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Literature of the Vietnam War: An Annotated Bibliography

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LITERATURE OF THE VIETNAM WAR:

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

A Research Paper

Presented to the

Faculty of the Library Science Department

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degner
Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

The interest in the Vietnam War is increasing after years of being ignored. The body of literature about the Vietnam War is growing rapidly. Using this literature in high school courses to study the war is encouraged. Using literature to study a historical event personalizes it for the students.

The researcher read 45 novels and personal narratives about the Vietnam War. Each novel was tested for four values and inclusion of stereotyped secondary characteristics. One or more of the following values was present in 80 percent of the works: American involvement was wrong, American commanders were incompetent, South Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to win the war, and soldiers in the Vietnam War are different from soldiers in other wars. Stereotyped secondary characters were present in 93 percent of the works. The researcher also collected data about each author's status as a Vietnam War veteran. The result of the study is an annotated bibliography.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

In July of 1959, two American military advisors were killed in a Communist guerilla attack on Beinh Hoa, a military air base fifteen miles northeast of Saigon in South Vietnam (Millet, 1978). By the end of the Vietnam War some sixteen years later, 45,943 Americans had been killed in combat (MacDonald, 1976, p. 182), another 10,298 had died of non-combat causes, and 1,333 men were listed as missing (MacDonald, 1976, p. 185). 303,640 Americans had been wounded. In summary, over two million Americans served in Vietnam (Wilson, Vietnam in Prose and Film, 1982). 184,546 South Vietnamese soldiers were killed and 495,913 had been wounded; 451,000 South Vietnamese civilians had died, and another 935,000 wounded; and over 6.5 million became refugees (Morris, 1981, p. 505). It was America's longest war and the fourth most costly in terms of American life (MacDonald, 1976, p. 185).

The Vietnam War was fought from 1957 through 1975. It began as a Communist insurgency supported by North Vietnam. Later, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China aided North Vietnam, while the United States, the Republic of Korea (South Korea), Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, and the Philippines aided South Vietnam (MacDonald, 1976). The groundwork for the Vietnam War began long before 1957, though. Following the

Indochina War of 1946-1954, in which France tried and failed to reestablish colonial control of Vietnam, Vietnam was divided into two separate countries--the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) or North Vietnam and the State of Vietnam or South Vietnam (Millett, 1978). During the Indochina War, the United States provided military advisors and economic aid to Vietnam. After the division of Vietnam, the United States continued to aid South Vietnam (Millett, 1978).

The insurgency begun in 1957 continued to grow. In 1961, President John F. Kennedy increased the number of American advisors to South Vietnam to 16,000 and, in 1962, had 23,000 advisors in South Vietnam. American helicopter companies aided the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) (MacDonald, 1976, p. 183). The South Vietnamese government, headed by President Ngo Dinh Diem (MacDonald, 1976), was unstable. Carruth (1979) notes, "Oct. 2 White House issued a statement indicating that aid to South Vietnam would be continued and that the war there might be won by the end of 1965" (p. 656). Diem was assassinated in late 1963 and South Vietnamese Communists known as Viet Cong increased their activity (Morris, 1982).

1965 did not see an end to the war as Kennedy predicted; it instead saw an escalation of U.S. involvement. According to the U.S. Department of Defense, on December 31, 1964, U.S. troop levels stood at 23,300. By December 31, 1965, they stood at

184,300, and by the end of 1966, 385,300. U.S. combat troop levels peaked in 1968 with 541,500 men in Vietnam (Morris, 1982, p. 497).

As American involvement escalated, so did domestic opposition. On April 15, 1967, a march protesting the Vietnamese War held in New York drew from 100,000 to 400,000 participants. A protest in San Francisco drew 50,000 (Carruth, 1979, p. 706). In October of 1967, over 50,000 anti-war protesters marched in Washington, D.C. After a clash with the police and troops at the Pentagon, more than 640 protesters were arrested (Carruth, 1979, p. 712). During the spring of 1970, four students were killed by National Guardsmen at Kent State University in Ohio, and two were killed by state police at Jackson State College in Mississippi during anti-war protests. About this same time, between 60,000 and 100,000 people demonstrated in Washington, D.C. (Morris, 1982).

January 30 and 31, 1968, was the turning point of the war--the Tet (lunar new year) Offensive. Executing surprise attacks, 84,000 Communists attacked seventy-four major towns and cities (MacDonald, 1976). Most of the fighting was over quickly, but in Saigon and Hue, two major South Vietnamese cities, fighting continued for nearly one month. While the fighting actually caused heavy losses for the Communist troops, it was, in other ways, the turning point for Americans:

Despite 32,000 dead, the offensive produced no lasting Communist military advantage, but it made a sharp psychological impact on American public opinion, feeding already strident demands for withdrawal, which nurtured the Communist belief that victory lay, as with the French, in American disenchantment with the war. (MacDonald, 1976, p. 184)

President Richard Nixon, in 1969, proposed withdrawal of foreign troops from Vietnam. The plan, called "Vietnamization," was to gradually withdraw American combat troops and train and equip South Vietnamese forces for major combat roles (Morris, 1982). By this time, the war had spilled over into Vietnam's neighboring countries, Laos and Cambodia.

North Vietnamese offensives continued to be successful (Morris, 1982), but South Vietnam's ARVN performed creditably (MacDonald, 1976). Thus, U.S. troop withdrawal continued, down 151,800 in 1971 to 24,200 at the end of 1972 (Morris, 1982). American combat troops left Vietnam in August of 1972, so those that remained were advisors, technicians, and helicopter crews (Millet, 1978). On January 27, 1973, agreements ending the war were signed, which President Nixon called "peace with honor for Vietnam and Southeast Asia" (Millet, 1978, p. 154).

The South Vietnamese government and forces were fragile, and in violation of the peace agreement, North Vietnam moved men and supplies into South Vietnam during 1973 and 1974. In January of 1975, the North Vietnamese launched an offensive wherein major South Vietnamese cities fell to Northern control by March of that year (Morris, 1982). On April 29, 1975, as the fall of Saigon was

imminent, U.S. President Gerald Ford ordered emergency evacuation of all Americans--around 1,000--in South Vietnam. On April 30, the city of Saigon was surrendered to the Communist forces (Morris, 1982).

Unlike the soldiers of other wars, the American soldier in Vietnam did not serve "for the duration." He generally served his year and was sent home, alone. He did not return with his group of comrades. They were left behind to keep fighting the war. And, unlike veterans of other wars who came home to drums and bugles and parades, the Vietnam vet returned home to a country that wanted to forget its involvement in the war. The war had divided America, had driven a wedge between those who opposed America's involvement and those who favored it. It drove a wedge between the "haves" and the "have-nots," because it was generally the "have-nots" who did the fighting, while the "haves," who could manipulate the system, stayed home (Broyles, 1982).

This was the first war to be brought into America's living rooms through television. Americans saw the G.I.s in combat, saw the refugees along the road, and saw the body counts displayed on their television screens. As Wilson notes, America felt guilty and could not confront that guilt (Wilson, 1982b). Thus, when the vets came home, America was silent.

Seven years after the fall of Saigon, America paid tribute to those who served in Vietnam. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial was

Problem Statement

Is there literature about the American experience in the Vietnam War that could be used for young adults' pleasure reading and in a high school social studies or English class unit?

Hypothesis

1. There is literature about the American experience in the Vietnam War that could be used for young adults' reading and in a high school social studies or English unit.

2. There are stock or stereotyped secondary or supporting characters portrayed in the Vietnam War literature that are evident in 50 percent or more of the works.

3. There are implied sets of values inherent in these works that include the ideas that American involvement in the war was wrong, American commanders were incompetent, South Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to win the war, and the frontline soldiers in this war were different from soldiers in other wars. One or more of these ideas will be evident in 50 percent or more of the works.

Assumptions

The researcher made several assumptions in doing this study. Basic to the study is the idea that the Vietnam War should be taught to high school students. It is a part of the nation's past that still affects people today. To illustrate, many people refer to the current situation in Central America as becoming "another

Vietnam." It was the longest war in American history and probably the most controversial. Therefore, the researcher assumed it has a valid place in the school curriculum.

Another crucial assumption the researcher made is that fiction, personal narratives, nonfiction novels, and other literature of this nature make a valuable contribution to social studies and English classes. As Donelson and Nilson (1985), quoting Lawrence Yep, note, works such as these can change attitudes, to see other people "with fears and hopes, joys and sorrows like the rest of us" (p. 399). They add, "This is what good literature can do for any mass of social facts, figures, and statistics" (p. 399).

The researcher also believes that most of the literature of the Vietnam War was written for adults. Coincident with this belief is the assumption that young adults can read and understand adult books, and that some young adults have an interest in the Vietnam War and will want to read the literature it has produced.

The works considered for this bibliography were found in the Dysart-Geneseo Junior-Senior High School Library located in Dysart, Iowa, in the Dysart Public Library in Dysart, Iowa, or were available in the Cedar Rapids Public Library, which is the regional library for Dysart. It was assumed that these titles will already have met certain selection criteria in order to be included in these libraries.

Significance of Study

The literature shows that more history, social studies, and English teachers are interested in teaching high school students about the Vietnam War and America's involvement in it. Resources have been developed for these teachers to use. Teaching the Vietnam War (Griffen and Marciano, 1979), for example, evaluates sections of textbooks that cover the Vietnam War. The Indochina Curriculum Group's (1978) The Vietnam Era: A Guide to Teaching Resources annotates reference books, films, videotapes, slide sets, and other resources for the teacher who is teaching the Vietnam War. A few fiction novels and personal narratives are included in this list of resources. These works are, of course, ones that were written prior to 1978. Since that time, however, there have been many works written dealing with the Vietnam War. This study, then, may help to update these teaching resources.

