

book seems to undermine the participation of other social groups in the ruling of the country during the pre-colonial period as at the top of one district there were three chiefs from all social groups. The identification of the actors in the grounding of the presidential jet also remains a controversial issue, even though the author was careful not to mention anyone.

With regard to migrations which peopled Rwanda, the author seems to accept the settlement of the population according to phases, which is also rejected by some historians basing on archaeological findings and lack of evidence of migrations in “ethnic” terms. The whole document which is not paginated does not give any bibliographical information. In this regard, different statistics mentioned are questionable. It is the case of 100,000 Tutsi killed in Rwanda in 1959 upheaval comparatively to low statistics given by other sources. The author also mentions the killing of several Hutu leaders in 1959 as an immediate cause of the upheaval while, in fact, only one was beaten. Neither does he show his sources for the number of Tutsi killed in Butare (even though the number 250, 000 is not very questionable) or the population density in the 1980s. Surprisingly, the information given by people he met from time to time corroborates some written documents. One may be tempted to think that they were either constructed by the author or his informants were trained to answer in that way. Despite the mentioned gaps, Wende made an effort to identify some key issues behind dreadful choices that people in Rwanda have made in 1994. This book can help both teachers and learners to understand the complexity of the Rwandan situation and more importantly for teachers to help their learners to think about the choices they make in life.

*Understanding and Teaching the Vietnam War (The Harvey
Goldberg Series)*

**(Madison Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2013, 334 pp.,
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Harvey Goldberg was a well-respected lecturer and teacher of history at the University of Wisconsin and at Ohio State University, in the United States of America. In honour of him, the University of Wisconsin Press has begun publishing the Harvey Goldberg Series for Understanding and Teaching History, of which this volume, on the Vietnam War, is the first instalment. Consisting of an introduction and eighteen essays, this guide to understanding and teaching the war brings together much of the most recent scholarship on the war and a collection of strategies for teaching about it, at several levels.

The introductory essay by the editors, presents a summary of many of the most recent debates about the war. This essay helpfully traces the history of the interpretation of the war and summarises its historiography. They begin with the first sceptical scholarly writing about the war by such authors as the French writer Bernard B. Fall (who was killed on a Vietnamese battlefield in 1967), and then examine the so-called orthodox interpretation of unnecessary US involvement, or indeed, of US aggression, by such historians of the “Wisconsin School” as William Appleman Williams and Lloyd C. Gardner (an undergraduate lecturer of this reviewer). They then move on to the revisionist historiography of the 1980s and later, which defended American motives in entering the war, and was critical of political interference in the military conduct of the struggle. They conclude this section by evaluating the revisionist project as a failure and the current consensus as being dubious about the motives and outcome of the war. They also take account of recent historiographical trends which expand the traditional America-centred focus of historical writing and teaching. These include a politico-geographical extension of interest, to balance US coverage with more information about, and interpretation of Vietnamese (both communist North and anti-communist South) motives and actions, before, during, and after the war. Also of greater recent concern are the French colonial roots of the later “American” war. This essay helpfully sets the stage for later chapters, about the role of communism and nationalism in the war, the French antecedents of the American effort, and the Vietnamese side of what was, after all, the *Vietnam War*.

This is then followed by two essays of reflection on long careers of teaching about the war, at university level. One of these is by George Herring, the author of one of the standard texts on the war, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*. Herring's career spans many of the historiographical transitions mentioned earlier, and he demonstrates how this new material and these new approaches affected and moulded his teaching at

the University of Kentucky.

The second part of the book is a series of essays on methods and strategies of teaching about the war, including the use of movies, music, literature, the Internet, and other materials. Many useful approaches are discussed in these chapters. Kevin O' Reilly's ideas about placing students in the position of the US decision-makers, to better understand their thinking, and Mitchell B. Lerner's contribution on the use of the so-called White House tapes, are suitable for advanced undergraduate or post-graduate students. Hugo B Keesing, on Vietnam era music, Scott Laderman, on movies about Vietnam, and Richard Hune Werking and Brian C Etheridge, writing about the use of the Internet, all provide a wealth of resources which are useful in secondary, as well as undergraduate classrooms.

The final section of this book covers specific topics of content which may be the focus of classroom teaching at any appropriate level. These include the place of the war in the Cold War, the role of nationalism and colonialism in the development of the war, the Vietnamese side of the war, and the Tet Offensive in the classroom and lecture theatre. The essay on the anti-war movement is less useful than it might have been, due to the author's seeming personal concern to vindicate the movement against recent criticism.

The concluding essay "Teaching the Vietnam War in Secondary Schools and Survey Classrooms" by Stephen Armstrong, an experienced high school teacher and university lecturer, presents useful approaches for instructors at any pre-graduate level of teaching. While some of this essay will be of little interest to the South African high school teacher (he gives a measure of attention to American standards for teaching the subject of the war), much of the essay is devoted to the development and application of ideas presented in the earlier chapters. Here the classroom teacher will find more specific strategies and suggestions about the use of music and films, both documentary and theatrical, and textbooks, in the high school classroom.

As with all such anthologies, the lecturer and teacher will find the quality and usefulness of these essays uneven. Taken together however, this collection will serve to update South African educators about recent issues and debate surrounding the Vietnam War and will stimulate their thinking about how best to teach this topic. High school educators, in particular, will want to consult this volume before the Vietnam War becomes a focus of their grade 12 teaching about the Cold War, in 2016.