



# Enduring Vietnam: An American Generation and Its War

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## **Enduring Vietnam: An American Generation and Its War** James Edward Wright

The Vietnam War is largely recalled as a mistake, either in the decision to engage there or in the nature of the engagement. Or both. Veterans of the war remain largely anonymous figures, accomplices in the mistake. Critically recounting the steps that led to the war, this book does not excuse the mistakes, but it brings those who served out of the shadows.

*Enduring Vietnam* recounts the experiences of the young Americans who fought in Vietnam and of families who grieved those who did not return. By 1969 nearly half of the junior enlisted men who died in Vietnam were draftees. And their median age was 21—among the non-draftees it was only 20. The book describes the “baby boomers” growing up in the 1950s, why they went into the military, what they thought of the war, and what it was like to serve in “Nam.” And to come home. With a rich narrative of the Battle for “Hamburger Hill,” and through substantial interviews with those who served, the book depicts the cruelty of this war, and its quiet acts of courage.

James Wright's *Enduring Vietnam* provides an important dimension to the profile of an American generation—and a rich account of an American War.

## **Enduring Vietnam: An American Generation and Its War Details**

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# From Reader Review Enduring Vietnam: An American Generation and Its War for online ebook

## Jeff says

I rarely give a book a five star rating, but this one deserves the five stars. In 1966 I was 17 years old so this book really resonates with me. The author does a wonderful job of painting a broad stroke picture of the times before, during, and after the war. There certainly are books that better describe the war in "technical, scholarly " terms , but to his credit , the author surpasses those others in my opinion. The book describes how the kid down the block felt waiting for the draft to grab him, how he felt when he was "in country", how he felt when he had to deal with the carnage that he saw , how he felt and what he did to survive his year tour, and how he felt upon his return.

The book gives us insight into how our government felt about the war. As noted , Johnson came to realize that the war could not be won , but yet felt that we shouldn't retreat. Of course we've known about this travesty for many years , but it needed to be and was described very well in this book.

To make my long story short, this book humanizes the war , and the generation that it was fought in. It brought back clearly to me the turmoil and divided nation that the war caused. It brought back the fears of parents , hoping that their sons would not be drafted and sent into the fray. It brought back images of the nightly news on TV where the "body count" numbers were super-imposed on the TV screen like baseball scores. It brought back the fear and uncertainty of being drafted and being sent to fight there.

This was a very powerful book for me. Read it so you can understand how our generation felt and dealt with this era.

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## Devyn says

I received this book from Goodreads.

Enduring Vietnam is a *hefty* book. It's thick, heavy, and every page is crammed with as much information as possible. Nearly overstuffed.

It's an absolute ink and blood heaven for a history buff.

With how confusing, unorganized, and generally just a big broiling mess the Vietnam War was, all I want out of a book about the war is a comprehensive, reliable, organized timeline of all the major events involving the political and the military, along with personal accounts that fits the appropriate timeline of said events, with a writing style that doesn't put me to sleep.

This book is it.

Imagine all the history books on the war, plus all the memoirs, plus newspapers accounts of the varying outlooks back in the states.... and combine them. *In a organized fashion.*

You get Enduring Vietnam.

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## Eric Layton says

Hmm... this book is a bit difficult to describe. It's a lot of things...

- historical
- political
- cultural
- painful
- cathartic

If you grew up in the era of this war, this book will be painful to read, yet therapeutic in its presentation of the affects that this war had on many of us from this time in our lives.

I did not serve in this war, but I have the utmost respect for those young men and women who did. I was just a bit too young. Had it lasted just a few more years, though, I would have been a candidate for the draft.

My father and uncles all served in WWII. My brother was of draft age during the height of the Vietnam War, but had a high lottery number and lucked out; otherwise, his life could have been seriously changed by his experiences had he served.

Because of my brother's age and the fact that this war was the first televised war, it was a daily conversation in our home then. I remember the fear my mother expressed over my brother's situation. I remember my father's comments about the news stories on the evening news.

I've had an interest in military history since I was a small child, but my focus has always been on the Vietnam War, possibly because I grew up in the midst of all of it. If you have an interest in the era and would like to try to understand what the young men and women of that time period were dealing with, read this book.

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### **Jack McCabe says**

#### **This book tells our story**

As a Vietnam veteran I can honestly say that this book tells our story like no other.