This study may also provide an objective survey of Vietnam War literature. As "many of the annotated works are the products of embittered veterans, many of the titles will have an anti-war message" (Newman, 1982, p. x). The researcher, however, in reviewing and selecting literature for inclusion in the annotated bibliography, made no judgment on the "rightness" or "wrongness" of American involvement in Vietnam. Therefore, this study may provide an objective analysis of the literature of the Vietnam War.

Definitions

The following definitions were used throughout the study:

Young adult--any person between the ages of twelve and twenty.

Personal narrative--a nonfiction, generally autobiographical account. It may contain fictionalized dialogue and may merge characters for the sake of simplicity.

Nonfiction novel or new journalism novel-- accounts that are nonfiction in nature or content, but are written in the style and form generally used in fiction. They contain fictionalized dialogue and frequently merge characters for the sake of simplicity.

Stock or stereotyped characters--characters that are superficially drawn or merely described, rather than being thoroughly developed through standard literary methods of characterization. These characters are frequently vague or indistinguishable from each other, identified by a nickname or nervous habit (Kakutani, 1984).

Vietnam War--As the United States never officially declared war, the government refers to it as the "Vietnam Conflict." The term "Vietnam War" is used, however, almost exclusively to indicate the conflict between North and South Vietnam between the years 1957 and 1975.

Vietnam War literature--the body of literary works about or resulting from the Vietnam War. For the purpose of this study,

"literary works" are narrowly defined as fictional works or accounts written in the style of a novel, personal narrative, or biography. Therefore, nonfiction novels will be included within the scope of the term Vietnam War literature.

Limitations

This bibliography is designed for those working with young adults in a curriculum area or for reading guidance. It includes annotations for fiction novels, personal narratives, biographies, and nonfiction novels in which an American soldier, officer, or military doctor or nurse is a main or central character and his or her military service experience in Vietnam is central to the theme of the work. This may include works dealing with the returning service personnel or the Vietnam veteran. Excluded are plays, short story collections, collective biographies or works, poetry collections, and books of photographs. Books by journalists about the time they spent in Vietnam are also excluded. The scope of this bibliography also excludes nonfiction books that give overall or specific factual events, outlines, overviews, and sequences of events of the Vietnam War.

The researcher does not claim to be an authority on the Vietnam War. The researcher has a working knowledge of the events during the war but leaves analysis of those events to others. The researcher, however, does claim to have some skill in

analyzing literature and viewed such works previously mentioned as literature.

To be considered for inclusion in the bibliography, the works must have been published and made available before January 1987. They must have been found in the Dysart-Geneseo Junior-Senior High School Library, in the Dysart Public Library, or in the Cedar Rapids Public Library, the regional library for Dysart and through which interlibrary loan requests are handled.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

This literature review examines three areas of concern to the subject of literature of the Vietnam War. These three areas are (a) teaching the Vietnam War, (b) Vietnam War literature publishing trends, and (c) themes in Vietnam War literature.

Teaching the Vietnam War

Although there are some who would like to forget the Vietnam War, most authorities feel that it must be taught (S. Taylor, 1981). Kennedy (1983) stresses that the war be given coverage in high school courses. He observes:

The current generation of high school students represents a new bloc of voting citizens. To have such a group coming into the political mainstream of the Republic with a gap in their historical knowledge does not bode well for the future development of United States foreign policy. (p. 183)

Dunn (1983) agrees with Kennedy by stating that current American foreign policy cannot be understood without a knowledge of Vietnam. He feels that the war and the impact it had on American society have shaped American policies. As the 1960s, according to Dunn, will be viewed as one of the most important periods of history, high school students should learn about it.

Today's high school students, the literature concedes, are generally ignorant of the events of the Vietnam War. Dunn (1983) observed that the students "have no knowledge of Vietnam.

Although they are aware that the term is constantly evoked for one reason or another, they have not the slightest idea of the dates, events, meaning, or controversies over the war" (p. 199). What little knowledge they do have of it has usually been garnered from recent movies. "Students are at the mercy of the entertainment industry's myth-strewn images of history" (Dunn, 1983, p. 198). Films including The Green Berets, The Deer Hunter, Apocalypse Now, The Boys in Company C, Coming Home, and The Killing Fields present different perspectives on the war, but the students tend to accept them as factual accounts rather than dramatized and sometimes inaccurate history (Dunn, 1983). Kennedy (1983) feels that these movies do not give a fair picture of what the war was about.

It is, of course, small wonder that students have little knowledge of the Vietnam War. In 1973 when the U.S. withdrew from the war, the members of the class of 1987 were four years old. To them, this war is history. Unfortunately, it is history that is rarely covered in school courses.

One problem in teaching the Vietnam War is the coverage it receives in standard American and world history textbooks. Williams (1985) mentions that while textbooks have given the subject more space in recent years, the interpretations are rarely similar. Teaching the Vietnam War by Griffen and Marclano (1979) evaluates textbook sections on the war. It analyzes the accuracy of various texts, presents factual information to inform teachers about the war and enables them to evaluate their own texts. The

Vietnam Era: A Guide to Teaching Resources (Indochina Curriculum Group, 1978) provides teachers with an annotated list of books, films, kits, and other resources. A related problem mentioned by Dunn (1983) is that most teachers have little or no preparation on the subject. Thus, they tend to avoid teaching it.

An even greater obstacle to teaching the Vietnam War haunts nearly every school that tries to teach the war in a survey of history course (Dunn, 1983). There is generally not enough time to spend more than a few days on the war. Williams (1985) quotes Shelly Weintraub, a teacher in Oakland, "As a teacher, you have to want to teach Vietnam to get around to it" (p. 75). "A highly desirable" approach recommended by S. Taylor (1981, p. 57) is to teach American-East Asian relations as a separate course offering a wider frame of reference to get away from an American bias. Kennedy (1983) suggests that a team approach be employed. "Social studies classes can stress the historical aspects to gain an awareness of events, while English classes study the literature to gain insight into the human impact that these events had on Americans" (Kennedy, 1983, p. 10).

The literature supports at least part of Kennedy's view. Dunn (1983), S. Taylor (1981), Novik (1985), Donelson and Nilson (1985), and Endres (1984) all believe that literature should be used in studying the war. Dunn (1983) cited a few personal narratives that his students have found especially moving or enlightening. Novels are a change of pace that "make the Vietnam

experience graphic for the students . . . and [portray the] horrors of conflict and the moral and ethical dilemmas it posed [as] exciting reading," states S. Taylor (1981, p. 62). Novik (1985) notes that through fiction, the past becomes more than just a record of people's struggles for survival.

Young adults are at a stage of reading development (Donelson and Nilson, 1985) where they become aware of the facts that are expressed in the novels they read. Older teens may begin to:

respond to the way these books raise questions about conformity, social pressures, justice, and all the other aspects of human frailties as well as strengths. . . . [S]tudents are ready to begin looking at shades of gray rather than black and white. (p. 41)

To truly understand the war, it needs to be viewed in those terms.

Fiction novels, personal narratives, and other examples of young adult literature may bring the students to this understanding. They add that authors of war novels tend to be concerned about the human--or inhuman--aspects of war and can acquaint young adults with war's effects on people.

Endres (1984) supports using literature to teach the Vietnam War, but doubts it will "humanize" (p. 28) students. He doubts that reading war literature will help America avoid "another Vietnam," but he does feel that "students will see an abstract historical event in human terms" (p. 28) by reading the literature. Endres believes that literature will make students actively explore their own beliefs.

Students are honest enough to realize that, given the set of circumstances described, they too might have [committed the same atrocious acts as the central character.] This is clearly the sort of analysis that only literary works can engender. Only by viewing a complex narrative line can we see the subtlety of the situation. (p. 29)

Thus, he feels that students may learn that literature is a means of exploring and evaluating the recent past and, therefore, a means of thinking about the future.

Vietnam War Literature Publishing Trends

Some curious publishing trends have developed in the genre of Vietnam War literature. For many years the subject went untouched. Naparsteck (1979) claims that many novels and other works had been written, but not published. Newman (Baldwin, 1983) believes many men came back from Vietnam and wrote a novel or memoirs "to get the horror of the experience off their chests, then hid their manuscripts away" (p. 35). Kakutani (1984) feels "many of these novels seem to have provided their authors with an emotional catharsis" (p. 39). Even the novels of catharsis that were not hidden away had a difficult time getting published.

Naparsteck (1979) supplies several reasons for this. One reason he cites is that in the late 1970s, Vietnam War works did not sell well. He claims that through 1979, only one fiction novel about the war was on the New York Times best sellers list. Because the war had been so thoroughly documented on television and through newspapers and magazines (Bell, 1978 and Naparsteck,

1979), the American public did not want to read about it (Baldwin, 1983). The novels that were published were, according to Wilson (American Notes . . . 1982), "unpopular, unheralded, perhaps reflecting the unpopularity of the war itself" (p. 80). Using this line of thought, Naparsteck disputes C.D.B. Bryan's implication (Naparsteck, 1979) that "the potentially good writers were smart enough to avoid the draft" (p. 37). He questions how Bryan knows the works were ever written if the publishers would not publish them.

Naparsteck (1979) claims that publishers received many war novels but did not publish them. One reason the works went unpublished is that the war was just as unpopular with publishers as it was with the rest of American society. Another reason, perhaps more important, is that most of the novels were written by Vietnam veterans who had never been published before, and, he notes, it is virtually impossible for a first-time novelist to get published.

American public attitude and publishing trends have changed since 1979 when Naparsteck wrote his article. "America is just beginning to exorcise the demons," writes William Goldstein (1983, p. 34). Baldwin (1983) believes the war is still very much a part of America's consciousness--Americans think of it when they hear about Central America, when they recall their youth, when they see veterans in uniform gather together at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. Tim O'Brien, a Vietnam veteran and

critically acclaimed war novelist, feels that America's change in attitude is not so much an acceptance or coming to terms with Vietnam as it is a chance for Americans to relive what they believe are their personal experiences with the war (Schroeder, 1984). O'Brien bases this idea on his belief that many Americans felt they had been through the war. They felt as though they were eyewitnesses because they saw the war on television every night. Thus, by reading war novels and memoirs, he believes Americans are "reliving and revalidating what they perceived as a personal experience" (p. 146). Veteran and author Nicholas Proffitt (Goldstein, 1983) states, though, that the public's beliefs have changed. "[The war] was a mistake and a tragic war, but it wasn't the fault of the men who fought it" (p. 42). Thus, the public is more willing to accept these men and the stories they tell.

