

MY LAI 25 YEARS AFTER:

**FACING THE DARKNESS
HEALING THE WOUNDS**



A TULANE UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE

NEW ORLEANS ♦ DECEMBER 1 - 3, 1994

MY LAI 25 YEARS AFTER:

FACING THE DARKNESS, HEALING THE WOUNDS

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READINGS

One morning in the latter part of March [1968] Task Force Barker moved out from its firebase headed for "Pinkville" [the troops' nickname for My Lai]. Its mission: destroy the troubled spot and all its inhabitants. When Butch [Ridenhour's informant] told me this I didn't quite believe what he was telling me was true, but he assured me it was and went on to describe what had happened. The other two companies that made up the task force cordoned off the village so that "Charlie" Company could move through to destroy the structures and kill the inhabitants. Any villagers who ran from Charlie Company were stopped by the encircling companies. I asked "Butch" several times if all the people were killed. He said that he thought they were, men, women, and children. He recalled seeing a small boy, about three or four years old, standing by the trail with a gunshot wound in one arm. The boy was clutching his wounded arm with his other hand, while blood trickled between his fingers. He was staring around himself in shock and disbelief at what he saw. "He just stood there with big eyes staring around like he didn't understand; he didn't believe what was happening. Then the captain's RTO (radio operator) put a burst of 16 (M-16 rifle) fire into him." It was so bad, Gruver said, that one of the men in his squad shot himself in the foot in order to be medivac-ed out of the area so that he would not have to participate in the slaughter. Although he had not seen it, Gruver had been told by people he considered trustworthy that one of the company's officers, 2nd Lieutenant Kally (this spelling may be incorrect [— it is Calley]) had rounded up several groups of villagers (each group consisting of a minimum of 20 persons of both sexes and all ages). According to the story, Kally then machine-gunned each group. Gruver estimated that the population of the village had been 300 to 400 people and that very few, if any, escaped. [. . .]

Exactly what did, in fact, occur in the village of "Pinkville" in March, 1968 I do not know for *certain*, but I am convinced that it was something very black indeed. I remain irrevocably persuaded that if you and I do truly believe in the principles of justice and equality of every man, however humble, before the law, that form the very backbone that this country is founded on, then we must press forward a widespread and public investigation of this matter with all our combined efforts. I think that it was Winston Churchill who once said "A country without a conscience is a country without a soul, and a country without a soul is a country that cannot survive."

Ron Ridenhour, Letter to Congress, 1969.

It's unlikely that any other atrocities of the magnitude and character of My Lai 4 have taken place in South Vietnam, but how many My Khe 4's [a massacre perpetrated by Bravo Company just a few miles away on the same day] have there been?

By the fall of 1971 the massacre by Bravo Company was forgotten, although in that slaughter lay an important truth about the American Army. Bravo Company killed between forty and a hundred innocent Vietnamese civilians with impunity on the morning of March 16, 1968. There was no Lieutenant Calley ordering his men to "waste them." There was no confrontation with a helicopter pilot, and no protesting and screaming over a radio network.

My Lai was out of the ordinary, but it was not isolated.

Seymour Hersh, *Cover-up: The Army's Secret Investigation of the Massacre of My Lai*, 1972.

The Guard at the Binh Thuy Bridge

How still he stands as mists begin to move, as morning, curling, billows creep across his cooplake, concrete sentry perched mid-bridge over mid-muddy river. Stares at bush-green banks which bristle rifles, mortars, men—perhaps. No convoys shake the timbers. No sound but water slapping boatsides, banksides, pilings. He's slung his carbine barrel down to keep the boring dry, and two banana-clips instead of one are taped to make, now, forty rounds instead of twenty. Droplets bead from stock to sight; they bulb, then strike his boot. He scrapes his heel, and sees no boxbombs floating towards his bridge. Anchored in red morning mist a narrow junk rocks its weight. A woman kneels on deck staring at lapping water. Wets her face. Idly the thick Rach Binh Thuy slides by. He aims. At her. Then drops his aim. Idly.

John Balaban. Reprinted by permission of the author; first appeared in *After Our War*, 1974; rpt. in *Carrying the Darkness: The Poetry of the Vietnam War*, ed. W.D. Ehrhart.

Hunting

Sighting down the long black barrel,
I waited till front and rear sights
form a perfect line on his body,
then slowly squeeze the trigger.

The thought occurs
that I have never hunted anything in my whole life
except other men.

But I have learned by now
where such thoughts lead,
and soon pass on
to chow, and sleep,
and how much longer till I change my socks.

W.D. Ehrhart. Reprinted by permission of the author; first appeared in *To Those Who Have Gone Home Tired: New and Selected Poems*, Thunders' Mouth Press, 1984; rpt. in *Carrying the Darkness*.

Song of Napalm for my wife

After the storm, after the rain stopped pounding,
We stood in the doorway watching horses
Walk off lazily across the pasture's hill.
We stared through the black screen,
Our vision altered by the distance
So I thought I saw a mist
Kicked up around their hooves when they faded
Like cut-out horses
Away from us.
The grass was never more blue in that light, more
Scarlet; beyond the pasture
Trees scraped their voices into the wind, branches
Crisscrossed the sky like barbed wire
But you said they were only branches.

Okay. The storm stopped pounding.
I am trying to say this straight: for once
I was sane enough to pause and breathe
Outside my wild plans and after the hard rain
I turned my back on the old curses. I believed
They swung finally away from me . . .

But still the branches are wire
And thunder is the pounding mortar,
Still I close my eyes and see the girl
Running from her village, napalm
Stuck to her dress like jelly,
Her hands reaching for the no one

Who waits in waves of heat before her.

So I can keep on living,
So I can stay here beside you,
I try to imagine she runs down the road and wings
Beat inside her until she rises
Above the stinking jungle and her pain
Eases, and your pain, and mine.

But the lie swings back again.
The lie works only as long as it takes to speak
And the girl runs only as far
As the napalm allows
Until her burning tendons and crackling
Muscles draw her up
Into that final position
Burning bodies so perfectly assume. Nothing
Can change that; she is burned behind my eyes
And not your good love and not the rain-swept air
And not the jungle green
Pasture unfolding before us can deny it.