Thank you for giving us a voice

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### **Laura Hoffman Brauman says**

A lot of books about war either focus on the political and military aspects of the war or they focus on the personal stories of the people that were in combat. Wright does an exceptionally good job of doing both in *Enduring Vietnam*. I came away with a much stronger understanding of the "history class" aspects of the war -- what we did from a strategy perspective, why we did it, what was going on at home, what was the perspective of the other side, etc. It was the personal accounts in here, though, that made the book resonate and have so much power. Seeing it from a bird's eye view and then reading account after account of the soldier on the ground (or in the air) was an incredibly effective way to connect the dots between politics and people. Wright didn't stop at the end of the war, though, he continued on and took the story through to

today discussing the problems vets had after returning home and even to the way units that served together started to reconnect in the 90's and into today. The book opened with the battle at Hamburger Hill -- reading about a battle that my dad served in and about soldiers who were the age my sons are now at the time they were serving made this feel intensely personal and relevant. I highly recommend this one.

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### **Scott Martin says**

This book is not just a rehash of previously written material about Vietnam. It does cover some of the key battles, political maneuvering and other well-known details, but only to provide context for the real meat of his work, the focus on the individuals who fought the main battles. Wright looks to dispel some of the accepted myths about Vietnam, that most of the men fighting in Vietnam were poor in discipline, disobeying authority and abusing various substances; that most of those who came back from the war, in addition to being shunned and condemned by the American public, were all broken, substance-addled vets, who would not offer much to American society. This was usually not the case, although there were instances that gave way to excessive generalizations about the Americans who fought in the war.

Many who came over, especially in the first part of the war, were dedicated fighters. While in rear-echelon areas, there were noted examples of drug abuse and discipline problems, most of the men in the field were focused fighters, especially when on patrols fighting a determined Viet Cong. While some came home to abuse and indifference, a number received warm receptions. Still, there was much indifference to the war in America, and many of the vets just did not discuss the war as a result. Things turned worse for morale and discipline in the base camps as the US withdrew, and the goal was not victory, but aided the South Vietnamese and waiting to get home. It was a tough war, and the fact that America could not really claim any major victory in that fight made the memory of the war that much more difficult.

The myriad of personal accounts are the strength of the book, from the famous (Pat Sajak, John Kerry, etc) to the various soldiers who did their service and came back to live "ordinary" lives. It is a hard war for America to face, and time has still not helped. People are more receptive towards the vets, but I feel that we will not admire the Vietnam veterans to the extent we do those from World War II. Wright does a great job bringing all of these together. It probably helps to have a working knowledge of the history of Vietnam, but even if this is the first volume you read about the war, you will be able to get through this readable work. The narrator does a good job, but does fall into the trap of trying to mimic some of the more famous figures' accents. All in all, a good read about a tough war.

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### **Ted Hunt says**

Full disclosure: James Wright was the best professor I ever took a course from, so I am a little biased about his work. His course, which I took in the spring of 1976, was entitled "20th Century American Political History" and it was taught in Dartmouth's largest lecture hall because not only was the course completely filled, but there were always lots of students in the room who weren't even taking the class! Jim Wright's class helped to turn me into a political "junkie" and it taught me the power of story-telling in history classes, a lesson I have never forgotten. (Indeed, I still use stories in my classes that I first heard in Jim Wright's class.) His new book, not surprisingly, is a very powerful look at the soldier's experience in the Vietnam War. While he touches on some of the significant political and military events of the conflict, the focus is clearly on the individuals who participated. This book has probably been in the back of Jim Wright's mind

since he arrived at Dartmouth in 1969. That was a year during which two recent Dartmouth grads were killed in Vietnam. One can find on the internet a photo of Jim Wright, who was in Vietnam researching the book, planting a hockey puck in the approximate spot where former Dartmouth hockey star Bill Smoyer was killed in 1969. If one is primarily interested in the military aspects of the war, or the intricacies of the political decisions made during the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon administrations, this is not the book for you. But I don't know if I have read a book about any war that more thoroughly presents the experiences of the soldiers, all of the soldiers. Wright does not just concentrate on the "grunts," but includes the experiences of the support personnel, the nurses, the men responsible for preparing the dead soldiers' bodies, the pilots. He includes soldiers' recollections of their return to the U.S., and the trials and tribulations of their postwar experiences. The book presents a fair bit of statistical evidence to dispel some of the "myths" that emerged about the men who were in the war (for instance, that most of them were drug users), and the reader encounters names both familiar (John Kerry, Chuck Hagel Max Cleland, for instance) and unfamiliar (unless one has read a lot of the novels about the war). The book does not really say much at all about the Vietnamese, but that was never the author's purpose. The dust cover includes a "thumbs up" endorsement from Ken Burns, and I am confident that his upcoming PBS series of Vietnam will take a very similar approach to telling the story of the war.

