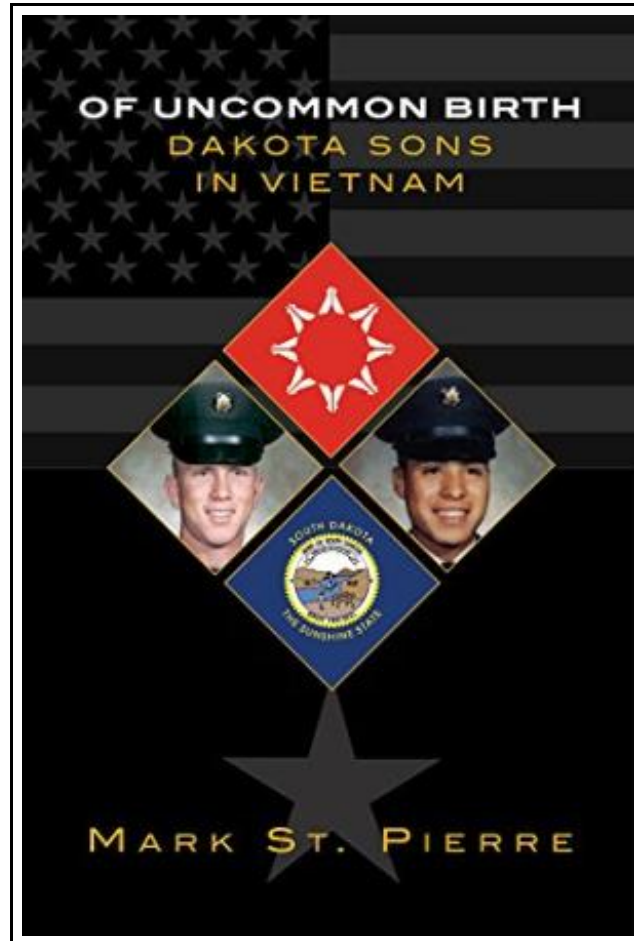


Of Uncommon Birth: Dakota Sons In Vietnam.



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Reviews

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OF UNCOMMON BIRTH: DAKOTA SONS IN VIETNAM.



University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2003. Hardcover. Book Condition: New. 320 pages. Hardcover with dustjacket. New book. MILITARY HISTORY. A work of creative nonfiction inspired by the true story of two South Dakota teenagers, Mark St. Pierre's *Of Uncommon Birth* draws upon extensive interviews and exhaustive research in military archives to present a harrowing story of two young men—None white, one Indian—caught in the vortex of the Vietnam War. Dale, a young middle-class white American from South Dakota, joins the army during the Vietnam War and dreams of serving his country. Frank, a young Lakota Indian, joins the army both in an effort to flee the seemingly inescapable circumstances of his life and to follow his people's warrior tradition. In *Of Uncommon Birth*, Mark St. Pierre intimately weaves together the lives of these two young men from very different worlds. Each in his own way struggles with issues of loyalty, responsibility, sacrifice, and personal identity through his experiences in Vietnam. *Of Uncommon Birth* presents the ironic story of what it means for an American Indian soldier in Vietnam to let himself become stereotyped as the Native "good luck charm" for his unit as a way to find acceptance, approval, and identity within the majority culture, even if the Brave and Loyal Indian Scout stereotype carries with it the smell of death. Mark St. Pierre has lived among the Lakota people since 1971, both as an educator and as an encourager of American Indian art. His involvement has given him a special sensitivity to the more subtle aspects of acculturation and continuity in Lakota identity. He is Adjunct Professor of Sociology, Anthropology, and Creative Writing in Colorado Mountain College, Steamboat Springs. "A moving and powerful novel of the Vietnam War, and especially of its effect on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation...."



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