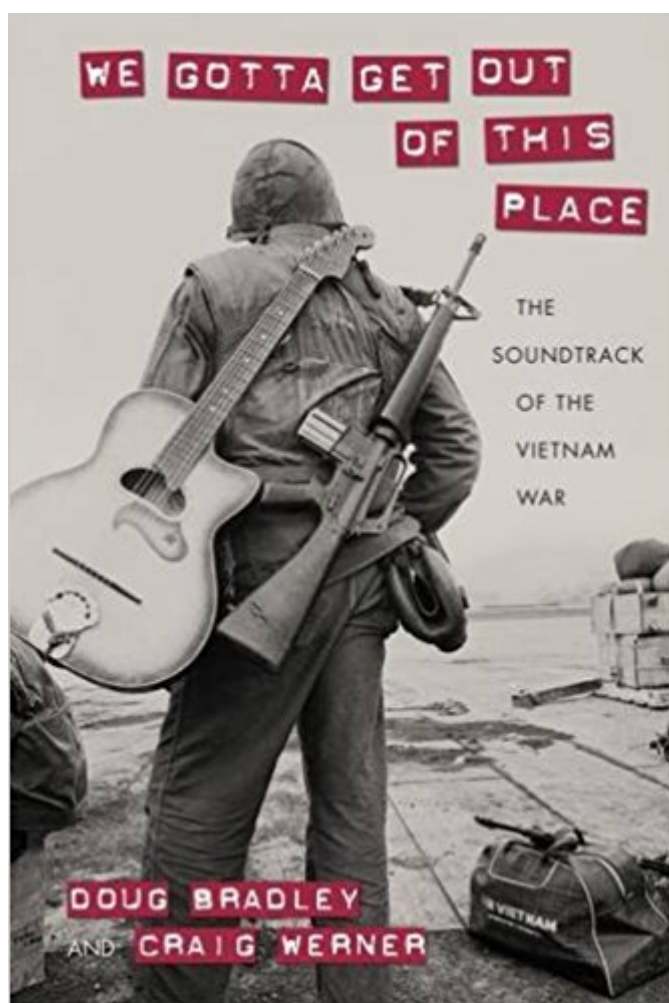


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We Gotta Get Out Of This Place: The Soundtrack Of The Vietnam War (Culture, Politics, And The Cold War)



Synopsis

For a Kentucky rifleman who spent his tour trudging through Vietnam's Central Highlands, it was Nancy Sinatra's "These Boots Are Made for Walkin'." For a "tunnel rat" who blew smoke into the Viet Cong's underground tunnels, it was Jimi Hendrix's "Purple Haze." For a black marine distraught over the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., it was Aretha Franklin's "Chain of Fools." And for countless other Vietnam vets, it was "I Feel Like I'm Fixin' to Die," "Who'll Stop the Rain," or the song that gives this book its title. In *We Gotta Get Out of This Place*, Doug Bradley and Craig Werner place popular music at the heart of the American experience in Vietnam. They explore how and why U.S. troops turned to music as a way of connecting to each other and the World back home and of coping with the complexities of the war they had been sent to fight. They also demonstrate that music was important for every group of Vietnam veterans—black and white, Latino and Native American, men and women, officers and "grunts"—whose personal reflections drive the book's narrative. Many of the voices are those of ordinary soldiers, airmen, seamen, and marines. But there are also "solo" pieces by veterans whose writings have shaped our understanding of the war—Karl Marlantes, Alfredo Vea, Yusef Komunyakaa, Bill Ehrhart, Arthur Flowers—as well as songwriters and performers whose music influenced soldiers' lives, including Eric Burdon, James Brown, Bruce Springsteen, Country Joe McDonald, and John Fogerty. Together their testimony taps into memories—individual and cultural—that capture a central if often overlooked component of the American war in Vietnam.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"If you want to understand what it felt like, outside of combat itself, to live through and be part of the Vietnam War, read this book. Then, go listen to the music. I did both and I urge you to do the same." — Karl Marlantes, author of *Matterhorn* and *What It's Like to Go to War* "Thoroughly researched, powerfully written and insightful . . . Perhaps most fascinatingly of all, *We Gotta Get Out of This Place* demonstrates how the music that found its way into the lives of the men and women who fought the war changed as the war dragged on, reflecting the dramatic changes 'back in the world.' . . . In the concluding 'Solo' of the book, Vietnam vet Jay Maloney begins, 'There is no such thing as one Vietnam. There were more than two and a half million of them.' No single book could capture that many Vietnams, or the multitude of voices needed to describe them, any more than you could squeeze that many singers onto a single 45 RPM record or write a song to evoke all of their experiences. But the remarkable achievement of Bradley and Werner's *We Gotta Get Out of This Place* is how close they've come to making that many voices of Vietnam veterans heard." — Paste "Doug Bradley and Craig Werner's account of music's connection to the Vietnam War is intimate and deeply informative, with a scope that encompasses both the war itself and the way that music has helped raise awareness of veterans' issues long after its end. *We Gotta Get Out of This Place* gives the reader a good sense of how the popularity of different songs and styles waxed and waned over the years, as the mood of the war changed. It also gives plenty of space for extended first-person narratives (dubbed 'Solos') offering a diverse array of viewpoints, including many from veterans who found themselves in anti-war camps, those who felt more conflicted about the anti-war movement, and musicians like Country Joe McDonald and James Brown. Nuanced and frequently moving. #1 Music Book for 2015" — Rolling Stone "This is unquestionably one of those rare 'must read' books." — On Point: The Journal of Army History "Of the many ways to relate the story of the Vietnam war, few are more vibrant and accessible than the way Doug Bradley and Craig Werner tell it. I devoured this book." — David Maraniss, author of *They Marched into Sunlight: War and Peace, Vietnam and America, October 1967* "We all love popular music and we all love soldiers. All we have left is memories. Maybe there is something to learn from this book, from their experiences, from the music. God, I hope so." — Country Joe McDonald "We Gotta Get Out of This Place is chock full of materials that present multi-voiced memories of how popular music related to the experiences of American GIs in and after the Vietnam War. The book will appeal to veterans, and in many ways is written by, for, and to them. But students and fans of popular music history, the history of the 1960s, and the history of war will also find it an engaging and worthwhile read." — Michael J.