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## **Jimmy says**

As a son of a refugee of the Vietnam War any historical books with the conflict interests me. Although I have read some individual biographies and accounts of the Vietnam War this is probably the first work I read in which looks at the bigger picture of the conflict such as evaluating the generation that fought in Vietnam, an evaluation of the political landscape and decisions of policy makers, the anti-war sentiments and the experiences of the guys doing combat operations. The author James Wright did a good job of weaving veteran's stories, statistics, and social discussions and offered to the readers a larger picture of the political narrative. Being an academic historian, former Marine officer and an avid advocates for veterans puts him in a unique place to write this work.

The book began by looking at the war in 1969. It starts with what America was doing and the press coverage of Memorial Day before going into the statistics of what was going on with the troops on the ground that day. Definitely well written and I thought the contrast of what was going on at home and in the field was a great approach.

I found it very insightful the book's discussion of how the United States got into Vietnam and also the early years of American involvement where there was much American optimism. The book captured the mood of a time when many believe the United States has a unique role and responsibility of fighting communism all over the world, including in Vietnam. Obviously the war in Vietnam did not happen in a vacuum and we cannot just blame later presidents in the conflict without understanding those who laid the steps to the conflict. The book also told of how President Lyndon B. Johnson escalated the war after Kennedy even though he did not think the United States could win the conflict. For me this was morally revolting to see a president going into a war he has no stomach to win. I thought Wright presented a good job in describing how LBJ thought of himself as a helpless victim heading towards the inevitable direction of the escalation of the conflict but really LBJ was an all too willing participant that escalated the war and is himself responsible for the direction of the conflict.

Of course no book on the Vietnam war could avoid the turning point of the Tet offensive. I think the book

really put Tet in its historical context, one which I was not as familiar with until I read this book. During the weeks leading up to the communist's Tet offensive the US military was expecting the enemy would try to turn a Marine garrison at Khe Sanh into "Dien Bien Phu." Dien Bien Phu was where a decade earlier a French garrison surrendered to the Vietnamese. But the American "Dien Bien Phu" at Khe Sanh did not happen although there were a lot of outbreaks of violence throughout the country orchestrated by the "Vietcong." The book pointed out how as a result of the Tet offensive the Vietcong lost a lot of their capabilities having been decimated and lost key leadership. But the way most Americans viewed it was that the insurgency was getting stronger. I thought this perspective was very telling and unfortunate that so much of the war in Vietnam was seen through political expediency of politics at home rather than the reality on the ground. Tet offensive would mark the turning point of American opinion of making the war unpopular. The book doesn't just talk about the change of American opinion but also hope the soldiers who deployed to Vietnam would also be different in their outlook and character. I never thought much about the draft myself but this book has a pretty good discussion about the draft and also the quality of soldiers between the draftees and enlisted.

The book also examines what Vietnam meant after the conflict ended in 1975. Here the author talks about the returning Vietnam veterans coming back to the States and the strange welcome they received. The author also talked about the range of reaction veterans received from indifference to downright hostility. The author was not just anecdotal but also showed how the statistics of the difficulties of employment during the early years of their return although later years they fared better. Nevertheless the book records the stories of how veterans were treated differently than previous generations of veterans, with people thinking of the stereotypes that Vietnam veterans were crazy, druggies and dangerous. Sadly the book also pointed out the statistics that for veterans of the war who were minorities they did not see an overall improvement over time. The book also talked about the portrayal of the war in Vietnam in movies and how many veterans felt there were a lot of portrayals of negative stereotypes. I thought the book did a good job showing the juxtaposition of movie critics who were not in Vietnam saying these films showing the military negatively were "realistic" while veterans themselves found it repulsive and not factual. There is also a discussion of PTSD and the statistics of whom were the ones that were more prone to PTSD.

