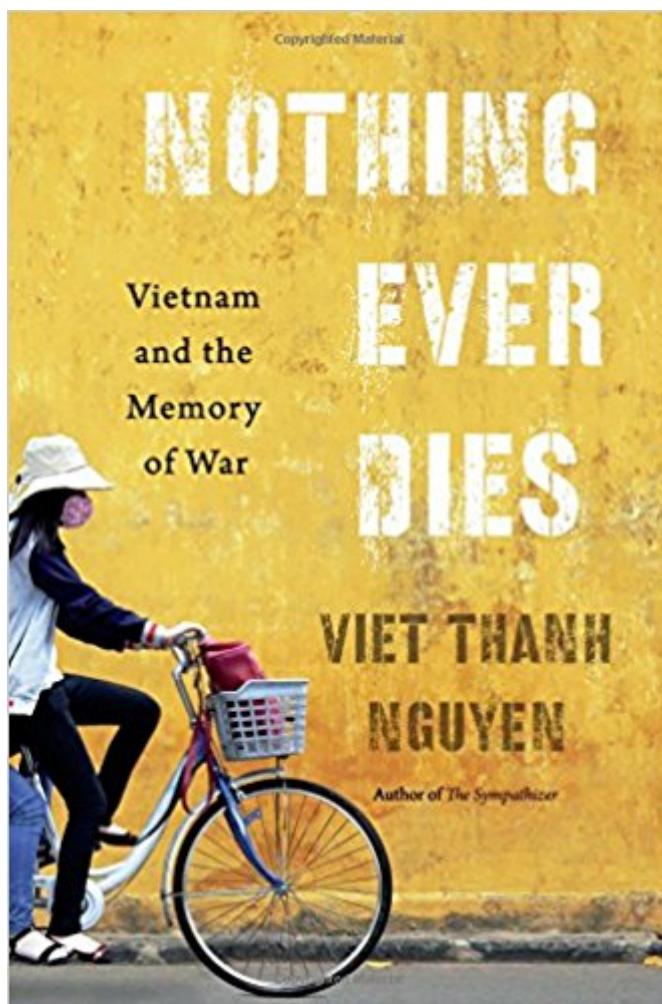


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# Nothing Ever Dies: Vietnam And The Memory Of War



## Synopsis

All wars are fought twice, the first time on the battlefield, the second time in memory. From the author of the Pulitzer Prizeâ “winning novel *The Sympathizer* comes a searching exploration of the conflict Americans call the Vietnam War and Vietnamese call the American Warâ •a conflict that lives on in the collective memory of both nations. From a kaleidoscope of cultural formsâ •novels, memoirs, cemeteries, monuments, films, photography, museum exhibits, video games, souvenirs, and moreâ •*Nothing Ever Dies* brings a comprehensive vision of the war into sharp focus. At stake are ethical questions about how the war should be remembered by participants that include not only Americans and Vietnamese but also Laotians, Cambodians, South Koreans, and Southeast Asian Americans. Too often, memorials valorize the experience of oneâ ™s own people above all else, honoring their sacrifices while demonizing the â œenemyâ •â •or, most often, ignoring combatants and civilians on the other side altogether. Visiting sites across the United States, Southeast Asia, and Korea, Viet Thanh Nguyen provides penetrating interpretations of the way memories of the war help to enable future wars or struggle to prevent them. Drawing from this war, Nguyen offers a lesson for all wars by calling on us to recognize not only our shared humanity but our ever-present inhumanity. This is the only path to reconciliation with our foes, and with ourselves. Without reconciliation, warâ ™s truth will be impossible to remember, and warâ ™s trauma impossible to forget.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This hybrid novel/memoir moved me deeply. It explores with depth and sensitivity what heroism

might mean; who writes history; what happens when you're accidentally on the wrong side of a bad war; whose narrative will prevail. No American can read this with comfort, but our discomfort is well earned.

Wars are fought twice over -- once on the battlefield and once in our memory -- and that is the subject of Viet Thanh Nguyen's profound and challenging but hugely readable new book. In the end, Nothing Ever Dies is a powerful meditation. It is a book to be read in small sips and not big gulps. It is worthwhile alone for revealing the intellectual roots of Nguyen's The Sympathizer, but even more so for confirming in compelling and passionate terms how we choose to remember and how we choose to forget, most notably that America is indeed fighting a forever War.

Here's a great quote from a recent article by the author. "What Hollywood does and what the industry of memory does, in the case of this war, is to efface and erase Asians and Asian Americans. This is a mode of propaganda and ideological preparation for the U.S. to go out there and not simply efface or erase Asians, but actually to kill them."

Occasionally I was put off by the post-modern slant but on the whole it is a marvelous book I have recommended to friends. The writing is beautiful, as anyone who has read The Sympathizer will expect, and Mr. Nguyen makes a strong case for rethinking our foreign policy.

A jumbled-up collection of lecture pieces given in a college class room, on subjects ranging from any kind of skirmishes to "great wars," nevertheless it is unclear what the author wants to deliver to the classroom: is it memories of or litanies on war tragedies? Some of the contents are simply author's monologues and dry-as-dust hard facts on economic-political issues of countries with war histories, including the author's Vietnamese war. Should one call this an attempt at a post-modern creative writing a la Baudrillard?

Viet offers great insight into the Vietnam War and how it is now seen in our culture particularly in film and literature. Fascinating, although it could have been dealt with in a more succinct manner.

One of the best books I've ever read. A new perspective of the South Vietnamese people who's country is no longer. Beautifully written. Funny & ironic.

It's passionate and an intellectual tour de force.

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