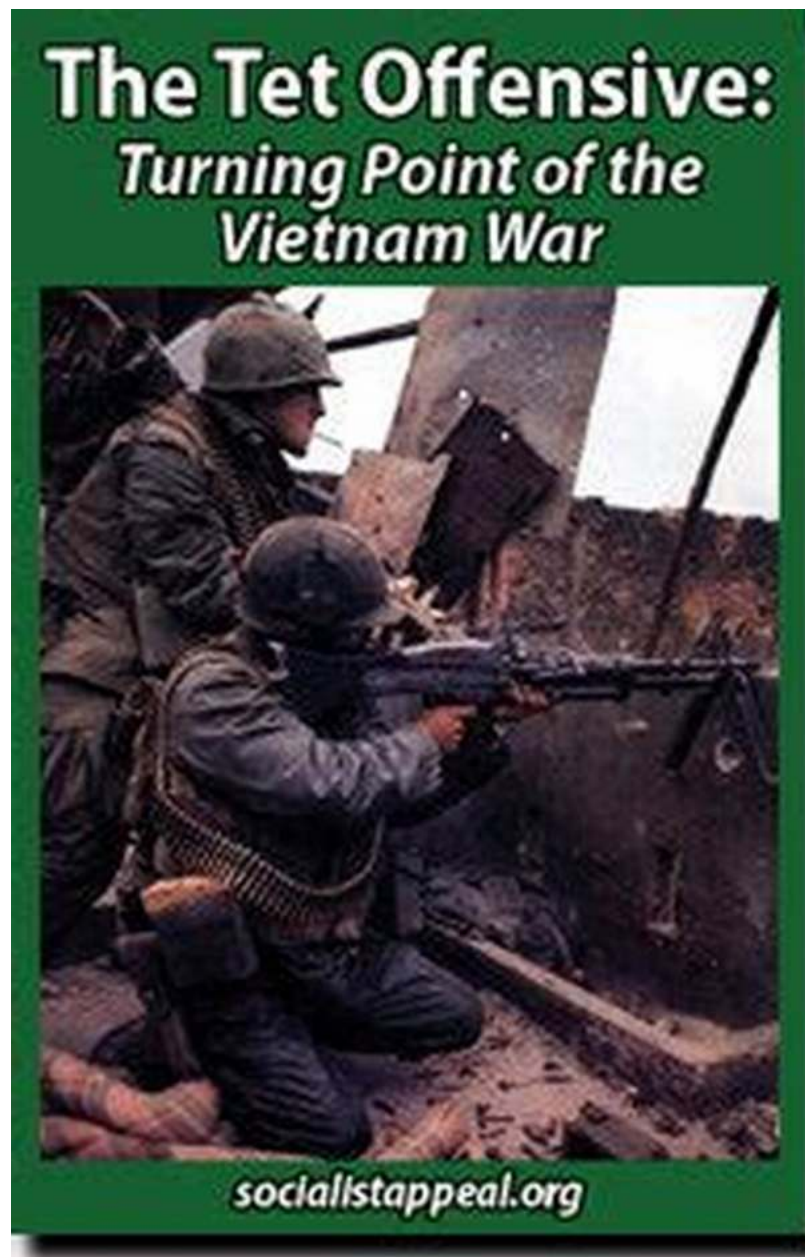


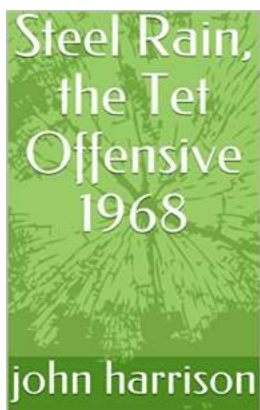
Steel Rain: The Tet Offensive 1968 - One of the Most Brutal Battles in Vietnam War History



The Tet Offensive: Background and Significance

The Tet Offensive was a massive military campaign conducted by the North Vietnamese forces and the Viet Cong during the Vietnam War. It was launched on January 30, 1968, during the Vietnamese Lunar New Year celebrations (known as Tet) and lasted until September 23, 1968.

