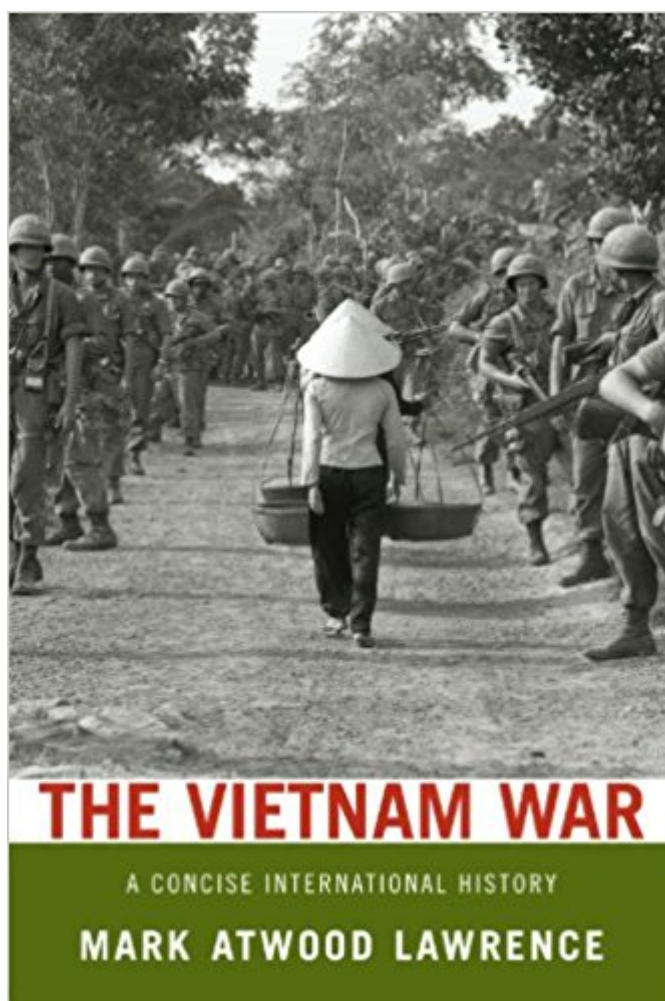


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The Vietnam War: A Concise International History (Very Short Introductions)



Synopsis

The Vietnam War remains a topic of extraordinary interest, not least because of striking parallels between that conflict and more recent fighting in the Middle East. In *The Vietnam War*, Mark Atwood Lawrence draws upon the latest research in archives around the world to offer readers a superb account of a key moment in U.S. as well as global history. While focusing on American involvement between 1965 and 1975, Lawrence offers an unprecedentedly complete picture of all sides of the war, notably by examining the motives that drove the Vietnamese communists and their foreign allies. Moreover, the book carefully considers both the long- and short-term origins of the war. Lawrence examines the rise of Vietnamese communism in the early twentieth century and reveals how Cold War anxieties of the 1940s and 1950s set the United States on the road to intervention. Of course, the heart of the book covers the "American war," ranging from the overthrow of South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem to the impact of the Tet Offensive on American public opinion, Lyndon Johnson's withdrawal from the 1968 presidential race, Richard Nixon's expansion of the war into Cambodia and Laos, and the problematic peace agreement of 1973, which ended American military involvement. Finally, the book explores the complex aftermath of the war--its enduring legacy in American books, film, and political debate, as well as Vietnam's struggles with severe social and economic problems. A compact and authoritative primer on an intensely relevant topic, this well-researched and engaging volume offers an invaluable overview of the Vietnam War.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In this history, University of Texas associate history professor Lawrence (Assuming the Burden: Europe and the American Commitment to War in Vietnam), sifts through centuries of struggle in the small Southeast Asian nation, beginning with the Trung sisters' first century fight to throw off Chinese domination, to illustrate how America, for the Vietnamese, was just another in a long line of ultimately vanquished enemies. Lawrence locates the Trung sisters' spiritual heir in Ho Chi Minh, the communist revolutionary who quoted the Declaration of Independence before finding himself at war with a U.S.-backed South Vietnamese insurgency. The book lives up to its brief and accessible billing, but overall there is little new regarding the "international" players, France, China, and the Soviet Union; largely American-centric, the narrative rests on major U.S. developments from the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Resolution to the fall of the American Embassy in 1975. That said, the author ably encapsulates the uses and abuses of American power, which should prove familiar to anyone following news of the current war. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Crisply concise...Delves into the 'whys' of the war: why the Vietnamese fought against the United States, why the great powers were involved, why the war turned out as it did and why legacies of the war linger."--Philip Seib,Dallas Morning News"[A] succinct history of a frustrating war that raised several painful issues America's leaders are now encountering for a second time...A pithy and compelling account of an intensely relevant topic."--Kirkus Reviews"Distills the US's longest war into a short, readable narrative...This brief summary of the tangled negotiations that prolonged the suffering caused by the war is perhaps Lawrence's most valuable contribution, since it covers an area that more extensive histories overlook...A valuable addition to any academic library...Essential."--C.C. Lovett, CHOICE"The book lives up to its brief and accessible billing..."--Publishers Weekly"In an elegant, almost elegiac prose style, Mark Lawrence takes us through the history of the Vietnam War in a narrative that transcends the usual focus on Vietnam and the United States. There is no other one volume history of the war that so thoroughly captures the war as an event in world history."--Marilyn B. Young, author of The Vietnam Wars, 1945-1990"A succinct and persuasive account of the Second Indochina War in its global context. At a time when the current U.S. involvement in Iraq evokes uneasy memories of America's controversial 'war of choice' in Vietnam, Mark Lawrence's thoughtful analysis of that previous conflict is highly welcome."--William J. Duiker, author of Ho Chi Minh: A Life"In this concise history of the Vietnam War, Mark Lawrence does a masterful job of transforming a highly complex and controversial subject into a brilliant and balanced histoire synth se. A rare feat."--Christopher Goscha, Universite

