

**Special Topics: War and Society in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century:  
The Vietnam War**

**Bookstore List** (in approximate order of use):

Ronald Powaski, *The Cold War: The United States and the Soviet Union, 1917-1991*. Oxford, 1998. \$32.95.

George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*. McGraw-Hill, 4th ed., 2001. \$29.35. The 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (1995) is also acceptable.

William J. Duiker, *Sacred War: Nationalism and Revolution in a Divided Vietnam*. McGraw-Hill, 1995. \$41.70.

George C. Herring, *The Pentagon Papers: Abridged Edition*. McGraw-Hill, 1993. \$18.00.

Robert S. McNamara, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam*. Vintage/Random, 1996. \$16.95.

Eric M. Bergerud, *Red Thunder, Tropic Lightning: The World of a Combat Division in Vietnam*. Viking/Penguin, 1994. \$16.00.

Stewart O'Nan (ed.), *The Vietnam Reader*. Doubleday-Anchor, 1998. \$16.95.

Nhu Tang Truong, *A Viet Cong Memoir*. Vintage/Random, 1985. \$14.95. [= Tang, Truong Nhu]

Melvin Small and William D. Hoover (eds.), *Give Peace a Chance: Exploring the Vietnam Antiwar Movement*. Syracuse, 1992. \$19.95.

**Useful Web Sites**

There are a number of Vietnam War-related **Web sites**, including the following:

Vietnam-related documents (Mount Holyoke):  
<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/vietnam.htm>

Links to Vietnam War resources (by Robert Buzzanco):  
<http://vi.uh.edu/pages/buzzmat/links.htm>

Vietnam War bibliography (Edwin Moïse):  
<http://www.clemson.edu/caah/history/FacultyPages/EdMoise/bibliography.html>

National Security Archive (George Washington University) (Cold War documents):

<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/>

McGraw-Hill also has a Web site based on Herring's book, with links to documents, maps, etc.:  
<http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072417552/>

Text of the Geneva Accords of 1954: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1954-geneva-indochina.html>

The Paris Peace Accords of 1973 (text of various documents, statements by Nixon and Kissinger, etc.):

[http://www.ibiblio.org/pub/academic/history/marshall/military/vietnam/policies.and.politics/paris\\_peace\\_1973.txt](http://www.ibiblio.org/pub/academic/history/marshall/military/vietnam/policies.and.politics/paris_peace_1973.txt)

**Books available only on Library Reserve**

(Weekly readings will indicate excerpts available on E-Reserve)

Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War*. There is an 8<sup>th</sup> ed. (1997), 9<sup>th</sup> ed., 1945-2000 (2002), and an updated 9<sup>th</sup> ed., 1945-2002 (2002).

Mitchell Hall, *The Vietnam War*.

Anthony Short, *The Origins of the Vietnam War*.

George C. Herring, *LBJ and Vietnam: A Different Kind of War*.

John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History*.

Melvyn Leffler and David Painter (eds.), *Origins of the Cold War: An International History*.

Ronald Spector, *After Tet: The Bloodiest Year in Vietnam*.

William Duiker, *The Communist Road to Power in Vietnam*.

William Duiker, *Ho Chi Minh*.

Neil Jamieson, *Understanding Vietnam*.

Bao Ninh, *The Sorrow of War: A Novel of North Vietnam*.

Samuel Hynes, *The Soldiers' Tale: Bearing Witness to Modern War*.

Melvin Small, *Antiwarriors: The Vietnam War and the Battle for America's Hearts and Minds*.

Tom Wells, *The War Within: America's Battle over Vietnam*.

Robert Buzzanco, *Vietnam and the Transformation of American Life*.

Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage*.

Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin. *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s*.

W. J. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War: The 1960s*.

Noam Chomsky et al., *The Cold War and the University*.

Michael Lind, *Vietnam the Necessary War: A Reinterpretation of America's Most Disastrous Military Conflict*.

David Kaiser, *American Tragedy: Kennedy, Johnson, and the Origins of the Vietnam War*.

Arnold Isaacs, *Vietnam Shadows*.

Thomas McCormick, *America's Half-Century: U. S. Foreign Policy in the Cold War and After*. (1989 and 1995 eds.)

### **Weekly Reading Assignments** (about 200-250 pages a week):

#### 1. Week of September 1 (Labor Day): Introduction: The Background in the Cold War and Vietnam

Ronald Powaski, *The Cold War: The United States and the Soviet Union, 1917-1991*, Preface, chapters 2 (pp. 58-64 only), 3, 4 (NB: pp. 92-96 in chapter 3).