Bruce Weigl. Reprinted by permission of the author; from *The Monkey Wars*, Univ. of Georgia Press, 1985; rpt. in *Carrying the Darkness*.

Group Shot

So they passed,
Days of hollow cadence
When each passing day
Seemed an album of daguerreotypes,
Camera-caught, anachronistic.
Puffed-up, pigeon-breasted,
As in Brady's day
We strutted to a distant
Very insistent drum.

I have photos of us all together,
Polished boots and brass
In front of whitewashed barracks.
There, hanging on the parlor wall,
We are as once we were,
The wholeness of our limbs,
Two eyes blinking at the sun,
When all had all needed
To woo the world.

Basil Paquet. Reprinted by permission of the author; first appeared in the *New York Review of Books*, 18 December 1969, rpt. in *Winning Hearts and Minds*, Jan Barry, Basil T. Paquet and Larry Rottman, eds., 1st Casualty Press; rpt. in *Carrying the Darkness*.

Those of us who have gone through the war like to feel we have come out with a certain truth.

Vietnam Veteran, quoted in Robert Jay Lifton, *Home From the War: Learning from Vietnam Veterans*.

The ordinary response to atrocities is to banish them from consciousness. Certain violations of the social compact are too terrible to utter aloud: this is the meaning of the word *unspeakable*.

Atrocities, however, refuse to be buried. Equally as powerful as the desire to deny atrocities is the conviction that denial does not work. Folk wisdom is filled with ghosts who refuse to rest in their graves until their stories are told. Murder will out. Remembering and telling the truth about terrible events are prerequisites both for the restoration of the social order and for the healing of individual victims.

The conflict between the will to deny horrible events and the will to proclaim them aloud is the central dialectic of psychological trauma. People who have survived atrocities often tell their stories in a highly emotional, contradictory, and fragmented manner which undermines their credibility and thereby serves the twin imperatives of truth-telling and secrecy. When the truth is finally recognized, survivors can begin their recovery. But far too often secrecy prevails, and the story of the traumatic event surfaces not as a verbal narrative but as a symptom.

Judith Lewis Herman, M.D., *Trauma and Recovery*.

Healing from trauma depends upon communalization of the trauma—being able to safely tell the story to someone who is listening and who can be trusted to retell it truthfully to others in the community. So before analyzing, before classifying, before thinking, before trying to do anything—we should *listen*. [. . .]

Narrative can transform involuntary reexperiencing of traumatic events into memory of the events, thereby re-establishing authority over memory. *Forgetting combat trauma is not a legitimate goal of treatment*. Veterans find it morally degrading to forget the dead. To know why this is so, we need only recall [. . .] the existential functions of guilt and rage. The task is to remember—rather than relive and reenact—and to grieve. For combat veterans this means grieving not only the dead but also their own lost innocence in both meanings, as blamelessness and as unawareness of evil. Also, many prewar relationships with parents, friends, siblings, and spouses are now gone forever. A secure sense of the goodness of the social order is irretrievably lost and must be mourned. One veterans said,

“You’re afraid that once you start to cry you’ll never stop. And once you start, it seems like it

will never stop. I cried for a whole year.”

We must all strive to be a trustworthy audience for victims of abuse of power. I like to think that Aristotle had something like this in mind when he made tragedy the centerpiece of education for citizens in a democracy. However, to do this we must overcome all the good reasons why normal adults do not want to hear trauma narratives. If forced to hear them, normal people deny their truth. If forced to accept them as true, they often forget them. Taken together, I call these good reasons the law of forgetting and denial.

Jonathan Shay, M.D., *Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character*.

In a true war story, if there’s a moral at all, it’s like the thread that makes the cloth. You can’t tease it out. You can’t extract the meaning without unraveling the deeper meaning. And in the end, really, there’s nothing much to say about a true war story, except maybe “Oh.”

True war stories do not generalize. They do not indulge in abstraction or analysis.

For example: War is hell. As a moral declaration the old truism seems perfectly true, and yet because it abstracts, because it generalizes, I can’t believe it with my stomach. Nothing turns inside.

It comes down to gut instinct. A true war story, if truly told, makes the stomach believe.

Tim O’Brien, “How to Tell a True War Story,” in *The Things They Carried*.

American military leaders have left ample testimony of the complex and often baffling challenge they faced in Vietnam and on the home front. Speaking of the “fog of war” in December 1967 [General Earle] Wheeler observed that Vietnam was the “foggiest war” in his memory and the first where the fog was “thicker away from the scene of the conflict than on the battlefield.” Marine Gen. Lewis Walt concurred. “Soon after I arrived in Vietnam,” he later admitted, “it became obvious to me that I had neither a real understanding of the nature of the war nor any clear idea how to win it.” Abysmal ignorance of Vietnam and the Vietnamese on the part of Lyndon Johnson, his advisers, and the nation as a whole thickened the fog of war, contributing to a mistaken decision to intervene, mismanagement of the conflict, and ultimate failure.

George Herring, *LBJ and Vietnam*.

My quarrel with the liberals and my quarrel with the peace people is that they never explored their own violence. I found their attitudes extremely smug and complacent. I saw more human violence at peace demonstra-

tions than in many situations in Vietnam—not all, but many. These people never wished to confront those things. They would like to pretend that they haven't got those capacities, that they are *not* violent people. But in their dreams and in their wishes and in their hearts they were in Vietnam too. Their shadow was in Vietnam. They're part of it too.

Michael Herr in Eric James Schroeder, *Vietnam, We've All Been There: Interviews with American Writers*.

It needs to be repeated that our participation in the Vietnam War is justified only if Vietnam is the contemporary salient of a world enterprise, however loosely organized, that aims ultimately at the security of the United States. If that is what it is, we need to hit back with such weapons as we are in a position to use which spare us the most precious commodity we have, the American soldier. If that is not what Vietnam is all about, then we should get the hell out.

William F. Buckley, "On the Right," March 19, 1968.

The root of the problem was the fact that much of what the newsmen took to be lies was exactly what the [U.S.] Mission genuinely believed, and was reporting to Washington. Events were to prove that the Mission itself was unaware of how badly the war was going, operating in a world of illusion. Our feud with the newsmen was an angry symptom of bureaucratic sickness.

John Mecklin, Former Public Affairs Officer, Saigon.

