

Combat novel calls it without fancy messages

"F.N.G." by Donald Bodey. 272 pages. Viking Penguin. \$15.95.

Reviewed by Mike Mooney

Stripes Korea Bureau Chief

Everyone was one when he first got to Vietnam. An "effengee" is what the grunts called you. And you remained that until you picked up your own handle or at least got bloodied.

In his new novel "F.N.G.," Vietnam veteran Donald Bodey captures the fears and apprehensions of every infantryman, either Army or Marine, who boarded a troop transport in the United States, stopped in the heat of Okinawa and then continued on an all-expense paid, one-year vacation to exotic Southeast Asia — compliments of Uncle Sam.

There are no great messages in Bodey's book "F.N.G." — the meaning of which you'll have to figure out for yourself.

But if you like adventure, a true picture of combat and the chance to look into the combat veteran's mind, "F.N.G." is your kind of book.

THE STORY CENTERS around Gabriel Sauers, a housepainter turned into a soldier who finds himself leaving the "World" for the Pearl of the Orient.

Like thousands of others, he's confused and apprehensive.

Bodey talks with stark frankness about the life of the infantryman.

Through Sauers' eyes, you feel the chill of the monsoon rains, the

frustrations of being a small part of a gigantic puzzle and the sickness at the pit of your stomach when a buddy gets greased.

The characters in "F.N.G." are real, and have real bush names: Pops, the 24-year-old squad leader; Peacock, who got drunk on R&R to Hong Kong and awoke with a big bird tattoo on his chest; Callmeblack, a fellow effengee who becomes a trusted friend and comrade; Prophet, who can smell and feel when something isn't right; and A.S.S., Albert Steven Saxon, another effengee who buys the farm the first night in the boonies.

THE ACTION in "F.N.G." is never exaggerated. Nor is the boredom faced by the infantryman — constantly wet, constantly dirty and constantly wondering whether the monsoon rains are ever going to stop.

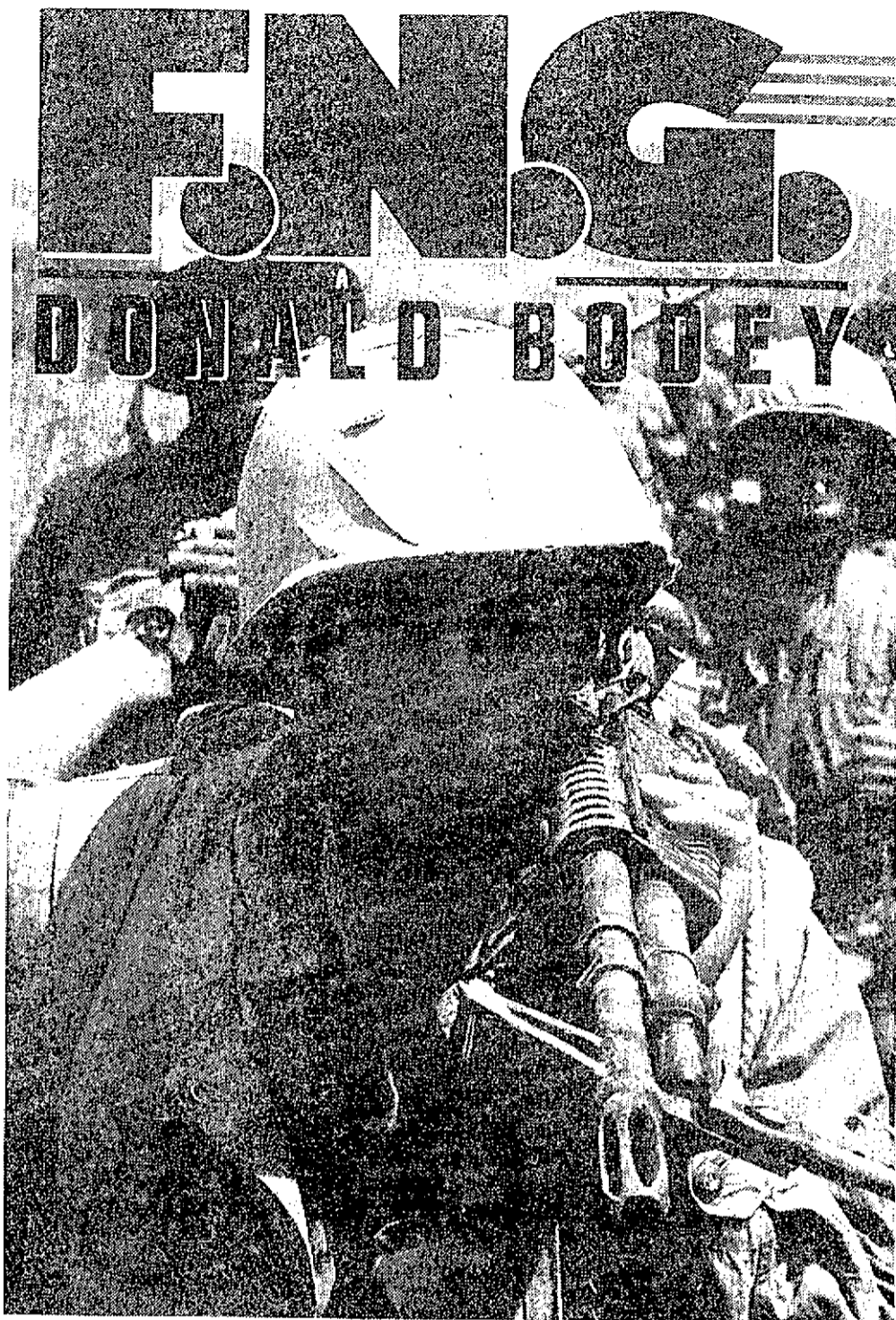
You sit in a mud bunker with Gabe and feel the cold water dripping down the back of your neck. You dig yourself deeper in the bunker as the rain pours harder and you experience the feeling of helplessness when the cry "incoming" echoes throughout the LZ.