The aim of the Tet Offensive was to bring the war to major cities in South Vietnam, including Saigon, Hue, and Da Nang, in the hope of igniting a general uprising among the South Vietnamese people against the American presence. This ambitious plan aimed to deliver a significant blow to the morale of the allied forces and demonstrate the determination and strength of the communist forces.



Steel Rain, the Tet Offensive 1968

by john harrison (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.9 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 5993 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 329 pages

Lending : Enabled

X-Ray for textbooks : Enabled



The offensive was named "Steel Rain" due to the relentless torrent of artillery shells, rockets, and mortars that rained down on the cities during the attacks. The intense and sustained firepower aimed to overwhelm the American and South Vietnamese forces, catching them off guard.

The Battles: Fury Unleashed

As the Tet Offensive began, the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong launched coordinated attacks on over 100 cities and towns across South Vietnam. The fighting was fierce, with heavy casualties on both sides. The cities of Saigon, Hue, and Da Nang witnessed some of the most intense and brutal battles of the entire war.

1. Battle of Saigon

The North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces initially targeted the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, hoping to stage a symbolic victory. However, despite heavy casualties, the American forces successfully defended the embassy and regained control of the city after weeks of intense fighting.

2. Battle of Hue

The Battle of Hue was one of the longest and bloodiest battles of the Tet Offensive. The North Vietnamese forces launched a surprise attack on the ancient city of Hue, capturing major parts of the city. The battle lasted for 26 days, with American and South Vietnamese troops eventually retaking the city but at a heavy cost. The battle exposed the brutality of urban warfare and left significant damage to the cultural and historical sites in Hue.

3. Battle of Da Nang

Da Nang, a major coastal city in South Vietnam, also faced fierce attacks during the Tet Offensive. The North Vietnamese forces targeted the American military base and the city itself. The battle lasted for several weeks, resulting in heavy casualties on both sides. Ultimately, the American and South Vietnamese forces successfully defended Da Nang, but the battle highlighted the vulnerability of even well-established positions.

The Impact: A Turning Point

The Tet Offensive was a psychological turning point in the Vietnam War. Despite suffering heavy losses, the North Vietnamese forces and Viet Cong achieved their objective of shattering the perception of American invincibility. The offensive highlighted the failure of the American strategy based on body counts and territorial control.

The mainstream media, particularly in the United States, portrayed the Tet Offensive as a major setback for the American forces, causing public opinion to turn against the war. The shocking images and stories from the battles, such as the execution of prisoners in Hue, further deepened the skepticism and anti-war sentiments among the American population.

Politically, the Tet Offensive brought about major changes as well. President Lyndon B. Johnson, facing mounting criticism and political pressure, announced that he would not seek re-election. The offensive also led to a greater emphasis on negotiations to end the war rather than achieving a decisive military victory.

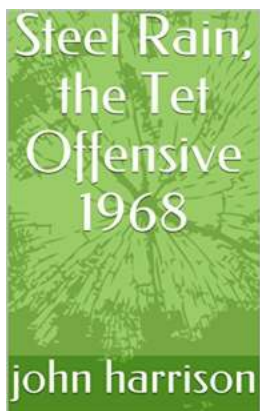
The Aftermath: Lessons Learned

The Tet Offensive demonstrated the resilience and determination of the North Vietnamese forces. It also exposed the flawed American strategy and led to a reassessment of the war efforts. The offensive compelled the U.S. to reconsider its military involvement in Vietnam and paved the way for the eventual withdrawal of American troops in 1973.

Furthermore, the Tet Offensive highlighted the fact that victory in Vietnam would not be determined by traditional battlefield victories alone. It underscored the importance of winning hearts and minds, as well as the need for a political solution to end the war.

In

The Tet Offensive, also known as "Steel Rain," was a pivotal moment in the Vietnam War. It was a military operation that changed the course of the war in multiple ways. The battles of Saigon, Hue, and Da Nang were fierce and brutal, taking a toll on both sides. The political and psychological impact of the Tet Offensive ultimately led to the reevaluation of American involvement in Vietnam and set the stage for peace negotiations.



