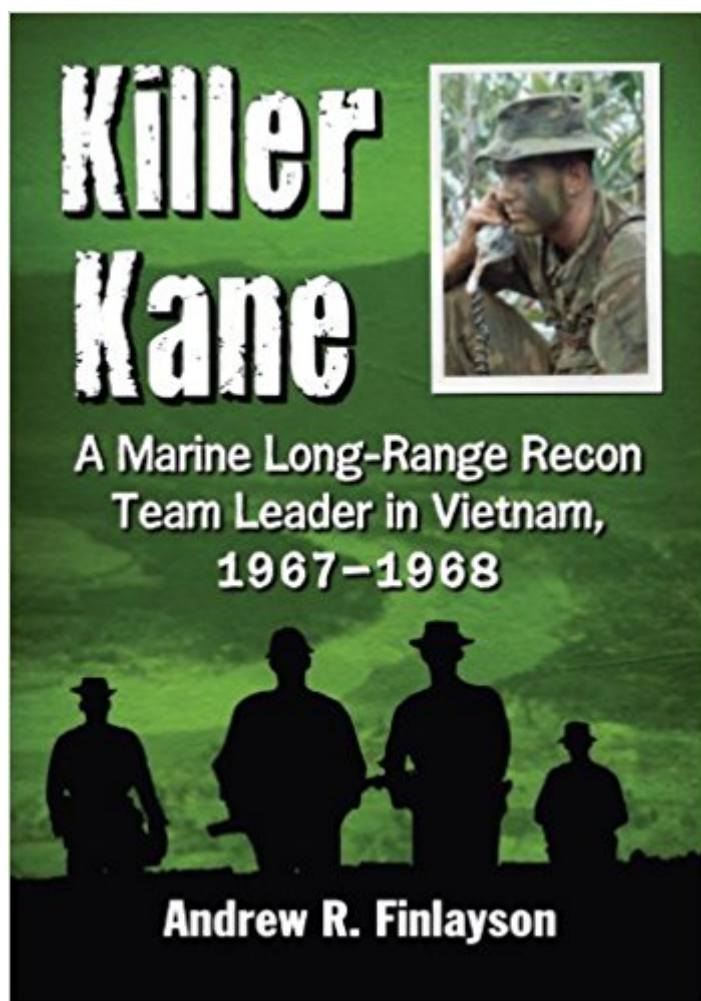




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Killer Kane: A Marine Long-Range Recon Team Leader In Vietnam, 1967â€“1968



Synopsis

The leader of one of the most successful U. S. Marine long range reconnaissance teams during the Vietnam War, Andrew Finlayson recounts his team's experiences in the year leading up to the Tet Offensive of 1968. Using primary sources, such as Marine Corps unit histories and his own weekly letters home, he presents a highly personal account of the dangerous missions conducted by this team of young Marines as they searched for North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong units in such dangerous locales as Elephant Valley, the Enchanted Forest, Charlie Ridge, Happy Valley and the Que Son Mountains. In numerous close contacts with the enemy, the team (code-name Killer Kane) fights for its survival against desperate odds, narrowly escaping death time and again. The book gives vivid descriptions of the life of recon Marines when they are not on patrol, the beauty of the landscape they traverse, and several of the author's Vietnamese friends. It also explains in detail the preparations for, and the conduct of, a successful long range reconnaissance patrol.

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Customer Reviews

This book was recommended to me by William P Singley, an author whose work can also be found

on . As an old 101st Airborne Vietnam vet from I Corps, I like to read books about the experiences of the grunts who we dropped off all over the place (I was a Huey crew chief). As a Marine Recon guy, the author gives one the feeling of having been out there and of the overall experience of the Marines doing the hard work. A bit redundant at times, it's still a great read and hard to put down once you can smell the streams and the jungle around you.