"F.N.G." doesn't get into the political aspects of the war. The concerns are more real . . . more true to life.

Like the young, gung-ho second john who orders the squad to carry the pieces of four dead Viet Cong to a hot LZ.

Or the decision of "Higher, higher" to move the tired and dirty

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Best sellers

The following is compiled by The New York Times.

Fiction

- ★ **A PERFECT SPY**, by John Le Carré. (Knopf, \$18.95.) The tale of Magnus Pym, a British secret agent, and his father, Rick, a flamboyant con man.
- ★ **I'LL TAKE MANHATTAN**, by Judith Krantz. (Crown \$18.95.) Rich and beautiful Maxi Amberville conquers the world of magazine publishing.
- ★ **THE BOURNE SUPREMACY**, by Robert Ludlum. (Random House, \$19.95.) The hero of "The Bourne Identity" foils a plot to seize Hong Kong.
- ★ **LAST OF THE BREED**, by Louis L'Amour. (Bantam, \$17.95.) An American test pilot stranded in Siberia.
- ★ **THE GARDEN OF EDEN**, by Ernest Hemingway. (Scribners, \$18.95.) A writer and his wife have affairs with the same woman on their honeymoon.
- ★ **THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT**, by Lawrence Sanders. (Putnam, \$18.95.) The theft of a priceless coin brings a New York dynasty's scandals to light.
- ★ **LAKE WOBEGON DAYS**, by Garrison Keillor. (Viking, \$17.95.) Recollections of a small American town.
- ★ **TAMING A SEA HORSE**, by Robert B. Parker. (Seymour Lawrence-Delacorte, \$15.95.) The private eye Spencer tracks a young woman through the seamy side of the world of lycoons.
- ★ **THE MAMMOTH HUNTERS**, by Jean M. Auel. (Crown, \$19.95.) Ayla continues her adventures in the prehistoric world.
- ★ **THE GOOD MOTHER**, by Sue Miller. (Harper & Row, \$17.95.) A woman's attachment to her daughter becomes a consuming passion.
- ★ **NOBODY LIVES FOREVER**, by John Gardner. (Putnam, \$12.95.) James Bond on the trail of the kidnapper of his devoted housekeeper.
- ★ **LIE DOWN WITH LIONS**, by Ken Follett. (Morrow, \$18.95.) An English woman caught between the CIA and the KGB, romance and loyalty, in Afghanistan.
- ★ **BREAK IN**, by Dick Francis. (Putnam, \$17.95.) Mystery, melodrama and bitter family rivalry in the world of British steeplechase racing.
- ★ **THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM**, by Marek Halter. (Holt, \$19.95.) One hundred generations in the history of a Jewish family.
- ★ **HIGH HEARTS**, by Rita Mae Brown. (Bantam, \$17.95.) The experiences of a Virginia belle who joins the Confederate cavalry.

