Reviews

The Wars We Took to Vietnam: Cultural Conflict and Storytelling. Milton J. Bates. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996. Pp. 328. $25.95.

Reviewed by Anthony Arthur, Cal State, Northridge

Milton Bates's provocative exercise in cultural definition is easily summarized in terms of theme and purpose but extremely complex in terms of its insights and details. As such, it is in some ways a useful intellectual companion for the creative texts by Tim O'Brien, Philip Caputo, Robert Stone, and others that usually provide the backbone of courses in the literature of the Vietnam War. Not the least of its virtues is that Bates writes about difficult matters with clarity and candor; readers who have problems with some of what Bates says, as I do, need to remember that he is, after all, dealing with the most contentious and quarrelsome set of issues to afflict this country since the Civil War.

Bates's title, "The Wars We Took to Vietnam," while memorable, may be less accurate than the quote that he uses to explain it: "'A nation's domestic problems,'" one veteran remarked, "'travel overseas in its soldiers' rucksacks'" (5). Bates continues:

> In this study I attempt a general history of the wars we took to Vietnam and a general criticism of the stories we brought back. In order of treatment, these cultural conflicts include the war between those who subscribed to different visions of American territorial expansion, the war between black and white Americans, the war between the lower classes and the upper, the war between men and women, and the war between the younger generation and the older. (5)

Problems are not wars, of course; Bates raises the rhetorical stakes and reveals that he is not really attempting a "general history" so much as an argument for a certain way of viewing that history. His subtitle, "Cultural Conflict and Storytelling," is less eye-catching and ambitious but more accurate than the somewhat over-reaching primary title.

In fact, it is not so much what happened—history—that concerns Bates but the stories told about the war and the reasons for telling those stories: the "politico-poetics" of the war, defined in terms of selected books and movies, such as *Going After Cacciato, A Rumor of War,* and *Platoon*, and augmented by "Insights drawn from disciplines such as anthropology, philosophy, psychology, and sociology as well as literary criticism" (6). That said, there is an extraordinary amount of material packed into Bates's six substantial chapters, five of them devoted to the different "wars"–those having to do with the frontier, race, class, sex, and generations–and the sixth and by far the longest on the "Politico-Poetics of the War Story." There are extended discussions of some familiar texts–O'Brien's *Going After Cacciato* and *The Things They Carried;* Caputo's *A Rumor of War* and *Indian Country*; Larry Heinemann's *Paco's Story* and Tobias Wolff's *In Pharoah's Army*; the films *The Deer Hunter, The Big Chill, Apocalypse Now,* and *Platoon,* plus many works lesser known, at least in terms of classroom use, including John Williams's *Captain Blackman*, David Rabe's plays, especially *Sticks and Bones*, and Admiral Elm Zumwalt's account, with his son, *My Father, My Son.* Bates also proves to skeptics that the more recent critical approaches of Bakhtin, Ricoeur, and Derrida, when combined by a shrewd critic with the cultural perspectives of Paul Fussell and the mythopoeic approach of Northrop Frye, can open up a text of even a mediocre work, such as *Platoon,* in ways that are exciting and persuasive, in sections if not always in their totality.

Bates's eclecticism results in some fascinating conjunctions of literature, film, history, and critical theory, as in the following selection from his first chapter, "The Frontier War" in which he explains the link between Joseph Conrad's Kurtz in *Heart of Darkness* and Francis Coppola's Colonel Kurtz (Marlon Brando) in *Apocalypse Now*. The filming had run into problems when

> someone pointed out the similarity between the developing Kurtz-Willard [the young officer sent to kill Col. Kurtz] story and the myth of the Fisher King. Then Coppola's wife, Eleanor, persuaded him to witness a ritual performed by the Ifugao Indians who were playing the Montagnards in the film, and he made the connection between their ceremonial slaughter of animals and the killing of the divine king in Frazer. Toward the end of a documentary filmed mainly by Eleanor, *Hearts of Darkness* (1991), Coppola ruminates about the continuity of life, the cycle of death and rebirth, as humankind's oldest and profoundest insight. He apparently believed that he had passed beyond the impasse of apocalypticism–linear history leading to the end of earthly time–by reaching further back, to a more primitive, cyclical conception of history. (21)

Ranging as it does from the profound to the absurd—the reader may choose!–this passage is typical of Bates's disinclination to make distinctions between good and bad writing and thinking. For example, in his chapter on "The Race War," Bates speaks warmly of William H. Leckie's *Buffalo Soldiers: A Narrative of the Negro Cavalry in the West* (1967), the story of the Ninth and Tenth Cavalries as "a classic frontier narrative . . . impressively researched and sympathetic" (48). What it lacks is "a sense of how the black soldiers feel about killing other nonwhites to secure the property of white settlers" (49). Presumably we have no records of how these soldiers felt; otherwise, Leckie would have used them. Earlier in our literary history, that would have been the end of it. Bates, however, recommends the use of what the anthropologist Clifford Geertz calls "thick description," which he explains most interestingly as the way one might interpret the simple contraction of an eyelid. One such movement might seem to be simply an "involuntary twitch," another as "a conspiratorial wink." "In certain situations the movement of the eyelid might even be a parody of a conspiratorial wink. *The significance of the event depends on its social context, the cultural web in which it is tangled*" (my emphasis) (49).

Geertz "likens this web to a literary text and the anthropologist's task to textual criticism." Bates explains: thick description is a "form of intertextual study, where the 'text' is any

form of symbolic behavior, from writing poems to participating in a Balinese cockfight" (49)—or taking seriously Hollywood directors who find the meaning of life in slaughtered animals. Leckie's text is not "thick," Bates says, but "thin," because he "imposes a Euro-American myth of the frontier on the three races" in conflict on the Great Plains; where thick description might detect a wink or the parody of a wink, Leckie sees only a twitch or at best a wink with one kind of significance (50).

Bates opposes to Leckie's "thin" account of the buffalo soldiers that included in a novel by John A. Williams called *Captain Blackman*, "published three years after Leckie's study and probably indebted to it" (50). Following Bates's lead, I read *Captain Blackman* at the same time as one of my students did, the two of us having found the only two copies in Los Angeles, and we agreed that as literature it was sadly lacking—even Bates sees the protagonist as a "sexual athlete in the Superfly Hollywood mode," racist himself and misogynistic (75). The "thickness" that Williams adds to Leckie's texts consists of such passages as the following, in which a Comanche is represented as saying to a black soldier, "Once we roamed this land from ocean to ocean, the old ones tell us. You black people who have nothing, who let yourselves be dragged from far, far lands in chains, and who've believed, really believed that the white god was also your god, will survive us, multiply because you do *not fight*, will not fight the white man" (50).