As with the war with Vietnam the way of remembering the Vietnam War itself was also a point of conflict and controversy. There was controversy with even the Vietnam War memorial itself, with some feeling that it failed to acknowledge the heroic element of the war and some even though it should not be designed by an "oriental woman." But over time the memorial became an accepted national symbol of the war and also a place for veterans to remember their war and those whom they lost.

There was a lot in this book beyond what I can write in a review. I think the memory of Vietnam is very painful for American history even decades later. This book is a look into the war and that generation and hopefully readers can be challenged and also see the controversy through a fresh perspective.

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## **Jerry Smith says**

There is much to learn about Vietnam and the war that, as this book is at pains to point out, is seen almost exclusively as "America's War". Now, I find this to be a hubristic and arrogant assertion. We are always hearing about the horrors of this conflict from the point of view of the Americans fighting in a hostile, hot, disease-ridden, frontline lacking war, far from home etc. This book contributes to this narrative but to its credit for a book about this subject, there are passing references to the abject horror of this conflict when seen from the Vietnamese perspective. I would like to have seen more of that but maybe I should seek out different books to gain that perspective.

This book takes some getting into, at least for this reader and frankly I found the early couple of chapters disjointed and unconvincing as a narrative. The introductory sections provide a road map for what the book is going to cover and that's fine but I can't help feeling that to be unnecessary in this type of nonfiction account. We are then launched into an account of the battle for Hamburger Hill which is a recurring theme of the narrative. Whilst harrowing, this account also feels somehow out of place to me at this stage of the account.

However, after that the book picks up greatly in my view. Chapters are dedicated to the causes and political situations that led to war, the players in that political drama (including the pervasive and vile influence of the political war criminal Kissinger) and also chapters dedicated further to the experience of those on the ground in terms of the fighting but also the dying, the injuries, the return and the reception upon that return.

This is very welcome and the book actually does a good job of presenting these as fact (there are a significant number of studies quoted liberally throughout) rather than trying to formulate a position. In this regard some of the conventional wisdom (e.g. the extremely high levels of veteran suicide, drop taking, officer fragging etc.) is challenged and relevant facts provided. There are many interviews quoted that subsequently are followed by: "on the other hand" and an opposing position provided from a separate conversation. This is wonderful prose since it provides balance that is so sadly lacking from today's discourse and makes one trust the author of this work.

Again this is largely, of course, presented from a US perspective. There is terse coverage of the horrors of B52 altitude bombing and the disregard this has for civilian casualties but overall Enduring Vietnam does not shy away from some of the atrocities that were committed and one gets the opinion that the author wishes us to know his opinion that these were unacceptable - My Lai is covered as a case, probably the worst case, in point.

Very glad I read it, especially as I enjoyed it more and more as it progressed. A useful account that added to my knowledge of this complex conflict.

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## **Jimmy says**

Reading this book is like looking at a pile of jigsaw puzzle pieces scattered on a table. They all have importance, but you know it will never be put together. There are just too many fragments. That being said, there is a lot of information that seems just a rehash, but all in all, it was an excellent book.

People often mistakenly, in my view, refer to the Vietnam War as our taking sides in a civil war. I guess, but that does not go far enough. It is important to understand that the United States was trying to stop communism. That was the key. That was why we had so much trouble not being involved.

In Christmas 1969, the company with the "highest body count" was rewarded with a trip to Cu Chi for a Bob Hope show. Another rifle platoon was denied a trip because they had a zero count. That failure of the war falls on the lap of General Westmoreland. Body counts caused slaughter and lying. The result "nullified social and political progress."

The NVA learned that the best way to fight was "in close range and fast." This prevented air and artillery fire. The battle of Ia Drang taught that lesson. They also learned to take the high ground.

Soldiers were told not to trust children. I was told to be careful of children, to watch for grenades. But I have never heard of any verified account of a child trying to hurt American soldiers.

The ARVN soldiers often failed in battle. But they were young conscripts from poor families, poorly supported, poorly led, struggling to maintain enthusiasm for the government, they had an extremely difficult task, and the Americans did not give enough help.

The author discusses Hamburger Hill, but I would have preferred a more detailed book than a chapter. What was the point of these terrible assaults? And with the rotation system, many of the fighters were FNGs (Fucking New Guys).