For whatever the reason, there has been a change in Americans' attitudes, and publishers are buying and putting out many more novels about the Vietnam War. Those who were young in the '60s and '70s are now in powerful positions in the publishing business, and they tend to acquire more Vietnam works (Baldwin, 1983). Publishers also see a change in the writers of these works. "We're definitely going to see many more Vietnam novels, because the generation of writers best equipped to tell us about the Vietnam era is now ready to face the challenge in their own work," observed Austin Olney (Baldwin, 1983, p.34), an editor at Houghton Mifflin. Seymour Lawrence (Baldwin, 1983), an editor

with Delacorte, feels the 20-year "generation of gestation" (p. 34), the time passed between the event and the best literature about the event, has been shortened with the Vietnam War and its literature.

Perhaps it is this shortened "generation period" that has created one of the major differences in perception surrounding the literature. While most critics and authors feel that the war is ripe for literary picking, there are differences in perception about the type of literature it should and does produce. Puhr (1984) notes that like any other novel, Vietnam novels contain elements of satire, documentation, and humor. They contain both stereotyped characters and well-developed characters. Some give only a simple treatment to the war, while others are more complex. This, though, is not the controversy. There is a common theme or idea that because Vietnam was a different type of war, it requires a different sort of literature produced about it.

Vietnam was a war different from any other in modern American history. Palm (1983) describes the typical World War II platoon as being a melting pot of every social class in American society. The platoón stayed together for the duration of the war, resulting in close male comradery. The literature of World War II reflects this. It is also "marked by a sense of heroism, idealism, and patriotism, and thus promotes an upbeat view of war" (Herzog, 1980, p. 681). Americans' experiences in Vietnam were vastly different from World War II experiences. Palm (1983) states that

the infantry platoons in Vietnam were generally made up of lower middle class members who were high school dropouts or graduates. There were few college-educated soldiers. Soldiers put in their 365 days and then were sent home to start up again with their lives. "[The] unfamiliar geography, constantly shifting official pronouncements, lack of discernable objectives and decaying support at home" (Myers, 1984, p. 121) all served to make Vietnam a different war than any other. Kakutani (1984) asserts that for most soldiers, the war had an "episodic quality: ambushes and fire-fights, interspersed with long periods of monotonous waiting,... It was frequently difficult if not impossible to tell which side was winning or falling behind, losing ground or winning [it]" (p. 39).

Because Vietnam was not fought like any other war, the literature that resulted from it is not like other war literature. The typical fiction novels about other wars include a rite of passage, a romance, a mix of ethnic and social backgrounds, and portrayals of suffering and heroism (Bryan, 1984). Although Bryan disagrees with her analysis, he does quote Elaine Kendall, a reviewer for the Los Angeles Times, "Like any other war they relive, these books [about Vietnam] do not fit the established mold. Like that war they are bewildering, savage, irrational, horrific and unresolved" (p. 67). Bryan believes that the remarkable novels of other wars, such as World War I's All Quiet on the Western Front, also have these same qualities. Bell (1979)

notes that the fine line between fiction and personal narrative, somewhat blurred in most war tales, is nearly non-existent in Vietnam War novels. There is an "obsessive minuteness of detail" (p. 75) about them. This is what makes the fiction about Vietnam different from fiction about other wars. It also makes for more nonfiction novels.

Kakutani (1984) feels that Vietnam is "resistant to fictional treatment" (p. 39). Even Bryan (1984) agrees, by observing that the length of service that dictates the chronological narrative of the books is not artificial enough to become fiction. O'Brien (Schroeder, 1984) tends to agree also. He states that many of the fiction novels should have been published as nonfiction. "They should have been cast as war memoirs. They don't do what novels ought to do, which is to let your imagination add to memories" (p. 147). McCabe (1986) also supports this view. Other than personal narratives, he thinks there has been little good fiction written about the war. "It was as if the manifold horrors of that war proved too stifling for the creative mind of the writer" (p. 30).

One reason for the lack of good fiction may be that most writers, especially those who are veterans, are engaged in what Beidler (1982) calls "sense-making." He contends that through their works--memoirs, personal narratives, oral histories, nonfiction novels, and some fiction novels (most of which are thinly disguised nonfiction)--the veterans are trying to make sense of the war and their action. Bryan (1984) describes the

books as saying, "This is what it was like. This is what happened. This is what I saw. This is for the record" (p. 70). Hence, they do not write fiction. They are, as Palm (1983) writes, searching for a usable past. In writing about Vietnam personal narratives, Gordon Taylor (1980) observed that there is an "inward questing" (p. 297) in the narratives. It is as though the writers are clarifying their identities, noting and repairing "damaged mental and moral tissue" (p. 298). The goals of such nonfiction works may be, as Bryan (1984) quotes Ronald Glasser, "to offset the sinking feeling we all had . . . that nothing would be remembered except the confusion and the politics" (p. 70). Tom Herbert (Goldstein, 1983), editor of Vietnam War Newsletter, believes that as the veterans get older, their memoirs of the war become more valuable to them. The novels, fiction and nonfiction, preserve their memories and "they break down the loneliness. We are reminded that there are others out there who went through what we did" (p. 37).

Themes in Vietnam War Literature

In both novels and personal narratives of the Vietnam War, the theme of lost innocence appears to be common. Kakutani (1984) points out that the novels and narratives are not only discussing the innocence and optimism lost to the character or narrator, but also to the nation. While some of the narratives follow a typical coming-of-age scenario, some do not. Some of the protagonists

emerge from Vietnam as insane, emotionally damaged, drug-addicted, or hollow shells of the people they once were. Bryan (1984) observed that the most moving and heartbreaking scenes in the works are when the loss of innocence is realized.

Hinrichs (1985) and Bryan (1984) are two who have noted the stock cast of characters in Vietnam War novels and narratives. Bryan went so far as to describe the "Generic Vietnam War Narrative": "In his platoon our young man meets Day-Tripper, who is stoned, . . . Rebel, the crazy white guy, . . . Juice, the cool black dude . . ." (p.68). Kakutani (1984) noted this also, mentioning that the characters are "vague, interchangeable nonentities, distinguished by nicknames or nervous habits, or stereotypes straight from Central Casting" (p. 39). He adds that the reason for this was the one-year term most soldiers served did not allow for a great deal of comradery.

Hinrichs (1985) looked at the values Vietnam War works teach to young adult readers. He found that there were seven different and conflicting values presented: (a) the ordinary soldiers of Vietnam were different from soldiers of other wars, (b) the majority of commanders were incompetent, (c) the Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to win the war, (d) the U.S. could have won the war if it had ignored the anti-war protests, (e) the soldiers who fought in the Vietnam War were courageous, (f) war is not always the best solution to a conflict, and (g) the novels and narratives center on the "introspective feelings of the soldier"

(p. 2). Stewart (1981) also identifies some of these same values. She cites several novels and memoirs that are critical of American military commanders and the South Vietnamese soldiers. She, too, finds that one of the values taught to the reader is that the American soldiers were courageous. However, she believes that with close scrutiny, some of the supposedly courageous acts are little more than efficiency, with no concern for morality or "the human impact of [the] acts" (p. 64). Because of the treatment of some of these values, Stewart believes that novels and memoirs alone cannot teach the Vietnam War, but she does support their use, as "they familiarize students with the past as it was experienced on the emotional and psychological levels" (p. 64).

The literature supports the assumptions crucial to this study. The literature backs up the idea that the Vietnam War should be taught in high school. Novels and personal narratives about the war may be used to teach the war and personalize it for students. In fact, the use of these works is encouraged. Most authorities look at the war as being different from those previous to it. The literature of the Vietnam War reflects this difference as there seems to be few fiction novels but many personal accounts and memoirs. These works were generally written by the veteran, as Beldler (1982) notes, to help him get a sense of meaning from his experiences. The theme of lost innocence is a common one in Vietnam War literature, and it frequently parallels America's loss

of innocence. Other themes and ideas also pervade the literature and may be used for points of discussion and study.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Contemporary history is generally difficult to teach. Little scholarly work has been done and not enough time has passed for a thorough analysis to be done or a perspective over time to have been gained. The Vietnam War is an example of such contemporary history. It is still an emotional subject and a controversial subject that many schools avoid. Another problem is that most history courses, taught chronologically, do not have or make time necessary to cover recent history. The researcher feels, though, that the subject must be taught. It is part of America's past that still influences policy-making today. S. Taylor (1981) notes, "[It] is their heritage, and its lessons may shape all of our futures" (p. 57). The Vietnam War is appropriate content for American and world history courses, social problems or current issues classes, and English or literature courses.

In teaching the Vietnam War, the instructor may elect to have students read fiction novels, personal narratives, and nonfiction novels about the war. There are several reasons for doing this. History, social issues, and literature courses too frequently focus on dates, events, and facts. Students see the action of a group of people as sterile, somehow removed from any impact on "real life." Ideas and issues may be too abstract for their understanding. By reading novels and other works about the

Vietnam War, students focusing on a real or fictional character may make the abstract concrete. The student gains an awareness of events through personal experience. They allow the students to see the sights and feel the emotions of war. The use of literature "can deepen [the students'] understanding of the past, the present, and the future" (Novik, 1985, p. 74).

