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Praise for Unique Vietnam Book

VFW's one-of-a-kind *Brutal Battles of Vietnam: America's Deadliest Days, 1965-2017* (480 pages, 700 images) has hit a responsive chord with both reviewers and individual veterans. Here is a sampling of their comments.

Book Reviews

VIETNAM magazine, by Warren Wilkins

Brutal Battles of Vietnam is a visually spectacular, year-by-year account of the bloodiest battles waged by American forces in Vietnam. Every major U.S. ground unit is represented. To its credit, the book also recounts [beyond the most highly publicized battles] dozens of equally deserving, yet largely forgotten, fights.

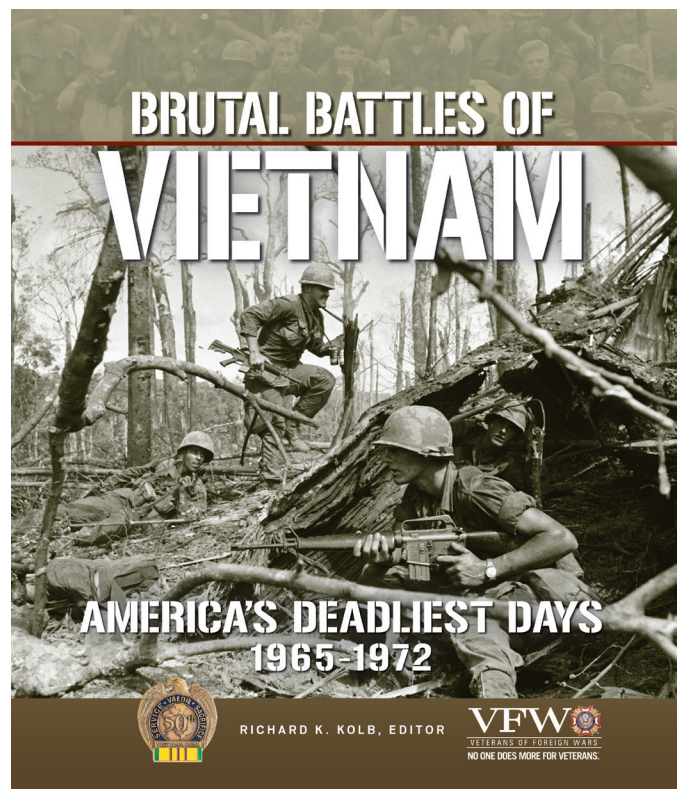
The vignettes, dedicated primarily to the boots-on-the-ground 'trigger-pullers,' demonstrate the extraordinary courage and sacrifice of the average grunt in Vietnam. Sidebars, special features and firsthand recollections memorialize the men who fought, and quite often died, in vicious close-quarters combat. The exploits of the Navy and Air Force in Southeast Asia are also duly recognized and honored.

The human cost of battle in the more than 100 actions covered in the book are thoroughly documented with statistics that examine the characteristics of American casualties. *Brutal Battles* reminds us that the American fighting man in Vietnam was every bit as heroic as his more celebrated forebears.

LEATHERNECK, by Bob Loring

This book isolates the major named battles of the war and puts you on the ground with more than 700 rarely seen photos and a host of personal battlefield accounts. *Brutal Battles* is laid out in easy to reference, date and time sequence. The authors did a splendid job of representing every major unit. The Marine Corps is well-represented and its battles adeptly depicted. The editor and art director created a well-balanced and artful representation of the war our country continues to misunderstand.

The book successfully achieves the stated goal of representing the skill and fortitude of our men of arms. The war is presented with no holds barred. This first-rate volume presents the titanic struggles faced by our men at arms with boundless care and forceful empathy. Exhaustively researched, this



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History: Vietnam War

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“This is a must-read for professional and amateur military historians, for Vietnam veterans and their family members, and anyone who seeks to understand that war.” —Jimmie W. Spencer, *Army* magazine

keepsake record of the Vietnam War will unquestionably claim its rightful place in the libraries of veterans, their families, and any resolute military historian.

SMALL WARS JOURNAL, by Keith Nightingale

The title, *Brutal Battles of Vietnam*, belies the quality of the contents, and for that diversity, I highly recommend it to both the vet and the casual-interest reader. It provides a path to understanding much better than the dense text of academic histories. Each reported event is short, graphic and fully comprehensible. For a large, graphically visual book, it is surprisingly intimate—analogueous to what war really is to the participants. With rare clarity, the experiences, faces and feelings of the participants are admirably displayed.

Grunts—this book is their story. The book takes the reader through each year of engagement, the rationale for our operations and a review of virtually all the fighting units that participated. A luster is put on the experience that belies the war’s ultimate outcome. Yet it puts no glory on war but clearly places the grace on those who were there.

