

The My Lai Massacre

What happened at My Lai? What motivated American military actions in My Lai? Why is My Lai important?

Background: On March 16, 1968, the soldiers of Charlie Company entered My Lai, within Son May village, prepared for a fierce fight with Vietnamese communists believed to be in the area. The platoon had already suffered heavy casualties from previous missions. However, reports had been wrong; there were no enemy soldiers. Without any return enemy fire, Captain Ernest Medina, Lieutenant William Calley, and other members of Charlie Company, shot and killed nearly every man, woman, and child in the village. The official U.S. count for those murdered is 347, while the My Lai site memorial notes 504 killed. Seymour Hersh, an independent journalist, reported the cover up on November 11, 1969. By then, the military had charged Lt. Calley with murder and ordered an official investigation, which produced the Peers Commission Report. Calley's trial opened a heated national debate about the morality of war, soldier conduct, and U.S. objections in Vietnam.

Source - Citation (Title, author, date, audience)	How is this source related to the My Lai massacre? What is this source's perspective about the My Lai massacre?	What information from this source is most important? How does it help you understand what happened at My Lai?
Army photographer Ron Haeberle's Photo Galley, March 1968 (used in Peers investigation)		
Lt. William Calley Military Court-Martial Transcript, 1970		

<p>Lewis Puller Autobiography <i>Fortunate Son</i> (1991)</p>		
<p>Nguyen Hieu Testimony Peers Commission, 1970</p>		
<p>Peers Commission Report "Summary Findings" 1970</p>		