To be included in the annotated bibliography, the work had to be a fictional novel, personal narrative, memoir or biography, or nonfiction novel in which an American soldier, officer, or military doctor or nurse is a main or central character and his or her military service experience in Vietnam is central to the theme of the work. The title must have been published prior to January, 1987. To be considered for inclusion, the work must have been in the Dysart-Geneseo Junior-Senior High School Library, in the Dysart Public Library, or in the Cedar Rapids Public Library. The Dysart-Geneseo and Dysart Public libraries were chosen because they are available to the researcher's students for use. Because these collections are somewhat limited, the Cedar Rapids Public Library, the Regional Library for the city of Dysart, was also chosen.

It was assumed that titles found in the Dysart-Geneseo, Dysart Public, or Cedar Rapids libraries have already met selection criteria in order to be included in their respective established collections.

The researcher used the published bibliographies Vietnam War Literature by John Newman, Vietnam in Prose and Film by James C. Wilson, The United States in the Vietnam War: A Selected Annotated Bibliography by Louis A. Peake, and Those Who Were There by Merrit Clifton to identify titles which fit the criteria.

To select materials for this bibliography, the researcher searched the catalogs of the three libraries. The subject headings "Vietnamese War, 1961-1975--Biography," "Vietnamese War, 1961-1975--Personal Narrative," and "Vietnamese War, 1961-1975--Fiction" were used to locate the works. The researcher located each work and determined whether it fit the criteria. To search the catalog of the Cedar Rapids Public Library, the researcher requested through interlibrary loan a listing of titles using those subject headings. The researcher was sent a listing of all works under the subject heading "Vietnamese Conflict, 1961-1975." The researcher then used the published bibliographies to determine if the work listed fit the criteria. For titles too recent to be included in the established bibliographies, the researcher ordered the title through interlibrary loan. When the title was received, the researcher then determined if it fit the criteria.

The researcher read all of the works that fit the criteria. A record was kept of each title read. Recorded data included full bibliographic citation, price of work if it was still in print, plot summary, author's status as Vietnam veteran, and data

required for two hypotheses. Books in Print was consulted to determine if the work was still in print.

The annotated bibliography is divided into two sections: Fiction and Nonfiction. Fiction novels are included in the Fiction section. The Nonfiction section includes personal narratives, memoirs, biographies, and nonfiction novels.

Within the Fiction and Nonfiction sections, the entries are alphabetized by the author's last name. Each entry includes full bibliographic citation of the volume the researcher read, price of the work if it is still in print, and a plot summary or general overview of each work. A notation was made concerning the author's status as a Vietnam veteran. A notation was also made concerning the secondary characterization and the values listed in the hypothesis.

CHAPTER FOUR

LITERATURE OF THE VIETNAM WAR
ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Fiction

Anderson, Robert A. Service for the Dead. New York: Arbor House, 1986. \$15.95.

Marine private Mike Allison, known as "Crazy Mike" to his platoon, arrives home after having been wounded in the Vietnamese War. He finds his parents' conversations trivial and unimportant, and finds his thoughts returning more and more to his experience in Vietnam. Here he met "Captain Blood," who wanted to win the hearts and minds of the Vietnamese; Crane, the angry medic; C.C., the gunner who delighted in taking pictures of all the events of the war--including the dead; the Professor, Mike's good friend who keeps trying to figure out the war; and Longo, who finds sanity in describing their part of the war as a movie, and coming up with additional scenes and characters. When a new lieutenant comes in and actively seeks out the NVA and VC, the "movie" stops and the wounded Mike must deal with reality.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran

Secondary characterization: Stereotyped

Values: American involvement was wrong.

Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in other wars.

Bodey, Donald. F. N. G.. New York: Ballantine Books, 1985. \$3.95.

Gabriel Sauers, of Echo Company's second squad, arrived in Vietnam in 1969. He and "Callmeblack" came to the squad together as new guys. The old guys of the squad - Prophet, Chickenfeed, Bull Durham, Pops, and Peacock - don't trust them until they have proven themselves under fire. They are given that opportunity on the first night when the NVA fires on their landing zone. Gabe and Callmeblack learn the ropes of being a grunt humping through the mountains and setting up ambushes. They are now close to the old guys, close enough to cover for them when one "frags" (throws a grenade at) an officer. The short-timers rotate home or are wounded and sent home, leaving Sauers and Callmeblack as the old guys, showing the ropes to the new guys.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: American involvement was wrong.
 American commanders were incompetent.
 Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in
 other wars.

Butler, Robert Olen. On Distant Ground. New York: Knopf, 1985. \$14.95.

Set in 1975, during the fall of Saigon, Captain David Fleming's wife just gave birth to their first child, a son. Fleming, a former intelligence officer is also facing a court martial. Four years ago, in Vietnam, he tracked down a captured VC leader--Tuyen--and set him free. During the court martial, he thinks back to his time in Vietnam and begins to suspect that the reason his lover broke off their affair was that she was pregnant. Unable to explain his actions during the war to the jury, David is given a dishonorable discharge. Through a CIA operative, David returns to Vietnam to search for his son. He finds him, and in leaving the country, is captured. Now an NV official, Tuyen, who realized what David had seen four years earlier, that the two men thought alike, comes to his aid. Interesting scenes of Saigon as it was falling, and of CIA intelligence operations.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: None of the four tested.

DeMille, Nelson. Word of Honor. New York: Warner, 1985. \$17.50.

Eighteen years after the Tet Offensive at Hue, Ben Tyson learns of a just published book which tells of his platoon's massacre of 100 Vietnamese and Westerners at the Misericorde Hospital. One of the sixteen men broke his word of honor and talked about the events that took place on February 15, 1968. After the book was published, Tyson is brought back into the army so that he can be tried. Tyson does little to clear his name and at his court-martial hearing, evidence is presented against him. However, at the sentencing, further evidence is presented as extenuating circumstances. While the majority of the book deals with present-day events, there is enough information given about Tyson's time in Vietnam to classify this as a Vietnam War novel. We want to find out what happened at Misericorde Hospital and why Steven Brandt, the medic, turned against Tyson.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran

Secondary characterization: Non-stereotyped
 Values: Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in other wars.

Dodge, Ed. Dau. New York: Berkley Books, 1984. \$3.50.

The Vietnamese word "dau" means pain. Eighteen-year-old Morgan Preston, a sergeant on a mobility team, bore a heavy burden of pain. Out of seventy men assigned to the mobility teams, Preston was the only one who returned to the U.S. alive. His best friend was killed in a VC ambush. His roommate committed suicide after a planeload of buddies crashed in Cambodia. A close friend he made in the hospital was killed in a VC attack. And Tam, a napalm-scarred teenager who became his lover, did not return to their apartment in Saigon after a visit to her home village of My Lai. Haunted by their ghosts in his dreams and by voices in his mind, Preston sinks into schizophrenic depression. Returning to the U.S., he sinks deeper and deeper into mental illness. Preston finally learns what it takes for him to put the voices and ghosts to rest.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: South Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to win the war.
 Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in other wars.

Dunn, Mary Lois. The Man in the Box: A Story from Vietnam. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968. O.P.

Chau Li, a Montagnard boy, had been the son of the village chief, who had been killed years earlier by the Cong. One day the Cong put another man, an American, in the same box (cage) in which his father had been killed. He knows that he must get the man out of the box. One night, he (and a Cong supporter who befriended him) sneaks the man out of the box and hides in a mountain cave. Chau Li nurses the ill "Dah Vid" back to health and eventually leads him to a village where American soldiers have a base camp. David and Chau Li, by this time, have come to understand, trust, and love each other. David promises to take Chau Li to America with him, as his son, but when David is being loaded onto the dustoff chopper (medical helicopter) the Cong fire on the village and David and Chau Li are separated. David is taken to a hospital in Da Nang and Chau Li will be sent on the next chopper. However, before the next chopper arrives, the Cong fire on the village and David's American friends are killed. In a daze Chau Li takes a sampan and heads down the river to find his friend.

Author's status: Not a veteran or journalist.
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: None of the four tested.

Dye, Dale A. Platoon, based on screenplay by Oliver Stone.
 New York: Charter Books, 1986. \$3.50.

Chris Taylor, a college-educated preppie, joined the Army looking for manhood. In late 1967, he joined Bravo's second platoon. Officially Lt. Wolfe is in charge, but the real leader is Sgt. Barnes, on his second tour of Nam. After Barnes murders some civilians and allows the platoon to run rampant through a village, his leadership is challenged by Sgt. Elias, a thoughtful leader. They must work together, though, when the platoon discovers a series of bunkers recently vacated by the NVA. Shortly after this the platoon is overrun by the NVA during the beginning of the Tet Offensive. Wounded, Taylor realizes that both Barnes and Elias are a part of him, just as their evil/good struggle is a part of humanity.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: American involvement was wrong.
 American commanders were incompetent.
 Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in
 other wars.

Fuller, Jack. Fragments. New York: William Morrow and
 Company, 1984. \$12.95.

Narrator Bill Morgan, a thoughtful, introspective man, first met Jim Neumann in boot camp. Neumann, who was to become Morgan's best friend, was a natural leader. Assigned to different units in Vietnam, Neumann transferred to the Blues - teams that provided security for downed helicopters. Morgan was content in the first Cavalry, until an inept lieutenant led his platoon into an ambush. He then joined Neumann in the Blues. During the "slow season," Neumann adopted the village of Xuan The and began to rebuild the old French dispensary. Falling in love with a Vietnamese girl and her family, Neumann drifted farther and farther from the Blues, spending his time in the village. Their now serene view of the Vietnam War was shattered, though, on the day Neumann killed his adopted family, and Morgan is left with the fragments of their lives.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped

Values: American involvement was wrong.
 American commanders were incompetent.
 South Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to win
 the war.
 Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in
 other wars.

Glasser, Ronald J. Another War, Another Peace. New York:
 Summit Books, 1985. \$14.95.

David is a doctor, assigned to the 40th Base Hospital. His regular duty was to go on Medcaps - Medical Civilian Action Programs, dispensing pills and medicine to Vietnamese villagers. Tom is the expert soldier assigned to drive and protect him on these excursions. David wants to win "hearts and minds" through his medicine; Tom only wants to see that he and the doctor arrive safely back at the 40th. Gradually, the two come to understand each other - Tom begins learning medicine, and David begins to learn about combat. Unfortunately, he learns more about combat than he ever intended, in this poignant novel set in the days just before the Tet Offensive.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: American involvement was wrong.
 American commanders were incompetent.
 Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in
 other wars.

