



# A Rumor of War

*Philip Caputo*

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## **A Rumor of War** Philip Caputo

In March of 1965, Marine Lieutenant Philip J. Caputo landed at Danang with the first ground combat unit deployed to Vietnam. Sixteen months later, having served on the line in one of modern history's ugliest wars, he returned home ? physically whole but emotionally wasted, his youthful idealism forever gone. *A Rumor of War* is far more than one soldier's story. Upon its publication in 1977, it shattered America's indifference to the fate of the men sent to fight in the jungles of Vietnam. In the years since then, it has become not only a basic text on the Vietnam War but also a renowned classic in the literature of wars throughout history and, as the author writes, of "the things men do in war and the things war does to men." "To call it the best book about Vietnam is to trivialize it. . . . *A Rumor of War* is a dangerous and even subversive book, the first to insist ? and the insistence is all the more powerful because it is implicit ? that the reader ask himself these questions: How would I have acted? To what lengths would I have gone to survive? The sense of self is assaulted, overcome, subverted, leaving the reader to contemplate the deadening possibility that his own moral safety net might have a hole in it. It is a terrifying thought, and *A Rumor of War* is a terrifying book." ? John Gregory Dunne, Los Angeles Times Book Review "Caputo's troubled, searching meditations on the love and hate of war, on fear, and the ambivalent discord warfare can create in the hearts of decent men, are among the most eloquent I have read in modern literature." - William Styron, The New York Review of Books

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