Now this may be "thick," but perhaps not in the sense that Geertz and Bates mean: it is labored, tendentious, and tin-eared. And yet Bates is able to say that this bad novel, because it offers an entirely imagined "thickness" to the saga of the buffalo soldiers, is "therefore, from one point of view, better history" than Leckie's account (50). In other words, bad imagination is better than none, in the absence of documentation; moreover, by implication, it is better than the accurately rendered history. Do we really want to teach this to our students?

The thick and thin distinctions are valuable even though misapplied in this instance, and Bates offers many other useful concepts and definitions that students seem to benefit from. One particularly applicable distinction is that between "managerial and subjugated knowledge." "Managerial" knowledge is that possessed by "the man on the hilltop, whether he is an elected political leader or one of those civilian or military technocrats

whom Noam Chomsky called 'the new mandarins,' [who] knows better than the man in the valley because he knows so much more and knows it dispassionately" (221). Accounts by Maxwell Taylor, Dean Rusk, and Henry Kissinger are examples of "managerial" narratives, as are, I suspect, most histories. Accounts by those at the bottom of the "authority pyramid," a term coined by Michael Herr, are the ones most of us know best and teach as literature: novels, plays, poetry, and reminiscences by participating soldiers and journalists.

If the ultimate goal of reading either literature or history about Vietnam is to arrive at some kind of truth about what it was and what it meant, Bates suggests that it will more easily be reached through subjugated rather than through managerial narratives, a position most teachers of literature probably subscribe to almost reflexively. Accounts such as Robert McNamera's recent heavily qualified *mea culpa* reinforce this feeling. But it is by no means certain that mere proximity to events confers expertise or wisdom, or that accounts written by such observers are automatically more credible than those by McNamara, Dean Rusk, or McGeorge Bundy—the debate over the *Enola Gay* Smithsonian exhibition, which opposed the views of some historians against the memories of some soldiers who were involved on the final assault against Japan in 1945 made this point exactly.

Moreover, it seems impossible to write a book or a book review about Vietnam without taking sides, even today. My own impression of the Bates book is that he is so determined to make his case, which is roughly that Vietnam revealed and grew out of serious flaws in the United States, that he often falls back on shaky generalizations and questionable statistics. Is it true that in the 1950's a "family that did not conform to the [Ozzie] Nelson or Cleaver ["Leave It to Beaver"] model was made to feel deviant" (187)? that "perhaps twenty-five million [Americans] a year" suffer serious injury on the job (96)? that a grand total of 1.7 million of the "3.14 million men and women who served in Vietnam . . . have suffered full or partial symptoms of PTSD at some time in their lives" (264)? Bates himself functions here as a less than completely reliable managerial author, and his ambitious, often valuable book loses a bit of its authority—a favorite topic—as a result. ■

An American Requiem: God, My Father, and the War that Came Between Us. James Carroll. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996. Pp. 279. $23.95.

Reviewed by Steven Liparulo, University of Houston

Sophocles' *Philoctetes* suggests that prolonged war (in this instance, at Troy) will always profoundly affect the father-son relation. On his initiatory mission to Lemnos, the orphaned Neoptolemus is presented with alternative father-figures: brave Odysseus, the loyal warrior, advocate of the indirect approach and untroubled by using people strategically, provided victorious results; wounded Philoctetes, obdurately scrupulous but so self-absorbed in his pain that he seems incapable of love or compassion. Neoptolemus's conflicts of loyalty are only suspended when the god Heracles appears to end the play. James Carroll's *An American Requiem* adds to the growing body of writing, fiction and memoir, which similarly deals with the personal and cultural effects of the American venture in Vietnam (the nation's longest war), especially the disruption of family patriarchy and the corruption potential in patriarchal institutions.

Carroll was uniquely positioned to witness this period of history: his father was an FBI agent directly commissioned to brigadier general in the Air Force and was the founding director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, serving in that capacity through the first half of the Vietnam War; Carroll took orders as a Catholic priest at a time when many of his peers were taking orders as draftees; his brother Dennis evaded the draft while another, Brian, became an FBI agent hunting fugitive draft-dodgers. James Carroll writes compellingly of the overlapping loyalties to family, church, and country.

Employing a novelist's technique, manipulating chronology for the sake of characterization, Carroll opens the memoir with contrasting depictions of his father. First we see Joseph Carroll as a comic figure helping his teen-aged son deliver papers in a Washington suburb, and, like Henry V anonymously wandering in his camp before Agincourt, feigning subordination to an irate Air Force NCO subscriber. Carroll then fast-forwards to the General as the silently suffering father of newly-ordained Father

James Carroll, who offends the brass at the Bolling Air Force Base chapel by slipping a reference to napalm into his excursus on Ezekiel's vision of the valley of the bones, the subject of his first sermon. The episode looks backward and forward in time, to the past when Carroll's father renounced the priesthood (his complex regret over this choice represented by his thumping his chest and declaring himself, in Latin, unworthy at 20), and to the author's future as an anti-war priest occasionally crossing paths with notorious figures like the Berrigan brothers. Carroll's most penetrating insight into his father's character is his recognition of the general's conflict of loyalties. While Joe Carroll will defend Dennis against draft-evasion charges, he will not act to help stop the war. Carroll depicts this as a patriarch's tragic choice:

> How could he ever have said about these dead men that their sacrifice had been offered for a stupid mistake? Once he had helped dispatch thousands of young men to their deaths, certainly he'd have seen any subsequent denouncing of the war as breaking faith with them–his other sons. (221)

Conflicts of faith are central to this memoir, as Carroll is both drawn to his calling in the Catholic church and repulsed by the corruption and perversity of church figures like Francis Cardinal Spellman, who is depicted as riddled with an exploitative pathology that "was and is endemic to the repressive, deceit-ridden culture of celibate clericalism" (71). Spellman serves as the *bete noir* for Carroll's memoir, described as a liar and "pederast," and exposed as a central, manipulative figure in the American intervention in Vietnam. Carroll recounts how Spellman arranged the first meeting in 1950 between Ngo Dinh Diem and Dean Rusk, then head of the Asia division at the State Department, the beginning of a tragic episode that included Diem's installation as head of the Vietnam government, his vicious anti-Communist (and anti-Buddhist) reign, and his assassination in "a coup the Kennedy administration tacitly approved of, if it did not outright engineer it" (168). Carroll claims that "the Vietnam War began as Spellman's" (164).