By 1967, men like Edward Landsdale, John Paul Vann, Richard Holbrooke, Robert Komer, and Rufus Philips finally succeeded to some degree to begin a counterinsurgency strategy. However, forcible removal of civilians to fortified hamlets did not help. Many just wandered into Saigon where I was. The streets were filled with refugees in the poorer areas of town where I lived.

Poor, working class, less educated, and minority American men were more likely to die in Vietnam.

Racism was quite prevalent in Vietnam. I can attest to that with numerous examples. Here is one from the book. Johnny Jackson, the young black soldier who successfully charged the last resisters at the top of Dong Ap Bia (AKA Hamburger Hill), never received the Medal of Honor. He certainly would have if he were white.

Pat Sajak was a DJ in Vietnam. There was little censorship of music choices. One that was forbidden was the Kenny Rogers song "Ruby, Don't Take Your Love to Town" for these lines: "It wasn't me that started that ol' crazy Asian war" and "I'm not the man I used to be." Also the parody of the national anthem from *Hair*. In the summer of 1969, Sajak was told not to play "Give Peace a Chance" but he played it on his last day in Vietnam.

Some popular music included the Beatles and Creedence Clearwater Revival. Some songs were Johnny Cash's "Ring of Fire" and James Brown's "Say It Loud--I'm Black and I'm Proud" and Nancy Sinatra's "These Boots Are Made for Walkin'" and Porter Wagoner's "Green, Green Grass of Home" and Otis Redding's "Dock of the Bay" and Peter, Paul, and Mary's "Leaving on a Jet Plane" and Jimi Hendrix' "Purple Haze and my favorite Creedence Clearwater Revival's "Fortunate Son." Number one was the Animal's "We Gotta Get Out of This Place" and next was Country Joe and the Fish's "I Feel like I'm Fixin' to Die."

Morphine was administered to those that medics did not think would survive to "keep them comfortable." Dying men often asked, "Where's my wife?" or "Where's my mom?" An army medic on Hamburger Hill always told them, "She's on her way." He learned to "always have a smile on your face, because . . . if you're smiling, he thinks he's going to be okay." And, of course, they always asked, "Am I going to make it?" He reassured them and then gave more morphine.

Grunts disdained the REMF's or Rear Echelon Mother Fuckers. I guess I was one of those. I remember one day when my girlfriend came home with a few hundred dollars and being chased by a group of GIs on leave. After I got angry at her, we laughed it up a bit.

Some soldiers complained about the phrase "Thank you for your service." I never had a problem with it, especially when it is young people learning how to be polite. When someone says that to me, I just repeat to myself the names of my friends who died.

Vietnam veterans never returned home to celebrations. I never cared about that. My fellow veterans do care. I have gone to parades with them, and it meant a lot to them. By contrast, the prisoners of war returned home to great celebrations.

Vietnam veterans had a higher unemployment rate than other veterans. And blacks and Hispanics lagged behind even more.

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### **Steve says**

I have read many books on the Vietnam War. However, this one is different. This is an excellent book to read and to me this gives a different viewpoint of the Vietnam War than any other books that I have read on the subject. This book gives accounts on those who fought in Vietnam and what they witnessed when they go out on patrols in the jungles and witnessed the deaths of their fellow comrades. Not only does this book covers the soldiers and marines who fought in Vietnam, But how they were treated when they came home. Those that came back from Vietnam, were treated horrible and were cursed at and spat upon and called names. Vietnam was unlike any other war, There was no front and it was hard to tell who the enemy was.

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### **Paul Waibel says**

There are many books about the Vietnam War. Many more will be written. The war was a national trauma that we, the generation who experienced it either as soldiers or civilians, will never really get over. It was a major event during a period when what it meant to be an American was questioned and forever changed.

Historians have written narratives of the war. They have tried to understand how we became involved in a war that others in the world understood was unnecessary and unwinnable. Few Americans could have found Vietnam on a world map; much less had any knowledge or appreciation for the history or the culture of the Vietnamese people.

The nation's military and civilian leadership were woefully ignorant, as well. Why else would military forces designed to fight a conventional war in Europe be sent to the jungles of Southeast Asia to fight a guerrilla war. High tech weaponry proved no match for the primitive weapons of the Vietnamese guerrillas.

President Johnson in 1965 referred to Vietnam as a "damned little pissant country." He and those around him believed that America could bomb the Vietnamese into accepting our plan for their future. If necessary, we would bomb them back to the Stone Age. In pursuit of that goal, we flew over 3.5 million sorties over Vietnam, only 8 percent over North Vietnam, and dropped more than 8 million tons of bombs on an area roughly the same size as New Mexico.