And when they came out of My Lai, I heard the stories they came back with. I didn't know whether they were true because I wasn't there. If they were true, it meant my company had murdered people, it meant I had helped by making sure the weapons worked, it meant my friends were in serious trouble because they had been taught their job too well. It meant speaking out against something I was told was right, but deep within me, I knew wasn't right, it meant because of lies I had been told I was sitting in the middle of a useless war, it meant if I died in Vietnam my life would have been used and wasted, it meant that each day as I did my assigned job, I was contributing my small share to keep the war going, it meant the men who already died and the men who were going to die were throwing their lives away, it meant I was helping to continue something I felt was wrong. It meant if I decided not to do my job anymore I would be sent to jail and court-martialed. It meant a lot of people would think I was a traitor to my country because I didn't believe in the war anymore, it meant some of the people in the company and outside the Army would hate me because they wouldn't understand why I had changed my mind, it meant I would get a dishon-

orable discharge, it meant I would find it hard to get a job, it meant losing the privileges of the G.I. Bill for schools and hospital care, it meant hardships on my parents. It meant a lot of bad things I didn't want to think about, based on stories I wasn't sure were true. So I decided to forget about it.

Jeff Needle, "Please Read This," quoted in Lifton.

When we look at the photographs published in *Life* and see the bodies of children and women in piles, and look into the faces of an old woman and a young girl about to be shot, we feel a kind of violence is being done to our feelings, and that the massacre threatens to overpower us. To block it out, we may freeze. If we face the massacre for what it is, we are torn by almost unbearable grief, but if we turn away and let the rationalizations crowd into our minds to protect us, we are degraded. We want to go on with our daily lives, and we may wonder, Why should my life be interrupted by this? Why should I take on this suffering on behalf of these victims? However much we may resist it, the choice has been made for us, irrevocably. Whether we manage to bear the grief or whether we freeze, the massacre enters into us and becomes part of us. The massacre calls for self-examination and for action, but if we deny the call and try to go on as before, as though nothing had happened, our knowledge, which can never leave us once we have acquired it, will bring about an unnoticed but crucial alteration in us, numbing our most precious faculties and withering our souls. For if we learn to accept this, there is nothing we will not accept.

Jonathan Schell, *The Military Half: An Account of Destruction in Quang Ngai and Quang Tin*.

Today, there is about My Lai an overwhelming sense of unfinished business. Hopes that what was demonstrably wrong could be demonstrably righted have never been fulfilled. Ridenhour's call for justice was answered with a farrago of legal process. Schell's fears that, even if people knew the truth, they would shrug it off as if they had never been told, have turned out to be well founded. Today the Tree of Knowledge has become the supermarket of news. Massacre has a short shelf life. The tension between the barbarity of My Lai and the national myths has been resolved in favor of the myths. "Thank God," George Bush said after the Gulf War in 1991, "the Vietnam syndrome is buried forever." If as [Michael] Waltzer [the Harvard philosopher] says, "the moral reality of war is not fixed by the actual activities of soldiers but by the opinions of mankind," then public opinion is as little ready to define or defend its ideals now as in 1968. Once again the darker side of war has gone underground. My Lai is no longer a public burden or concern. The

burden of guilt and the burden of responsibility have fallen onto the soldiers themselves. "Shit," the men of Charlie Company used to tell each other, "rolls downhill."

Michael Bilton and Kevin Sim, *4 Hours in My Lai*, 1992.

how to be wise in the midst of confusion, and how to let go of that which we can no longer hold. In this way, anger can teach forgiveness, hate can teach us love, and war can teach us peace.

Phung Thi Le Ly Hayslip, *When Heaven and Earth Changed Places*, 1990.

I see battlefields or combat areas that are under twenty-four hour [...] surveillance of all types. I see battlefields on which we can destroy anything we can locate through instant communications and the almost instantaneous application of highly lethal fire power. [...] Hundreds of years were required to achieve the mobility of the armored division. A little over two decades later we had the air-mobile division. With cooperative effort, no more than 10 years should separate us from the Automated Battlefield.

Gen. William C. Westmoreland, Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, Annual Luncheon Association of the U.S. Army, October 14, 1969; quoted in Lifton.

The lieutenant Calleys of war will be left home—if a drone helicopter is ordered by a computer to strike at a sensor post being passed by children or water buffaloes, it means there has been an error in information, not in law or conscience—a court martial cannot try a manless helicopter, nor can a chain of command be easily recognized in a more modern form of organization where only machines can be held responsible for their own actions.

Dickson and Rothchild, "Electronic Battlefield: Wiring Down the War," *Washington Monthly*, May 1971.

If you were an American GI, I ask you to read this book and look into the heart of one you once called enemy. I have witnessed, firsthand, all that you went through. I will try to tell you who your enemy was and why almost everyone in the country you tried to help resented, feared, and misunderstood you. It was not your fault. It could not have been otherwise. Long before you arrived, my country had yielded to the terrible logic of war. What for you was normal—a life of peace and plenty—was for us a hazy dream known only in our legends. Because we had to appease the allied forces by day and were terrorized by Viet Cong at night, we slept as little as you did. We obeyed both sides and wound up pleasing neither. We were people in the middle. We were what the war was about. [...]

If you are a person who knows the Vietnam war, or any war, only by stories and pictures, this book is written for you too. For you see, the face of destiny or luck or god that gives us war also gives us other kinds of pain: the loss of health and youth; the loss of loved ones or of love; the fear that we will end our days alone. Some people suffer in peace the way others suffer in war. The special gift of suffering, I have learned, is how to be strong while we are weak, how to be brave when we are afraid,

Warm greetings to the people of My Lai, to the people of this district and this province. I come to you this morning with a deep sadness for the tragedy of your village. I sense also that this morning the people of My Lai are sad. The people of this district and province, indeed the people of Vietnam are sad. And peace-loving people around the world, including the United States, are also sad at the memory of what happened in this village. As there has been a gentle rain here this morning, I believe we can say that even the heavens are very sad.

A few days ago my wife and son came here to My Lai. As I sat over here by the irrigation ditch where 170 people, mostly old people, women and children were killed, the wind in the surrounding pine trees seemed to weep in sorrow for these lost sons and daughters of My Lai.