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The book, Steel Rain, the Tet Offensive, covers the bloodiest year of the Vietnam War, 1968, including the 1968 Tet Offensive, but many of the stories in the book are actually very funny. They were after all a bunch of American boys long before they were soldiers. John Harrison was commissioned as a Lieutenant at 20 years old for example.

Like the original Band of Brothers from World War II, his unit was formed and trained in the States specifically to make a combat parachute jump, this time in the Vietnam War. Officially they were the 3rd Battalion (Airborne), 506th Infantry Regiment, of the 101st Airborne Division.

The book starts with John attending JumpSchool and ends with a case he had as a lawyer long after the Vietnam War was over defending a former 173rd Airborne trooper from criminal charges related to his use of marijuana while undergoing cancer treatment at Walter Reed Army Hospital.

John's story is told episodically with each chapter capable of being read alone. Many of the men that served with John have read and commented on the stories. Some of their comments appear at the beginning of each chapter. My Mother's Machine Gun is John's favorite chapter, but others prefer Staying Alive by Being Inept, or the one about the magnificent fart. John believes that you cannot tell the truth about American soldiers without telling the funny stories along with the rest. Even in a war zone it seems they actually did have fun sometimes.

In Steel Rain, the Tet Offensive we met "rock apes", tigers, elephants, snakes, peacocks and many other animals, great and small, in the wild, sometimes with deadly results for the animals. However, other than snakes, the Army mentioned none of them in training. While the unit trained mostly for combat patrols in the jungle, it fought mostly in pitched battles in cities, towns and villages in II Corps.

Steel Rain, the Tet Offensive, is about American men doing the best they could in a war they did not choose, in a place America never really understood. They managed to be there on the bloodiest day, the bloodiest week, the bloodiest month and the bloodiest year of a long bloody war. The 1968 Tet Offensive is a big part of what John and his men saw and did in their year in country.

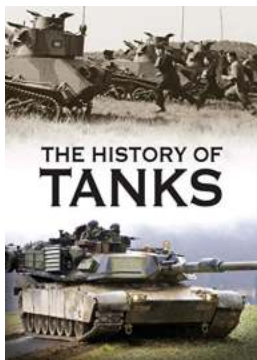
War never really leaves you, it brings out the best and the worst in men and because of those two facts normally the story of a war is well told. However, the Vietnam War was different. Never have there been more myths reported as facts. Never has the actual story of the war been more ignored. If you read almost any history of the Vietnam War at some point it will say something like: "The enemy

attacks during the Tet Offensive were quickly beaten back except in Khe Sanh, Saigon, Hue and Phan Thiet." Then the history will go on to describe the fighting in Khe Sanh, Saigon and Hue, but Phan Thiet will never be mentioned again. This is that story.



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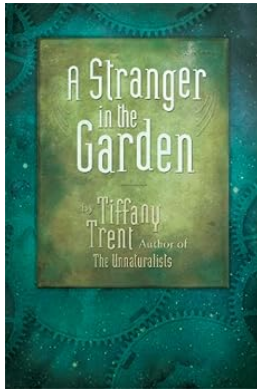
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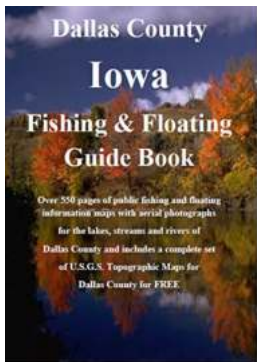
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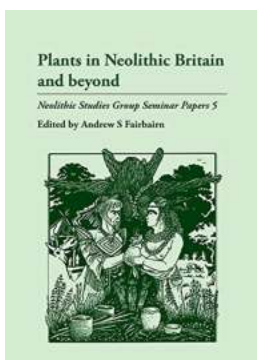
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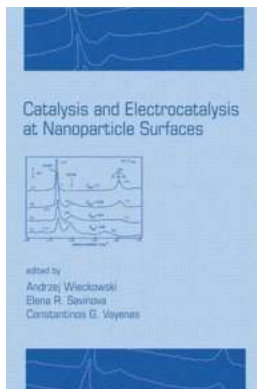
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