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"The Illustrated History of the Riverine Force: The Vietnam War," "The Illustrated History of Carrier Operations: The Vietnam War," and "The Illustrated History of the Marines: The Vietnam War"

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him to opine as to who was the best tacair pilot during the war.

This is essentially a picture book, and the sources that provided the greater number of photos were given the more detailed accounts. Still, it is good reading. The Mig killers are given stirring write-ups. I was pleased to see the enlisted tail gunners granted their due but saw nothing on the efforts of the guided missile cruisers and destroyers. Most of the Linebacker account is given over to the B-52s. Other things happened, but that operation was the Stratoforts' finest hour. At least that is how I would feel if I had been over Hanoi in one of the damn things.

Air War Hanoi is quick, easy reading with lots of photographs, some well-known, but enough new to keep your interest. There are factual errors and misprints, but reading about the exploits of people you know and events in which you took part is enjoyable. If you were not there, it is still great reading.

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Forbes, John and Williams, Robert.
The Illustrated History of the Riverine Force: The Vietnam War. New York: Bantam Books, 1987. 158pp. \$6.95

Marolda, Edward J. *The Illustrated History of Carrier Operations: The Vietnam War*. New York: Bantam Books, 1987. 158pp. \$6.95

Simmons, Edwin H. *The Illustrated History of the Marines: The Vietnam War*. New York: Bantam Books, 1987. 128pp. \$5.95

This trilogy of paper books provides a summary of U.S. naval operations conducted "in theater" during the Vietnam war. As a group, they contain more than the usual amount of text for an illustrated history. This may be in anticipation of a video-taped version of the books. The volume entitled "Riverine Force" is perhaps misleading because it covers all "brown water" operations including the CTF 115 (Market Time) coastal patrol operations and CTF 116 (Game Warden) river patrol operations as well as the CTF 117 Mobile Riverine Force (MRF) operations.

The books are reasonably well done, although they suffer badly from a shortage of charts that would have helped to illustrate the battles described in the text. Instead, photographs are employed to give a general sense of the action, if not the direction. One cannot help but remember TV news using the same technique during the war. However, this time the slant is on the bravery of the men fighting the battles—a refreshing and welcome change. These volumes would be most useful to the casual reader; not the serious student of naval history. There is a reminder in there for all of us, however, which is revealed somewhere near the beginning of the third volume, as you realize you are reading about yet another separate and largely unrelated war. Further,

even the battles described within each volume seem unrelated. At first I was critical of the authors and publishers for poor quality work. Upon further reflection I recalled that that was the way it was—three separate wars, each with independent operations that always seemed to start at square one. Not much of a formula for success. No wonder the war colleges have rediscovered the art of campaign planning with such enthusiasm.

On balance, if you are looking for a quick refresher on naval operations in Vietnam, these three books might fill your requirement. If you want depth, detail and context, however, you will be better served elsewhere.

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Brace, Ernest C. *A Code to Keep*.
 New York: St. Martin's, 1988.
 264pp. \$16.95

In 1961 a general court-martial dismissed Captain Ernest C. Brace from the Marine Corps. As he put aside his mustang officer's good conduct ribbon (he had enlisted at age 16), his Air Medal (the fourth star represented 100 combat missions), and Distinguished Flying Cross (awarded after being shot down over North Korea), he assured himself that there are no ex-Marines. Less than four years after his trial, Brace was shot down a second time. While flying CIA-funded missions from Thailand into Laos in support

of Lao and Thai "civil action teams," he was ambushed, immediately captured by the Pathet Lao, and turned over to North Vietnamese regulars. On 28 March 1973—seven years, ten months, and seven days later—Brace emerged from Hoa Lo prison, the Hanoi Hilton. President Ford, citing his conduct in the prison camps, pardoned his court-martial conviction. Admiral James B. Stockdale recommended him for the Navy Cross and the Department of Defense awarded him its highest award, the Medal for Distinguished Service.

Anyone piqued to discover the mettle that provides the details behind this sketch of events will be well rewarded by *A Code to Keep*. It is an engaging, fast-paced good read. It also is a welcome, although regrettably brief, addition to the POW literature. Brace tells his story from POW ringside where he was often lodged because of the political complexities of his Laotian shutdown. The book both elaborates well-known episodes and contributes new details of its own. It covers three periods.

The first period spans his 1965 to 1968 imprisonment in South Vietnam. He was alone—he was not to hear an American for three and one-half years, and his major adversaries were the primitive conditions of his captivity: exposure to the elements and deprivation of food, water, and medical attention. Never physically tortured during his entire captivity, he describes his guards without rancor, emphasizing that for