I come to you this morning as a person who was born in a land far away, the land of America. But I am sad because we can say that each one of those 504 men, women and children who were killed on that fateful day was my brother and sister. For in an ultimate sense, we all have the same father and mother. We are all brothers and sisters in the same family: the family of mankind.

The tragedy of My Lai is the tragedy of war. Each time a person is killed, we can say that person is our sister or brother.

It is my hope and prayer that we all will remember the tragedy of the morning in March 25 years ago, not that we will hold hatred for each other, but that we will thoughtfully learn the lessons of history. And it is my hope and prayer that a tragedy like My Lai will never, never, never happen again.

It is my hope also that from this day forward, the relationship and friendship between our peoples will grow stronger and deeper. As I see the irrigation ditch here in My Lai, it is my hope that our peoples will not be separated by the ditch of war and misunderstanding, but that we will find ways to build a bridge of friendship and mutual respect over this ditch, and that we shall live together in peace.

Finally, I want to say personally that I am deeply sorry for what happened here in your village 25 years ago. As people who long for peace, we ask your forgiveness for that tragedy.

We honor the people of My Lai, of this district and of this province. We honor the people of Vietnam. We wish for you a future of happiness, of peace and fullness of life.

Earl Martin, Mennonite Central Committee, speech to an assembled group of about 1000 farmers, children and officials in My Lai village on March 16, 1993.

MY LAI 25 YEARS AFTER: FACING THE DARKNESS, HEALING THE WOUNDS

TIME	EVENT	SPEAKER	LOCATION	TIME	EVENT	SPEAKER	LOCATION	
THURSDAY DECEMBER 1, 1994								
THURSDAY 4:00-6:00 PM	FROM HOLLYWOOD TO HANOI, DIRECTED BY TIANA (THI THANH NGA)	Tom Brown, Indochina Film Arts Foundation	McAlister Auditorium	9:00 - 10:45 AM	EXPERIENCING THE DARKNESS: ORAL HISTORY PANEL	William Eckhardt, prosecutor, My Lai cases Ron Ridenhour, journalist Hugh Thompson, helicopter pilot, Vietnam	Freeman Business School Chadwick Auditorium	
7:00 PM	SURVIVORS AND WITNESSES: THE CONTINUING JOURNEY OF VIETNAM VETERANS	Robert Jay Lifton, M.D., psychiatrist	Rogers Memorial Chapel	11:00 AM - 12:30 PM	AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES ON THE VIETNAMESE EXPERIENCE	John McAuliffe, moderator, Director, U.S.-Indochina Reconciliation Project John Balaban, poet Robert Olen Butler, fiction writer Wayne Karlin, fiction writer	Freeman Business School Chadwick Auditorium	
FRIDAY DECEMBER 2, 1994								
FRIDAY 9:00-10:30	TRAUMA AND RECOVERY: THE CONTINUING JOURNEY	Patience Mason, author Jonathan Shay, M.D., psychiatrist Karin Thompson, clinical psychologist	Stibbs Room A&B, University Center	11:00 AM - 12:30 PM	LESSONS ON THE WAR: WORKSHOP ON TEACHING THE WAR	Jerry Starr, sociologist	Freeman Business School Room 101	
9:00-10:30	POLITICAL BACKGROUND OF THE VIETNAM WAR	George Herring, author and historian	Rogers Memorial Chapel	12:30 PM	LUNCH			
11:00 AM 12:30	VIETNAMESE PERSPECTIVES ON THE VIETNAMESE EXPERIENCE	Joseph Vuong, prof. of Vietnamese Bac Tran, author, prof. of Vietnamese Truyen T. Vu, M.D., physician Kiem Do, Capt., Viet. Navy (ret.)	Stibbs Room A&B, University Center	1:15-2:45 PM	FROM HOLLYWOOD TO HANOI BOOK SIGNING	Tom Brown, Indochina Film Arts Foundation various participants	Chadwick Auditorium, Tulane Bookstore	
11:00 AM 12:30	ATROCITIES IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE	Stephen Ambrose, author and military historian	Rogers Memorial Chapel		LESSONS LEARNED (MILITARY)	Capt. Warren Hudson (USN ret.), swiftboat captain, Vietnam Gen. Walt Boomer (USMC ret.), former Marine commander, Gulf War Col. Hays Parks (USMC ret.), Chief International Law Branch, the Pentagon Col. Harry Summers (USA ret.), author	Cram Room, University Center	
12:45 PM	LUNCH		Freeman Business School Atrium	1:15-2:45 PM	POETRY AND FICTION READING	Robert Olen Butler, fiction writer W.D. Ehrhart, poet Wayne Karlin, fiction writer Basil Paquet, poet	Rogers Memorial Chapel	
	FOUR HOURS IN MY LAI BOOK SIGNING	Kevin Sim, Director various participants	Chadwick Auditorium Tulane Bookstore					
1:45-3:15 PM	HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE MY LAI ATROCITY: STATES AND LAW OF WAR	David Clinton, moderator Gen. Walt Boomer (USMC ret.), Marine commander, Gulf War Col. Hays Parks (USMC ret.), Chief International Law Branch, the Pentagon Col. Harry Summers (USA ret.), author	Freeman Business School Chadwick Auditorium	3:00-4:30 PM	PASSAGE TO VIETNAM: A SLIDE SHOW	Rick Smolan, editor and photographer	Freeman Business School	
1:45-3:15 PM	CARRYING THE DARKNESS: LITERARY APPROACHES TO ATROCITY	W.D. Ehrhart, moderator John Balaban, poet Wayne Karlin, fiction writer Basil Paquet, poet	Rogers Memorial Chapel	3:00-4:30 PM	LESSONS LEARNED (POLITICAL)	Jack Salmon, moderator, political scientist Stephen Ambrose, historian George Herring, historian Henry Mason, political scientist	Cram Room, University Center	
3:15-5:00 PM	THE ROLE OF THE PRESS AND THE VIETNAM WAR	Warren Bell, moderator, journalist David Halberstam, journalist Seymour Hersh, journalist Ron Ridenhour, journalist Kathleen Turner, professor	Freeman Business School Chadwick Auditorium	4:45-6:45 PM	META-PANEL. QUESTIONS: WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THE WOUND? HOW CAN IT BE HEALED?	Stephen Ambrose Gen. Walt Boomer Kiem Do William Eckhardt John McAuliffe Tim O'Brien	Col. Hays Parks Ron Ridenhour Jonathan Shay, M.D. Col. Harry Summers Marilyn Young	Dixon Hall
5:00 PM	OPPORTUNITY TO EXAMINE EXHIBITS	Vietnam related book display Original photographs of Vietnam today	Howard Tilton Library Newcomb Art Gallery Rogers Mem. Chapel, Dixon Hall	7:30 PM	READING BY TIM O'BRIEN	Tim O'Brien, fiction writer	Dixon Hall	
7:00 PM	KEYNOTE ADDRESS	Seymour Hersh, journalist	Dixon Hall	7:30 PM	CLOSING REMARKS	Randy Fertel		
7:30 PM	FOUR HOURS IN MY LAI	Kevin Sim, Director	Bobet Hall, 332, Loyola Univ.		FROM HOLLYWOOD TO HANOI, DIRECTED BY TIANA (THI THANH NGA)	Tom Brown, Indochina Film Arts Foundation	McAlister Auditorium	