William Duiker, *Sacred War: Nationalism and Revolution in a Divided Vietnam*, Preface, Introduction, chapter 1.

Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*, Preface, chapter 1 (to p. 30).

Further useful reading:

Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War* (chapters on Truman and Eisenhower).

Mitchell Hall, *The Vietnam War* (for a brief summary of the War).

Anthony Short, *The Origins of the Vietnam War*, Prologue and chapter 1.

#### 2. Week of September 8: Historiographical Issues in U. S. Policy; the French War and the Geneva Accords

Robert Divine, "Vietnam Reconsidered" (*Diplomatic History*, vol. 12:1 [Winter 1988], pp. 79-93; E-Reserve).

Gary Hess, "The Unending Debate: Historians and the Vietnam War" (*Diplomatic History*, vol. 18:2 [Spring 1994], pp. 239-264; E-Reserve).

John Garofano, "Tragedy or Choice in Vietnam? Learning to Think Outside the Archival Box" (*International Security*, vol. 26:4 [Spring 2002], pp. 143-168; E-Reserve.)

Melvyn Leffler and David Painter (eds.), *Origins of the Cold War*, articles by Bruce Cumings, "Japan and the Asian Periphery," and Michael Hunt and Steven Levine, "Revolutionary Movements in Asia and the Cold War" (in 1994 edition, chapters 11 and 13; the 2005 edition has only the Hunt & Levine article) (Book Reserve and E-Reserve).

Herring, *ALW*, remainder of chapter 1 and chapter 2.  
George Herring (ed.), *The Pentagon Papers*, Introduction, chapter 1.  
Duiker, chapter 2.

3. Week of September 15: Washington's War (I): Kennedy's War

Powaski, chapter 5 (to p. 152).  
Herring, *ALW*, chapter 3.  
Herring, *PP*, chapter 2.  
Robert McNamara, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam*, Preface, chapters 1-3, first 9 pp. of chapter 4 (to end of Kennedy material).

Further useful reading:  
For a critique of JFK, see Robert Buzzanco, *Vietnam and the Transformation of American Life*, pp. 64-68 (Lib. Reserve).

4. Week of September 22: Washington's War (II): LBJ's Escalation

Powaski, chapter 5.  
Herring, *ALW*, chapters 4-5.  
Herring, *PP*, chapters 3-6.

5. Week of September 29: Washington's War (III): LBJ Manages the War

Herring, *ALW*, chapter 6.  
Herring, *PP*, chapter 7.  
Herring, *LBJ and Vietnam: A Different Kind of War*, chapters 1; in chapter 5, pp. 121-128 (Book Reserve and E-Reserve).  
Robert Dallek, "Lyndon Johnson and Vietnam: The Making of a Tragedy" (SHAFR Presidential Address, January 1996, *Diplomatic History*, vol. 20:2 [Spring 1996], pp. 147-162; E-Reserve).  
Larry Berman, "Coming to Grips with Lyndon Johnson's War" (*Diplomatic History*, vol. 17:4 [Fall 1993], pp. 519-537; E-Reserve).  
Francis Bator, "No Good Choices: LBJ and the Vietnam/Great Society Connection" (*Diplomatic History*, vol. 32:3 [June 2008], pp. 309-340; and the comments by Evan Thomas, Randall Woods, Marilyn Young, Mark Moyar, Fredrik Logevall, and Larry Berman, and Bator's reply (pp. 341-370; E-Reserve).  
McNamara, *In Retrospect*, chapters 4 and 5.

Further useful reading:  
"Robert Buzzanco's *Masters of War: Two Views*" – reviews by Col. Harry Summers and Andrew Rotter (*Diplomatic History*, vol. 21:4 [Fall 1997], pp. 651-662; E-Reserve).

6. Week of October 6: Washington's War (IV): McNamara Looks Back

McNamara, chapters 7, 9-11.

"A Roundtable Review: McNamara's *In Retrospect*" (*Diplomatic History*, vol. 20:3 [Summer 1996], pp., 439-471; E-Reserve).

Further useful reading:

Appendix to Vintage edition of McNamara: sections by McNamara, Ernest May, Walt Rostow, Richard Rusk.

The class would find it useful to see the film "The Fog of War" (the Errol Morris documentary and interview of McNamara), which is available in the Instructional Media Center in the Library and at many local video rental outlets.

>> Mid-semester examination on Friday, October 10.

7. Week of October 13: The Grunt's War (I): An Overview

Eric Bergerud, *Red Thunder, Tropic Lightning: The World of a Combat Division in Vietnam*, Preface, Introduction, chapters 1 and 2.