du Quebec a Montreal" It takes skill to condense a massive subject into a concise, entertaining, and accessible book. This is what Mark Atwood Lawrence accomplishes in his 224 page book *The Vietnam War: A Concise International History*... This book might be even more attractive than the larger volumes on the subject because it is succinct and focuses on the primary issues of the war."--Shelton Woods, *Resources* "In less than two hundred pages of clear, crisp prose, Mark Atwood Lawrence succeeds in 'examining the American role within a broadly international context...' The information Lawrence packs into such a short volume is most impressive: his 'introductory study' is both comprehensive and economical... Lawrence achieves his principal objective reminding us that the geopolitical environment decisively shaped the Vietnam experience in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries."--Gregory A. Daddis, *Michigan War Studies Review* "Lawrence has produced a general survey of the war that will likely become a standard resource in undergraduate courses... One could not ask for a better 'concise' history than the survey Lawrence has written. His prose style is always clear and often elegant... For a subject that has all too often inspired overwrought critiques of the various parties involved in the conflict, it is refreshing to have a synthesis that adopts a more neutral and dispassionate view of the Vietnam War."--James McAllister, *History: Reviews of New Books*

I grew up with the words "From Saigon" on the evening news. I was 25 when Saigon fell to the North Vietnamese. I realized recently, that I knew nothing about the War in Vietnam other than the media presentation at the time. I started looking for a reasonably short, readable history of the war that did not project someone's political agenda. This book filled that need. The author did not editorialize much (refreshing in today's journalistic world where fact and opinion get blurred by writers). It did not answer the big question for me: why did 58,000 American troops have to die in Vietnam? Of course, that would be a matter of opinion. It did provide perspective about the world events that surrounded the war and put it into context for me. I would recommend it to anyone looking for some knowledge of this war that so changed the landscape of US politics.

Well written, it is historic and yet told in a way you want to hear the story. Mr. Lawrence does have a way at combining both what you learned in history class (which is boring) and the ability to tell a story (which is exciting). I did have to read this for a history class, but it was so well written I decided to keep it. It is one of my favorite books. If all history writers could write like this then history books would go flying off the shelves. It is strong writing you can almost feel the humidity from the jungle and smell the food.

A nice, concise history of the causes of the Vietnam war and its major battles. More a review of the forces at work that led to the war and its aftermath than details of individual battles. I wanted a better understanding of this rather than a simple military chronology, so this was overall a good book in this regard.

College book pick by college professor I had to get.

Overall, this book does exactly what it sets out to do and it does it very well. My only issue with reading this book was that historical figures/important people are only really introduced once and there are no reminders about who they are after. At first, it was difficult to re-find where certain people were first introduced to remind myself who they were, but then I remembered Google exists. Aside from that small issue the book is great.

This book gives an excellent historical portrayal of the Vietnam War, from the earliest days of French colonization to the last helicopter fleeing the American embassy. While its scope is wide it treats each major event in enough depth to successfully recall the entire period to mind. It goes further to suggest how Vietnam has continued to remain in the American psyche.

Well written and researched, yet is short and concise. This book looks to write about the Vietnam wars from a "international history" perspective which gives a reader a very good big picture view of the era. Which is quite a accomplishment due to the long and complicated history of the Vietnamese and foreign powers involved in this piece.

Short and concise the author gives the novelist historian a basic understanding of the many problems that plagued the American leadership

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