The Odyssean machinations of political church figures like Spellman are embedded, for Carroll, in the history of the "moral failure of the Church" prior to and during World War II, and contrasted by the arrival of the reform-minded Pope John XXIII in 1958. This Pope, and his successor, Paul VI, would deepen the moral conflicts of the era by challenging prior Catholic traditions of excommunicating communists and supporting "just wars." Paul's address to the United Nations, in which he declared that "you cannot love while holding offensive weapons," came at a time when Lyndon Johnson was expanding the American military commitment to Vietnam (160). Carroll brings the turbulence of these times down to the human scale of a failed priest, writing that "all the conflicts then surfacing in our society about the war were conflicts deeply buried inside certain individuals charged with managing it, one of whom, I see now, was surely my father" (186).

The author's own conflict was clarified for him by the poet and critic Allen Tate, who in 1966 signed a book for Carroll, wishing him luck in "his two vocations," the priesthood and writing (107). He told Carroll, then a seminary student who had spent the summer working on his poetry under Tate's tutelage, that he couldn't have both. A few years later Carroll, visiting Tate in Tennessee hoping for more encouragement as a writer, would minister to his mentor on the occasion of the death of his son. But Tate's prophecy would eventually prove true.

Carroll writes that he "loved being a priest," and describes his work in the campus ministry at Boston University as an effort "to redeem the cruel myopia of the Counter-Reformation Church" (242). He evokes the volatility of the times, as well as the absurd gap between the Vietnam War and its resistance and "mainstream" American life, in the story of his appearance on the *Dick Cavett* television program. On a day when an anti-war demonstration on campus led to a violent confrontation with Boston police, Carroll arrives in New York only to find that Cavett is sick, and that comic actor Jack Klugman will be filling in as guest host. After the "self-promoting shticks" of John Sebastian, Henny Youngman, and Elizabeth Ashley, Carroll is brought on as "their straight man" (226). After a "wet kiss" from Ashley and a "dog collar" joke from Klugman, Carroll cuts to the chase with a description of the near-riot he'd left just hours before in Boston. Klugman is left speechless, and the show

ends, not with follow-up discussion, but with "an unheard-of departure," the band playing an entire number (227). The popular culture of the time was not often prepared to deal critically with resistance to the war in Vietnam, especially not when its messenger was a priest.

James Carroll fulfilled Tate's prophecy in 1974, resigning the priesthood in order to have a life like his father's, "with a loving wife and children" (254). His account of the relationship between the Catholic church and the American intervention in Vietnam adds substantially to the witness offered by other writers of his generation, but it is what Tate called his other vocation, his faith in the power of writing, that both transforms Carroll as a man and most thoroughly connects him with coeval American writers, especially the highly-acclaimed Tim O'Brien.

O'Brien writes, in *The Things They Carried*, that "this too is true: stories can save us" (255), a belief that Carroll reflects in stating that "telling our stories is what saves us" (267). These similar phrases mean very different things, however, to these veterans of very dissimilar roles in the conflict. O'Brien, writing from the experience of the soldier, engages "the illusion of aliveness" (260), suggesting that in a story "you make the dead talk" (261). Ex-priest Carroll's faith in the stories of Jesus leads him to assert, in contrast to O'Brien's denial of death, that "the knowledge of death, that we all face it, is what enables us to live now in communities with each other, without arrogance" (123). Carroll writes of his faith in God, not as a patriarchal power but as an essential mystery embodied in the stories of Christ, marked by parody and irony (120-121). This is an alternative *telos* to the drive for victory that Carroll sees operating through George Bush's prosecution of the war in Iraq, the same faulty belief that led to the war between Carroll and his father, a war without winners. "Victory is impossible," Carroll concludes, "Victory is meaningless. Victory is a lie. Victory is another name for murder" (279). The American bent for "winning" leaves Carroll, author of ten books and father of two children, nervous and afraid. His miracle laid "in my having let go of the need myself to feel superior" (251), a miracle not widespread in contemporary culture.

Sophocles ends his tragedy with Heracles offering Philoctetes a miraculous cure for his wounds through victory at Troy. The audience knows, however, that Heracles's prohibition against

sacking the temple there will not be honored, and that "victory" will begin new cycles of war and suffering. The reader of James Carroll's *An American Requiem* may experience the same ironic disparity between its nobility and futility, because the book works to challenge commonplace expectations. As he writes, "the story [of the divide between father and son] is a victory over the need to be victorious" (279). ■

Work Cited

O'Brien, Tim. *The Things They Carried.* New York: Penguin, 1990.

Four Years with General Lee. Taylor, Walter H. Edited by James I. Robertson. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1996. Pp. 218. Photographs, notes, index. $12.95.

Reviewed by Rodney Rice, USAF Academy

James Robertson's new edition of Walter Taylor's classic *Four Years with General Lee* is a valuable contribution to Civil War studies. This edition, an update of Robertson's earlier 1962 annotated version, includes a new introduction that sketches in the essential facts concerning Taylor's close relationship with Robert E. Lee, thereby affording readers a useful, but not overly intrusive, conceptual framework for placing the memoir in its historical context. Thus, we learn that the young, energetic Taylor, who in 1861 was a handsome twenty-two-year-old VMI dropout, would subsequently serve four arduous years in the Army of Northern Virginia, see firsthand the glory and gore of virtually every major eastern campaign from Fredericksburg to Appomattox, and become one of the most respected and reliable of General Lee's aides.

In part, Taylor's success as a staff officer was the result of intelligence, extraordinary organizational skills, and near-photographic memory for places, names, and figures. As administrative gatekeeper to General Lee, he handled everything from staff correspondence and message traffic to troop inventories and appointments. And in this memoir, Taylor speaks diligently, economically, and honestly about everything from the initial organization of the Army of Northern Virginia to the evacuation of Petersburg. As might be expected from an outstanding staff officer, Taylor narrates his tale with military precision and punctuates it with any number of factual data including tables, notes, memos, letters, and other anecdotal information about his experiences with General Lee. In so doing, Taylor successfully fulfills his avowed purpose of speaking "with entire candor" concerning the "more prominent events in the career of the great Confederate leader." For the student of Southern history or those curious about Robert E. Lee, this edition is indispensable for reliable information about incidents, small and large, that shaped the direction of the Civil War. ■

Women and the War Story. Miriam Cooke. Berkeley: U California P, 1996. Pp. 300. $18.95.