Non-fiction, general

- ★ **FATHERHOOD**, by Bill Cosby. (Dolphin-Double-day, \$14.95.) Anecdotes and ruminations from the

television star and father of five.

- ★ **YOU'RE ONLY OLD ONCE!** by Dr. Souss. (Random House, \$9.95.) A checkup at the Golden Years Clinic, in pictures and rhyme.
- ★ **THE TRIUMPH OF POLITICS**, by David A. Stockman. (Harper & Row, \$21.95.) Why President Reagan was unable to balance the budget.
- ★ **JAMES HERRIOT'S DOG STORIES**, by James Herriot. (St Martin's, \$19.95.) Fifty tales by a Yorkshire veterinarian about his favorite animal.
- ★ **ENTER TALKING**, by Joan Rivers with Richard Meryman. (Delacorte, \$17.95.) The talk-show hostess' long professional climb.
- ★ **WHEN ALL YOU'VE EVER WANTED ISN'T ENOUGH**, by Harold S. Kushner. (Summit, \$16.95.) The search for a life that matters; counsel from a rabbi.
- ★ **BUS 9 TO PARADISE**, by Leo Buscaglia. (Slack-Morrow, \$16.95.) Another trip with the ebullient advocate of the virtues of love.
- ★ **NECESSARY LOSSES**, by Judith Viorst. (Simon & Schuster, \$17.95.) Life is a series of losses, the author argues, and we must confront them in order to grow.
- ★ **YEAGER: An Autobiography**, by Chuck Yeager and Leo Janos. (Bantam, \$17.95.) The story of the first man to fly faster than sound.
- ★ **IACocca: An Autobiography**, by Lee Iacocca with William Novak. (Bantam, \$19.95.) The rise of an immigrant's son to top jobs at Ford and Chrysler.
- ★ **THE MAN WHO MISTOOK HIS WIFE FOR A HAT**, by Oliver Sacks. (Summit, \$15.95.) The loss of the faculty of recognition and other strange neurological disabilities.
- ★ **ALL GOD'S CHILDREN NEED TRAVELING SHOES**, by Maya Angelou. (Random House, \$15.95.) A writer's memoir carries the story from her native Arkansas to her ancestral Ghana.
- ★ **A LIGHT IN THE ATTIC**, by Shel Silverstein. (Harper & Row, \$13.50.) Light verse, with drawings by the author.
- ★ **BESS W. TRUMAN**, by Margaret Truman. (Macmillan, \$19.95.) Her daughter shows that the former first lady was intelligent and caring as well as private and austere.
- ★ **"AND SO IT GOES,"** by Linda Ellerbee. (Putnam, \$16.95.) Television journalism as experienced by an NBC correspondent.

Advice, how-to and miscellaneous

- ★ **FIT FOR LIFE**, by Harvey Diamond and Marilyn Diamond. (Warner, \$17.50.) A diet for weight loss and physical fitness.
- ★ **THE ROTATION DIET**, by Martin Katahn. (Norton, \$15.95.) A three-week program that varies daily caloric intake, based on the Vanderbilt University Weight

Management Program.

- ★ **CALLANETICS**, by Callan Pinckney with Sallie Batson. (Morrow, \$17.95.) Exercises to enable women to look "10 years younger in 10 hours."
- ★ **WEBSTER'S NINTH NEW COLLEGIATE DICTIONARY**. (Merriam-Webster, \$14.95.) A standard reference work updated in 1983.
- ★ **THE BE (HAPPY) ATTITUDES**, by Robert Schuller. (Word, \$12.95.) Inspiration from a California clergyman.

