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Autore	Mariani Giorgio <1954->
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Sommario/riassunto	"While war is considered to play a fundamental role in the United States' conception of itself, American war literature is usually read as being anti-war. This is to a large extent a fate shared by all modern war literature, which is seen as engaged almost by default in a critique of the madness and meaninglessness of military conflict. However, rigorous discussions of what exactly makes a text anti-war are rare. Even though anti-war literature is sometimes considered a literary genre of its own, no sustained attempts at identifying its formal or philosophical features have been made. This book argues that there are objective reasons for this impasse and discusses an impressive and well-chosen range of texts: Joel Barlow's <i>The Columbiad</i> , Melville's <i>Moby-Dick</i> , Ellen La Motte's <i>The Backwash of War</i> , William Faulkner's <i>A Fable</i> , Tim O'Brien's 'How To Tell A True War Story', Maxine Hong Kingston's <i>The Fifth Book of Peace</i> , poetry by Brian Turner and Helen Benedict's <i>Sand Queen</i> -- "The notion that war plays a fundamental role in the United States' idea of itself obscures the rich--and by no means nai;ve--seam of anti-war thinking that winds through American culture. Non-violent resistance,

far from being a philosophy of passive dreamers, instead embodies Ralph Waldo Emerson's belief that peace "can never be defended, never be executed, by cowards." Giorgio Mariani rigorously engages with the essential question of what makes a text explicitly anti-war. Ranging from Emerson and Joel Barlow to Maxine Hong Kingston and Tim O'Brien, *Waging War on War* explores why sustained attempts at identifying the anti-war text's formal and philosophical features seem to always end at an impasse. Mariani moves a step beyond to construct a theoretical model that invites new inquiries into America's nonviolent, nonconformist tradition even as it challenges the ways we study U.S. warmaking and the cultural reactions to it. In the process, he shows how the ideal of nonviolence and a dislike of war have been significant, if nonhegemonic, features of American culture since the nation's early days. Ambitious and nuanced, *Waging War on War* at last defines anti-war literature while exploring the genre's role in an assertive peacefighting project that offered--and still offers--alternatives to violence"--
