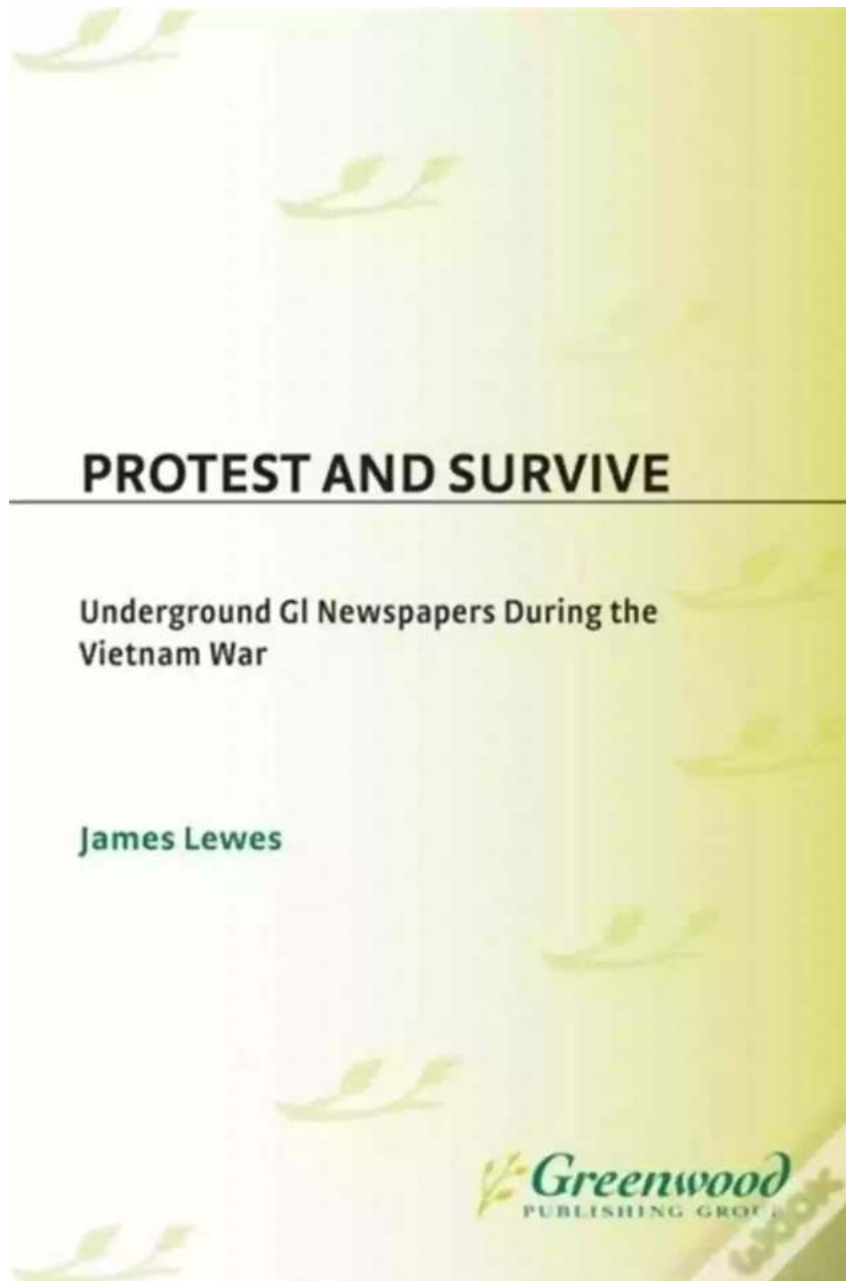


Uncovering the Hidden Stories: Underground GI Newspapers During The Vietnam War

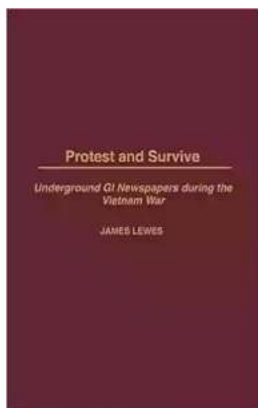


The Vietnam War was one of the most contentious conflicts in modern history, engulfing not only the Vietnamese people but also leaving a lasting impact on American soldiers. Amidst the chaos and disillusionment, a unique form of resistance arose within the ranks of the US military: underground GI newspapers.

