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# The Things They Carried



*Par Tim O'Brien*  
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**Par Tim O'Brien : The Things They Carried** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Things They Carried:

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**Description :** Description du produitOne of the first questions people ask about The Things They Carried is this: Is it a novel, or a collection of short stories? The title page refers to the book simply as "a work of fiction," defying the conscientious reader's need to categorize this masterpiece. It is both: a collection of interrelated short pieces which ultimately reads with the dramatic force and tension of a novel. Yet each one of the twenty-two short pieces is written with such care, emotional content, and prosaic precision that it could stand on its own.The Things They Carried depicts the men of Alpha Company: Jimmy Cross, Henry Dobbins, Rat Kiley, Mitchell Sanders, Norman Bowker, Kiowa, and of course, the character Tim O'Brien who has survived his tour in Vietnam to become a father and writer at the age of forty-three. They battle the enemy (or maybe more the idea of the enemy), and occasionally each other. In their relationships we see their isolation and loneliness, their rage and fear. They miss their families, their girlfriends and buddies; they

miss the lives they left back home. Yet they find sympathy and kindness for strangers (the old man who leads them unscathed through the mine field, the girl who grieves while she dances), and love for each other, because in Vietnam they are the only family they have. We hear the voices of the men and build images upon their dialogue. The way they tell stories about others, we hear them telling stories about themselves. With the creative verve of the greatest fiction and the intimacy of a searing autobiography, *The Things They Carried* is a testament to the men who risked their lives in America's most controversial war. It is also a mirror held up to the frailty of humanity. Ultimately *The Things They Carried* and its myriad protagonists call to order the courage, determination, and luck we all need to survive.

*Presentation de l'auteur* The million-copy bestseller, which is a ground-breaking meditation on war, memory, imagination, and the redemptive power of storytelling. *The Things They Carried* is, on its surface, a sequence of award-winning stories about the madness of the Vietnam War; at the same time it has the cumulative power and unity of a novel, with recurring characters and interwoven strands of plot and theme. But while Vietnam is central to *The Things They Carried*, it is not simply a book about war. It is also a book about the human heart about the terrible weight of those things we carry through our lives. .com "They carried all the emotional baggage of men who might die. Grief, terror, love, longing--these were intangibles, but the intangibles had their own mass and specific gravity, they had tangible weight. They carried shameful memories. They carried the common secret of cowardice.... Men killed, and died, because they were embarrassed not to." A finalist for both the 1990 Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award, *The Things They Carried* marks a subtle but definitive line of demarcation between Tim O'Brien's earlier works about Vietnam, the memoir *If I Die in a Combat Zone* and the fictional *Going After Cacciato*, and this sly, almost hallucinatory book that is neither memoir nor novel nor collection of short stories but rather an artful combination of all three. Vietnam is still O'Brien's theme, but in this book he seems less interested in the war itself than in the myriad different perspectives from which he depicts it. Whereas *Going After Cacciato* played with reality, *The Things They Carried* plays with truth. The narrator of most of these stories is "Tim"; yet O'Brien freely admits that many of the events he chronicles in this collection never really happened. He never killed a man as "Tim" does in "The Man I Killed," and unlike Tim in "Ambush," he has no daughter named Kathleen. But just because a thing never happened doesn't make it any less true. In "On the Rainy River," the character Tim O'Brien responds to his draft notice by driving north, to the Canadian border where he spends six days in a deserted lodge in the company of an old man named Elroy while he wrestles with the choice between dodging the draft or going to war. The real Tim O'Brien never drove north, never found himself in a fishing boat 20 yards off the Canadian shore with a decision to make. The real Tim O'Brien quietly boarded the bus to Sioux Falls and was inducted into the United States Army. But the truth of "On the Rainy River" lies not in facts but in the genuineness of the experience it depicts: both Tims went to a war they didn't believe in; both considered themselves cowards for doing so. Every story in *The Things They Carried* speaks another truth that Tim O'Brien learned in Vietnam; it is this blurred line between truth and reality, fact and fiction, that makes his book unforgettable. --Alix Wilber From Publishers Weekly Weapons and good-luck charms carried by U.S. soldiers in Vietnam here represent survival, lost innocence and the war's interminable legacy. "O'Brien's meditations--on war and memory, on darkness and light--suffuse the entire work with a kind of poetic form, making for a highly original, fully realized novel," said PW. 60,000 first printing. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc.