

5 US Wars Rarely Found in History Books

History is full of forgotten conflicts that are commonly overlooked in U.S. history.

You've heard of the Vietnam War, but what about the "secret war" in Laos? Over 16 million members of the Greatest Generation fought in World War II, but what about the 5.8 million Americans who served in the "Forgotten War?" History is full of conflicts that have become footnotes in American history books—if they make it in at all. Here are five secret or forgotten wars that are commonly overlooked.

1. Philippine-American War

During the Spanish-American War, rebels in the Philippines proclaimed their independence after 300 years of Spanish rule... only to have their hopes for a free nation written off with a few pen strokes when the Treaty of Paris was signed in 1898, handing the Philippines to the United States. Rebel leader Emilio Aguinaldo—who had convened a revolutionary assembly that drew up the first democratic constitution in Asia—launched a revolt.

The United States responded by sending in troops and by war's end, over 4,000 American soldiers had died, ten times the number of Americans killed in the Spanish-American War. Losses among locals were worse: 20,000 Filipino insurgents and an unknown number of civilians lost their lives in the fight for independence.