Reviewed by Alison Weir, USAF Academy

Miriam Cooke has written a provocative book that explores the role of the "War Story" as written by women in many of the nastier wars that have occured and are occurring during this last half of the twentieth century. After reading her analyses, I found myself wishing I had access to these books, and that my knowledge of Arabic and Algerian culture was not so anemic. Clearly, as Cooke's analysis demonstrates, the women of these countries who have found their voices to describe their wars expand our understanding of who partakes in and is affected by war.

Where Cooke fails, however, is in her desire to theorize the nature of women to the War Story in general. Just as Western feminism is inadequate to characterize the condition of all women, the condition of women in Arab states is inadequate to address the dynamic of women and war in the West. Although she attempts to connect her authors' characters and US women who serve in the military, this strategic essentialism backfires as one compares the mental images of an Iraqi mother in purdah and an American woman in battle dress: clearly these women experience war differently. Likewise, the Gulf War was a very different war from the US perspective than it was from the Iraqi perspective. Cooke provides valuable insight into the Iraqi perspective, but from the American perspective, the war became a John Wayne "War Story" with Tom Clancy special effects on CNN.

Cooke's characterization of the War Story is, in itself, problematic. She assumes a generic story which she describes as men's turning "their messy war experiences into coherent stories. The dichotomies of the War Story organize the confusion so that aggression should not be confused with defense, victory with defeat, civilian with combatant, home with front, women's work with men's work" (16). This definition may describe a great many War Stories, but it does not describe the most compelling ones, those which deal with the confusion, disillusionment, and alienation that occur during war, as do Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*, Frederick Manning's *The Middle Parts of Fortune*, Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*, and Tim O'Brien's *Things They Carried*. Her assertion that the War Story is always a masculine product also needs qualification; surely, Virginia Woolf's *Jacob's Room* is a War Story.

Cooke seeks to distinguish her subject texts from these by addressing what she calls "postmodern wars." She applies this label to wars as varied as the Algerian War of Independence, the Iran-Iraq War, the Intifada, the Northern Irish "Troubles," and the gang wars of South Central L.A. The label "postmodern" is particularly problematic because Cooke seems at a loss to define it. She cites a bevy of critics and attempts to draw parallels between war and postmodern architecture. "Postmodern" at times means "covered extensively by electronic media," "involving unconventional combatants," and "postcolonial." There are problems with these definitions as applied to the wars of the late twentieth century. If a war does not appear on the evening news, has the war not been waged? "Unconventional

combatants" have appeared in every war, often exposed only after they are dead. "Postcolonial" is perhaps the most problematic, since it requires flexible definitions of "colonial." Clearly, economic imperialism has not helped the cause of gang members, but is a war postcolonial if the imperialists are not addressed? Perhaps the oxymoron "civil war" would better serve Cooke's purpose, but even that fails to account for the Iran-Iraq War unless all of Islam serves as the internally divided state.

Why do I spend so much of this review on these definitional points? Because Cooke spends so much time attempting to articulate her definitions and to provide a generic picture of women and the War Story, a task as difficult as it is potentially destructive. To make a generic case for how women react and interact with war is to undercut cultural differences in gender as well as the only constant of what O'Brien calls a "true war story," its dependence on individual response. Cooke's attempt to use a select sampling of war literature by women whose only unifying trait is their shared "non-Western" perspective to speak for all women and all wars not only takes space away from her valuable analysis, it also undercuts the insights she does make. Cooke has provided a valuable service in finding and highlighting the voices of these subaltern women who write their wars. To force those voices to speak for all wars may silence them into irrelevance. ■

aftermath: an anthology of post-vietnam fiction. Edited by Donald Anderson. NY: Henry Holt & Company, 1995. $12.95.

The Other Side of Heaven: Post-War Fiction by Vietnamese & American Writers. Edited by Wayne Karlin, Le Minh Khue & Truong Vu. Willemantic, CT: Curbstone Press, 1995. Pp. 420. $17.50.

The Vietnam War in Songs, Poems, and Stories. Edited by H. Bruce Franklin. Boston, MA: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1995. Pp. 352. $10.00.

Reviewed by Ellen Pinzur, Cambridge, MA

A 1984 annotated bibliography, listing various types of work about Vietnam, cited 38 anthologies, including works of fiction published in literary magazines; fiction and poetry collected and published by Vietnam veterans; short stories written by Vietnamese authors; testimony from the Dellums Committee on US war crimes; first-person accounts written from the front lines; essays about the implications of US involvement in the war; articles reprinted from the US Naval Institute; a collection of statements and photographs centered around Operation Dewey Canyon III staged by Vietnam Veterans Against the War in Washington DC, April 19-23, 1971, and the VVAW/Winter Soldier Investigation hearings held in Detroit, February 1971; foreign policy papers and transcripts from a conference at the Adlai Stevenson Institute of International Affairs in June 1968; translations of classic and modern Vietnamese poetry; a collection of articles from *The Washington Post*; several collections of historical documents generally organized around US foreign policy or war crimes; and a collection of writings of various forms that presents perceptions of the war by African Americans who participated in the war, as well as activities of Blacks in the US to achieve and maintain civil and human rights.[1]

More such varied anthologies have since been published. These include volumes of documents about the war; testimony from Congressional hearings; historical and literary essays and analyses; compilations of both historical documents and literature; and collections that include excerpts from novels, short stories, poems, and conference papers.[2]

Between 1993 and 1997, six additional anthologies of which I have knowledge have been published.[3] I happily added all six to the 347 books and journals about the American War in Vietnam and its aftermath (including histories, memoirs, reportage, novels, poetry, plays, and movies), war in general, and the sixties already living in my apartment in bookshelves or in stacks on various flat surfaces, including the floor as well as the tops of a coffee table, a window sill, and a hardwood cabinet. The obvious question about a plethora of anthologies is: are they sufficiently different from one another? For the three books discussed here, the answer is a resounding yes.

Donald Anderson's *aftermath: an anthology of post-vietnam fiction* provides fourteen stories, three by women (four of the stories appear in Karlin and one appears in Franklin; in addition, different stories by Robert Olen Butler and Tim O'Brien also appear in Franklin). The foreword by George Herring is a concise essay about the war, the young Americans who fought it or opposed it, and the war's impact on American society; Anderson's introductory essay reminds us "[s]uch stories are about what we must live with after any fought war, soldier or no. They identify us, these stories. *They are about us*" (xxxi).

