

T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection

ABSTRACT

INTERVIEWEE NAME: Philip X. Brady

COLLECTION: 4700.0939

IDENTIFICATION: Vietnam veteran

INTERVIEWER: Richard W. Koffman

SERIES: Americans in Southeast Asia

INTERVIEW DATE: 2/5/74

FOCUS DATES: August, 1965 - June, 1969; May, 1967-Feb, 1968

ABSTRACT:

Tape 1370

Enlisting in Navy to get off the streets; learned riverboat navigation during training; training in communist ideology; basic training; using compasses during survival training; beating soldiers in simulated POW camp; psyching soldiers into wanting to kill Viet Cong; working riverboat duty; firing on wrong villages, killing civilians then denying it; Cambodian border; shooting and being shot at made him feel like he was accomplishing something; sneaky attacks of the Viet Cong; Tet Offensive; very gung ho, wanted to stay there; fighting between black and white soldiers; putting loaded guns to Vietnamese girls' heads just to scare them; soldiers bathing naked in front of the villagers; "a gook was a gook"; passing out drunk while on duty; lack of discipline; Viet Cong indistinguishable from South Vietnamese; Navy Seals; Navy torturing prisoners; Green Berets as professional soldiers who didn't want war to end; feeling of power with shooting guns; getting a hero's welcome when returning to US in 1968; being proud while at war, then bothered when he came home and read about what he was fighting for; US picked the wrong strategy; getting rides with strangers in helicopters; stealing beer from the Army; drank a lot but few drugs; friends who would have been better off being shot in Vietnam than coming home crazy and strung out; might have done more drugs in Vietnam if he'd been more aware of their effects; types of boats used; working five-man crews; transporting Army on their ships; fondness for the 30 caliber machine gun; most of unit was high school drop outs who shot at water buffalo and houses for kicks; living on barracks ships; running into sampans and fish traps at night; Chinese rocket hitting the Tan Son Nhut airport; mouse biting soldier; had a Vietnamese girlfriend; kids getting blown up by stepping on mines; VC cutting off hands of orphaned children.

TAPES: 1 (T1370)

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 35 minutes

PAGES TRANSCRIPT: 19 pages

RESTRICTIONS: None