Paperbacks

Fiction

- ★ **SKELETON CREW**, by Stephen King. (Signet-NAL, \$4.95.) Twenty-two tales of horror set in contemporary America.
- ★ **THE TWO MRS. GRENVILLES**, by Dominick Dunne. (Bantam, \$4.50.) Romance, scandal and murder in New York's high society.
- ★ **JUBAL SACKETT**, by Louis L'Amour. (Bantam, \$3.95.) A 17-century frontiersman woos an Indian princess.
- ★ **TOO MUCH TOO SOON**, by Jacqueline Briskin. (Berkley, \$4.50.) Three sisters are bound by an obsession with the same man.
- ★ **TEXAS HEAT**, by Fern Michaels. (Ballantine, \$4.95.) The Coleman clan of "Texas Rich" faces further complications.
- ★ **WHEN LOVE AWAITS**, by Johanna Lindsey. (Avon, \$3.95.) Lady Leonie, mistress of Pershwick, is pledged to the dreaded Rolfe of Crewel.
- ★ **A CATSKILL EAGLE**, by Robert B. Parker. (Dell, \$3.95.) The private eye Spencer joins hands with federal agents to bring down a powerful scoundrel.
- ★ **FOOTBALL**, by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle. (Del Rey-Ballantine, \$4.95.) Hostile visitors from another star descend on Kansas.
- ★ **SHANGHAI**, by Christopher New. (Bantam, \$4.50.) An Englishman finds love, wealth and danger during five decades in China.
- ★ **HOLD THE DREAM**, by Barbara Taylor Bradford. (Bantam, \$4.50.) Greed and passion imperil the empire created by "A Woman of Substance."
- ★ **THE COLOR PURPLE**, by Alice Walker. (Pocket, \$3.95.) The life and loves of a black woman as told through her letters.
- ★ **THE CLAN OF THE CAVE BEAR**, by Jean M. Auel. (Bantam, \$4.95.) The adventures of a woman at the dawn of the human race.
- ★ **FAMILY ALBUM**, by Danielle Steel. (Dell, \$4.50.) The Thayers, a couple with five children, cope with the crises of contemporary America.

- ★ **QUEENIE**, by Michael Korda. (Warner, \$4.95.) The life of a woman not unlike Morde Oberon.
- ★ **THE VALLEY OF HORSES**, by Jean M. Auel. (Bantam, \$4.95.) Continuing the saga story begun in "The Clan of the Cave Bear."

Non-fiction, general

- ★ **COPS**, by Mark Baker. (Pocket, \$4.50.) More than 100 policemen and policewomen tell of their professional and private lives.
- ★ **THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED**, by M. Scott Peck. (Touchstone-S&S, \$8.95.) Psychological and spiritual inspiration by a psychiatrist.
- ★ **OUT OF AFRICA AND SHADOWS ON THE GRASS**, by Isak Dinesen. (Vintage-Random House, \$4.95.) Two memoirs of colonial Kenya.
- ★ **SMART WOMEN, FOOLISH CHOICES**, by Connell Cowan and Melvin Kinder. (Signet-NAL, \$4.50.) Modern women's efforts to find good men.
- ★ **LOVING EACH OTHER**, by Leo F. Buscaglia. (Fawcett, \$7.95.) Suggestions for "settling our priorities right in order to enjoy life to the fullest."
- ★ **MY MOTHER'S KEEPER**, by B.D. Hyman. (Berkley, \$4.50.) Bette Davis seen by her daughter.
- ★ **CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL**, by Peggy Anderson. (Bantam, \$4.50.) An inside view of a leading pediatric hospital.
- ★ **THE SPECIALIST**, by Gayle Rivers. (Charter, \$3.95.) The memoirs of a man who kills terrorists.

Advice, how-to and miscellaneous

- ★ **WOMEN WHO LOVE TOO MUCH**, by Robin Norwood. (Pocket, \$4.50.) How to avoid or end addictive, unhealthy relationships with men.
- ★ **RAND McNALLY ROAD ATLAS: United States, Canada, Mexico**. (Rand McNally, \$5.95.) For 1986.
- ★ **WHAT COLOR IS YOUR PARACHUTE?** by Richard Nelson Bolles. (Ten Speed Press, \$8.95.) Job and career advice: 1986 edition.
- ★ **ADULT CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS**, by Janet Geringer Woititz. (Health Communications, \$6.95.) Help for victims of others' compulsive behavior.
- ★ **GARFIELD IN PARADISE**, by Jim Davis. (Ballantine, \$5.95.) The latest adventures of the cat.
- ★ **SMART COOKIES DON'T CRUMBLE**, by Sonya Friedman. (Pocket, \$3.95.) A psychiatrist counsels women about taking charge of their own lives.
- ★ **GARFIELD OUT TO LUNCH**, by Jim Davis. (Ballantine, \$5.95.) The cartoon cat's 12th book.

★ — On sale in most Stripes Bookstores.
☆ — On order — not yet received.