PARTICIPANTS

Neil Alexander. New Orleans based professional photographer and award winning documentary filmmaker, Mr. Alexander journeyed to Vietnam on a travel assignment last February. He plans to return there in '95 to continue work on a photographic survey of the architecture of Vietnam. Of his work, on display at the Rogers Memorial Chapel and Dixon Hall, he notes: "I chose to look beyond the hardware and memories of our war to reveal the country that has always been there, complex and beautiful." Exhibits here and in New York. Currently at work on documentary, *In the Shadow of the Dragon*, on the New Orleans Vietnamese community.

Stephen Ambrose. Boyd Professor of History and Director of the Eisenhower Center at the University of New Orleans. Noted author, historian, and educator, Ambrose has written over 20 books on US foreign relations, military history, and political and military leaders, six on Dwight D. Eisenhower alone. *Rise to Globalism*, his interpretive study of American foreign policy since 1938 is used as a text at many colleges and universities. His best-seller, *D-Day, June 6, 1944: The Climactic Battle of World War II*, was published this year to highlight to the 50th anniversary of D-Day. For his book *Eisenhower: The President*, Ambrose received the 1984 George Washington Honor Medal, highest award of the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge. He was also named 1985 Louisiana Humanist of the Year by the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities.

John Balaban. Poet, translator, and educator. Civilian alternative service as a conscientious objector, 1967-69. Service in Vietnam, 1967-69 primarily as a field representative for the Committee of Responsibility to Save War-Injured Children. Returned to Vietnam in 1971, spending nearly a year traveling the countryside alone with a tape recorder while collecting the oral folk poems of Vietnamese farmers. Professor of English at University of Miami. Memoir: *Remembering Heaven's Face*, 1992. Poetry: *Words for my Daughter*, 1991; *Blue Mountain*, 1982; *Ca Dao Vietnam: A Bilingual Anthology of Vietnamese Folk Poetry*, 1980 (ed. and trans.); *After Our War*, 1974; *Vietnam Poems*, 1970.

Warren Bell. Journalist, university lecturer, media consultant. 25 years experience in Broadcast journalism, including senior Anchor and Reporter at WVUE, the New Orleans ABC affiliate. Lecturer in Mass Communications at Dillard and Xavier Universities. CEO of Warren Bell and Associates, a media consulting company engaged in Corporate Communications, Community Relations, Video Productions.

General Walt Boomer (USMC Ret.). Served two tours in Vietnam, where he was a Marine combat company commander in 1966-67 and an advisor to a South Vietnamese Marine infantry battalion in 1971-72. He served as Commanding General, U.S. Marine Central Command and I Marine Expeditionary Force during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. He was named Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps in 1992 and held that position until his retirement in 1994. At present General Boomer serves as Senior Vice President and Chief Project Management Officer of McDermott International, Inc.

Robert Olen Butler. U.S. Army, 1969-72, trained as a counter-intelligence special agent and Vietnamese linguist, served in Saigon as administrative assistant to the U.S. Foreign Service officer who was advisor to the mayor of Saigon. Author and educator. Books: *They Whisper, A Good Scent from a Strange Mountain, The Deuce, Wabash, On Distant Ground, Countrymen of Bones, Sun Dogs, The Alleys of Eden*. Mr. Butler won the Pulitzer and the Rosenthal Foundation Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1993 for *Good Scent*, and a John Simon Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship in the same year.

Lou Campomenosi. Conference Co-Director. Retired Marine officer and Gulf War veteran. Lived in Cambodia from 1957-59. Dissertation analyzed the *New York Times'* editorial position on US involvement on Vietnam from 1945-65. Adjunct Assistant Professor of Political Science, University College, Tulane.

David Clinton. Associate Professor of Political Science, Tulane. Recent Publications: *The Two Faces of National Interest*, 1994; "International Obligations: To Whom are They Owed?" *The Review of Politics* (Spring, 1993).

Kiem Do. Served as Captain in Vietnamese Navy, 1954-75; Commandant of Midshipman School, 1963; Fleet Deputy Commander, 1967; District Commander, 1967; Commander of Seafloat Operation with US Brown Water Navy deep in infamous area of Nam Can Camau, 1971-72; Vietnamese War College, 1972; Chief of Riverine Staff Force, 1972; Deputy Navy Chief of Staff for Operations, 1973-75. Lost 3 brothers: one by French bullet, one by US B-52 bombing, one by Vietnamese hatchet. Settled in New Orleans, 1975. Spokesman for the Council of Vietnamese Veterans (New Orleans); Chairman of Asian American Society (New Orleans); Chairman of Vietnamese community (New Orleans); Member of Working Group on Community of the Greater New Orleans Foundation. Senior Cost Analyst at Entergy Corp.

William G. Eckhardt. Chief Prosecutor, My Lai Cases, 1970-71 (responsible for My Lai war crimes cases including that of Captain Medina—Calley's immediate superior). Received Federal Younger Lawyer Award from Justice Rehnquist for discharge of duty "with ability, vigor, and dedication consistent with the highest ideals of the legal profession." Former Director of National Security Legal Issues, US Army War College, 1985-88, 1991-92. General Counsel, US European Command, Germany, 1988-91. At present, Visiting Associate Professor of Law, Univ. of Missouri-Kansas City.

