LOOK SHARP
ACT SHARP
BE SHARP
INTRODUCTION

There are heavy concentrations of American soldiers living and working in the midst of the Vietnamese population.

Here two cultures—Vietnamese and American—have collided, with basically good results; unfortunately, however, there has been some misunderstanding. This was inevitable, but it doesn’t mean we can’t do anything about it.

In order to minimize the bad effects of such collisions, certain standards of conduct and common sense are expected. They provide the basic theme for this book. We hope they’ll provide a theme for your tour of duty in Vietnam.

Any time we become more burdensome than the Viet Cong, we’ll be asked to leave. Remember we are guests here: We make no demands and seek no special treatment.

Nothing speaks so well of our way of life than a sincere attempt to understand the Vietnamese. Join with the people! Understand their life, use phrases from their language and honor their customs and laws.

Courtesy to women is universal. In Vietnam this courtesy is more formal than in our country. Treat women with politeness and respect.

Friendships are bridges between the two cultures. Make personal friends among the soldiers and common people.

Oriental people emphasize concession and yielding rather than forcefulness. Always give the Vietnamese the right of way. Practice this in a broad sense.

Don’t risk yourself or your comrades in the field. Be watchful, avoid crowds and don’t discuss your job with anyone. Be alert to security and ready to react with your military skill.

An oriental distinguishes himself by his courtesy, suppleness and good humor. Personal display is distasteful to him. Don’t attract attention by loud, rude or unusual behavior. And remember, there may be VC in your audience.

Brandishing a fat bankroll is vulgar and doesn’t win any friends. Let’s scotch this image of the “Rich American.” Avoid separating yourself from the people by a display of wealth or privilege.

Above all else you are members of the U.S. Military Forces on a difficult mission, responsible for all your official and personal actions. Reflect honor upon yourself and the United States of America.

And that’s what this book is all about.
You and your Vietnamese counterpart have a common bond—you are both military men, dedicated to one cause. Soldiers the world over share for the most part, the same desires and ideals. So, make an honest effort toward friendship with the Vietnamese fighting men. Many of them are combat tested veterans who will be eager to discuss tactics and other subjects with you.

Don’t boast of superior equipment and training or of your income. The Vietnamese soldier does a good job with less, and you’ll only generate friction. Don’t boast that we have come “to bail you out.”
Our mission in Vietnam is complex and demanding. If our only mission was to assist in defeating the enemy forces on the battlefield it would be relatively simple. Such however, is not the case.

We are examples of the kind of people a democracy produces. The Vietnamese have never been fortunate enough to have a democratic government free from the burden of aggression. They study not only our actions on the battlefield but our behavior in our off-duty time as well, for some knowledge of this ideal they are seeking . . . democracy.

We are not just soldiers. We are soldiers and representatives. In all our official and non-official actions we must be at our best to reflect honor upon ourselves and America.
In a city, most of us tend to let our guard down. But war can erupt with brutal suddenness in the crowded streets and dimly lit bars. Charlie is adept at terrorism and stops at nothing if he believes he can make a successful strike.

Don't discuss your job with anyone. Nobody really has a "need to know" except at work. The VC intelligence network can put together significant information from bit and pieces.

Avoid crowds and keep an eye peeled for trouble. Charlie can pitch a few foul curves of his own.
I HAVE THE STRANGEST FEELING WE'VE GONE PAST MY BILLET!!
REMEMBER!
"CHARLIE" LIKES CONGESTED AREAS TOO... BUT, FOR A DIFFERENT REASON!!

AVOID CROWDS! Stay Alert Stay Alive!
HE LEAVES A VEHICLE UNATTENDED FOR TWO HOURS IN SAIGON!. NOW HE WANTS CREDIT FOR FINDING A VIET CONG SATCHEL CHARGE!!
THAT'S STRAIGHT DOPE!.. I GOT A BUDDY IN THAT OUTFIT.. THEY'RE MOVIN' OUT FRIDAY!
The Vietnamese quite naturally have a very high regard for their fragile beautifully-featured women. Treat them with the respect and courtesy you would an American girl. Don’t be loud and harsh or make a display of your affluence; you won’t get very far. The Vietnamese consider such behavior boorish and vulgar.

Vietnamese women are impressed with a pleasant, self-effacing attitude and refined behavior. They admire abstract qualities more than material “show off.”
SORRY I'M LATE DON! BEEN WAITIN' LONG?
Vietnam belongs to the Vietnamese, so don’t hog the road with your jeep or deuce-and-a-half. Next time you’re on the road, give the Vietnamese the right of way. That goes not only for driving but in daily contacts as well.

Common sense in dealing with the Vietnamese goes a long way toward breaking the “culture barrier.” Be courteous and they’ll respond in kind.
HOW NOT TO WIN FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE!
Your appreciation of America’s role in the world today will be broadened if you join with the Vietnamese and learn the history of their fight for freedom from aggression.

This valiant little nation has a link with the past that stretches back some 4000 years. Vietnam today, as it has so many times throughout history, is fighting for its life against subjugation. By extending your friendship to the Vietnamese, you strengthen our alliance and measurably assist understanding between our two nations.

Make a genuine effort to learn the language and customs of Vietnam. You can only broaden your personal horizons by doing so.
As an American in Vietnam your income is generally higher than even the top paying Vietnamese positions. Even a PFC in the American Army receives more on payday then some field grade officers in the Vietnamese Army.

This higher income does not give us the right to carelessly pay higher prices for everything and toss our money around in a display of wealth ... at the same time demanding privileged treatment.

We are here to aid the Vietnamese people, not damage their economy. By paying more you not only hurt your fellow soldier, but you promote inflation, making it impossible for the Vietnamese people to afford the basic necessities such as transportation and food.
WHY

DOES EVERYTHING COST
SO MUCH IN THE SAIGON-CHOLON
AREA?

BECAUSE OF RECKLESS SPENDING BY YOU
SOLDIER...
How many guys like a show-off? The answer is none. The Vietnamese are no different from us; they don’t like attention-getting show-offs either.

Clowns belong in the circus, not in public places. All you have to do is behave as you would in your hometown. If you wouldn’t do it there, don’t do it here.
HE SAYS HE'S THE FASTEST GUN ON TOWN! WHATEVER THAT MEANS!

DON'T TAKE YOUR GUNS TO TOWN...
The Saigon Area is a rich mixture of the old and the new—and we Americans are providing most of the latter. Naturally, some Vietnamese resent this dramatic intrusion of their culture and misconduct only amplifies misunderstanding.

We Americans occupy an important role in Vietnam, a role in which we are both a soldier and representative of our country. Our "image" is tarnished by the immature actions of a few soldiers who don't stop to think about the consequences.

We are guests in Vietnam—24-hours a day. It carries a responsibility that cannot be evaded.
GRIST FOR HO CHI MINH'S
PROPAGANDA MILL!