



The Vietnam War and Postmodernity

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The longest war in the nation's history, the American military intervention in Vietnam dominated United States culture and politics from 1965 to 1975. In addition to causing immense devastation in Southeast Asia, the war transformed American society, with effects that continue to be felt today. Yet aside from a few cultural studies of the war's representations, scholars have tended to ignore the relationship between the American war in Vietnam and broader cultural developments in the West. Frederic Jameson once characterized the Vietnam War as "the first terrible postmodernist war," suggesting that it embodied or reflected the sensibility of an emerging historical epoch. But does it make sense to place a military conflict within a category of cultural and aesthetic periodization? Is it possible to see the Vietnam War as an expression and reflection of postmodernity? what Jameson calls "the cultural logic of late capitalism"? These are some of the questions addressed in this volume. Ranging across a variety of disciplines, including philosophy, cultural studies, literary criticism, and film studies, the essays explore the war's discourses and technologies in relation to the post-modern condition. At the same time, they reinterpret key cultural representations of the war from a postmodern perspective. The result is a book that poses important challenges to both Vietnam War studies and postmodern studies, at once reshaping the ways postmodernity is conceived and reminding us of the war's enduring significance in contemporary cultural history. In addition to Michael Bibby, contributors are Philip D. Beidler, Michael Clark, Cynthia J. Fuchs, Brady Harrison, Tony Williams, Eric Gadzinski, Chris Hables Gray, and Douglas Kellner.

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