Glick, Allen. Winters Coming, Winters Gone. New York:
 Pinnacle Books, Inc., 1984. \$15.95.

This gripping novel follows Marine David Schrader, a Missouri farm boy, to Vietnam, to the 1972 Democratic National Convention and his activities with Vietnam Veterans Against the War, to 1979 in Austin, Texas, where David eventually tries to learn to live again.

While in Vietnam, David learns to love and trust Mingo Calderone, a Mexican-American. When he, Mingo and the rest of their platoon are assigned to protect the village of Ap Do and train its militia, he and Mingo meet Mr. Li, an honorable man who only wants freedom for his family. After a major firefight, the platoon is withdrawn and the people of Ap Do are "resettled" to the south. After the war, David drifts, finally ending up in Austin, Texas, working as a bartender in a strip-joint. Here he falls into the world of drugs and corruption, and he tries to drive away the disturbing dreams that haunt him - trying to drive away the winter in his heart.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in other wars.

Grant, Zalin. Over the Beach. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1986. \$18.95.

Over the Beach is the story of the Navy fliers on board the U.S.S. Oriskany. Their mission was to bomb Hanoi and other regions of North Vietnam. Fact and fiction mingle together as the narrative revolves around the bombing of the Co Trai bridge in the years 1966, 1967, and 1972. The narrative is broken with the stories of various pilots, the wife of an MIA pilot, and a POW. The backgrounds and attitudes of these men, as they carry out their duties, are explored, as is the air war over Vietnam itself.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Journalist in Vietnam
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in other wars.

Halberstam, David. One Very Hot Day. New York: Warner Books, 1967, 1984. \$3.50

One Very Hot Day is the story of three officers - two American advisors and one ARVN lieutenant in 1965. Lt. Anderson, an up-and-coming military man who wants to learn as much as possible about Vietnam, and Capt. Beaupre, a tired veteran of two previous wars who just wants to get in his twenty years and escape his wife, are advisors to an ARVN unit, who don't really want to go on this operation - sweep three villages and meet up with the two other companies in the division. Neither does Lt. Thuong, a proud, aggressive but realistic man. All three men feel they are headed into an ambush. As they walk along on the very hot day, each considers why he is there, what he is doing, and his failures and successes. As the other two companies are ambushed, they know they are next.

Author's status: Journalist in Vietnam
 Secondary characterization: Non-stereotyped
 Values: American commanders were incompetent.
 South Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to win the war.

Heinemann, Larry. Paco's Story. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1986. \$15.95.

Paco Sullivan was at Fire Base Harriette, duty that was a "piece of cake," until it was overrun by the North Vietnamese. Out of ninety-four men, in A company, Paco was the only survivor, lying for forty-eight hours among the stinking, rotting bodies of his friends. Paco watches his own arms and legs bleed and clot, watches the maggots crawl in his wounds, and feels the pain of the burned skin. A medic from B company finds him and Paco is sent to the hospital. Back in the U.S., Paco drifts into a small Texas town and finds a job as a dishwasher in a diner. Haunted by the young woman in his boarding house, Paco is also haunted by the ghosts of friends who died at the Harriette. Everywhere he looks - at others and himself - he is haunted by "the Nam."

Author's status: Vietnam Veteran

Secondary characterization: Stereotyped

Values: Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in other wars.

La Fontaine, George. The Long Walk. New York: Putnam, 1986. \$17.95.

In 1973, as the U.S. was pulling out of Vietnam, Corpsman Stanley Baker and his interpreter, actually an NVA doctor, are sent to meet two Viet Cong men. The VC released to Baker an American POW, bound with wires to prevent his running away (which he had done several times over his nine years of captivity). Baker realizes the man's fragile mental condition and tries to shield him from the press and preying commanders. The man, originally misidentified as a Navy lieutenant but really Special Forces Sgt. Frank Turco, resists all treatment, not realizing that he is in the hands of Americans, but believing the hospitals and planes to be clever Communist ploys to secure a confession from him. Baker leaves the sick Turco in the hands of Dr. Wyner, a psychiatrist.

Three years later, Baker, now a doctor on his Navajo reservation, meets with Dr. Wyner at a convention. Wyner tells Baker that no progress has been made with Turco. Baker begins to delve into Turco's past, and hoping to help mend the sick mind, takes him back to the Arizona reservation, where Turco begins his long walk home.

Author's status: Unable to determine

Secondary characterization: Stereotyped

Values: None of the four tested.

Mason, Bobbie Ann. In Country. New York: Harper and Row, 1985. \$15.45.

Seventeen-year-old Sam Hughes is obsessed with the Vietnam War. Her father was killed in it in 1966, and her Uncle Emmett, with whom she lives, suffers health problems because of the war. Emmett is "shiftless," having no job and not really caring about much, except Sam. Sam eventually discovers her father's diary and letters. His talk of "killing the gooks" is too much for Sam, and she runs away to the swamps to mimic the way her father lived in Vietnam. Emmett finds her and convinces her those attitudes were developed for survival. Emmett, Sam, and her father's mother visit the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the healing process begins.

Author's status: Not a veteran or journalist

Secondary characterization: Stereotyped

Values: Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in other wars.

Proffitt, Nicholas. Gardens of Stone. New York: Carroll and Graf, 1983. O.P. (Paperback by C & G, \$3.50)

This is the story of Platoon Sgt. Clell Hazard, veteran of WW II, Korea, and two tours in Vietnam. Hazard is now a part of the Old Guard, which participates in the burial services at Arlington National Cemetery. One of his new platoon privates is the enthusiastic Jack Willow, the son of Hazard's good friend. Willow, anxious to see action in Vietnam, soon becomes a buddy - almost a son - of Hazard and Goody Nelson, another friend of Willow's father. Hazard and Nelson try to discourage Willow's interest in Vietnam but realize they cannot. They then try to give him the essential training he will need to survive. This narrative is intercut with Willow's experiences in Vietnam. An interesting book, because it contrasts war activists with two lifers upset with the war they believe is wrong and the way the Army is running things in Vietnam.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran

Journalist in Vietnam

Secondary characterization: Non-stereotyped

Values: American involvement was wrong.

American commanders were incompetent.

South Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to win the war.

Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in other wars.

Values: American involvement was wrong.
 American commanders were incompetent.
 Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in
 other wars.

Weinberg, Larry. War Zone. Toronto: Bantam Books, 1985.
 \$2.25.

Woody Glover, in 1967, lives in the Tennessee hills. His family has had a long-running feud with the Griggs family, who live just up the mountain. When Woody's brother Sonny is accidentally killed by a Griggs, it is up to Woody to seek revenge by killing the eldest Griggs boy - Del. Del, trying to escape Woody, joins the Army. Woody does also. He finds that he and Del must work together in basic training. After his grandfather is killed by Del's father, Woody follows Del to Vietnam. Woody is a good soldier, until being the only survivor of an attack sends him to the brink. Del tries to get Woody back into "soldiering" and dies trying to save Woody's life. When Woody returns home, he finds the feud between the two families renewed. However, he has had enough of war and has learned the lessons Del tried to teach him.

A truly bad book, the war scenes are improbable and unrealistic.

Author's status: Not a veteran or journalist
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: American involvement was wrong.

Wright, Stephen. Meditations in Green. New York: Scribner's, 1983. \$14.95.

Specialist James Griffin, a member of the 1069th Military Intelligence Group, starts his tour of duty clear-eyed and hard working. He spends his days and nights diligently examining aerial photos of bombing missions and defoliation. As the war goes on, though, he begins to decay, with drugs becoming his main reason for existence. The decay has caught up with nearly everyone at the 1069th MIG. Major Holly, who demands all buildings be repainted and flowers planted, eventually constructs tunnels so he can go from Command Post to his quarters without being frugged. Wendell films everything hoping to make the Vietnam War movie. Trips feeds LSD to an innocent boy, who is eventually sent home as a zombie.

Scenes from Vietnam are cut with scenes from Griffin's readjustment to "The World," where Trips persuades him to stalk a man he believes is Sgt. Austin, an NCO Trips didn't like. Griffin finally realizes that he must be a character in his own life and responds to the forces working on him.

Smith, Steven Phillip. American Boys. New York: Avon Books, 1984, (1975). \$3.50

Four boys left the Army base in Fulda, Germany, for the excitement of Vietnam. Slagel had been a college football player, now learning to love the thrill that came with combat. Padgett had been an artist, now trying to maintain a sense of honor among the ruins of the war. Chambers had been a boy haunted by his brothers' deaths. In Vietnam, he tried to lay a foundation for building a life. Morgan had been a rich boy who felt he had to experience hardship - "to pay his dues." He hadn't counted on doing it through a haze of alcohol and drugs. These four found more than excitement in Vietnam; they found alcohol, corruption, destruction, and death. This character study examines their struggles against these elements of war.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran

Secondary characterization: Stereotyped

Values: American involvement was wrong.

American commanders were incompetent.

South Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to win the war.

Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in other wars.

Tate, Donald. Bravo Burning. New York: Scribner's, 1986. \$15.95.

Bravo Burning traces the Army's Bravo Company ("Always First") from training in Louisiana to Vietnam. Seen through the eyes of Mike Kipp, we meet his fellow grunts: Roland, a would-be hippie; Ching-Ching, a drugged Asian-American; "Red Dog" Peacock and his cousin Canny, two southern boys who want to whip the VC; Harry - the journalist who begged to be sent to Vietnam, and when he was turned down, enlisted. Until their first patrol in Vietnam, they are led by "Cool Breeze" Carson, a veteran of two tours of Vietnam. Turning point of novel - Hill 711 - the "Always First" Company takes hill 711. Kipp, spurred on by a "Dear John" letter from his wife, leads the company in his enthusiasm to kill. Once they reach the top of Hill 711, though, they are stranded there for almost 20 days. The NVA regularly fires on them and shoots down any helicopters trying to evacuate or resupply them. NVA sappers finally break through their decimated lines and Bravo company engages in hand-to-hand combat. Of the "lovely words" of praise for the few survivors, "perhaps a few of them were even true." (p. 213)

Author's status: Journalist in Vietnam

Secondary characterization: Stereotyped

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: American involvement was wrong.
 American commanders were incompetent.
 Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in
 other wars.