W.D. Ehrhart. Poet, editor, and educator. U.S. Marine Corps, 1966-69. Service in Vietnam, 1967-68. Books: *The Outer Banks and Other Poems*; *To Those Who have Gone Home Tired: New and Selected Poems*; *Vietnam-Perkasie* (novel) and *Passing Time* (nonfiction); ed., *Carrying the Darkness: An Anthology of Vietnam War Poetry; Demilitarized Zones* (co-editor); and *Those Who Were There* (contributing editor).

Randy J. Fertel. Conference Director. Visiting Assistant Professor of English, University College, Tulane. Articles published in: *Modern Language Quarterly* (on *Huckleberry Finn*), *Victorian Poetry* (on Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*), *Wordsworth Circle* (on *Tintern Abbey*), and *New Orleans Review* (on Louis Malle's *Atlantic City*). Book in progress: "Connoisseurs of Chaos": A Poetics of Literary Improvisation.

David Halberstam. Journalist and historian. Mr. Halberstam first went to Vietnam in 1962 where he reported for the *New York Times*. He has won every major journalistic award, including the Pulitzer. Books include: *The Making of a Quagmire*, 1965; *One Very Hot Day*, 1967; *The Best and the Brightest*, 1972; *The Powers That Be*, 1979; *Summer of '49*, 1992; *The Fifties*, 1993.

George Herring. Author and educator. Former editor of *Diplomatic History*. Books: *The Secret Diplomacy of the Vietnam War, LBJ and Vietnam: A Different Kind of War, and America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*. Chair of Department of History, the University of Kentucky.

Seymour Hersh. Journalist. With a background in reporting American foreign policy and its effects that dates back over 25 years, Mr. Hersh's books include: *My Lai 4: A Report on the Massacre and its Aftermath*, 1970; *Cover-up: The Army's Secret Investigation of the Massacre of My Lai*, 1972; *The Price of Power: Kissinger in the White House*, 1983 (LA Times Book Prize, 1983; Natl. Book Critic Circle award 1983); *The Samson Option: Israel's Nuclear Arsenal and America's Foreign Policy*, 1991. Among many awards, Mr. Hersh received the Pulitzer Prize for international reporting in 1970.

Warren Hudson. Retired from the U.S. Navy in the grade of Captain in 1992 after 26 years of service. He served at sea in destroyers in various positions, including that of commanding officer. He also served as officer-in-charge of a Swift Boat, a 50 foot patrol boat, in Vietnam where he was wounded in action. His last naval assignment was as the commanding officer of the Tulane NROTC Unit. Mr. Hudson is currently the general manager of a manufacturing company in New Orleans and continues to be associated with Tulane as an advisor to the president and Provost on ROTC matters.

Wayne Karlin. Fiction writer, editor, and educator. U.S. Marines, 1966-67. Service in Vietnam, 1966-67. Co-editor, *Free Fire Zone: Short Stories by Vietnam Veterans*, 1973. Novels: *Crossover, Lost Armies, The Extras, Us*. His short fiction has appeared in *Antietam Review, Glimmer Train, New Outlook, Passenger, Prairie Schooner, and Vietnam Generation*. Chairman, Department of English, Charles County Community College, St. Mary's County Maryland and teacher, the William Joiner Center at the University of Massachusetts. At present editing, along with Le Minh Khue, an

anthology of post war fiction by Vietnamese and American Writers: *Echoes*.

Robert Jay Lifton, Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry and Psychology and Director, Center on Violence and Human Survival, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, Mt. Sinai School of Medicine, CUNY. Books include: *Death in Life: Survivors of Hiroshima* (National Book Award), 1969, 1991; *Home from the War: Vietnam Veterans, Learning from Vietnam* 1973; rpt. 1992 (National Book Award nominee); *The Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide*, 1986 (National Jewish Book Award, LA Times Book Award for history). Awards: Public Service Award NY Society of Clinical Psychologists, 1970; Hiroshima Gold Medal, 1975; Gandhi Peace Award, 1984; and the Bertrand Russell Society Award, 1985.

Henry L. Mason. Professor of Political Science, Tulane. Related writings: *The Purge of Dutch Quislings: Emergency Justice in the Netherlands* (monograph, 1952); *Mass Demonstrations Against Foreign Regimes* (monograph, 1965); articles on the Holocaust and genocide in *World Politics*, *Political Science Quarterly*, and the *Yearbook of the Netherlands State Institute of War Documentation*.

Patience Mason. Writer. Author of *Recovering from the War: A Woman's Guide to Helping Your Vietnam Veteran, Your Family, and Yourself*, the book she wished she had when her husband, Robert Mason, a helicopter pilot and the author of *Chickenhawk*, returned from the war.

John McAuliffe. Founder and Executive Director of the U.S.-Indochina Reconciliation Project (USIRP), a non-profit educational organization based in New York. From 1972 to 1982 McAuliffe was director of the Indochina program in the peace Education Division of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). He made the first of numerous trips to Indochina in 1975, visiting Laos and arriving in Hanoi the day the war ended, April 30th, 1975. Co-author of "The Cambodian Stalemate" in the Winter 1989-90 issue of *World Policy Journal*.

Tim O'Brien. Novelist. Served as a foot soldier in Vietnam from 1969-70. His unit's area of operation included the village of My Lai, where the massacre occurred a year prior to his arrival. Novels: *Going after Cacciato*, 1979 (National Book Award); *The Things They Carried*, 1990 (Chicago Tribune Heartland Award in fiction); *In the Lake of the Woods* (just published in October). Memoir and Non-fiction: *If I Die in the Combat Zone; Northern Lights: The Nuclear Age*. Other Awards: "The Things they Carried," first published in *Esquire*, received the 1987 National Magazine Award in Fiction; Guggenheim Foundation, The National Endowment for the Arts, and the Massachusetts Arts and Humanities Foundation.

