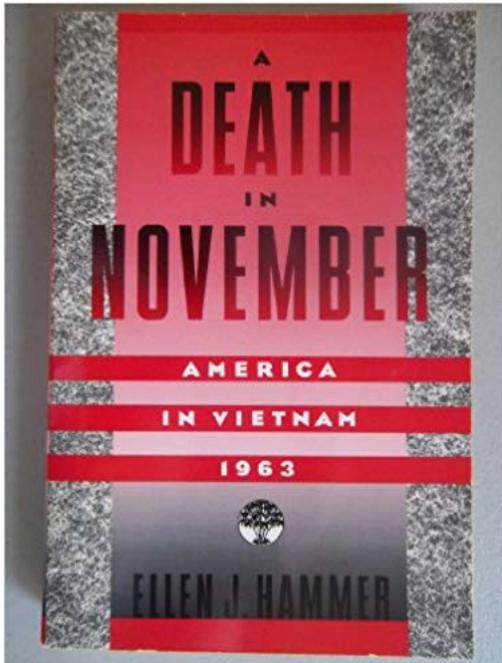


## A Death in November: America in Vietnam, 1963 by Ellen J. Hammer



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The time: January-November 1963. The place: Saigon. The circumstances: the subversion from inside and out of a fledgling nation, and the promotion, by some of the Kennedy administration's arrogant and uncomprehending high officials, of a group of Vietnamese generals' treachery. The result: the assassination of South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem and his brother Ngo Dinh Nhu in a military coup just three weeks before the assassination of President Kennedy. Hammer's riveting in-depth chronicle of that crucial year demonstrates how this military coup transformed the Vietnam war into an American war. Having often visited the embattled nation of South Vietnam in this period and having interviewed key characters in the drama, she also draws on previously classified documents and other sources, including many unpublished ones. Portraying the Vietnamese protagonists in a Vietnamese context, Hammer cuts away layer after layer of double-talk to expose the incomprehension and mistrust between Americans and Vietnamese that destroyed Diem's independent government. A Death in November reveals how the coup, which led to the United States' open control of the war effort, set in motion an ever-widening tragedy.



## Reviews of the **A Death in November: America in Vietnam, 1963** by Ellen J. Hammer

Qulcelat

She was telling the truth of how the Kennedy Administration, the CIA, and those arrogant policy makers had betrayed President Diem by supporting the coup that led to the assassination of him and his brother. It was just because those arrogant politicians in Washington D.C wanted to send US troops to South Vietnam. A lesson to learn for the South Vietnamese Government: "You don't fear the enemies, who attack you, but the fake friend that hugs you!"

Whitesmasher

One of the better books on the Diem assassination

Survivors

The American presidents and their administrations mistakes and ignorance. Importantly, I have great respect for the American GIs. You cannot win a war if you do not understand your friends and enemies: culture and language. This book is highly recommended to those who want to know more about the Vietnam/American vs. Ho Chi Minh/China/Russia wars.

Iell

Enlightening!

snowball

Ellen's book, and her previous one on this subject, should be required reading for all congressmen, senators and presidents before they enter any declared or undeclared war activities. As I have stated previously in my articles on the Vietnam war, the US was on the wrong side. This US should have been on the side of the Vietnamese who only wanted independence. The Vietnamese (Indo-Chinese back then) did not want France to return in 1945 after the end of WW II to "reclaim its prize colony - Indochina" but wanted to become an independent country as part of the French Union. The Vietnamese people truly thought that the United States would surely want to help a colony become independent, based upon its own history. 53,000 Americans and 2 million Vietnamese people died for nothing. Indochina eventually was able to dislodge all foreigners from their land. An important lesson in history for all major powers who often enter a country with good intentions. So, what have we learned from history. Absolutely nothing. Enter the 21st century and the Middle East wars. History repeats itself again. PS, I served in Vietnam from Dec 1971 to Feb 1973.

Doomredeemer

I read this when it came out, & from what I recall, it was chilling. It's the kind of expose that no one really wants to believe, but is compelled by the sheer weight of evidence. And it cost Hammer her academic career. The libtards of the day were just as virulent as they are today, not that the monstrously insufferable neo-cons are any better. We need a balanced, honest, & excruciatingly well researched history of that mess we Boomers just called, Nam. I have this book on my wish list! Btw & fyi, this book cost the author her academic future to write. I call that, courage.

Thomeena

This is an outstanding book from a very well-informed writer on the terribly mismanaged policy that culminated in Ngo Dinh Diem's assassination. Since its publication in the late 1980's, there has been a devastating avalanche of declassified information confirming key elements of Hammer's account on the depth of U.S. complicity in the Diem coup. Readers should pay attention to this understudied topic, for many historians draw a direct link between Diem's overthrow and ever deeper U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War in the mid-1960's.

One caveat, however, should be added. This book tells a great part of its account from the Vietnamese perspective, and is a little bit fuzzy on some of the furious debates that took place behind the scenes between Kennedy's advisors about the coup. This is not Hammer's fault because much of the information on this issue was still classified at the time. A more complete account of the

American perspective can be found in Fisher, Turner, & Moore's To Oppose Any Foe.

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