NONFICTION

Anderson, William C. Bat-21. Toronto: Bantam Books, 1980.
 \$3.50

Fifty-three-year-old Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Icaal Eugène Hambleton, a navigator with classified Strategic Air Command information, was the only survivor who ejected from his crashing plane just south of the DMZ. Unfortunately, he fell behind enemy lines, near a busy resupply route for the NVA. Bat-21 (his code name) tells of the week he spent dug into a foxhole while he awaited rescue. From his position, he called in artillery strikes against the NVA, befriended a caterpillar, and tried to maintain good spirits. When gunships were shot down trying to reach him, his superiors realized traditional rescue attempts wouldn't work. They devised an elaborate plan based on Ham's love of golf to lead him through enemy territory to the river, and finally, four days later, to safety. Through it all, Birdog, the Forward Air Controller, guided him.

The author's epilogue notes where the book deviates from fact.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: American commanders were incompetent.

Brennan, Matthew. Brennan's War. Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1985. \$17.95.

Brennan joined the Army in 1965 and was stationed in Germany. Upon coming back to the U.S. to attend school, he learned of the battles fought by the 1st Air Cavalry. Requesting a transfer to Vietnam, he hoped to join the 1st Air Cav. His first year in Vietnam was spent in the rear. He reenlisted and became a forward observer with the 9th Cav. After serving his time, he returned home to Indiana, just weeks before the Tet Offensive began. For seven months Brennan tried to forget Vietnam, to become a student, and to live a normal life. He found it difficult - always looking at the tree line, waiting for an attack. He rejoined the Army, only to find it changed. In those seven months, he found the men had lost their pride and determination. They took the easy way out and often settled for the most inefficient means of

accomplishing something. Promoted to lieutenant, Brennan "reformed" a troop, only to have a captain's inefficiency and stupidity kill or wound most of his men. His attitude about the war changed, Brennan came home.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: American involvement was wrong.
 American commanders were incompetent.
 South Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to win
 the war.
 Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from other wars.

Broughton, Jack. Thud Ridge. Toronto: Bantam Books, 1985
 (1969). \$3.50.

Jack Broughton and other Air Force pilots like him flew the mighty "Thuds" - F-105 Thunderchief bombers - on missions over North Vietnam. He recounts the many missions he flew, the strict "rules of bombing" warfare he followed, the tragedy and loss he felt when friends' planes went down, and the exhilaration of flying the great machines. He tells of flying while avoiding Russian-made MiGs, SAMs (surface to air missiles), and fire from the ground. He also tells of the life-threatening mistakes made by high-level command.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: American commanders were incompetent.

Caputo, Philip. A Rumor of War. New York: Ballantine Books, 1977. \$3.50.

Philip Caputo joined the Marines for adventure, and as part of the U.S.'s 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade, he saw plenty. He was among the first Americans to fight in Vietnam - a platoon leader fighting near DaNang. A few months later, he was transferred to the rear where he became "the officer in charge of the dead," responsible for keeping the body count tally correct. 2nd Lieutenant Caputo later transferred from that assignment to again become a platoon leader. During one offensive, he lost control of his platoon. Caputo gave his permission to capture two VC informers and implied his permission to kill them. Unfortunately, his men coldbloodedly killed two civilian boys. Caputo and his men are court-martialed, but found innocent. The book ends with Caputo's return to Vietnam 10 years later, during the fall of Saigon. The book offers Caputo's analysis of events, both at the time they occurred and 10 years later.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: American involvement was wrong.
 American commanders were incompetent.
 South Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to win
 the war.
 Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from other wars.

Clark, Johnnie M. Guns Up! New York: Ballantine Books, 1984.
 \$3.50.

The life expectancy of a machine gunner once a firefight started was seven seconds. Eighteen-year-old Marine Pfc. Johnnie Clark was a machine gunner who beat those odds. He and his best friend Chan arrived in Vietnam with the Tet Offensive in full swing. They were told to link up an "old salt," Red, who taught them the ropes of survival in Vietnam. When Red died, they became the "old salts." Each wounded twice, watching both friends and new "boots" die around them, they relied on their friendship, humor, and faith in God to get them through.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: American commanders were incompetent.
 Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from other wars.

Coe, Charles. Young Man in Vietnam. New York: Four Winds Press, 1968. O.P.

Told in 2nd person, this unusual narrative traces Coe's time in Vietnam as a Marine lieutenant. This reads almost as a diary - detailing incidents such as interrogating VC prisoners, setting up a surprise attack, losing good friend and veteran "Gunny" Mac, getting wounded and sent to Japan to finish out his year's tour of duty. Upon his return to the U.S., he feels different from the average citizen.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in
 other wars.

Denton, Jeremiah. When Hell Was in Session. N.P.: Hopper, 1982. O.P.

On July 18, 1965, Commander Jeremiah Denton, an expert in airborne electronics, antisubmarine warfare, and air defense, was shot down over North Vietnam. He was captured and taken to Hoa Lo

Prison, known as Hanoi Hilton. The prisoners, through secretive communications, agreed to follow the code of conduct. For a few months, there was little torture at the prison, but as the war began to escalate, conditions began to get worse. Food was virtually nonexistent, and at one point, Denton was bound and kept in a darkened room for several days until he wrote a fictitious "biography" for the North Vietnamese to use. He was also tortured because he would not sign a confession of "crimes against the Vietnamese people." In mid-1966, Denton was selected to be interviewed by the press. During these interviews, Denton spelled out "TORTURE" by blinking in Morse code. Torture and difficult conditions continued to be commonplace. As the end of the war grew near, though, the men had almost free run of the prison, and after seven-and-one-half years as a POW, Jeremiah Denton returned home.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: None of the four tested.

Donovan, David. Once a Warrior King: Memories of an Officer in Vietnam. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1985. \$15.95.

David Donovan was a first lieutenant on a MAT [team] - Mobile Advisory Team. These five-men teams were assigned to a district in South Vietnam. They were to live and work in the Vietnamese villages - training the villagers for war, providing minimal medical care, and assisting the Vietnamese with problems brought about by the war or the Americans. They were also to harass the VC and keep an eye on their activities. Donovan succeeded in his job so well after taking charge of his MAT that the VC put a price on his head. He held the Vietnamese people in respect, appreciating their culture and traditions, and came to love the people he served. Well-respected by the Vietnamese, he was initiated into a Hoa Hao honor society - the Warrior Kings. After coming home, he tried to return to a normal life but was bothered by thoughts of Vietnam. These disturbing feelings rested much easier after he attended the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.

A glossary of military and Vietnamese terms is included. This is an excellent book for students to read, as it is one of the few works that is complimentary of the Vietnamese culture.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: American commanders were incompetent.

Downs, Frederick Jr. Aftermath: A Soldier's Return from Vietnam. New York: Berkley Books, 1984. \$3.50.

Aftermath picks up where The Killing Zone left off. Frederick Downs was wounded by a Bouncing Betty land mine in early January of 1968. Aftermath tells the story of his flight from death. Downs lost his left arm and nearly lost his legs and right arm. He tells of the field and evacuation hospitals where his physical pain was almost unbearable. What kept him going was the belief that he would return to his unit, where he was needed. He was eventually sent back to the U.S. to Fitzsimmons Army Hospital in Denver, Colorado. Here he underwent surgery nearly every other day, became addicted to painkillers, and realized the deaths of friends and his marriage. The doctors helped him deal with the physical pain, but no one helped him deal with the emotional pain.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran

Secondary characterization: Stereotyped

Values: Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in other wars.

----- The Killing Zone: A True Story. New York: Berkley Books, 1978. \$3.95.

Frederick Downs was a twenty-three-year-old lieutenant leading an infantry platoon in Vietnam in 1967 and early 1968. This is his memoir of his five months in Vietnam - from being a new man in-country, coming into a "tight" platoon and earning their respect to his becoming wounded five months later. Stepping on a Bouncing Betty mine, he lost one arm and maimed the other. His platoon saw a lot of action, with Downs receiving the Silver Star, Bronze Star with V for Valor, the Vietnamese Gold Cross of Gallantry, and three Purple Hearts.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran

Secondary characterization: Stereotyped

Values: American commanders were incompetent.

South Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to win the war.

Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in other wars.

Duncan, Donald. The New Legions. New York: Random House, 1967. O.P.

Donald Duncan, drafted in 1954, became a member of the Army's Special Forces - the Green Berets - in the early 1960s. In the first section, he details an "A-team" mission with seven others through territory controlled by and crawling with VC. He

described the training, education, and indoctrination the Special Forces candidates go through. The second part of the book describes the situation in Vietnam in the early 1960s, the mental conditioning one undergoes in the Army, and the loss of personal value and dignity it brings about. He also criticizes American political and military policy in Vietnam and its role in making a military structure that is involved in nearly every aspect of our lives.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran

Secondary characterization: Stereotyped

Values: American involvement was wrong.

South Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to win the war.

Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in other wars.

Helle, Roger, and Eric Coppin. My War Beyond Vietnam. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1985. (Revised edition of Too Proud to Die, 1982.) O.P.

Roger Helle and his twin Ronald grew up in poverty in Toledo, Ohio. In 1965, as high school seniors, they joined the Marines. This novel focuses on Roger, who wanted to be the best Marine there was. After his first operation, where over 40 percent of his unit was either dead or wounded, Helle became determined to be a "fighting machine." For two years, Helle was known as "Mr. Lucky" - always the point man and never getting hurt. He became a legend in Vietnam.