Basil Paquet. Poet and editor. U.S. Army, 1966-68, medic. Service in Vietnam, 1967-68. Co-Founder of 1st Casualty Press. Co-editor of *Winning Hearts and Minds: War Poems by Vietnam Veterans*, 1972; *Free Fire Zone: Poetry Short Stories by Vietnam Veterans*, 1973; and *Post-mortem: Poems and Short Stories by Vietnam Veterans*. Poetry appeared in: *Winning Hearts and Minds*; *New York Review of Books*; *New Times, Arts Review*; *Carrying the Darkness; Vietnam Anthology: American War Literature*, ed., Nancy Anisfield, 1987; *Unaccustomed Mercy*, ed. W.D. Ehrhart, 1989. Wallace Stevens Award for Poetry, 1968.

Col. Hays Parks. Marine infantry commander in Vietnam. Chief, International Law Branch, International and Operational Law Division, and Special Assistant for Law of War Matters, Office of the Judge Advocate General of the Army, Pentagon, Washington DC, 1979-present. In his present position he provides politico-legal advice to the Army Staff and the Office of the Secretary of Defense on matters ranging from special operations to directed energy warfare. Legal adviser for the 1986 Libya airstrike; US representative for law of war negotiations in Geneva, New York, and The Hague. Mr. Parks occupied the Charles H. Stockton Chair of International Law at the Naval War College in 1984-85. He was the US Naval Institute's Author of the Year for 1990. Articles include: "Command Responsibility for War Crimes," 62 *Military Law Review* 1 (1973); "Crimes in Hostilities," *Marine Corps Gazette* (August and September 1976); US Army Field Manual 27-10, *The Law of Land Warfare* (in preparation).

Ron Ridenhour. Freelance writer and investigative reporter. In 1969, just out of the U.S. Army and back from Vietnam, Ridenhour wrote a letter of complaint to the Pentagon, Congress, and the President. The letter detailed and asked

for further investigation into reports he had heard from friends, fellow soldiers, about a massacre of a Vietnamese village by their American Army unit, an atrocity the world later came to know as the My Lai massacre. His "Heroes at a Massacre," *Playboy* (March, 1993) is a memoir/essay about My Lai, some of the men who were heroes there, some men who weren't heroes, and the slippery nature of heroism in the modern world. George Polk Award for Local Reporting, 1983. Gerald Loeb Award for Distinguished Business and Financial Journalism in *Commentary*, 1988.

Jack D. Salmon. Professor of Government, University of West Florida. B.A. and Ph.D. in Political Science, Univ. Of Kansas; M.A., Foreign Area Studies (China), Yale University. Professor Salmon has held positions at Gonzaga University, Virginia Tech, and the U.S. Naval War College.

Jonathan Shay, M.D. Clinical Instructor, Tufts Medical School, Department of Psychiatry; Staff Psychiatrist, Day Treatment Center of the Veterans Administration Outpatient Clinic, Boston, MA; Team Psychiatrist, Veterans Improvement Program (PTSD), Veterans Administration Outpatient Clinic, Boston, MA. Member, International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies. Books and articles include: *Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character*; "Binding up the Wounded National Theology," *Harvard Divinity Bulletin*, Vol. 24, 1994.

Kevin Sim. Director, Yorkshire Television. Co-author with Michael Bilton of *Four Hours in My Life*, 1992. Director of documentary by the same name which was broadcast in 1990 by PBS on Front Line and by the BBC. The documentary garnered an International Emmy and British Academy Award as well as other international prizes. Sim has made many documentaries for the BBC and WGBH in Boston including *Kitty: Return to Auschwitz* (1980).

Rick Smolan. A former *Time*, *Life* and *National Geographic* photographer, and creator of the best-selling *Day in the Life* books (with more than 4 million copies sold), Rick Smolan has spent a decade finding ways to place himself and his projects directly in the path of the converging worlds of photography, design, publishing, and technology. Editor of *"Passage to Vietnam,"* just published in November, an unprecedented view of Vietnam seen through the eyes of 70 of the world's greatest photographers who for seven days were given license to travel throughout Vietnam. In January 1994 *American Photo* magazine chose Smolan as one of "Photography's Top 100" most important people. Commented the magazine: "Perhaps no one has been more influential in creating a market for photography books."

Jerry Starr. Professor of Sociology at West Virginia University and Director of the Center for Social Studies Education in Pittsburgh. He is editor of *The Lessons of the Vietnam War*, acknowledged by *The Washington Post* as the nation's "first comprehensive curriculum" on the subject and saluted by *Time* magazine as "a widely praised academic curriculum on Vietnam." Starr also edited the 1988 special issue, "Teaching the Vietnam War," of *Social Education*, the official journal of the National Council for Social Studies. With support from the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, his program has grown to include a resource guide, teacher training video and teacher training handbook and networks of about 100 Vietnam veteran speakers bureaus and 60 teacher trainers around the country. Starr has conducted highly praised workshops for teachers throughout the country. This is his first workshop in Louisiana.

Col. Harry Summers. Author, editor, and lecturer. An Army War College Distinguished Fellow who formerly held the War College's General Douglas MacArthur Chair, Colonel Harry Summers is now a syndicated columnist for the *LA Times*, editor of *Vietnam* magazine, and holder of the Marine Corps Chair of Military Affairs. Summers is a veteran of the Korean and Vietnam wars and was twice decorated for valor and twice wounded in action. Military analyst for NBC News during the Gulf War, Col. Summers has made over 200 network appearances and is a frequent guest on Voice of America and National Public Radio. Col. Summers is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the International Institute for Strategic Studies. Books: *On Strategy*, prize winning study of strategic issues in Vietnam; *On Strategy II*, on Gulf War, called by *NY Times Book Review*, "the best of any gulf war book to date." His *Persian Gulf War Almanac* and *New World Strategy: A Military Policy* are forthcoming in 1995.

Hugh C. Thompson, Jr. As a helicopter reconnaissance pilot with the 123rd Aviation Battalion aero scouts, Thompson came upon the My Lai massacre in progress, and tried to stop it. Awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for confronting U.S. troops and rescuing Vietnamese civilians during the massacre.

Karin Thompson, M.D. Clinical Psychologist and Program Director, Post-traumatic Stress Disorder Inpatient Unit, and Professor, Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, New Orleans and Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Neurology, Tulane University School of Medicine.

Bac Hoai Tran. Vietnamese Instructor, UC Berkeley and Vietnamese language consultant. Educated in Ho Chi Minh City and Dalat University (1972-77). Associate Editor, *The Tenderloin Times*. Books: *Anh Ngữ Báo Chí; Introductory Vietnamese; Intermediate Vietnamese*. Consultant on documentary, *Which Way is East* by Lynne Sachs.