Anderson's selections range from well-known and already-anthologized writers (Erdrich, O'Brien, Wolff, Kumin, Butler, Jones, and Stone) to "The Art of Living," a story by John Gardner that prompted Anderson's search for additional like stories (xxv). Anderson's biographical sketch of each author provides enough material to help a curious reader who wants to read more by that writer. Collectively, these are intelligent stories in which the characters live their doom, disillusion, and grief. They serve to put to rest the idea that America is a land chosen by God for special favor.

Anderson's choices for inclusion emphasize the agony of survival from a variety of perspectives, exemplified particularly by Gemma, Kid McArthur's sister in Stephanie Vaughn's "Kid MacArthur" (which also appears in Franklin). These are stories of our nation's past, told with all of its blemishes and grace. Space limitations prevent every wonderful piece from being included and there isn't one piece that I would push out. Although I respect Anderson's decision to select complete short stories, I miss the voice of Larry Heinemann—either a portion of *Paco's Story* or from the less anthologized and more widely admired by Vietnam veterans of my acquaintance *Close Quarters*—in *aftermath.*

Nevertheless, this collection can serve as an introduction for people who have read little or nothing in the literature of the war, or it can be a welcome compendium to a library brimming with full-length novels about the war or its aftermath. Any way you look at it, *aftermath* deserves an honored place in collections of writings about the war.

Karlin, Khue, and Vu's *The Other Side of Heaven: Post-War Fiction by Vietnamese & American Writers* includes 37 stories, one poem, an epilogue essay by Gloria Emerson and an introduction by Wayne Karlin. Six of the stories are by women; 18 are by Vietnamese writers. Four of the stories appear in Anderson; different stories by Butler, Just, and O'Brien, poetry by Balaban and two stories by Karlin appear in Franklin. The biographical sketches here also provide ways to find additional writing by the same authors; additionally, the writers are placed within the context of the war.

Karlin's introduction explains clearly the birth, development, and format of this powerful and important anthology—don't skip over it to get to the stories themselves. As Karlin points out, he used a shortened version of George Evan's thoughtful and thought-provoking poem "A Walk in the Garden of Heaven" as the hook for the chapters, which flow from one to another to tell about "the grief of loss and the ways the dead continue to haunt the living, the psychologically and morally and physically wounded, the tragedy of exile, and, finally, the displaced, the lonely, the haunted, the trapped" (xiv). In addition, he tells us that he "wanted the anthology to reflect the many ways the war still affects us. Divisiveness, hatred, and bitterness are part of the wounds of war; they are part of the cost we are still paying" (xiv). "The Man Who Stained His Soul" by Vu Bao is a tale of deception as well as the creation and the establishment of a myth; I was reminded of the line from "The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance," when the truth is finally revealed and the journalist responds to a question about what he is going to write by saying, "When the truth becomes legend, print the legend." "Waiting for a Friend" by Ngo Tu Lap is bone-chilling in its intensity, fatalism, and endurance. And "Marine Corps Issue" by David McLean tells an unflinching story about communication, the generation gap, service, honor, and dignity in a strong yet compassionate way.

These stories share close observation of human nature. They communicate, eloquently and simply, that we cannot rid ourselves

of the past. The overall tone of these stories is the revelation of the universality and humanity of the characters, including their ignorance and their understanding. Karlin's anthology provides a way for keeping the memories alive in the public's mind. This is a vital collection that provides ways to understand ourselves and our counterparts in Vietnam—combatants and non-combatants alike.

H. Bruce Franklin's *The Vietnam War in Songs, Poems, and Stories* contains 16 stories, 5 songs, and 64 poems by 46 writers, 13 of whom are women; a glossary, bibliographies, and secondary sources on Vietnam War Literature, as well as a chronology. Vaughn appears in Anderson; different stories by Balaban, Butler, Just, Karlin, and O'Brien appear in Karlin, of the 16 stories, two are by Wayne Karlin, and Larry Rottman is represented by a story and a poem. In addition, three of the stories are from the genre of science-fiction or fantasy. Furthermore, Franklin alone among the editors of these anthologies, includes somewhat extended biographical sketches, often including personal comments from the authors, which he states "need to be read as integral to their works" (6).

Although Franklin notes that a majority of the writers were directly involved in some way in the war—either as soldiers or war correspondents or nurses or the parent of a soldier—this is not breaking news. Neither is it a revelation that this is the most anti-war of the three anthologies. For example, Franklin's choice of Tim O'Brien's "The Man I Killed" rather than "Speaking of Courage," which is included in Anderson and Karlin, is a harrowing tale of the war's brutality perpetrated upon oneself as well as on others. And Kate Wilhelm's "The Village" is an imaginative way for Americans to grasp the reality of what happened at My Lai in March of 1968.

Franklin's section on popular songs, tiny as it is, at least pays homage to the significance of music during the years of the war. His own essay is incisive in explaining the issue. My criticism here is that five songs are too few. I would cut out some of the poems in order to include the lyrics to some of the songs Franklin mentions: The Animals' "We Gotta Get Out of This Place"—which was an anthem not only for the Americans in Vietnam but also for students on college campuses across the country as well—Charlie Daniels' "Still in Saigon," and Edwin Starr's "War." I would add Arlo Guthrie's inimitable "Alice's Restaurant," Barry McGuire's

"Eve of Destruction," and Steven Stills's "For What It's Worth."

Some of the best Vietnam veteran writers are included in the poetry section. Jan Barry's "In the Footsteps of Ghengis Khan" and "Thap Ba," Ron Carter's "Vietnam Dream," Horace Coleman's "OK Corral East/Brothers in the Nam," Steve Hassett's "Christmas," Gerry McCarthy's "The Sound of Guns," Marilyn McMahon's "Dying with Grace," Dale Ritterbusch's "Search and Destroy" and "At the Crash Site of a B-52/January 1994," Larry Rottman's "What Kind of War?" and "The Bones of an American M.I.A. Speak to the Members of the Joint Casualty Resolution Team" are in particular superb. I can never see Bruce Weigl's "Burning Shit at An Khe" without remembering the Monday night in June 1994 when he and Larry Heinemann read passages from their respective works at the Town Meeting at the New England Shelter for Homeless Veterans. But, where, oh where, are poems by David Connolly and Alan Farrell? This is a most eclectic anthology–with something in it for everyone, and not just those who opposed the war.

