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Vietnam: The Real War: A Photographic History By The Associated Press



Synopsis

To cover the Vietnam War, the Associated Press gathered an extraordinary group of superb photojournalists in its Saigon bureau, creating one of the great photographic legacies of the 20th century. Collected here are images that tell the story of the war that left a deep and lasting impression on American life. These are pictures that both recorded and made history, taken by unbelievably courageous photojournalists. In a moving essay, writer Pete Hamill, who reported from Vietnam in 1965, celebrates their achievement. As we begin to look back from the vantage point of half a century, this is the book that will serve as a photographic record of the drama and tragedy of the Vietnam War.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Upon receiving this today, I had to put it down after just a few minutes because the anger returned looking at these pictures, which rival Matthew Brady's portrayal of the US Civil War in my book as the best photojournalism of war. But after gathering myself and reopening these pages, I feel tearful sorrow. The photos - some searingly graphic, such as the bodies of North Vietnamese dragged to a site for mass burial, others heart rending, including a woman who has just discovered the body of her husband - are grouped into seven chronological chapters, an introduction by Pete Hamill, and an Epilogue. Tet gets its own chapter. Some of the photos of the action, particularly skies filled with menacing choppers, are mind boggling. One photo shows a line of choppers laying machine gun fire into woods surrounding a landing site. Another shows choppers on the ground to the horizon

with waves more arriving. There's a sense of hopelessness to US soldiers in the jungle, often waiting for a medivac, sometimes standing beside a wounded comrade, sometimes next to a body bag. Mostly, there is great suffering. This is a book I will keep at hand.

You can't love a book like this, but you can appreciate the courage, the collection effort, how divisive the war was, and how brave the men were for each other (most of the time). Having been a part of the war, I still find it difficult to go through the book--takes time.

The Associated Press sent its first reporters to Vietnam soon after the French military returned to the country in 1945. During the next thirty years what started out as a distant colonial war grew into the principle military struggle of the Cold War. The whole time, the Associated Press was on the ground writing stories and taking photos. To do this, the AP hired and cultivated the best photojournalists of the era. "Vietnam: The Real War" is a photographic history of the conflict. Most of the photos come from AP's archive but when necessary the editors have included photos from non-AP sources. The text lightly covers the history of the war. Its real strength is telling the stories of the AP photographers and journalists. These are the stories of the intrepid journalists who brought the war to the world's newspapers and magazines. The "Golden Age" of photographic journalism is often seen as having taken place during the Spanish Civil War and Second World War. A whole cottage industry has arisen to chronicle the works of the great Magnum photographers, Robert Capa, David Seymour and George Rodgers. The photographic history of the Korean and Vietnam wars have never generated the same interest among historians and authors. Perhaps this is because of our nation's more troubled relationship with these conflicts. Neither the Korean nor the Vietnam War were ever considered "Good Wars" fought by a "Greatest Generation." It is unfortunate that the great photojournalists of the Vietnam War never received the recognition they were due. "Vietnam: The Real War" is a collection of extraordinary photographs that move way beyond merely documenting the horrors of war. There are beautifully composed images that leave the world of illustration and enter the realm of fine art. Those images say as much about the insanity of war as any work by Goya. This is a great book that will be enjoyed by people interested in both history and photography. Highly recommended!

Superb photo documentation of Vietnam, with just enough captioning to give context. You won't find all the great or memorable Vietnam pictures here - this is an Associated Press book, but it's full of superb shots by some of the great photo journalists who worked in Southeast Asia. If Vietnam is

part of your memory, I highly recommend this book. You won't just read it once and forget it. The book is more than just random photos. There is a story thread woven through it, based on correspondence from the AP Saigon bureau. In retrospect, it makes the whole Vietnam adventure seem stupid, but of course ALL hindsight is 20/20.

I have seen many of these photos before. Seeing them again helps me to recall the pain, anguish and horror that so many people of my age had to endure. My own time in the Army, 1963-64, never required me to be in Vietnam and I consider myself very lucky for that. As I talk with other veterans who were not so fortunate my heart goes out to them. I wish our country had done a better job of recognizing their sacrifice so many years ago.

This book is really a copy cat of "The Eyewitness History of the Vietnam War" put together by George Esper and The Associated Press published in 1983 in soft cover. There are very few different photographs in this new book. The 1983 version has more text about our troops, it's not just pics. I was irritated with one pic. On pg 250 the caption refers to soldiers giving a "V" sign, those soldiers are giving the peace sign. The soldier with both fists in the air is a black soldier and he is giving the black power sign. With that off my chest I would highly recommend this hard cover book. Brought back some "fond" memories.

Vietnam was unique for reporters & photo journalists compared to recent conflicts in that they could hitch a ride & go where ever they wanted without being embedded as they are required to do now. This resulted in some "tell it like it is" on the ground reporting. These are some of the Associated Press most memorable shots of the war from the early 1960's thru the mid-70s. They are very often heartbreaking but honest. This is not a coffee-table book, but it is a photographic history of the real war in Vietnam from the ground up. It includes a 15 page introduction by journalist Pete Hamill & all pictured are captioned.

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