Your writing and descriptions of combat events made me proud once again of my 0311 background. Although doing two tours myself with a rough and tumble outfit 2nd batt. 1st Mar. Div in 68, 9 and 70. I envied your relationship with your Marines only resorting to the memories of my experiences and my fellow brothers. Having an officer like you at that time I'm sure would have made a major difference for our outcome. No disrespect to the Corp, but we never had training from any Officers or SNCO's other than ITR. We lost way too many Marines, but we never lost hope. Thank you for inviting me to your past in combat, your thoughts, enthusiasm and dedication. Semper Fi Devil dog.

Mr. Finlayson's description of recon missions in Viet Nam is spot on and written in one of the most comprehensive and straight forward views that I have seen in print. Prior to reading Killer Kane I had no information on how Marine Recon teams conducted their missions. I was a member of a LRRP company attached to the 173rd Airborne brigade more than a year after Mr. Finlayson's first tour. There were so many similar operational preparations that it was fun to make comparisons. Some major differences were that we rarely operated with more than six team members and I cringe at going to the field with an officer! Especially a newly minted one! Our team leaders for the most part were second tour Sergeants highly capable and intelligent. It also seems that we carried more water and equipment. We never carried C-rations just freeze dried larp rats as they were called. We carried at least eight quarts of water because we had a collapsible five quart canteen that fit in the bottom of our rucksack, a two quart on our web belt as well as the standard one quart with canteen cup. Each man was trained as an emergency medic and carried IV drip saline\ lactated ringers and knew how to use it also atropine and morphine surrets, in addition each man carried a claymore and we deployed these every night at our night lagger, we considered these our last line of defense. Each man carried at least 300 rnds of 5.56 ammunition in canteen pouches as well as a canteen pouch of standard m26 frags. Every man was trained to be proficient at calling in artillery and air support if something happened to the radii man. Only one time do I remember carrying two radios to the field because we were going to be near another units AO. Every man also had to carry ten foot of 1/2in. Line and carbineres to make swiss seat rigs if we had to rappel in or be pulled out by

Mcquire rig extraction. Our teams were small so we could always be inserted and extracted by the Huey slick (UH1) helicopter. I can't imagine using a CH-46 (Chinook) to insert or extract with the size and noise I don't know how they maintained stealth. I have to hand it to the Marines though, they done a wonderful job with what they had and I would personally like to thank Mr. Finlayson for his service and hope he writes another book about his second tour. I can't say enough good about this book and highly recommend it.

This was a great book about the Author in the Marines in Vietnam. This is one brave man and he was an exceptionally talented as an Officer leading his troops into battle time and again. Few people would ever survive what he did of his first tour in Vietnam. I can not wait to read the next book in this mini series about his second tour.

The writer is by no means a professional author but he wasn't trying to be. He told a very interesting story well. I've read a few other stories about Marine Recon in Vietnam and I liked this one the best.

I liked the stories about when they went out on patrol and some of the inter-action between the Marines when at base. However, I felt the author went overboard on complimenting his superiors and subordinates. It's fine to do that to recognize good performance, but he does it over and over. The author also has an extremely high impression of himself and it is displayed very often in the book.

Although I don't feel it was well written, I feel it was a good insight into one officer's opinion of what should have given the war a better chance of winning! Since I served in the US Navy during the early years of the Vietnam War, I wasn't aware of the political side of the conflict. My older brother served in the Navy CB's attached to a Marine division for three thirteen month tours! Like so many GI's returning from Vietnam, sadly he never got over the war and drank himself to death many years later.

War is a deadly and dirty game and the winner takes all, but no one escapes its shadows! If you really want to know what combat is like you have to listen to a man that has been in combat and survived that year to talk about it. If you need to know the up close and deadly intricacies of jungle warfare then you need to listen to a combat tested Recon Marine/Soldier. A man who has faced those threats, overcome the challenges and killed the enemy for his country and for his fellow

Marines/Soldiers lying next to him in the bush! This book will give you brief taste of war, but it will not be pleasant for some!

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