By 1969, America no longer saw victory in the war as an objective. So why did the war continue until 1975? The lives of American and Vietnamese soldiers and the lives of the Vietnamese citizens meant little in the drama of American politics. Neither President Johnson nor President Nixon wanted to go down in history as the first American president to lose a war. Eventually, both became victims of the war they could not bring themselves to end.

The real subject of James Wright's book is not why we fought and lost the war in Vietnam. Rather it is what

the war did to the so-called “baby boomer” generation, those who served in Vietnam as well as those (myself included) who by luck or design managed to avoid military service. All of us were to some extent changed by the war.

The extensive research, especially the numerous interviews undertaken by Professor Wright, together with an obvious gift for writing a historical narrative that keeps the reader turning the pages, enables the reader to experience the trauma of the war. We are able to live it, or in some cases no doubt relive it. This is not a book that will leave the reader with a “good feeling.” *ENDURING VIETNAM* is a book that will enlighten all who read it, but will be especially meaningful for those who came of age during the sixties, those who lived with the war day by day, and for those for whom that experience will never end.

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### **Kathy Heare Watts says**

As the daughter of a retired soldier, Vietnam was ever present in my childhood. My father served two tours, 1968-69 and 1971-72. He was forever a changed man. He came back with nightmares, he saw horror, and to this day, it is a closed subject.

I married a soldier who was in basic and AIT when Vietnam ended. Never would I have dreamed that in 2001, our country would change and be thrown into not one but two wars. As the mother of a US Army soldier, I have had to see my son off to war seven times. As a combat engineer, he is following in her grandfather's career to be a lifer. They have discussed Vietnam and so this book will go to my son.

I won a copy of this book during a Goodreads giveaway. I am under no obligation to leave a review or rating and do so voluntarily. I am paying it forward by passing this book along to my son who I think will appreciate its contents.

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### **Chris Jaffe says**

Well that was a damn disappointing book.

It just didn't come together for me. What's this saying about Vietnam? It's about the soldiers experience. It has some background info. It has some politics of the war. It has some post-war. It has a lot about how the war shifted in the middle of 1969. But these parts never quite came together for me. Every page is well done. Every paragraph is professionally written. But the whole is less than the sum of its parts. It read like various bits of info than anything else. I couldn't always tell what the point of the info was - it was just info. In the intro, Wright described his plan of action for the book, and I didn't quite get it then - sounded random to me. I hoped it would work out better as I got into it, but i didn't. The main exception to this is the last chapter, about the postwar aftermath. That worked pretty well. But that's about it.

Some bits of info from the book: about 40% of the men who came of age during the war served. 8.7 million enlisted and 2.2 million were drafted. Nearly 12,000 died in 1969, then 6,300 in 1970, 2,400 in 1971, 900 in 1972, and 500 from 1973-75. Spring of 1969 was the turning point as Nixon shifted to Vietnamization. The US troop total actually peaked in May, at 540,000. There was antagonism between the grunts on the front lines and the REMFs in back. The latter were more likely to be on drugs. Few soldiers wanted to stay in

country, even those who voluntarily enlisted. By 1975, only 12% of Americans supported sending military aid to South Vietnam while 78% opposed it.

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## **David Bales says**

This is a sad but important book, detailing the numerous experiences of ordinary American soldiers and marines during the Vietnam War, from their introduction to the country in the early 1960s until decades after Saigon fell in 1975. One long chapter discusses the machinations of various presidential administrations in allowing the Vietnam situation to spiral into an American war, (completely unnecessary) but most of the book deals with common--but horrific--information about casualty lists, the difficult road for the wounded, the travails of their families back home in America, racial and class tension among soldiers in Vietnam, (mostly nonexistent in the field but common in the rear) and after 1968, the terrible feeling that their actions, heroism and sacrifices were for nothing as both Johnson and Nixon attempted to extricate the U.S. from the war. A very difficult to read set of chapters deal with the traumas and alienation felt by many veterans of Vietnam, (but not all) after the war, pigeon-holed as baby killers, drug addicts and psychopaths. The Vietnam War was a disaster, but we would do well to remember the (mostly) young people, men and women, who did what their country asked them to do--and did the best they could.

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