

An analysis of the novel all quiet on western front essay

[Government](#), [Military](#)



The first issue is on brutality involved in war. It shows the properties of Great War in terms of destruction to the young soldiers in the front line. The narrator, Paul, gives a critique of the good picture a reader might have of combat. First, the author describes war as involving starvation, constant attack, and major infestation of rats, in addition to bad weather as well as enemies forming trenches in war zones. This change the positive picture that Kantorek gave on the issue of war since the teacher used to encourage his student to volunteer and join the army. Also, the narrator disagrees with Kantorek on consequences of joining the military and being in war since it results to friends losing life or even being disabled (Erich, 1928). Therefore, Paul disagrees with his teacher in the aspect of war since the primary reason why soldiers are losing their life is over a piece of land. This shows that losses in war are greater than benefits derived.

The second critique involves honor of the young soldiers. Paul's tone in the whole novel is flat, in terms of his friends who have died in the war. He gives a different opinion of honor for the soldiers since the Germany nation's views soldiers as their heroes. But in real sense, Paul has lost his friends in battle and sees no heroism in this. For example, in the novel, the narrator passes off the death of his friend as a common thing since soldiers should not be overcome by emotions (Erich, 1928). In addition, when he visits his home and finds his mother dying, there is no bond with his mother hence emphasizing the disconnection that soldiers in combat have over feelings. Hence, the narrator feels that his respected elders like Kantorek have betrayed him since they glorify and honor war. Also, the brunette interested in Paul since he is a romanticized kind of soldier who is in the line of death.

In respect to nationalism as well as patriotism, the narrator describes of how young soldiers swear to dedicate their lives to Europe especially in the years that lead to world war one. Kantorek supports patriotism and nationalism of the young soldiers. In contrast, Paul and the other soldiers are bitter towards patriotism since it forced them to enter into this war. Also, Paul comforts the French soldier whom he kills. This shows that he goes beyond patriotism of his nation and sees life as being more important (Erich, 1928).

The other major critique that Paul has is on Animalism, where soldiers are compared to wild animals since they eat food prepared for the mass in troughs and has no modern latrines. Hence, battle to win power in the military is like the battle animals have in the wild to win territories.

Moreover, the narrator shows comradeship between the soldiers by constantly using the word we in the novel. It shows that soldiers value each other as a unit while the nation watches as they put their lives at risk in battle. Adding to the above, Paul is emphatic on the fact that words in war cannot do justice since war is a reality to soldiers.

The nineteenth century view of nationalism has not changed much. However, nationalism for the military has evolved by the fact that soldiers can work on contract basis, hence they do not have to dedicate their whole lives to war. In addition, various symbols illustrate nationalism, for example in the national anthem as well as the national flag. Also, from a modern point of view, nationalism is perceived as an economy which builds itself to be more self sustaining. Hence, there is a more collective approach to nationalism

compared to the time of Paul, where the military were viewed as the only nationalists.

In conclusion, the narrator in this book emphasizes the opinion that there is no gain in war from either side since it will result to loss of life which is the greatest value. Hence, the military should ensure that other peaceful ways are established to deal with any dispute. Paul illustrates that life is more important than patriotism in respect to war hence choice to join the military should be personal.

Reference

Remarque, Erich Maria. *All Quiet on the Western Front*. New York. Fawcett Crest Press, 1929. Print.