

With regard to balance, surely the selection "Sending American Troops to Cambodia is Immoral?" is not the only alternative position to the selection "Sending American Troops to Cambodia is Necessary," but the editors suggest as much with their format. Another format problem is that it is not clear where the editorial portion of each viewpoint ends and the selection itself begins because the author of the original document is listed before the editorial remarks. There are some illustrations, short excerpts, and maps that make the book more useful in the classroom. Dudley and his colleagues have retitled selections and have added subtitles to parts of the selections for "clarity."

A knowledgeable teacher could use this book effectively, along with a good text and classroom comment, but I would use the McMahon book of readings along with a short text by Duiker, Hess, or Herring rather than this book. [Robert J. McMahon, ed., *Major Problems in the History of the Vietnam*, 2d ed. (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1995, pbk); William J. Duiker, *The Communist Road to Power in Vietnam*, 2d ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996, pbk); Gary R. Hess, *Vietnam and the United States: Origins and Legacy of War* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1990, pbk); and George C. Herring, *LBJ and Vietnam: a Different Kind of War* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994)].

The First Division Museum at Cantigny

John F. Votaw

James S. Olson and Randy Roberts, eds. *My Lai: A Brief History with Documents*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998. Pp. xiv, 222. Cloth, \$35.00; ISBN 0-312-17767-4. Paper, \$7.50; ISBN 0-312-14227-7.

No issue has more divided Americans in recent decades than the Vietnam War, and the painful reminder of the My Lai Massacre still haunts the nation today. Charlie Company's murder of almost 400 noncombatants shocked a public already polarized by the government's growing credibility gap following the Tet Offensive. When Seymour Hersh's articles first appeared in November 1969, many people refused to believe that American soldiers could perpetrate such a heinous crime on civilians, but others were quick to point out that atrocities routinely had been carried out by both sides in the protracted Southeast Asian war. Ron Haeberle's graphic photographs of the massacre, which were published in *Life* magazine during the following month, further fueled the debate and led to creation of the Peers Commission to conduct a thorough investigation.

This book, a volume in the highly successful Bedford Series in History and Culture, offers the full story of My Lai through a reprinting of key press releases, eyewitness testimonies, and editorial articles. Sixty-eight primary documents describe the background to the massacre, assault on the village, cover-up, testimonies from

Charlie Company, exposure and investigation, public reaction, and culpability for the action. The majority of these selections are drawn from the Peers Commission report and they document the vagueness of military orders for sweeping the village, as well as providing specific accusations against Capt. Ernest Medina and Lt. William Calley. Sworn statements from members of Charlie Company and surviving Vietnamese villagers offer more than a story of frustrated and frightened soldiers overreacting to an ambiguous situation; testimonies reveal organized rapes and calculated murders. Efforts at the highest military levels to conceal the crime tarnished the army's image and made further pursuit of wartime goals even more difficult. The punishment of Lt. Calley exacerbated the debate when critics labeled him a mere scapegoat who was used by superiors to protect their own careers and the reputation of the U.S. Army.

Despite the obvious evil associated with the My Lai Massacre, editors Olson and Roberts do an excellent job of assembling important documents to generate new lines of thoughtful discussion. They especially direct reader attention to issues of culpability and the fundamental question about the "rules of conduct" in a guerrilla war where identities of friends and enemies often blur. The book is user-friendly and is aimed primarily at college students, but it can also be utilized in high school classes and can be read with interest by a broader adult audience. Courses in Recent America, Military History, Ethics, and even American History survey classes serve as a logical forums for adoption. The editors provide a list of twenty-one questions for reader consideration, as well as an authoritative list of suggested readings and a detailed index. Teachers hoping to generate provocative classroom discussions and those who wish to assign short writing assignments on controversial topics should strongly consider this book. It stands as one of the best volumes in the rapidly expanding Bedford Series.

University of Nebraska at Omaha

Michael L. Tate

William A. Gordon. *Four Dead in Ohio: Was There a Conspiracy at Kent State?* Laguna Hills, CA: North Ridge Books, 1995. Pp. 301. Paper, \$13.95; ISBN 0-937813-05-2.

The title of William A. Gordon's book about the 1970 tragedy at Kent State University clearly indicates to the reader the author's approach to the topic. Born near Kent, Ohio, Gordon attended Kent State and this obviously sparked his interest in the topic. While it is apparent that he spent much time researching the events of May 1970, his lack of historical expertise presents a clouded view of the tragedy. Gordon's authorship of two Hollywood tour guides are his only other listed credentials. He claims that no history professors at Kent State would even discuss the tragedy with him. As Gordon explains the roadblocks he encountered in writing this book, the