

an auction sale of Glover's belongings after his death in 1983.

As Gardiner explains, for over forty years Glover "went out into the streets and fields, and photographed the working-class young men to whom he was attracted: builders, roadworkers, milkmen, delivery boys, dockers, farm labourers, in fact any and all classes of tradesmen and outdoor workers." (11) A middle-class, professional architect, Glover had a fondness for working-class men, particularly soldiers, street boys, and Ralph, his "handsome East End lover." Picking up from this, Gardiner's text frames the photographs around issues of class.

For all its centrality, Gardiner's use of class remains limited. His treatment of gay history and class suffers from wild generalization. One gets the impression from Gardiner's descriptions that almost the entire population of working-class men in Britain during the first half of the twentieth century was homosexually-active. His analysis of the operations of class within sexual relations between men too often lapses into a pseudo-psychological rather than historical explanation. For example, the sexual availability of working-class men historically was due, Gardiner guesses, to the fact that working-class men "have fewer anal fears than the upper classes." (16)

Despite these and other shortcomings (the cutlines that accompany the photographs are either frustratingly unidentified or curiously ahistorical as with the pairing of a quotation from Oscar Wilde's trials with a photograph from what might be the 1930s), I still liked this book. I like it not so much for its history, but for what it represents. While Glover's photographs probably tell us more about middle-class desires and fantasies than they do about working-class men, the book itself poses a challenge to a gay historical practice still often preoccupied with the lives of white bourgeois men. In a similar way, it challenges much recent "queer theorizing" that either elides issues of class altogether or collapses them under otherwise sophisticated considerations of gender and race. As some activist-intellectuals worry about the increasing separation between community and academy in the pro-

duction of lesbian/gay studies, *A Class Apart* is also a reminder that academic institutionalization has not entirely supplanted earlier traditions of popularizing lesbian/gay history.

At the same time, *A Class Apart*, for all its visual appeal, is probably not the best example of how to present the gay past to a popular audience. Better use could have been made of the lesbian and gay social history produced over the past two decades. Part of the value of *A Class Apart*, however, is that it does raise the question of how we can have a history that is both intellectually engaged and of interest to a wider public.

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Christian G. Appy, *Working-Class War: American Combat Soldiers and Vietnam* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press 1993).

Back in the late 1960s as the war in Vietnam escalated, I naively assumed that everyone was like me: "draft bait." It was assumed that I would be called as would all of my friends. Of course, as I learned more about the war and talked to people, I came to realize that this was not the case. I noticed that Congressmen's sons didn't go and I was always baffled that all those healthy athletes that I watched on the playing fields and courts on Saturday afternoons also didn't get the call (Rocky Bleier being the one exception it would seem). In time—very short time—I realized why. Now we have Christian Appy's very fine study *Working-Class War* to help future generations understand this phenomenon. As with so much that happens in the political sphere, the Vietnam war served to reinforce that cynical attitude that in America everyone is equal and some are more equal than others (for both positive and negative ends).

Appy's book is divided into nine chapters which literally chronicle the life of the "grunt" from the moment he is called up to the time he goes back to "The World" and into an uncertain future riddled with questions and guilt, pride and regrets. Chapter One is entitled

"Life Before the Nam" and deals with the backgrounds of the working-class men who formed the heart and soul of the American military during the Vietnam era. It is in this chapter that we find out how deeply the military drew from the ranks of working-class and lower middle-class youth to supply the ranks. Appy expertly profiles the attitudes and beliefs of these young men in an attempt to explain why they went to war and why they held (and hold) the attitudes they have toward the war. Chapter Two deals with "Basic Training." This makes for chilling reading at times, as we see "civilian maggots" being prepared to go to war and become "real men." Readers will appreciate Appy's deft merging of the psychological and physical dimensions of the training in the creation of a professional soldier. Chapter Three, "Ominous Beginnings," is one of the most engaging sections in the book as Appy describes first impressions of Vietnam experienced by GIs. The GI was, according to Appy, first assaulted by the smell, and in that he sees a metaphor for the whole war: "Most veterans describe the smell of Vietnam as a strange combination of odors, some brought from America, others indigenous to Vietnam. 'It was like sweat, shit, jet fuel, and fish sauce all mixed together.' In the very odors, Americans confronted one of the most fundamental facts about the war: the conflict between the advanced technology of the wealthiest nation on earth and the largely preindustrial and agricultural world of the revolutionary Third World. It produced a fetid odor indeed. As John Ketwig writes, 'The humidity was oppressive; and there was a sweet stink that suggested fruits and tires burning together.'" (129)

Chapter Four begins the actual discussion of the GI's experience of fighting the war. In this chapter, Appy describes the nature of the battleground, the American strategy of search and destroy which was to aid its policy of attrition, and the reality of having to fight the Vietnamese "on their terms." Chapter Five is entitled "Drawing Fire and Laying Waste"—a fairly self-explanatory title—and documents the GI's experience hitting landing zones, "humping the boonies," and drawing fire. This last idea, that grunts were largely

used to attract fire so American technological firepower could be trained on the enemy, is particularly disturbing. Appy closes this chapter by talking about how soldiers took out their frustrations and anger on civilians, and this in turn serves as a transition to the next chapter which deals with some of the moral dimensions of the war.