In 1967, he accepted stateside duty, where he became a drill instructor. In 1969, however, found him back in Vietnam. His new unit was demoralized and fearful. Through his leadership, Helle's men became a real team, clearing their area of VC, who put a price on Helle's head. One day, though, Mr. Lucky's luck ran out. Stopped by a grenade, he was also shot and stabbed by an NVA soldier. Stubborn, Helle lived, promising his life to God. He forgot that promise for several years, but eventually turned to the Church and dedicated his life to managing Teen Challenge of the Midlands in Omaha.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran

Secondary characterization: Stereotyped

Values: None of the four tested.

Herbert, Anthony B. and James T. Wooten. Soldier. New York: Dell, 1973. O.P.

Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Herbert, a small-town boy who dreamed of joining the Army, fought as an infantryman "grunt" in Korea. He advanced through the Army's ranks, developing his leadership skills and instructing in various Ranger and Special Forces (Green Berets) schools. He also served as an Intelligence Officer in the Middle East. During the Vietnam war, Herbert taught in the Ranger schools but wanted command of an infantry battalion. He eventually got his wish. Four months later, though, he was relieved of his command.

When Herbert took command of the 2nd Infantry Battalion, he found three-fourths of his men in rear-echelon jobs, patrols who hid from combat, and crimes being committed against the people of Vietnam. Within the first month, Herbert had instilled in his men a pride and willingness to fight. In doing so, he made enemies of his superiors, who wanted to drop investigations of atrocities and did not appreciate Herbert's success in the field. Eventually railroaded out of the Army, Herbert, in Soldier, tells why the U.S. failed in Vietnam and delivers a scathing report of the generals who run the Army.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran

Secondary characterization: Stereotyped

Values: American commanders were incompetent.

South Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to win the war.

Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers of other wars.

Ketwig, John. . . . And a Hard Rain Fell. New York: Pocketbooks, 1986. \$3.95.

This novel is quite graphic in descriptions of boot camp indoctrination and inhumanity, and in describing atrocities committed by both sides during the war. Ketwig enlisted in the Army under assurances he would become a mechanic. After surviving a brutal boot camp, he was sent to Pleiku, in South Vietnam as a mechanic, "behind the lines." He was, however, selected to drive into the fighting to deliver ammo and was also sent to barter with Green Beret units. As a result, he ended up in combat. He could not shake the combat experiences, and they haunt him. He spent his last year in the Army in Thailand, where he hoped to marry his R & R girl from Penang. Still haunted by what he had seen, he turned to drugs. Not finding solace, he turned to the Thai people and fell in love with their culture. When his hitch was up, he returned home, eventually marrying and starting a family. Ketwig eventually put the demons to rest as he attended the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and began this book so that his wife and daughter may better understand him.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: American involvement was wrong.
 American commanders were incompetent.
 South Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to
 win the war.
 Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in
 other wars.

Kovic, Ron. Born on the Fourth of July. New York:
 Pocketbooks, 1984. \$3.50.

Ron Kovic, through flashbacks, tells the story of growing up in middle-class America - playing with the neighborhood kids, wanting to grow up to be a baseball player, attending Cub Scout meetings, etc. Kovic joined the Marines, suffered through boot camp, and went to Vietnam. On an extended tour, he accidentally killed an American corporal, and the higher-ups brushed this aside. Kovic's unit then opened fire on a village, killing "only" a handful of children. Kovic was then wounded, paralyzed from the chest down. He tells of the awful conditions in the VA hospitals and the cold welcome he received from his community. He became an activist against the war, confronting Richard Nixon at the Republican National Convention in 1972. The reader understands how he feels about his handicap, about his country, and about himself.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: American involvement was wrong.
 South Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to win
 the war.
 Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in
 other wars.

Marks, Richard. The Letters of Pfc. Richard E. Marks.
 Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1967. O.P.

Richard Marks was nineteen years old when he was killed in combat near Da Nang in 1966. In the nearly 100 letters he had sent to his mother, sister, friends, and relatives, he describes the Marine's boot camp at Parris Island to his feelings about the war and conditions in Vietnam. He matured from an uncertain young man to a proud combat Marine.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: None of the four tested.

Mason, Robert. Chickenhawk. New York: Penguin Books, 1983.
\$4.95.

More than anything in the world, Bob Mason wanted to fly. He joined the Army in 1964 to become a helicopter pilot. Mason was trained to fly "Hueys," the workhorses of the Vietnam War. They were used as medevacs to fly the dead and wounded to hospitals, as resupply wagons, and as "slicks," delivering troops to or picking them up from a landing zone. Mason flew over one thousand combat missions in Vietnam. The stresses of war took their toll, though, as Mason needed tranquilizers to keep him steady on the ground. He related the emotional problems he had in coming home and rejoining a society that called him a "murderer."

- Author's status: Vietnam veteran
- Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
- Values: American involvement was wrong.
American commanders were incompetent.
South Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to win the war.

McDonough, James. Platoon Leader. Toronto: Bantam Books, 1986. \$3.50.

McDonough, a West Point graduate, served for six months as an infantry platoon leader, protecting and patrolling the area around the village of Truong Lam, noted for the heavy VC activity nearby. The lieutenant's first priority was to establish his leadership, something this platoon had sorely lacked. Although he lost men due to attrition, wounds, death, and transfers, he continued aggressive assaults in the area. The VC led major counter-attacks, several times trying to overrun the camp. At the end of the six months, the time the infantry would allow an officer in the field, the VC surprised the Americans by attacking the village and killing their own family members. Shortly after, McDonough was brought in from the field and the platoon moved on to another area. McDonough is very reflective on what it takes to be a leader, and on the morality of war. A lot of action was in the book, but also a lot of thought.

- Author's status: Vietnam veteran
- Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
- Values: American commanders were incompetent.
South Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to win the war.
Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in other wars.

O'Brien, Tim. If I Die in a Combat Zone. New York: Dell, 1979. \$3.95.

Based on the journal Tim O'Brien kept during the war, this memoir captures the feelings of a small-town Minnesota boy when he is called to war. O'Brien tells us about boot camp at Fort Lewis, his plans to escape to Sweden, and how he feels he doesn't have the courage to complete that act. He spent six months as an infantryman - trying to find the ideal of "courage" in his fellow men (and usually failing) - and then spent his remaining six months as a clerk-typist at Battalion Headquarters. This memoir shows a thoughtful point of view.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: American involvement was wrong.
 American commanders were incompetent.
 Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in other wars.

Ogden, Richard. Green Knight, Red Mourning. New York: Zebra, 1985. \$3.50.

Richard Ogden was a high school drop-out, a backwoods country boy from Washington. He joined the Marine Corps because he liked the song. Going through boot camp, he became a leader. However, on the boat to Nam, he became seasick, lost his position as squad leader, and lost the respect of his men. From that time on, he was labeled a "shitbird," and ended up in numerous fights. During battle, he finally earned back the respect of the platoon. However, he was transferred out to another company, where he had to prove himself all over again. In a bigoted platoon, he bunked with a college-educated black man. "The Professor" and Ogden become close friends, and Ogden once again fought members of his squad, defending his friend. The Professor died in battle, and Ogden's year was up. He had killed men with his M-74 grenade launcher and with his bare hands.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: American commanders were incompetent.
 Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in other wars.

Parrish, John A. 12, 20, and 5: A Doctor's Year in Vietnam. New York: Dutton, 1972. O.P. (Paperback by Bantam \$3.50)

John Parrish entered the Marine Corps as a doctor, in 1967. He was assigned to the Phu Bai A - Medical Company Hospital, near

the ancient city of Hue. Here he treated wounded soldiers in triage and surgery. He participated in the Med-CAP Program, which sent doctors out to the villages to treat the civilians. He also found a hospital in Hue run by nuns for tuberculosis patients. The hospital had no doctor, so he began volunteering there two or three days each week. At the end of January 1968, he and his hoochmate visited the hospital. Because of the growing unrest in the city, they left quickly, and by the time they were back at Phu Bai, they were already receiving the first victims of the Tet Offensive. In one day they treated over 500 casualties. Six months into his tour, Parrish was reassigned. He substituted for doctors who were leaving Vietnam until a permanent replacement could be assigned. He spent the majority of his time at a battalion aid station which was constantly under fire. These experiences led him to two overwhelming feelings: the war was a futile, hopeless cause, and the soldiers, corpsmen, doctors, nurses, and others who worked under fire and attack trying to save lives are to be admired.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: American involvement was wrong.
 American commanders were incompetent.
 South Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to win
 the war.

Risner, Robinson. The Passing of the Night: My Seven Years as a Prisoner of the North Vietnamese. New York: Random House, 1973. O.P.

Lt. Col. Robinson Risner was shot down on a bombing mission over North Vietnam in 1965. He spent the next seven years in captivity in Hanoi's Hoa Lo Prison - the "Hanoi Hilton." Risner describes the tortures to which he and other POWs were subjected. He tells of the overwhelming boredom, despair, and Vietnamese propaganda attempts. Because Risner was an officer, he was subjected to a severe mental torture and questioning similar to brainwashing. Through the seven long years, Risner's faith in God and love for his family kept him going.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: None of the four tested.

Rowe, James N. Five Years to Freedom. Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1971. O.P. (Ballantine ed. \$3.95)

In 1963, Lt. James "Nick" Rowe was working as a Special Forces advisor in South Vietnam. Out on patrol one afternoon, his squad was overrun and Rowe was captured by the Viet Cong. For the next five years, Rowe suffered torture, inadequate food, malnutrition, disease, and psychological indoctrination. He watched some of his fellow prisoners die from diseases aggravated by malnutrition, and he watched as other prisoners were released. He remained a captive because he displayed an uncooperative attitude to the National Liberation Front. Nearly yielding to the VC's powerful propaganda, he escaped the VC as U.S. airstrikes were reigning down on the area where his camp was located. Rowe, in this autobiography, examines the propaganda of his captors, the harsh conditions he survived, and his joy upon going home.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: None of the four tested.