These three anthologies present the works of writers who understand the social functions of history, as delineated by Gerder Lerner in *Why History Matters*: "to validate aspects of the past; to confer immortality through collective memory; to construct a common reality or a cultural tradition; to explain past events; to heal." These are valuable books. ■

Notes

1. Merritt Clifton, Coordinating Editor, *Those Who Were There: Eyewitness Accounts of the War in Southeast Asia, 1956-1975, and Aftermath.* Paradise, CA: Dustbooks, 1984. John Newman's *Vietnam War Literature: An Annotated Bibliography of Imaginative Works about Americans Fighting in Vietnam*, Metuchen: Scarecrow Press, 2nd edition, 1988, 3rd edition, 1996.
2. These include, but are not limited to, Albert's *The Sixties Papers;* Nancy Anisfield's *Vietnam Anthology*; Vivian Vie Balfour's *The Perimeter of Light*; W. D. Ehrhart's *Carrying the Darkness* and *Unaccustomed Mercy*; Ronald Fraser's *1968: A Student Generation in Revolt;* Owen Gilman and Lorrie Smith's *America Rediscovered;* Harold Hayes's *Smiling Through the Apocalypse: Esquire's History of the Sixties*; Gerald Howard's *The Sixties;* Philip Jason's *Fourteen*

Landing Zones; Tom Jenks's *Soldiers and Civilians*; Carl Ogelsby's *The New Left Reader;* Harrison Salisbury's *Vietnam Reconsidered*; Al Santoli's *Everything We Had*; Sonya Sayers, *et al., The 60's without Apology*; William Searle's *Search and Clear*; D. Michael Shafer's *The Legacy*; Theatre Communications Group, Inc.'s *Coming to Terms: American Plays and the Vietnam War*; Linda Van Devanter and Joan Furey's *Visions of War, Dreams of Peace*; James Veninga and Harry Wilmer's *Vietnam in Remission*; Reese Williams's *Unwinding the Vietnam War.*

3. The three that I am not discussing in this review are: *Vietnam: A Traveler's Literary Companion,* edited by John Balaban and Nguyen Qui Duc; *Writing Between the Lines: An Anthology on War and Its Social Consequences,* edited by Kevin Bowen and Bruce Weigl; and *The Mammoth Book of Modern War Stories*, edited by Jon E. Lewis.

Vietnam War Literature: An Annotated Biography of Imaginative Works about Americans Fighting in Vietnam. Edited by John Newman; David A. Willson, David J. Derose, Stephen P. Hidalgo, Nancy J. Kendall, contributors. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 1996. Pp. xi + 667. $68.00.

Reviewed by Walter Jones, University of Utah

The body of imaginative writings concerning the United States involvement in the Vietnam War is growing in size, complexities, and importance. Discussing in his *Vietnam War Stories: Innocence Lost* (New York: Routledge, 1992) the existence of a seemingly overwhelming amount of literature dealing with the Vietnam conflict, Toby Herzog states his belief that many of these works treat the war honestly and artistically and, therefore, are of great value because of their attempts to make sense out of our nation's Vietnam experiences (2, 5, 7). Today, well over 1,000 novels, plays, collections of short stories, and books of poetry about Americans in the Vietnam War exist in the English language. For the serious reader, this statistic, one which rivals the literary

output about the American Civil War, presents a significant challenge in identifying and selecting specific titles to acquire or study.

Critical to bringing order and understanding to this outpouring of fictive publications, and to the host of critical volumes that analyze the expanding corpus of Vietnam War literature, is a book-length bibliography. The most recent of these reference sources is the exceptionally good *Vietnam War Literature: An Annotated Bibliography of Imaginative Works about Americans Fighting in Vietnam* (third edition) which has as its creator John Newman, curator of the Colorado State University's Vietnam War Literature Collection.

Key to Newman's success in producing this bibliographic guide is his ability to enlist the efforts of highly qualified assistants whose expertise complements his own knowledge of the field of Vietnam War writings. Newman's skill at marshalling talented people to produce a high quality bibliography becomes quite apparent in the first edition of *Vietnam War Literature*. For this early work, Newman had Colorado State University professor and former Air Force pilot, John Clark Pratt pen the introduction. Author of the much-acclaimed Vietnam War novel *Laotian Fragments* (New York: Viking, 1974), Pratt gives Newman's work a scholarly framework by providing a clearly focused opening essay about the war's literature. Again, Newman went to Pratt for the introduction to the second edition of *Vietnam War Literature* and then enlisted Ann Hilfinger's excellent technical assistance in putting the book together physically.

To appreciate the great merits of the third edition of *Vietnam War Literature*, it is useful to begin with information about the associate editors and contributors. While Newman himself wrote the bibliography's preface, John S. Baky introduced the work. Baky's special qualifications include his having once been the curator of the LaSalle University Library's Vietnam War literature collection. Currently, Baky is the director of LaSalle's Connelly Library. His article "Literary Resources of the Vietnam War" (*War, Literature, and the Arts*, Spring/Summer 1993 [5]) further demonstrates his credentials as an authority on Vietnam War literature and gives his introduction the substance of reliable scholarship.

David A. Willson, assistant to Newman in producing the bibliography's novel and short story sections, is a Vietnam

veteran, author, and reference librarian at Green River Community College in Auburn, Washington. Having written several Vietnam novels (*REMF Diary* [Seattle: Black Heron, 1988] and *REMF Returns* [Seattle: Black Heron, 1992]), Willson has also completed a bibliography (now it its third edition) of Vietnam War literary works: *Willson's Bibliography: War in Southeast Asia* (Auburn, Washington: Private printing, 1991).

David J. DeRose, editor of the bibliography's drama section, is an authority on theater and playwrights and has written the biography, *Sam Shepard* (New York: Twayne, 1992). He taught Theater Studies at Yale University before moving to California where he is currently in the Theater Arts Department at the University of California's Berkeley campus. He has published several essays on American drama about the Vietnam War including "A Dual Perspective: First Person Narrative in Vietnam Film and Drama" (an essay in Owen W. Gilman, Jr., and Lorrie Smith's book *America Rediscovered: Critical Essays on Literature and Film of the Vietnam War* [New York: Garland, 1990]).

Stephen Hidalgo, who edited the poetry section of *Vietnam War Literature*, is a poet and author of bibliographic essays about Vietnam War poetry. Concerning Hidalgo's qualifications to assist in Newman's bibliography, David Willson has stated, "Only Bill Ehrhart and Vince Gotera can be mentioned in the same breath with Stephen Hidalgo when it comes to Vietnam War Poetry" (Electronic Communication, David Willson to Walter Jones, May 30, 1997). One of his more recent works is "Agenda of Vietnam War Poetry: Reading the War as Art, History, Therapy and Politics" (*Journal of American Culture*, Fall 1993 [16]).

