

Cohen provides a couple of reasons the moment passed. One was a "right-wing backlash." Another reason may be suggested by the book's approach. There are few, if any, blue-collar workers in *Work and Sing*. The book does mention a number of performers. Yet Cohen's main focus is on music collectors. The main historical figure of the book is not Joe Hill or Woody Guthrie but the collector Alan Lomax. Certainly Lomax is important: he made countless field recordings, organized concerts, and even put together several "hootenannies" in which he sang on stage. But while he spoke for common workers he cannot be called one himself. Like other experts, he could be accused of romanticizing his subjects, of celebrating their simplicity to the point of patronizing or even infantilizing them. In 1946 the label Young People's Records began releasing work songs as children's songs, as charmingly simple expressions such as "Erie Canal," "John Henry," and "Get Along Little Dogies." Finally, Cohen's material suggests that by the 1960s romantic visions and a tendency to infantilize worker expressions had changed the context of labor-based folksongs. By 1965, as Pete Seeger would complain, the song "Union Maid" was "far better known on college campuses" than it was "in the average union hall" (147). Cohen's golden moment ended, in other words, when the worker of folk song ceased to be connected to the actual American laborer.

Wisconsin Vietnam War Stories: Our Veterans Remember, compiled by Sarah A. Larsen and Jennifer M. Miller. Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2010. xix, 357 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, appendixes, index. \$24.95 paper.

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Wisconsin Vietnam War Stories is an oral history in which 40 Vietnam veterans from the Badger State tell their tales of going to, surviving, and coming back from the American War in Vietnam. Rich with photographs and other illustrations and carefully edited into chapters on a variety of subjects, the work shows both the diversity of soldiers' reactions to the Vietnam War and the fundamental reality that wars, right or wrong, are devastating human experiences.

Chapter subjects in the book range from well-known ones, such as the Tet Offensive and Hamburger Hill, to lesser-known parts of the war, such as river naval duty and the "secret war" in Laos. Arranged in a basically chronological fashion and expertly introduced by Jennifer

Miller's short historical essays, the succession of subjects moves readers through the war from its beginnings "off the radar" in the 1950s to its difficult ending in the 1970s. On the way, readers get to know many interesting people, as well as the challenges of the war and its aftermath. Among the people, one finds farm boys and city kids; American Indians, an African American, and a woman serving in the Women's Army Corps (WAC); a Lutheran chaplain, a Hmong boy soldier, and a pair of identical twins who discover each other at the same military base in Vietnam. As for the challenges of the war, they are ever present in the voices of the participants. One learns of anxious, as well as clueless, decisions to volunteer, of the immovable reality of the draft for that generation of men, and of the oppressive heat, jungle, and smells that often challenged new arrivals from their first moments in Vietnam.

Of all the book's themes, however, none is clearer than the sense of loss that often haunts soldiers. Lost innocence, lost faith, lost limbs, and the lost ability to fit in back at home all spring from these stories. Among the deepest losses, of course, are those of lost friends. Not surprisingly, it was devastating to watch friends die; many participants are still haunted by difficult memories, tenacious flashbacks, and the survivor's guilt that is by definition a curse of the living, not the dead. The Vietnam War changed these people even as it took the lives of others, and this combined legacy lays a heavy hand on war veterans, a part of the devastating price that war exacts.

Thus, this volume is a fine oral history of the Vietnam War. In addition, it certainly captures the stories of veterans from Wisconsin, a valuable contribution. However, while the participants are Wisconsinites and the book includes details such as the names of the participants' hometowns and an appendix listing all Wisconsin military personnel who perished during the war, one would be hard pressed to define the book as strictly "about Wisconsin." These stories, of service and loss, triumph and tragedy, are from the Midwest, but they are very much part of a larger story, of America and the Vietnam War experience. Whether told by people from Wisconsin or Iowa, or from New York, Georgia, or California, the difficult war stories of America's Vietnam veterans share much in common. Thus, in the end, this volume is a well-done oral history for those interested in the Vietnam War; for those more interested in Wisconsin or the Midwest, it can also be of interest, though it is hardly a story specific to its state or region.