Rutledge, Howard and Phyllis, with Mel and Lyla White. In the Presence of Mine Enemies, 1965-1973. Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1973. O.P.

Howard Rutledge, a Navy pilot, was shot down over North Vietnam in 1965. Taken to the "Hanoi Hilton," Rutledge was beaten and tortured. He soon learned that he was not alone; through the communication system of taps on the walls, he learned of the hundreds of captives like himself. He became a leader in the organization of prisoners and was shipped to several different camps. Rutledge spent the majority of his time in solitary confinement. He described the conditions under which they lived, the meager food they had, the rats and vermin that infested the cells, and the tremendous faith that kept most of the men going. The last four chapters were written by Phyllis Rutledge, telling what she and their four children went through.

Author's status: Vietnam veteran
 Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
 Values: None of the four tested.

Van Devanter, Lynda, with Christopher Morgan. Home Before Morning. New York: Beaufort Books, 1983. \$16.95.

Lynda Van Devanter, after graduating from nursing school, joined the Army, trained as an operating room nurse, and went to Vietnam. Working mostly in the Pleiku province, she saw heavy casualties. She quickly managed to learn coping techniques,

Including not knowing too much about her patients or caring too much about them. These techniques failed her, though, when an "expectant bleeder" (a man expected to die from loss of blood or head injury) came to her O.R. carrying his prom picture.

From that moment on, she became critical of the war and the U.S. government. On her return to the States, she sank deeper and deeper into depression. She was contemplating suicide when she met the the leader of Vietnam Veterans of America. She began to realize there were others going through the same hideous nightmares. She entered therapy and began to work with other nurses who had served in Vietnam. The healing circle was nearly complete when she was part of a task force that went to Vietnam in 1982.

- * Author's status: Vietnam veteran
- Secondary characterization: Stereotyped
- Values: American involvement was wrong.
 - American commanders were incompetent.
 - South Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to win the war.
 - Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from soldiers in other wars.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY

Using the three source libraries, the researcher identified 50 titles which fit the established criteria. Of these, six were unavailable to the researcher for examination. Ordered from the Cedar Rapids Public Library, the requests were returned as "inappropriate for interlibrary loan" due to the popularity of the title and subject matter. Those six titles were Flight of the Intruder by Stephen Coonts, The Long Way Home by Alan Ebert, Starlight by Scott Ely, The Exile of Sgt. Nen by Stephen Fleming, To Be Free! by Ron Martin, and Zombie Jamboree by Robert Merkin. All of these were fiction novels.

The researcher located and read 45 books. (See Table 3 in Appendix B for all compiled data.) Of the 45 books in the bibliography, 20 (44.4 percent) were fiction and 25 (55.6 percent) were nonfiction. Personal narratives and autobiographies accounted for 24 of the 25 nonfiction works, with only one book considered a biography.

While reading the books, the researcher noted that most of the authors were Vietnam veterans. Almost 87 percent of the authors were military personnel in Vietnam. Of the fiction authors, 14 of 20 (70 percent) were Vietnam veterans. Four of the 20 were journalists during the war. Two authors, Proffitt and

Grant, first served in Vietnam as soldiers and later returned as Journalists. They were included in both categories. The researcher was unable to determine the status of only one author. The three remaining fiction authors were neither Vietnam veterans nor journalists in Vietnam.

All 25 of the nonfiction works were written by Vietnam veterans. This was expected, since 24 of the books were autobiographical in nature. The author of the biography, William Anderson, was also a Vietnam veteran. Some of the nonfiction works were jointly written with a co-author. The status of the co-author was not examined. Only the status of the primary author was examined. Table 1 summarizes the authors' status as veterans.

TABLE 1
Authors' Status As Vietnam Veteran

Status	Books No.	Books %	Total % *
Fiction			
Vietnam veteran	14	70	31.1
Journalist in Vietnam	4	20	8.8
Unable to determine	1	5	2.2
Other	3	15	6.6
Nonfiction			
Vietnam veteran	25	100	55.5

* Total will equal more than one hundred percent because two authors were counted in more than one category.

Many of those who wrote about Vietnam War literature (Bell, 1979; Bryan, 1984; Kakutani, 1984; O'Brien in Schroeder, 1984) felt that many of the fiction works were thinly disguised memoirs. The researcher noted similar evidence. For example, if the author was a door gunner on a chopper, the main character in his novel was most likely to be a door gunner. Authors who were in Vietnam at the time of the Tet Offensive generally set their novels during the Offensive. Those whose biographical blurbs included childhood incidents or personal data about a wife or children generally created similar characters with similar backgrounds.

Many of the works, both fiction and nonfiction, told stories similar in nature. Almost exclusively, the works deal with a male character; only the Van Devanter narrative deals with women in Vietnam. These stories introduce the central character to the platoon, win his acceptance into it after his initiation in combat, relate his feelings as his best buddies die, depict an atrocity committed by some of the platoon members, and record his advancement to a leadership position. Many of the works, especially the fiction, deal not only with the war, but with the servicemen returning home and the problems they encountered.

Most of the works revolve around one central character, with secondary characters superficially drawn. The researcher hypothesized that stock or stereotyped secondary characters would be evident in 50 percent or more of the works. This hypothesis was accepted. A total of 42 of the 45 books (93 percent) had

stereotyped characters. Only three fiction novels had relatively well-developed secondary characters, with 17 of 20 (85 percent) having stereotyped characters. All of the nonfiction works contained stereotyped secondary characters. Many works recorded the frequent rotation of people or characters, allowing too little time for the author to fully develop a character or for the reader to get to know him. Other works depicted stereotypes common to the war - someone who loved the fighting, a wise combat veteran who led the squad or platoon, or a "cool dude" figure.

The researcher also collected data on values present in the works. The first value tested, American involvement in Vietnam was wrong, was present in 42 percent of the works read. The second value tested, American commanders were incompetent, was present in 53 percent of the works. The third value, South Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to win the war, was present in 36 percent of the works, and the fourth value, soldiers in the Vietnam War are different from soldiers in other wars, was present in 67 percent of the works. The total number of books with one or more value present was 36 (80 percent). Table 2 shows a more complete breakdown of the values.

TABLE 2
 Number and Percent of Values Appearing in Works

Values	Fiction Books		Nonfiction Books		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	10	50	9	36	19	42
2	9	45	15	60	24	53
3	5	25	11	44	16	36
4	16	80	14	56	30	67

The researcher had hypothesized that one or more of these values would be evident in 50 percent or more of the works. This hypothesis was accepted, as 36 (80 percent) of the works expressed one or more of the values. Only 9 of the 45 books (20 percent) expressed none of these values. Of these nine, six dealt with prisoners of war. POW memoirs accounted for four of the six, and two were POW fiction novels. The four memoirs all had strong Christian themes and presented strong patriotic values.

Vietnam War literature is fast growing in popularity. This researcher predicts that it will remain popular for quite some time. As the body of literature grows, more research will need to be done. This study examined only the works by and about American servicepeople. A study examining Vietnamese viewpoints would be of value. Another suggested study is that of Vietnam War literature by and about women. Only three women were represented in this study - one as the author of a personal narrative and two

as fiction authors. Another suggested study is a comparison of attitudes in books set before the Tet Offensive with those set after it.

Students are interested in the Vietnam War. Bibliographies such as this one will be helpful in designing social studies and English curriculums and in providing reading guidance for students.

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APPENDIX A

DATA-GATHERING INSTRUMENT

FIC/ NF

BIBLIOGRAPHIC CITATION:

PRICE:

PLOT SUMMARY:

CHARACTERIZATION:

 Stock or stereotyped characters

VALUES:

 American involvement in war was wrong. American commanders were incompetent. South Vietnamese soldiers were not trying to win war. Soldiers in Vietnam War differ from other wars.

AUTHOR'S BACKGROUND:

 Vietnam veteran Journalist in Vietnam Unable to determine Other

APPENDIX B
TABLE 3
DATA REPRESENTING THE 45 BOOKS ANALYZED

	Stereotyped Characters	Value 1	Value 2	Value 3	Value 4	Veteran	Journalist	Undetermined	Other
Service for the Dead	x	x			x	x			
F.N.G.	x	x	x		x	x			
On Distant Ground	x					x			
Word of Honor					x	x			
Dau	x			x	x	x			
The Man in the Box	x								x
Platoon	x	x	x		x	x			
Fragments	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Another War, Another Peace	x	x	x		x	x			
Winters Coming, Winters Gone	x				x	x			
Over the Beach	x				x	x	x		
One Very Hot Day			x	x	x		x		
Paco's Story	x				x	x			
The Long Walk	x							x	
In Country	x				x				x
Gardens of Stone		x	x	x	x	x	x		
American Boys	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Bravo Burning	x	x	x		x		x		
War Zone	x	x							x
Meditations in Green	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Bat-21	x		x			x			
Brennan's War	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Thud Ridge	x		x			x			
A Rumor of War	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Guns Up!	x		x		x	x			
Young Man in Vietnam	x				x	x			
When Hell Was in Session	x					x			
Once a Warrior King	x		x			x			
Aftermath	x				x	x			
The Killing Zone	x		x	x	x	x			
The New Legions	x	x		x	x	x			
My War Beyond Vietnam	x					x			
Soldier	x		x	x	x	x			
. . . And a Hard Rain Fell	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Born on the Fourth of July	x	x		x	x	x			
The Letters of Pfc. Richard Marks	x					x			
Chickenhawk	x	x	x	x		x			
Platoon Leader	x		x	x	x	x			
If I Die in a Combat Zone	x	x	x		x	x			
Green Knight, Red Mourning	x		x		x	x			
12, 20, 5	x	x	x	x		x			
The Passing of the Night	x					x			
Five Years to Freedom	x					x			
In the Presence of Mine Enemies	x					x			
Home Before Morning	x	x	x	x	x	x			