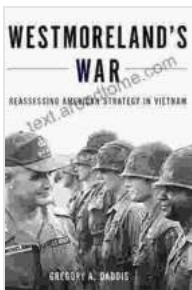


# Westmoreland War: Reassessing American Strategy in Vietnam

The Vietnam War remains one of the most controversial and studied conflicts in American history. *Westmoreland War: Reassessing American Strategy in Vietnam*, a new book by historian Andrew Wiest, offers a fresh perspective on the war by examining the role of General William Westmoreland, the U.S. commander in Vietnam from 1964 to 1968.



## Westmoreland's War: Reassessing American Strategy in Vietnam

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 3766 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 278 pages  
Lending : Enabled



Wiest argues that Westmoreland's strategy of attrition, which aimed to inflict heavy casualties on the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army (NVA), was flawed from the start. He shows how Westmoreland overestimated the enemy's strength and underestimated the resilience of the Vietnamese people. As a result, the war dragged on for years, with no clear end in sight.

## **Westmoreland's Strategy**

Westmoreland's strategy was based on the belief that the United States could defeat the Viet Cong and NVA by inflicting heavy casualties. He believed that the enemy could not sustain such losses and would eventually be forced to negotiate a peace settlement.

To achieve this, Westmoreland launched a series of large-scale offensives, including the Battle of Ia Drang in 1965 and the Tet Offensive in 1968. These offensives did inflict heavy casualties on the enemy, but they also resulted in significant American losses. More importantly, they failed to achieve Westmoreland's goal of breaking the enemy's will to fight.

## **The Flawed Assumptions of Westmoreland's Strategy**

Wiest argues that Westmoreland's strategy was flawed from the start. He shows how Westmoreland overestimated the enemy's strength and underestimated the resilience of the Vietnamese people.

Westmoreland believed that the Viet Cong and NVA were a well-organized and well-equipped force. He estimated that the enemy had over 300,000 troops in South Vietnam. In reality, the enemy's strength was much smaller. According to Wiest, the Viet Cong and NVA never had more than 150,000 troops in South Vietnam.

Westmoreland also underestimated the resilience of the Vietnamese people. He believed that the Vietnamese would not be able to withstand the heavy casualties that he was inflicting on them. However, the Vietnamese people proved to be remarkably resilient. They continued to fight even after suffering heavy losses.

## **The Consequences of Westmoreland's Strategy**

Westmoreland's strategy had a number of negative consequences. It led to the deaths of thousands of American soldiers and Vietnamese civilians. It also prolonged the war and made it more difficult to achieve a negotiated peace settlement.

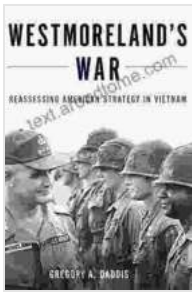
The war's negative consequences are still being felt today. The United States has spent billions of dollars on veterans' benefits and healthcare. The war also damaged America's reputation around the world.

Westmoreland War: Reassessing American Strategy in Vietnam is a valuable contribution to the literature on the Vietnam War. Wiest offers a fresh perspective on the war by examining the role of General William Westmoreland. He shows how Westmoreland's strategy of attrition was flawed from the start and led to the deaths of thousands of American soldiers and Vietnamese civilians.

Wiest's book is a must-read for anyone who wants to understand the Vietnam War. It is a valuable reminder of the dangers of hubris and the importance of learning from the mistakes of the past.

### **Further Reading**

- Westmoreland War: Reassessing American Strategy in Vietnam by Andrew Wiest
- The Vietnam War by Ken Burns and Lynn Bao Le
- Vietnam War on History.com



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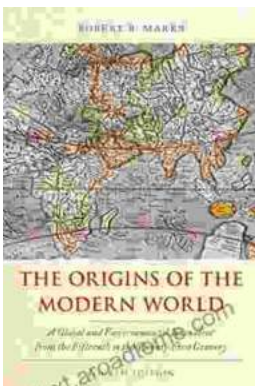
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