Kramer, author of *The Republic of Rock: Music and Citizenship in the Sixties Counterculture*"By letting the veterans and the music do the talking, Werner and Bradley take readers on a journey through the tension, sorrow, fear, and hope that defined American men and women's service in Vietnam. The diversity of voices and songs reminds us that the home front and the battlefield are always connected and that music and war are deeply intertwined."

—Heather Marie Stur, author of *Beyond Combat: Women and Gender in the Vietnam War Era*"When you realize the average age of a combat soldier in Vietnam was 19, you can better appreciate how music would be indelibly written into the experiences of that powerfully formative time. This amazing book does justice to conveying the power and emotional impact of music throughout that era."

—Bobby Muller, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines, Vietnam 1968-69, Founder and President, Vietnam Veterans of America"Through the testimonies Bradley and Werner collect we see, firsthand, how music provides a window into the war and tensions over generation, region, and race. Music becomes much more than an artifact of culture; it is the stuff of memory and part of the complex ways we all make meaning."

—Tom F. Summers Sandoval Jr., author of *Latinos at the Golden Gate*"Bradley and Werner understand more kinds of music, more songs, and more troops of more kinds than anyone else who's written about the American military experience in Vietnam. Whether you read it because you are interested in the war, the music, the politics, or because you're still trying to figure out what Hell was going on, *We Gotta Get Out of This Place* will be a revelation."

—Dave Marsh, author of *The Heart of Rock and Soul*"Doug and Craig's program based on their book *We Gotta Get Out of Here: The Soundtrack of the Vietnam War* is outstanding. They grab your attention from the start and the music transports you. It's amazing to hear the music and the effect it had on the soldiers. You come away with a whole new perspective on the war and the music of the era."

—Sonia Outlaw-Clark, West Tennessee Delta Heritage Center"I spoke with Doug Bradley and Craig Werner before a packed house at Mystery to Me about their extraordinary new book, *We Gotta Get Out of This Place*, which takes an insightful and nuanced look at the music of the Vietnam War. Doug and Craig played the music, and talked about the vets and musicians they had interviewed. I think it's safe to say no one who was there that night will soon forget it."

—Doug Moe"Intimate and deeply informative, with a scope that encompasses both the war itself and the way that music has helped raise awareness of veterans' issues long after its end."

—Rolling Stone"Authors Doug Bradley and Craig Werner have given us a gift: a compendious book that looks at the music we rock-and-roll-generation Americans who served in the Vietnam War listened to. . . . For anyone who wants to know about music and the Vietnam War, this is the book to read. Will another book ever be needed? I can't

imagine it. This is the book that I've long wanted on this subject. If I were still teaching a course on the Vietnam War, I would use this book as a text."~ VVA Veteran Online"A fascinating history of music connected to the Vietnam War. Highly recommended."~ Choice"Music can be ephemeral and evanescent. That's why We Gotta Get Out of This Place is so important: It preserves the impressions of those who were in the Vietnam War, listening, shooting, trying to stay alive."~ Washington State Magazine

Doug Bradley, a Vietnam veteran, teaches a course on the war with Craig Werner, professor of Afro-American studies at the University of Wisconsin~ Madison and author of Higher Ground: Stevie Wonder, Aretha Franklin, Curtis Mayfield, and the Rise and Fall of American Soul.

If you grew up in the 60's and especially if you served in Vietnam the music we listened to was part of our lives. When we hear a particular song it strikes a cord and helps us relive that time. Music and Vietnam go together. Music in Vietnam was an escape from the war. We Gotta Get out of this Place tells the reader the songs that meant so much to us during the war. There are a lot of books on the Vietnam war, this was a joy to read.

When ordered I thought I was going to get a CD. When the order arrived, it was a book, I have to say it was a good surprise. Not only could I virtually hear the songs that were talked about but, I could truly relate to the times and remember what I was going through and where I was in nam when they were played and I heard them for the first time. Lots of the memories sucked but there were also many great ones. It is really worth the read.

thank you

I thought I was buying a DVD with all the songs they had on the web page. Those were the songs that played while I was in Vietnam.

good book

Got this for my husband who is Vietnam vet. He doesn't read many books, but he's reading this!

Quality product; easy transaction; prompt delivery; highly recommend!!

A must for Vietnam vets.

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