

is a serious book worthy of reading by today's field grade officers and civilian policymakers interested in arguments that challenge the status quo. It is also highly recommended for joint combat developers and force planners at U.S. Joint Forces Command.

Speaking at the National Defense University after 11 September 2001,

Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld stated that future conflicts will "require us to think differently and develop the kinds of forces and capabilities that can adapt quickly to new challenges and to unexpected circumstances." Professionals who want to "think differently" and examine the kinds of forces and capabilities that

can meet new challenges and "unexpected circumstances" should start with *Transformation Under Fire*.

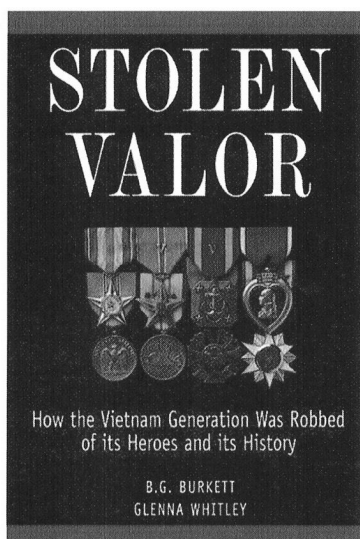


>LtCol Hoffman works at the Center for Emerging Threats and Opportunities, Quantico.

Beware False Heroes

reviewed by Col Kenneth D. Jordan, USMC(Ret)

STOLEN VALOR: How the Vietnam Generation Was Robbed of Its Heroes and Its History. By B.G. Burkett and Glenna Whitley. Verity Press, Inc., Dallas, TX, 1998, ISBN 096670360X, 692 pp., \$31.95 (Member \$28.76)



This Vietnam thing just won't go away. *Stolen Valor* was published over 6 years ago, with little fanfare. It has since become one of the most credible testimonies of the most controversial and yet to be understood war in our history. This is a highly respected and well-researched record of blunt candor supporting the theory that Vietnam veterans, as a population, are less troubled, more successful, and better educated than their counterparts from other wars, and—get this—an astonishing 91 percent are positive about their oppor-

tunity to have served in that war. This book isn't about the war. It's about the people who fought the war.

Why print a review on a book that has been in circulation for 6 years? There are two reasons. The book is gaining popularity and credibility each year as an invaluable research source, and the Vietnam War is still here. Witness the volume of information in print and electronic media about the Vietnam era and its influence on the forthcoming election for the President of the United States. What the two candidates did or didn't do during that time has been, and will continue to be, a significant part of the decision process to select the next Commander in Chief. Concurrently, the war in Iraq is being routinely compared to the Vietnam War, and some of the same people are doing the comparisons—thus the viability of this book today.

Coauthors B.G. Burkett and Glenna Whitley wrote *Stolen Valor* as a labor of love, to address some of the inconsistencies associated with that war. Burkett, the tenacious investigator, and Whitley, the reporter/writer, collaborated to produce one of the most well-researched, factually supported, well-organized, and structurally sound records of misinformation, faulty

reporting, historical distortions, and myths about the Vietnam War. Burkett, himself a Vietnam veteran, and Whitley, an award-winning investigative reporter, invested years of tedious, time-consuming research, aggressively using the Freedom of Information Act to obtain previously inaccessible information and using those sources to obtain police records, media reports, quotes, and some challenging interviews, to produce *Stolen Valor*.

Among the most disturbing revelations is the shameful manner in which politicians, the media, educational institutions, and even the Veterans Administration seemingly collaborated to attack a group of Americans who fought the war. Oddly, the same people who were vilified 30 years ago are respected today, as evidenced by the astonishing number of Vietnam "wannabes" who wear fake medals and live lies to emulate Vietnam veterans, and to whom an entire chapter, with photographs, is dedicated.

This is a stunning book, and it's been a team effort. You will recognize no small number of prestigious Marines who assisted the authors in their inquiries and are willingly quoted in the text, reinforced by a strong endorsement by James Webb, former Secretary of the Navy and Navy Cross recipient. Left unguarded, many of the same politicians, media representatives, entertainers, and medical professionals (or their successors) who created a false legacy for Vietnam veterans can duplicate this same pattern of misinformation for those representing our country in the war against terrorism.



>Col Jordan is serving as a member of the MCA Board of Governors.