries. From 1810 to 1820, he worked to immortalize them in a series of etchings. The artist himself never saw the results. The etchings were not published until 1863, some 35 years after his death. By then, the passions of the Napoleonic era had subsided and the satirical implications in Goya's work were less likely to offend. The Dover edition reproduces in its original size the second state of this first edition, which contained 80 prints. Three additional prints not in the 1863 edition are also included here, making this the most complete collection possible of the etchings Goya intended for this series. The bitter, biting captions are reprinted, along with the new English translations, as are the original title page and preface.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

The strikingly original characterizations and sharply drawn scenes that came to be known posthumously as *Los Desastres de la Guerra* (The Disasters of War) are among Francisco Goya's most powerful works and one of the masterpieces of Western civilization. Goya's model for his

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The images cheaply reprinted in this edition of Goya's Disasters of War are poorly rendered. They are muddled, unclear and indistinct, stripping away Goya's incredibly sure handed technique and voiding the emotionally violent impact these images must have had when they were first viewed many centuries ago. These images demand better respect, and some of them receive it by means of a duotone process in a wonderful book entitled "Goya and the Spirit of Enlightenment." If you want a clear and precise idea as to why Goya's Disasters of War were a great artistic and technical achievement the Dover edition will not deliver the goods. If you have never seen a fine reprinting of these images, then by all means purchase the Dover edition - ignorance is bliss.

While reading the amazing book "The Serial Killer Files", I discovered several mentions to some "famous series of engravings...with it's horrific images of rape, castration, and dismemberment..." Being a moral person, I had to see what all the hype was about! So I went a few weeks later to my college library and I looked at all the images...and I was shocked. To say that these images are unnerving and gruesome is the understatement of the century!! But there's something about them that makes them essential viewing for all...it's the most honest depiction of war I've ever seen in still image. Rather than try to justify the horror of his images with the idea of a greater good served or divine justice delivered, Goya simply portrays things how they were and lets us despair without any manipulation on his part. I'm sure others have gone through the series of plates with this book so I'll simply list a few of the plates that I think are the most affecting: "Sad Presentiments of what must

come to pass", "This is what you were born for", "Why?", "What more can one do?", "This is worse", "Great deeds-against the dead!", "Unhappy Mother!", "The Consequences". Also, something that must be mentioned, aside from 2 or 3 prefaces, the only thing in this book is the 80 or so images themselves. While these images are of a war that happened hundreds of years ago in a foreign land, what they portray is something whose long claws cast their shadow across distance and time...the insanity and cruelty of man manifest in the horrors of war. For those who want an honest look into the results of war, you need look no further. But be forewarned that, in the words of Nietzsche, "...if you gaze into the abyss, the abyss gazes also into you."

I realize this is a bargain book, but the printing is TERRIBLE...horrible in fact. No art book I've purchased has ever been this low quality. Most images are too low contrast, and appear entirely flattened with details very difficult to make out. Even if the paper was low quality, but the images are what you're buying the book for. I say opt for a more expensive option. Do not buy.

It's a good book in theory but the print quality of the images is terrible. They are printed so dark you can barely tell what you're looking at. It makes the book basically useless. I do not recommend this book.

A very useful book, the complete series is reproduced in actual size. The first 80 prints reproduced are fine, early impressions from the first published edition of 1863. My only complaint is that they are nowhere credited, so we do not know which museum collection was photographed. Given that the introduction is by Philip Hofer, formerly at the Harvard Library, it's natural to assume that these are Harvard's prints, or maybe the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. But they are not. Surprisingly, Harvard owns only a later, inferior copy of this series (third edition). And the MFA's copy is even earlier than the one reproduced (Harris III.1a instead of 1b, i.e., before the publishers edited some of the captions). My best guess is that this book principally reproduces a book that was issued in 1921 in Munich using the etchings in the Kupferstichkabinett in Berlin. "Les desastres de la guerra, von Goya: zweiundachtzig Faksimile-Wiedergaben in Kupfertiefdruck nach den Vorzugsdrucken des Kupferstichkabinetts in Berlin" was published in 1921, and therefore is in the public domain.

Splendid rendition of the most powerful series of war pictures ever to be produced. Such a condemnation of war should make us all ashamed that we still indulge in such a barbarous practice. If Goya were a war artist in Syria and many other places today his message would be the same, as

would his despair.

A perfect way to get the early preface of the Goya series "Disasters of War" with up close images of the etchings

A disturbing work. As timely today as it was when Goya did it.

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