These publications provided frustrated soldiers an avenue to express their opposition to the war, share stories, and critique the military establishment. This article delves into the intriguing world of underground GI newspapers during the Vietnam War, shedding light on their importance and enduring significance.

The Birth of Underground GI Newspapers

As the Vietnam War escalated and the number of American troops deployed in Southeast Asia soared, disenchantment within the ranks became increasingly palpable. Many soldiers came to question the legitimacy and morality of the war they were fighting. Denied the chance to voice their concerns through official channels, disillusioned soldiers took matters into their own hands and started creating their own newspapers.



Protest and Survive: Underground GI Newspapers during the Vietnam War by James Lewes(Kindle Edition)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 5569 KB

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 256 pages

Screen Reader: Supported



Underground GI newspapers sprouted like insurgent weeds across military bases in Vietnam, serving as platforms for open dialogues and dissenting opinions. These publications tackled a range of issues, including opposition to the war, anti-establishment sentiments, and reflections on the impact of war on individual soldiers and civilians.

The Power of Words: Content and Impact

What made underground GI newspapers truly captivating was their raw and uncensored content. These publications were not bound by military regulations or the need to promote a particular narrative. Soldiers could freely express their frustrations, fears, and questions without fear of retribution.

Articles showcased firsthand accounts of war atrocities, highlighted the civilian casualties often overlooked by the mainstream media, and narrated the struggles faced by American soldiers on the ground. These powerful stories not only informed readers but also engendered a sense of empathy among soldiers, helping to build solidarity within the ranks.

The Battle Against Suppression

While underground GI newspapers thrived within the military bases, distributing them posed a significant challenge. Military authorities viewed these publications as subversive and went to great lengths to suppress their distribution. Soldiers had to resort to secretive means, often smuggling the newspapers inside their uniforms or taping them inside hollowed-out ammunition boxes.

Despite facing constant censorship and confiscation, underground GI newspapers embodied the indomitable spirit of the soldiers who fought to be heard. These publications became even more important as a channel for protest when soldiers witnessed the government's deceptive and misleading information in official news outlets.

The Legacy of Underground GI Newspapers

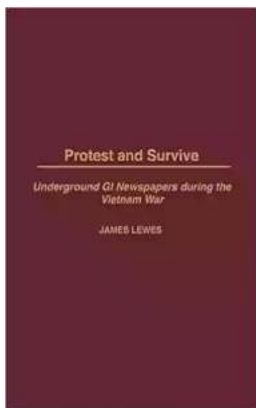
Despite the risks and challenges they faced, underground GI newspapers had a lasting impact on the Vietnam War and the anti-war movement. These

publications not only provided soldiers an outlet for expression but also played a vital role in shaping public opinion back home.

The stories and perspectives shared in these papers challenged the dominant narrative of the war propagated by the government and mainstream media. Influential underground GI newspapers like "The Bond" and "Vietnam GI" played a pivotal role in fuelling the anti-war sentiment, encouraging activism, and mobilizing the anti-war movement.

The underground GI newspapers during the Vietnam War gave soldiers an unparalleled platform to voice their dissent, share their stories, and influence public opinion. These publications, created by soldiers who believed in the power of truth, showcased the resilience and determination of American troops in the face of suppression.

The legacy of these newspapers extends far beyond the war, reminding us of the importance of freedom of speech and the indelible impact individuals can make when they come together to challenge the status quo. The stories contained within these newspapers continue to inspire new generations to critically examine conflicts and speak out against injustice.



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Drawing from more than 120 newspapers, published between 1968 and 1970, this study explores the emergence of an anti-militarist subculture within the U.S. armed services. These activists took the position that individual GIs could best challenge their subordination by working in concert with like-minded servicemen through GI movement organizations whose behaviors and activities were then publicized in these underground newspapers. In examining this movement, Lewes focuses on their treatment of power and authority within the armed forces and how this mirrored the wider and more inclusive relations of power and authority in the United States. He argues that this opposition among servicemen was the primary motivation for the United States to withdraw from Vietnam.

This first book length study of GI-published underground newspapers sheds light on the utility of alternative media for movements of social change, and provides information on how these movements are shaped by the environments in which they emerge. Lewes asserts that one cannot understand GI opposition as an extension of the civilian antiwar movement. Instead, it was the product of an embedded environment, whose inhabitants had been drafted or had enlisted to avoid the draft. They came from cities and small towns whose populations were often polarized between those who wholeheartedly supported the war and those who became progressively more critical of the need for Americans to be involved in Vietnam.



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