Brutal Battles is an unusual panoramic recount of the Vietnam experience. It artfully demonstrates the great camaraderie. Altogether, the totality of the work and the degree of clarity for the reader is quite striking. For me, as I believe it will for others, this book fills the void of what was going on with other people in other places in Vietnam. For those who were there, it is enlightening. For those who were not, it is highly educational. *Brutal Battles* does a great national service and should be one of the first books examined by anyone wanting to know what Vietnam was really about.

WASHINGTON TIMES, by Gary Anderson

VFW strives mightily to keep those memories [of the sacrifices] alive. Each chapter is painstakingly researched and the interviews with participants of the battles represent primary sources in a way that has not been done in any of the literature of the war that I have come across. It is a grunt’s eye view. Because of the size and volume, it is meant to be read selectively. It does a great service to the warriors. Many of the survivors will now be able to point to a particular chapter and say, ‘I was there.’ This book is about those who would otherwise be forgotten as the sands

of time drift on. This is an American story seen through American eyes. College professors would be well advised to include *Brutal Battles of Vietnam* to show the human cost of decisions made in Washington and Saigon.

ARMY MAGAZINE, by Jimmie W. Spencer

Brutal Battles of Vietnam is one of a kind: The book is the first and only to offer a comprehensive U.S. battle history of the war in Vietnam in a single volume. The battles included in the book will no doubt shock the reader with their ferocity and brutality. They will invoke memories of hardship and sacrifice among Vietnam veterans; memories of battles fought and friends lost a half-century ago. The book is filled with accounts of incredible courage on the battlefield. Acts of courage and valor on the battlefield that become almost commonplace. The focus is on the selfless service and sacrifice of those who fought, bled and died in the war. It’s about the warrior. *Brutal Battles* is an important book. This is a must-read for professional and amateur military historians, for Vietnam veterans and their family members, and anyone who seeks to understand that war. And VFW is to be commended for this impressive contribution to understanding the war.

ON POINT: THE JOURNAL OF ARMY HISTORY, by Matthew J. Seelinger, Editor-in-Chief

A magnificent work covering the bloodiest incidents of the war, its eight chapters corresponding to 1965 through 1972 cover many battles new to all but the most dedicated scholars of Vietnam or veterans of the war. In addition to the narrative descriptions of each battle, *Brutal Battles of Vietnam* is lavishly illustrated with photographs. Perhaps the most valuable part of this masterful work comes in the series of appendixes under the heading *War’s Facts & Figures*. They provide a wealth of data on various aspects of the war—the most highly decorated servicemen, the war’s deadliest battles, unit casualty figures, a complete combat chronology, profile of the troops and a further reading list. This commendable book serves as a tribute to Vietnam veterans and would be a welcome addition to the library of any Vietnam vet or for those of younger generations wishing to learn more about the war.

AMERICAN JOURNAL, by Gary Noller, Editor

Masterfully edited, this must-have book is an important historical work. The stories are down in the dirt, sweaty, smelly, and sometimes terrifying accounts of the conduct of the war. The stories are brilliantly illustrated. This book makes up for some of the obvious omissions of the popular press by searching out and telling about all major battles regardless of the interest of the American press. *Brutal Battles* recognizes those few of the many who know battle and faced the most trying days of their lives. It gives much-deserved full credit to the fighting soldier. It is a valuable resource not only for veterans, but also their families. It is filled with facts that will help tell the true story of the Vietnam War for generations to come.

THE VVA VETERAN, by Marc Leepson, Books Editor

Brutal Battles is a worthy, reader-friendly, heavily illustrated coffee-table-sized tome that stands as the first and only book that presents a comprehensive U.S. battle history of Vietnam in a single volume. It is a compelling, well-written compilation of on-the-mark reports of dozens of Vietnam War engagements that ended in significant casualties. In other words, that is, the deadliest, most brutal of the war's all-out battles. Each one gets a relatively short but meaty chapter told from the point of view of the Americans who did the fighting. We get the voices of everyday troops, cogent descriptions of what took place and tributes to those who perished and those who performed courageously under fire. The book includes actions involving every American division and independent infantry brigade that took part in the war, as well as sections on the Navy and Air Force. Tribute is paid to the most highly decorated troops, statistical information provided and a combat chronology included.

Author/Veteran Comments

GREGORY A. DADDIS, history professor and author of three books on Vietnam

A marvelous book. It is an impressive work that goes far in helping readers understand what it was like to serve on the front lines in Vietnam. I will use it in teaching here at Chapman University's Program in War and Society. Moreover, *Brutal Battles* is a wonderful gift for and will have a special place in our Center for American War Letters Library.