The bibliography's final section, "Miscellaneous" is the creation of Nancy Kendall, a reference librarian in Wisconsin. While her main area of expertise is computers, she, too, has demonstrated extensive knowledge of the literature of the Vietnam War by assisting David Willson in compiling a bibliography of Vietnam REMF works and by writing a critique of Sandra Whitman's bibliography, *Writing about Vietnam* ("Caution: Use This Book at Your Own Risk" *Vietnam Generation Newsletter* volume 3, no. 2 [June 1991]: 28-33). In addition to discussing the difficult topic of miscellaneous imaginative works, she contributed to the physical production of the bibliography by preparing a camera-ready copy for the printers. Further, she served as the book's liaison person to the publisher, a

responsibility that she, to quote Newman, discharged "superbly" (electronic communication, John Newman to David Willson, July 22, 1997).

Considering the excellent and diverse qualifications of this group of teachers, authors, and librarians–a "rare group of people" as Willson calls it–it is fair to say that their bibliography is the product of a collective genius. It is tightly focused and highly selective, expertly annotated, and well organized. Duplicating the chronological approach used in the second edition of *Vietnam War Literature*, Newman also continued the policy of providing two indices: one for authors and a second for the titles of specific works about the war. This combination of annotated entries, chronological sections, and indices makes the book a rich source of references for both scholars and lay readers.

The bibliography has several features worth extended discussion. First is the thought-provoking and informative insights each of the editors provides in her or his introductory remarks to the publication's five sections. Baky sets a positive tone for the bibliography when he praises the war's literature by stating that among the writing about the war are works of art that represent the "best to be produced by any writer or poet writing in the last decade" (xi).

In his portion of the novels and short stories of *Vietnam War Literature*, Willson discusses at some length the literary value of Vietnam War fiction and concludes with the intriguing idea of a friend who asserts, "All American novels published since 1965 are Vietnam War novels" (4). Following Willson, DeRose presents a case for the excellent quality of plays about the Vietnam War. He offers his belief that very few plays about the war have been published because most of those who produced the conflict's theatrical works meant their creations for street corners or the stage. Many of these works, therefore, never made it into print. Despite this situation, DeRose concludes that those which are published "make fascinating reading" (439, 440).

Hidalgo, limiting his poetry section to works mostly "depicting combat in Vietnam," affirms that the value of the war's poetic creations is their ability to record the warrior's experiences with a "close attention to the critical details" and to "the order and perspective with which those details are perceived" (463). Finally, Kendall gives the reader an exacting account of her having chosen "several notable comic and cartoon collections, as

well as books of art that came out of the war" to represent the "elusive and ephemeral works" that came out of the war.

A second noteworthy element of *Vietnam War Literature* is its selective nature. This has remained true in all three of Newman's editions. Central to the scope of his books is his insistence that the editor must read every item in the bibliography before making comments about it. This necessitates restricting the project to a manageable collection of materials that Newman has defined as including only "imaginative works in English about Americans fighting in Vietnam" (vii). While this is both an understandable and acceptable situation, it creates a mild longing for a learned discussion of pre-1965 classics, such as Graham Greene's *Quiet American* (London: William Hienemann Ltd., 1955), and William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick's *The Ugly American* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1958). It also hints at the benefits of including lesser-known early fiction, such as *To a Silent Valley* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961) by former American Foreign Service Officer and author, Howard R. Simpson, and the intriguing English translations of novels by writers like Jean Larteguy whose imaginative works provide valuable insights about the American War in Vietnam.

A third salient feature is the book's annotations. Herein lies much of the work's attractiveness. Newman holds his assistants to brief comments about each novel, short story, poem, play, or miscellaneous item, but the annotations are extremely well written, informative, often quite witty. In general, the editors emphasize descriptions of a work's plot, characters, settings, and theme, but they often offer short analytical opinions about a work's effectiveness as a literary endeavor or addition to the writings on the Vietnam War. In these evaluations are found remarks such as "realistic," "holds the reader's attention," "first class," "perfunctory plot," "boring," or "compelling." These features give *Vietnam War Literature* a genuinely literary flavor and often reward the reader who merely wants to browse the overall bibliography.

In summary, *Vietnam War Literature* is a major work in bringing order to the overwhelming number of publications about the war itself. As an authoritative, concise, and fascinating compilation of fictive works on Americans in Vietnam, the bibliography echoes clearly Nancy Anisfield's belief that as complex and controversial as the Vietnam War remains to Americans, the war's imaginative works are immensely vital

because they offer numerous and varied ways of interpreting the war and its results (*Vietnam Anthology,* Bowling Green: Bowling Green State U Popular P, 1987, 2). The book holds a valuable place among existing bibliographies about the war, such as Philip K. Jason's scholarly *The Vietnam War in Literature: An Annotated Bibliography of Criticism* (Englewood Cliffs: Salem Press, 1992). Further, *Vietnam War Literature* serves as an excellent bridge between imaginative works about the Vietnam War and the growing number of excellent critical volumes which discuss and analyze that literature—works that include Timothy J. Lomperis's *Reading the Wind: The Literature of the Vietnam War* (Durham: Duke UP, 1987), Thomas Myer's *Walking Point: American Narratives of Vietnam* (New York: Oxford UP, 1988, and Philip K. Jason as editor of *Fourteen Landing Zones: Approaches to Vietnam Literature* (Iowa City: U of Iowa P, 1991). Anyone either collecting books about or studying the Vietnam War would benefit immensely by acquiring and consulting frequently Newman's third edition of *Vietnam War Literature.* ■

Gentlemen Volunteers: The Story of American Ambulance Drivers in the Great War, August 1914–September 1918. Arlen J. Hansen. New York: Arcade Publishing, 1996. Pp. 272. Photographs, maps, drawings. $27.95.

Reviewed by Charles Clerc, Stockton, CA

Statistically, the war that raged from 1914 to 1918 in Europe pales by comparison with the Second World War, but nevertheless it was horrendous: 16 nations involved, 61 million troops, close to 10 million battlefield deaths, 20 million people dying from starvation and disease. The United States could count itself fortunate to have escaped three of the four years of combat on foreign soil. But American ambulance drivers were there from the beginning. *Gentlemen Volunteers,* by Arlen J. Hansen, is the most thoroughly researched, the most detailed,

informative, and comprehensive, and certainly the most readable study done on American ambulance units in the First World War. Consider it the definitive book on the subject.