Ronald Spector, *After Tet: The Bloodiest Year in Vietnam*, Preface, Introduction, chapters 2, 3, 8 (last three pp.), 9, 11, 12, Epilogue (Lib. Reserve).

The class will adjourn for a week of R & R: Fall Break - week of October 20.

8. Week of October 27: The Grunt's War (II): Army Memories

Bergerud, chapters 3, 4, 6, 7, Epilogue.

Further useful reading:

For a negative view of US soldiers, see Robert Buzzanco, *Vietnam...*, pp. 89-94, 113-118.

9. Week of November 3: The Grunt's War (III): War Stories

Samuel Hynes, *The Soldiers' Tale: Bearing Witness to Modern War*, chapter 5, "What Happened in Nam" (Book Reserve and E-Reserve).

Stewart O'Nan (ed.), *The Vietnam Reader*, Introduction, sections 1, 3, 10.

10. Week of November 10: The Enemy's War (I): The View from Hanoi

William J. Duiker, *Sacred War*, chapters 3-Epilogue.

Truong Nhu Tang, *A Viet Cong Memoir*, Foreword, chapters 1-5.

Further useful reading:

William Duiker, *The Communist Road to Power in Vietnam* (especially chapter 13).

William Duiker, *Ho Chi Minh*.

Bui Tin, *Following Ho Chi Minh: Memoirs of a North Vietnamese Colonel*.

11. Week of November 17: The Enemy's War (II): The View from the South

Truong Nhu Tang, chapters 6-Epilogue (chapters 21-24 can be skimmed).

Further useful reading:

Bao Ninh, *The Sorrow of War: A Novel of North Vietnam*.

12. Week of November 24 (Thanksgiving Week): The War Against the War

Melvin Small and William D. Hoover (eds.), *Give Peace a Chance: Exploring the Vietnam Antiwar Movement*, Foreword, Preface, Parts I and II.

Noam Chomsky, "The Cold War and the University," in Noam Chomsky et al., *The Cold War and the University*, pp. 171-194 (Book Reserve and E-Reserve).

Further useful reading:

Melvin Small, *Antiwarriors: The Vietnam War and the Battle for America's Hearts and Minds* (especially the Conclusion).

Robert Buzzanco, *Vietnam...*, Introduction, chapters 6 and 8.

Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage*.

Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin. *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s*.

Tom Wells, *The War Within: America's Battle over Vietnam*.

John Carlos Rowe and Rick Berg (eds.), *The Vietnam War and American Culture*.

13. Week of December 1: The War Against the War (II); Back to Washington – the Nixon-Kissinger War

Small and Hoover, *Give Peace a Chance*, parts III and IV.

Ronald Powaski, *The Cold War*, chapter 6, Conclusion.

Herring, *ALW*, chapter 7.

Further useful reading:

Jeffrey Kimball, *Nixon's Vietnam War*.

14. Week of December 8: The End of the Tunnel

Herring, *ALW*, chapter 8.

Robert McMahon, "Contested Memory: The Vietnam War and American Society, 1975-2001" (SHAFR Presidential Address, January 2001, *Diplomatic History*, vol. 26:2 [Spring 2002], pp. 159-184; E-Reserve).

David L. Anderson, "One Vietnam War Should Be Enough and Other Reflections on Diplomatic History and the Making of Foreign Policy" (SHAFR Presidential Address, June 2005, *Diplomatic History*, vol. 30:1 [January 2006], pp. 1-21; E-Reserve).

Further useful reading:

Michael Lind, *Vietnam the Necessary War: A Reinterpretation of America's Most Disastrous Military Conflict*, Preface, chapter 8 (Book Reserve and E-Reserve).

David Kaiser, *American Tragedy: Kennedy, Johnson, and the Origins of the Vietnam War*, Introduction, chapter 16, Epilogue (Book Reserve and E-Reserve).

Arnold Isaacs, *Vietnam Shadows*, chapters 1, 3, 8.

Herring, "'Peoples Quite Apart': Americans, South Vietnamese, and the War in Vietnam" (SHAFR Presidential Address, December 1989, *Diplomatic History*, vol. 14:1 [Winter 1990], pp. 1-23; E-Reserve).

Terry H. Anderson, "The Light at the End of the Tunnel: The United States and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam" (*Diplomatic History*, vol. 12:4 [Fall 1988], pp. 443-462; E-Reserve).

T. Christopher Jespersen, "The Bitter End and the Lost Chance in Vietnam: Congress, the Ford Administration, and the Battle Over Vietnam, 1975-76" (*Diplomatic History*, vol. 24:2 [Spring 2000], pp. 265-293; E-Reserve).

A term paper will be due on Friday, December 12 (details to be announced). There will also be a final examination.