Joseph Vuong, Ph.D. Born, Soctrang, South Vietnam. Professor of Vietnamese, Tulane University College. Books: *Early Childhood and Cross-Cultural Education*, 1991; *Vietnamese Cross-Cultural Adjustment*, 1990. Parish Council President, Marrero, 1992.

Truyen T. Vu, M.D. Staff physician at West Jefferson Medical Center and Clinical Associate, Tulane University Medical School. Medical degree awarded by Saigon Medical School, 1972. Former chief of Internal Medicine and Head of Tuberculosis Program, Long An, Vietnam. President, Vietnamese Resettlement Association; President, Vietnamese Catholics Communities in the South-east of USA; President, Vietnamese Catholics Communities in New Orleans.

Marilyn B. Young. Chair, Department of History, NYU. Ms. Young has taught Asian history since 1980. Her latest book is *The Vietnam Wars: 1945-1990*.

SPECIAL EXHIBITS AND SCREENINGS

From Hollywood to Hanoi, Directed by Tiana (Thi Thanh Nga), produced by Oliver Stone. Tom Brown, Secretary, Indochina Film Arts Foundation will present. Thursday, December 1, 4:00-5:30pm in McAlister Auditorium and again Saturday at 12:30pm in the Freeman Business School Chadwick Auditorium.

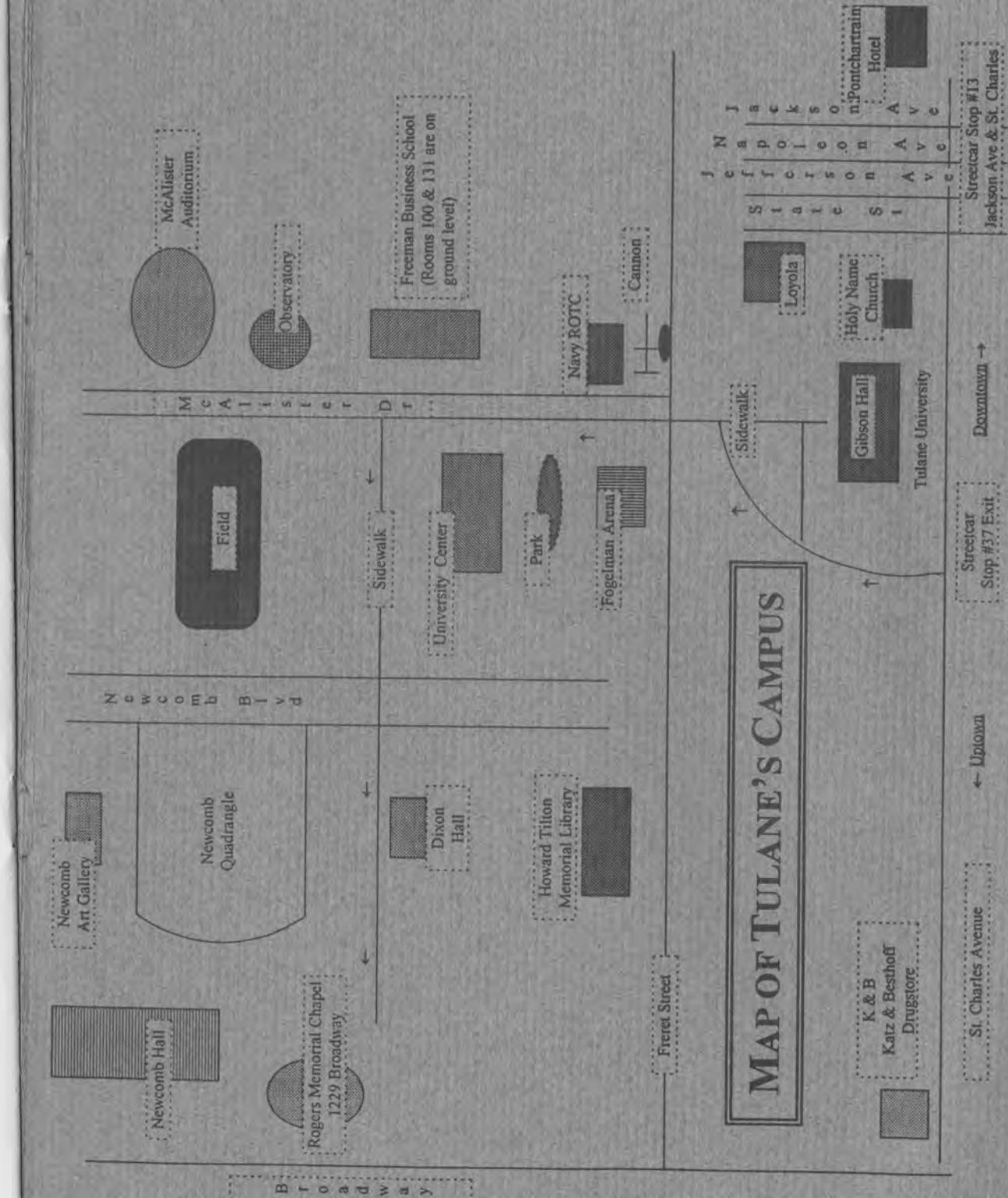
Four Hours in My Lai will be shown at the Loyola University Film Buffs Institute, 332 Bobet Hall, Friday, December 2, 7:30. The Director, Kevin Sim, will present. The documentary will also be shown during lunch Friday, December 2, 12:45-1:45 in the Freeman Business School Chadwick Auditorium.

Passage to Vietnam: photographs presented as a slide show by Rick Smolan. Saturday, December 3, 3:00-4:30 pm Freeman Business School Chadwick Auditorium. An exhibit of the photographs will also be on display in the Newcomb Art Gallery from Nov. 27 - Dec 7.

Voyage to Vietnam, Neil Alexander. An exhibit of original photographs on display throughout the conference in the Rogers Memorial Chapel and in Dixon Hall.

“Remember My Lai”: Vietnam related books and political ephemera. Howard Tilton Memorial Library.

Book signing: Books will be signed by participating authors during lunch Friday and Saturday in the Tulane Bookstore.





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