Hansen starts by tracing the tripartite development of the American Ambulance services under the leadership of Edward Dale Toland, "a 28-year-old Philadelphia gentleman," along with H. Herman Harjes, a 39-year-old banker living in Paris; next, Richard Norton, 42-year-old Harvard graduate, classics professor, and archeologist, who sported a monocle; and, last, A. Piatt Andrew, 41-year-old Princeton grad, former teacher at Harvard, director of the US Mint, and Assistant Secretary of the Treasury. They were all men who knew how to get things done. In the face of formidable odds, such as bureaucratic hassles and turf protection, they managed to form efficient ambulance units, made up primarily of volunteers from universities, colleges, and prep schools throughout the country, many from the East Coast. These were upper-crust American men (and some women) who had known few if any real hardships. Bent on doing good, they performed with zeal and grit often in the midst of shelling, terror, carnage. Whether by transportation of the wounded directly from the trenches or in less hazardous jitney duty behind the lines, the life-saving contributions of these drivers were incalculable.

In Part II, "Works and Days," Hansen dramatizes anecdotes about individual drivers, such as Philip Sidney Rice, who suffered battle fatigue; Charlotte Read, an American nurse and ambulancier who went right to the front lines where "all hell broke loose"; and Richard Nelville Hall, age 21, who was struck by a shell, "the first American volunteer ambulance driver to die in the war."

Another chapter devoted to the ambulances themselves reveals the author's remarkable knowledge of cars, their engines, their innards. Hansen shows how "the relative simplicity of maintenance and repair made the Model T especially appealing to the ambulance service." Beyond Henry Ford's popular Tin Lizzie, "a marvel of design and durability," some drivers "preferred Packards, Panhards, or other models" including "Fiat, Mercedes, Hudson, De Launey-Bellville, Mettallurgique, Peugeot, Cadillac, Rolls-Royce, Austin, Daimler, Italia, Sunbeam." The entire chapter on the mechanics of ambulances is handled with authority and affection.

Part III, "The End of Something," begins with a chapter on politics, motives, and impressions. Hansen writes: "The hardships of the war, the tedium of *repos*, and the temperamental demands of the early automobiles were not the only challenges American volunteer ambulance drivers faced during the first two and a half years of the war."

He goes on to show how lack of support at home, indifference of the public and politicians, and shunning by relief organizations like the Red Cross made life extremely difficult for the drivers. Many were enraged by President Wilson's continuing neutrality. Some became fiercely dedicated to their tasks; some were repelled by the horrors of war; most were transformed by the experience. In one especially valuable chapter in the third part, Hansen writes of the contributions of women drivers. While still patronized by an oppressive post-Victorian society, they managed to carry out their numerous driving duties with skill and aplomb. For example, Mary Dexter "risked her life constantly in her efforts to pick up wounded and deliver them promptly to the Creil hospital." When she appeared at "the very front lines," she wrote that "the soldiers stared at me open-mouthed."

The exploits of noted male literary and artistic figures "have been recounted in hundreds of memoirs, biographies, and histories." Hansen sometimes offers a corrective. For instance, he shoots down stories that Walt Disney "had been a decorated World War I ambulance driver." He provides evidence that Disney missed the war entirely and did not arrive in France until after the Armistice. Details of ambulance service are provided about Louis Bromfield, Waldo Peirce, Harry Crosby, Robert Hillyer, Charles B. Nordhoff, John Howard Lawson, Julian Green, Ramon Guthrie, Sidney Howard, William Seabrook, Malcolm Cowley, E.E. Cummings, John Dos Passos, and Ernest Hemingway.

The last chapter in Part III is devoted to the militarization of the American Volunteer Corps, a long and complicated process that seemed to have brought mixed results–from spiritedness to disdain, from resignation to bitterness.

The ending informs us of the untimely deaths of two of the three founders of the ambulance units. Richard Norton became a victim of meningitis, dying in London in 1918 at the age of 46, and H. Herman Harjes died in 1926 at the age of 51 from a fall while playing polo in France. (A. Piatt Andrew, later

a seven-term US representative, died at the more advanced age of 63 in Massachusetts in 1936.)

An impeccable researcher, Hansen assimilated information from hundreds of sources, many of them quite obscure or hitherto undiscovered, and puts everything together seamlessly. A model of organization, Hansen's book is divided into three major sections, each of which has three parts. An introduction begins the book; an epilogue concludes it. As if balanced on a fulcrum, the middle chapter entitled "*En Repos*," shows the ambulance drivers in periods of inactivity when they caught up on correspondence, participated in sports, or simply took it easy. The thematic structure of the book is as admirable as its physical structure, proceeding from beginnings to endings, from defeat to victory (and conversely for the ambulance service itself from victory to defeat), from lack of recognition and ignominy of the drivers to their recognition and even fame.

As Keith Henderson has pointed out (*Christian Science Monitor,* May 2, 1996) about the ambulance service: "There are lessons here for volunteers in any age: Motives, and the willingness to refine them, can have a lot to do with success. And even the best motives can be twisted by ego."

Need we be reminded, by the time in 1917 when the US entered the war and the ambulance corps had been absorbed by the Red Cross and the US Army, "over 3,500 Americans had served as drivers." Hansen dedicates his book to these men and women for "their heroics amid horrors, their manners amid madness."

His book is handsomely produced, beautifully laid out, and replete with 16 pages of illustrative material, including a map of battle lines, a poster, testimonials, pictures of flags, and 30 photographs of drivers, administrators, battle scenes, and recovery missions. The book also contains 45 pages of highly informative notes at the back of the text, alongside a thorough 11-page bibliography and a helpful index. If the book has any drawback at all, it's in George Plimpton's less-than-satisfying foreward, over which the author himself had no control.

As it took a special breed of men and women to serve in ambulance units in World War I, so it took a special kind of person to complete a book about them. During writing and research, the author was suffering from renal cancer. With a courage beyond measure, he persevered to complete the

manuscript. Hansen died at a Stockton, California, convalescent hospital on August 12, 1993, at the age of 56. His family and friends saw to it that the manuscript made its way in completed form to the publisher. In turn, Arcade made certain that the book reached the light of day.

Near a circle of columns at the University of the Pacific where Hansen taught, there may be found a memorial and a plaque "placed in memory of":

Arlen J. Hansen
1936-1993
Professor of English, 1969-1993
By his family, colleagues, and friends
On October 2, 1993

The memorial rests just on the edge of groundcover by the walkway between the Library and Knoles Hall. It has the shape of a miniature alp. Students and faculty call it Arlen's Rock. ■