

Although the Vietnam conflict ended two decades ago, a fierce cultural war over how its literature is to be perceived continues to be waged. *Warring Fictions* charges American critics with twenty years of white-wash and reminds us that Vietnam was not just an American anguish and its fiction a rock-and-roll acid trip. From the blind patriotism of *The Green Berets* to the postmodern hip of *Dispatches*, this book brings history and politics back to the Vietnam War novel.

Exposing the complicity of commercial and academic institutions in the writing of recent American history, this study rebukes academic literary culture that speciously purports a radical calling for itself. And it raises important questions about the interlocking interests and ideologies of literary culture, the publishing industry, the mass media, and the academy.

With its exemplary command of actual history and its well-documented investigation of the Vietnam fiction canon, this book throws a probing light on a literary culture whose tastes and attitudes have helped enforce a conservative interpretation of the war. In extraordinary readings of *The Quiet American*, *The Ugly American*, *The Prisoners of Quai Dong*, *The Laotian Fragments*, *Dispatches*, *The Things They Carried*, and *In Country*, *Warring Fictions* provides a radical historical perspective on the fiction that emerged from the Vietnam War.