JAMES E. LIVINGSTON, Battle of Dai Do, Medal of Honor recipient

This book is a prime example of unbiased and honest

historical preservation that tells the human side of the Vietnam War. It really tells the story in a much better way than most books do. It's a truthful account that shows the commitment, service and sacrifice of all who served in Vietnam. I highly recommend *Brutal Battles* to everyone, especially Vietnam veterans who will get a bigger picture of the war. Many of them only know about their own experiences. This book shows what others really did, too.

DAN GILLOTTI, Historian, 30th Field Artillery Regiment Association

Once I started reading *Brutal Battles*, I could not put it down. It is an awesome piece of work. No one will ever be able to duplicate the in-depth volume of research. This book really nailed it!

BARRY WALTER, Vietnam, August 1967-July 1971

I am amazed by the sheer amount of information contained in *Brutal Battles*. The personal accounts of the participants are inspiring. To know that such men of our generation lived, fought, and died for each other is truly humbling. This treasure will be valued by every Vietnam veteran who is fortunate enough to read it.

DOUG BONNOT, Battle of Firebase Ripcord

I was impressed with the overall product—real class. You undertook an almost impossible task in documenting the significant battles of all services covering the entire war in one volume. *Brutal Battles* emphasizes the determination, fortitude and valor of American soldiers and none of their shortcomings. My compliments on a superb accounting of America's warriors in those times that others have said are best forgotten.

JOHN MEYER, Studies and Observation Group (SOG)

Let me salute you for the Herculean effort exerted to produce such an outstanding, yes, heavy book—both in weight and content. You far exceeded all my expectations for what *Brutal Battles of Vietnam* would look and feel like.

LES STEVENSON, Battle of Thon Cam Son

This book is excellent. When my wife read parts of *Brutal Battles*, tears began to run down her face. She said this is preserving history forever. This book will impact thousands of veterans and their families and friends. The work it entailed will not go unappreciated!

CHUCK HAWKINS, Battle of Firebase Ripcord

Excellent work! Excellent book! *Brutal Battles* is a valuable contribution to literature of the Vietnam War. I cannot say enough praise for the effort and result.

“The personal accounts of the participants are inspiring. To know that such men of our generation lived, fought, and died for each other is truly humbling.” —Barry Walter, Vietnam, August 1967–July 1971

SUSAN KEATING, journalist specializing in national security issues

WOW! Fabulously done. Great work. This book is amazing. I was really taken aback with how beautifully done *Brutal Battles* is.

JIM THIEL, Battle of Chau Ngai

Thanks for the great work in putting this book together. I ordered 10 copies and donated them to five public libraries plus veterans groups in Wisconsin. As one librarian said, ‘*Brutal Battles* is really a tremendous book.’

DOUG WITCRAFT, Battle of Thon Cam Son

A job well done. I ordered and handed out 10 copies of *Brutal Battles*. Everyone I have given the book to really likes it.

JIM NELSON, Battle of Firebase Gold

This is one of the most accurate books written on the Vietnam War. It tells it like it was. A wonderful book, everyone I have shown *Brutal Battles* to would like a copy.

DON RIPLEY, U.S. Army, Vietnam

Brutal Battles is a tremendous book. VFW members are in the authors’ debt for the Herculean effort that was required to pull it off. It is a masterpiece and I commend all those involved in its production and release.

ALAN GREEN, Battle of LZ Margo

The writing in *Brutal Battles* brought the combat all to life. Reading the account of my battle, once again I could smell the acrid smoke, hear the deafening blasts and feel the sense of raw life/death urgency that gripped everyone on that hill.

BRUCE WALMSLEY, Rocket attack on Firebase Charlie 2

I can never tell you how much the gripping accounts in *Brutal Battles* mean to individual veterans, unit members and relatives.

RICHARD K. KOLB: Publisher and editor-in-chief of *VFW* magazine for 27 years (1989-2016), Kolb worked on this project over 10 years with input from hundreds of veterans. He partially authored and edited *Faces of Victory* (a two-volume history of WWII), *Battles of the Korean War: Americans Engage in Deadly Combat, 1950-1953*, *Cold War Clashes: Confronting Communism, 1945-1991* and *Combat Action: Cambodia to the Balkans, 1975-1991*. Kolb served in Vietnam with the 4th Infantry and 101st Airborne divisions during 1970-71 in the Central Highlands and I Corps as a radio operator attached to the artillery.

HOW TO ORDER: *Brutal Battles of Vietnam* can be purchased by simply calling 1-800-821-2606 and asking for item #4767. \$29.95 plus \$9 for shipping. To reach the editor, Rich Kolb, e-mail him at rkolb6231@gmail.com.

