



PHILIP JONES GRIFFITHS' VIET NAM

A unique collection of photographs of the American War in Viet Nam by the legendary Magnum photographer, drawn from the milestone exhibit

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Magnum Photos

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The New Statesman



The Vietnamese are a rice-growing people. For two thousand years their adeptness at pursuing this perennial task has been sustained by their belief in a harmony between man and nature.



On a U.S. aircraft carrier in the South China Sea, pilots never saw the faces of those they killed and maimed. It was considered important to protect men from sights that could produce emotional reactions.



Chinook helicopters were used to relocate peasants to camps, surrounded by barbed wire, and bearing a sign saying, “Welcome to Freedom.” Here, peasants were delivered in a dust storm whipped up by the helicopter.



American soldiers often showed compassion toward the Vietcong. This wounded VC had fought for three days with his intestines in a cooking bowl strapped onto his stomach.



The battle for District 8 in Saigon in May 1968 produced many civilian casualties. This woman hit by helicopter rocket fire was helped by a nervous South Vietnamese soldier.



Captured Vietcong soldier before being taken away for interrogation that invariably involved torture.



Soldiers of the U.S. 9th Division during urban fighting were sent to retake the suburbs of Saigon from the Vietcong. Despite what his demeanor implies, this soldier was being shot at.

This woman was tagged with the designation VNC (Vietnamese civilian). The wounded were normally tagged VCS (Vietcong suspect), while the dead were posthumously elevated to the rank of VCC (Vietcong confirmed).





Saigon firemen collected corpses during the Tet offensive. They had just placed this young girl, killed by U.S. helicopter fire, in the back of their truck, where her distraught brother found her.



Refugees from the U.S. bombing of the “showcase” district of Saigon in 1968. It housed pro-American Catholics relocated from the North after partition in 1954.



Soldiers on a “search and destroy” mission in a village in Quang Ngai Province. The men were killed and later an artillery strike obliterated the village.



In Quang Ngai Province, everything that moved was a target. The newly-developed antipersonnel weapons caused a problem—their plastic darts were designed not to show up on X-rays.



Le Thi Mit ties the hands of her son Nguyen Van Lanh to prevent him from harming himself or others. His brother, Truong, has an eye defect that makes him very sensitive to light.



At the age of two, this boy was in the arms of his fleeing mother when she was killed by a helicopter gunship. He survived but went insane. When helicopters pass overhead, he goes berserk, trying to shut out their sound.

Older soldiers often missed their families and so befriended children and dogs. More dogs than wives were taken back to America.



Ten-year old South Vietnamese soldier described as a “little tiger” for killing two “Vietcong women cadre”; his mother and teacher, it was rumored.





At the Truong Son cemetery there is a wall listing the names of over 12,000 combatants. A similar memorial for all the Vietnamese who died, compared to the one in Washington DC, would have to be nine miles long.



Mrs. Nguyen Thi Lop, 56, the widow of Bay Lop—murdered by General Nguyen Ngoc Loan during the Tet Offensive. Bay Lop was captured while attacking the Naval Headquarters in Saigon.



My Lai. The children of some of the survivors standing on the path where 504 old men, women, children, and babies were killed by American troops.



Children with an unexploded bomb in the courtyard of their home in a village near Vinh, in what was North Vietnam.



Mai Chiem Tiem, 46 years old, from Dong Ha town, lost his hand and had his optic nerves severed when he picked up a pineapple bomb in his paddy field in January 1987.



Scrap war material collected by countless scavengers all over the country ends up at the Vicasa Metal Works in Bien Hoa, where it is made into metal rods that are used for new building construction.

Penh, 14 years old, born in
Tramkok district, Takeo Province.
He begs with his parents.



Nguyen Thi Van Long is 18 years old. Her father was in the war for five years along the DMZ. She has speech and hearing problems because her ears and mouth are deformed. She has lived for six years in Friendship Village in Hanoi, where she now spends most of her time making paper flowers.



Pham Thi Thuy Linh was born in Ho Chi Minh City with no arms, so she learned to write with her feet. Her father was an officer who worked around planes that dropped Agent Orange.



Mother and her child from Svay Rieng Province. He suffered from hydrocephalus, a common result of Agent Orange poisoning. He died four months after this picture was taken.



Nguyen Minh Phuc, a little girl born in Tay Ninh in November 2000. She is suffering from hydrocephalus caused by Agent Orange.

