



## Con Thien: The Hill of Angels

*James P. Coan*

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**Con Thien: The Hill of Angels** James P. Coan

**A memoir/history of a much-beleaguered Marine outpost of the DMZ.**

Throughout much of 1967, a remote United States Marine firebase only two miles from the demilitarized zone (DMZ) captured the attention of the world's media. That artillery-scarred outpost was the linchpin of the so-called McNamara Line intended to deter incursions into South Vietnam by the North Vietnamese Army. As such, the fighting along this territory was particularly intense and bloody, and the body count rose daily.

*Con Thien* combines James P. Coan's personal experiences with information taken from archives, interviews with battle participants, and official documents to construct a powerful story of the daily life and combat on the red clay bulls-eye known as "The Hill of Angels." As a tank platoon leader in Alpha Company, 3d Tank Battalion, 3d Marine Division, Coan was stationed at Con Thien for eight months during his 1967-68 service in Vietnam and witnessed much of the carnage.

Con Thien was heavily bombarded by enemy artillery with impunity because it was located in politically sensitive territory and the U.S. government would not permit direct armed response from Marine tanks. Coan, like many other soldiers, began to feel as though the government was as much the enemy as the NVA, yet he continued to fight for his country with all that he had. In his

riveting memoir, Coan depicts the hardships of life in the DMZ and the ineffectiveness of much of the U.S. military effort in Vietnam.

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