"It Was for Nothing" discusses how grunts dealt with the official justification for the war—a policy which engendered more anti-Americanism and, consequently, put more soldiers at risk. The grunts' response was to fight for two basic and simple reasons: for survival and for each other. Anything beyond that lost meaning as the war dragged on. Chapter Seven, "What Are We Becoming," continues the discussion of the effects of the war on the GI, focusing this time primarily on responses to the chaos they encountered in the bush. Here Appy discusses the idea of "The World," the term soldiers gave to America or whatever was not Vietnam. This designation is interesting, as he notes, because it made Vietnam another world, a world which was the "antithesis to the (real) World." (251) This in turn helped them adjust psychologically and project onto an "alien world responsibility for the war's meaninglessness and savagery." (253) There are some genuinely moving cases here, such as that of the GI who had been reared in poverty, but none the less comments on how really poor the Vietnamese were, and the anecdote about the hostility of GIs who, after they learn to distrust everyone, throw C-rations at kids begging for food on the side of the road instead of to them.

The last two chapters make the transition from the jungles of Vietnam to the streets of the United States, as GIs attempt to wrestle with what the war meant from a moral standpoint. These chapters do an excellent job of illustrating the moral dilemma of one doing their duty (i.e., doing what they have been told is right) in an enterprise that lacked moral justification. In other words, these young men—many of them never before confronted with such existential dilemmas—had to ask, "If the country is wrong, am I wrong?" The pain of this situation was further compounded by the fact that these young men were rejected by

the very people they had been told they were there to save from the onslaught of communism: the Vietnamese and their own sweethearts, parents and friends stateside. Is it any wonder that the legacy of Vietnam for soldier and civilian alike is one of distrust?

In conclusion, I cannot recommend this book highly enough. Appy's portrait of the working-class army is sound and well researched as he explores the social and intellectual threads that made up the essence of the Vietnam-era American GI. He also evokes the GI's life before the war, during it, and after. The structure of the book makes this possible, as the reader moves from innocence and high hopes into the heart of a genuine moral dilemma and the subsequent bitterness and disillusionment. People who want to quickly condemn young men for events like My Lai might not like what Appy reveals here, but they will have a better understanding of how that boy next door could kill with so little compunction. Appy does not forgive these incidents but he makes them and the people who experienced them real, so that it is harder to make sweeping judgements about those who fought and the way they fought. On the other hand, the book will reaffirm the widely held notion that the real villain in the whole Vietnam experience was the government and the high command. William Westmoreland wasn't much liked or trusted by radicals back then; this book will do nothing to change those feelings of distrust, and perhaps, hatred. To reread his comments about strategy and grand military design in light of what Appy presents of the worldview of these working-class boys and actual military strategy will offer cold comfort to conservatives and will probably raise the hackles of those who were part of the New Left. If the flame still burns, they may even experience that fire that was in their guts and that led them to the streets in protest. Mostly, however, his book should be a reminder that this sort of war should never happen again.

Finally, I would strongly recommend this book for teachers of literature and film as a fine resource to bring to their studies of the literature and films of Vietnam. Much of the literature of the war is, quite naturally, nar-

rated by, or presented from the point of view of the educated or at least articulate soldier. Our focus often falls on how bright/innocent/dedicated young men are transformed by the horrors of the war, of how they internalize the moral dilemmas and come out with a new world view. This book will help illuminate the historical actors who lived on the periphery of philosophy but who, like the well-educated, found their lives forever changed by their time in "the Nam."

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Albert S. Broussard, *Black San Francisco: The Struggle for Racial Equality in the West, 1900-1954* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press 1993).

Albert S. Broussard's *Black San Francisco* offers a detailed description of African-American life in that city between the turn of the century and the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision in 1954. Indeed the painstakingly-thorough study of the forces which shaped the black San Francisco community in the first half of the twentieth century is the principal strength of this book. Chronologically, in thirteen tightly-organized yet remarkably detailed chapters, Broussard charts the growth of the city's black population, its institutions, residential patterns, and occupational structure.

In a larger sense, Broussard seeks to describe the evolution of race relations in a western American city, arguing that "the history of blacks in the twentieth-century urban West has been largely neglected." This focus presents a useful context, as the author describes adjustments and confrontations which differed from those in eastern urban centres. San Francisco's black community remained small until World War II. As such, it straddled the advantage of relative freedom from racial violence, and the disadvantage of failure to win a place in the city's political and economic power structure. For the most part, Broussard handles this atypical situation well as we learn much from San Francisco's particular circum-