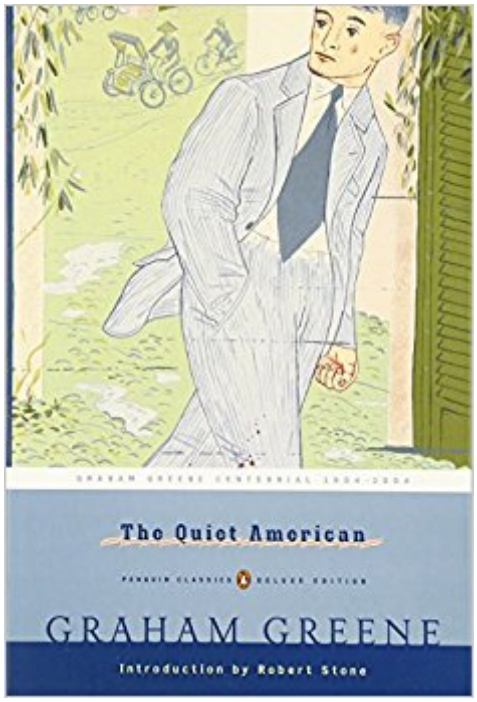
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The Quiet American (Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition)



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Synopsis

Graham Greene’s classic exploration of love, innocence, and morality in Vietnam "I never knew a man who had better motives for all the trouble he caused," Graham Greene’s narrator Fowler remarks of Alden Pyle, the eponymous "Quiet American" of what is perhaps the most controversial novel of his career. Pyle is the brash young idealist sent out by Washington on a mysterious mission to Saigon, where the French Army struggles against the Vietminh guerrillas.As young Pyle’s well-intentioned policies blunder into bloodshed, Fowler, a seasoned and cynical British reporter, finds it impossible to stand safely aside as an observer. But Fowler’s motives for intervening are suspect, both to the police and himself, for Pyle has stolen Fowler’s beautiful Vietnamese mistress.Originally published in 1956 and twice adapted to film, The Quiet American remains a terrifiying and prescient portrait of innocence at large. This Graham Greene Centennial Edition includes a new introductory essay by Robert Stone.For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700Ã Â titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust theÃ Â series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-dateÃ Â translations by award-winning translators.

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Customer Reviews

This edition of Greene’s novel "of sexual intrigue, savage warfare, and some mystery" (LJ 3/1/56) is

the newest member of the Viking "Critical Library" series. Along with the full text of the novel, the volume includes criticism of the work plus biographical information and essays on Greene. Nice for the price.Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

"No serious writer of this century has more thoroughly invaded and shaped the public imagination than Graham Greene." —Time

I described the story as ’dark’ only because it’s basically a war story and I find nothing ’light’ about this mode of context. The writing couldn’t be more superb, the story line excellent with beautifully fleshed out character development. Very happy to have discovered this book and the writer via a book club as I now wish to read more pieces of writing by the author Graham Greene; he’s that fine with the pen.If you as a reader tend to be one emotional, your feelings will definitely be stirred from the beginning to finish of this novel. There too are interesting facts to be learned about the Vietnam war and who truthfully played the greater roles in creating/fighting this conflict. Being one who grew up during this time period, I was startled to find myself surprised about certain previously unknown - to myself - facts regarding the discord within Vietnam.Please do read this story to become both more educated and personally moved.

When reading Graham Greene’s novel, he states without saying, "A good American is a dead American." This novel was assigned for 20th Century American history class in college. I have never read a Graham Greene novel. But I was pleasantly surprised by it, it’s about an American idealist, Alden Pyle, who goes to Vietnam in the 1950s on a government mission from the United States more like a spy to learn what the French Armies have on the Communist guerrillas. In hindsight, the story occurs during the Communism and McCarthyism era. This book is written by a well-known British Catholic author.He writes about Alden Pyle’s murder and his life there in Vietnam. He meets a cynical British journalist Fowler and has an affair with Phuong, the Vietnamese mistress caught between them. The love triangle is never really explained like what the two men see in Phuong. I analyze this book as the American; the Briton; and a Vietnamese caught in a power struggle. The American and Briton males in this novel come across as arrogant and misogynistic towards Phuong. In many ways, Phuong represents Vietnam and is the prize in the battle between the old regime of the British Empire and the new superpower of the United States.When I first read this book, I had no inclination about it. I never thought to take this book seriously but I do. I see the

love triangle as a way to represent the countries and who has the power over Vietnam. Sadly, Phuong is not as simple minded or innocent. She is rather mysterious, manipulative, and intelligent. If Phuong represents Vietnam, the country is a lot smarter than their colonial powers like the United States and England. Phuong represents Vietnam as a woman who doesn't necessarily need to be saved like a damsel in distress. I'm sure people will disagree but to each his own.

Leaving aside your feelings about the Viet Nam conflict, Greene is a truly great writer, who can describe a scene or situation in the fewest of words but with extraordinary effect. I read this because Nguyen, author of The Sympathizer, was reportedly much influenced by it. Greene's book is much better written (but to be fair at the point of writing The Quiet American, Greene was a more experienced novelist than Nguyen is now), and has more layers of moral ambiguities. But I'm still thinking about these books, and will for a long time.

Graham Greene was an exceptional writer. We chose this small book for our book club selection, and it was highly praised! It's a good look at Viet Nam (French Indochina) before the Americans sent in troops. It was also interesting to view the two movies, one from the 50's and the other more recent, to see the different interpretations on the same story.

One one level, a truly amazing novel on love, betrayal and doubt. Graham Greene was my favourite writer when I was much younger, and I recently read The Quiet American for the third time. This time I more fully appreciated also the political insights of Greene, often referred to as a writer with an almost uncanny ability to visit and then describe a world of politics and revolutions at the right time.He was a flawed and ambivalent Catholic, and his battles with faith and doubt became the blood that lifted his novels to excellence. Give him a try.

This story is set in Vietnam during the early 50's when the Vietnamese communists and several independent national forces were fighting to oust their French colonial masters. A jaded and self-proclaimed neutral British journalist loses his Vietnamese mistress to a young idealistic American who is there supposedly to help with economic development but soon, we learn, has other clandestine objectives. The two men, rivals for the young woman, are caught in an attack on a rural watchtower where their values are revealed. The physical and political atmosphere is vividly portrayed and the observations about exporting democracy are as relevant today as they were then. This is a classic and a great read.

This is not what I expected from this author. I read the book unhappily and then read the Intro which I had previously just scanned. It was then I think I began to understand the book. You ask about the characters. They are just symbols of Greene's political position.It would be hard for me to recommend it unless the person to whom I was speaking was knowledgeable. It was a tough read.I, however, admire the author.

The Quiet American describes the post World War II Vietnam where the French domination was in shambles and espionage among various western powers was murky indeed.Greene captures the period and place with vivid details and with a sense of danger that permeates all. The title character is a young American of unspoken purposes, while the narrator is an aging Brit newspaperman whose star is waning. Both love the same young woman who has been the elder man's mistress until the young American comes along. Many are the contrasts and contradictions: between youth and age, experience and inexperience, warring politics and peoples. These are pre-feminist times where women are both powerful in relationships and victims of changing fortunes and men.As with my other Greene novels, I will relish many rereads to come.

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