Delve Deeper into

Regret to Inform
By Barbara Sonnenborn

Premieres on PBS Monday, January 24th, 2000 at 10PM E.T. (check local listings).
The national P.O.V. broadcast is a co-presentation with the National Asian American Telecommunications Association.

Fiction. There are so many fine American novels about the Vietnam War that it seems impossible and unfair to choose just a few. Tim O'Brien, Robert Olen Butler, Thom Jones, Philip Caputo, Larry Heineman, Bobbie Ann Mason, John Edgar Wideman and Ward Just have all written eloquently about the effect of the Vietnam conflict on Americans who served there (and those who didn't), as well as on Vietnamese who came to the United States as refugees. Perhaps less widely available is fiction written by Vietnamese writers, some still living in the Republic of Vietnam, others by now fairly settled residents of the U.S.; for example:


Nonfiction. Among the more comprehensive historical approaches to the conflict are works like:


Assessments of the impact of the War, the political and cultural polarization it inspired, and the postwar search for reconciliation include:


From self-help to sociological study, widowhood has generated a rich literature over the past several decades. Highlights among self-help books include:


Among the valuable academic studies are:

Memoirs. Personal accounts of the War and its effect upon individuals within the broader context of their lives and history often offer an emotional insight into a time and place, for example:


Younger Readers. There is a surprising amount of wonderful fiction and nonfiction works for young adults and children. Some of these include:


Web Sites. There are literally thousands of Vietnam-related sites. Among the valuable clearing-houses are:

Either http://www.vietvet.org/ or http://grunt.space.swri.edu/ should get you to the veterans’ home page, which provides practical information (e.g., on veterans’ benefits), access to interactive discussion areas and reports written by veterans and their families about recent trips to Vietnam.

http://students.vassar.edu/~vietnam/index.html and http://www.ocf.berkeley.edu/~sdenney are among the more useful university sites, which give surfers access to historical documents and, particularly at Berkeley, links to other information sources from the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi to Southeast Asian newspapers.

Finally, http://www.taps.org/, a site sponsored by the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, deals with grief in general, supplying information and links to other resources, from government agencies to local support groups.

Videos. Classic commercial films about the Vietnam War and its impact on combatants and/or non-combatants may be obvious; among them, in alphabetical order:


Perhaps more valuable to people interested in the War and its impact would be the superb documentaries produced by public and commercial networks; for example:


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