

Voice of the people

SIU and Vietnam studies

CARBONDALE, Ill.—The recent article by Michael Arndt, "America comes to terms with Vietnam War—in classroom" was interesting and well done. Strangely, however, it omitted Southern Illinois University from the list of Illinois institutions where one might expect to find courses with Vietnam content in the curriculum. I say "strangely" because SIU is the only Illinois university, and one of the exceptionally few universities in the country, with a commitment to Vietnamese studies of any kind.

My own contribution is a course, "Government and politics of Vietnam," that I will offer in the spring semester. Unlike the courses Mr. Arndt surveyed, mine deals primarily with Vietnamese politics, not American politics concerning Vietnam, but it does have a significant "Vietnam War" component, as it is my apparently

unfashionable contention that the Vietnam War took place in Vietnam.

In addition, SIU offers comprehensive instruction in the Vietnamese language on a regular basis, under the direction of the distinguished linguist, Prof. Nguyen Dinh Hoa. The university's library contains more than 3,000 books and periodicals in the Vietnamese language—the third-largest such collection in any American university library—and receives almost all Vietnamese daily and weekly newspapers currently published in Vietnam. These are surely more significant resources than Mr. Arndt found in canvassing other Midwestern universities, and it is surprising that he overlooked them.

William S. Turley

Associate professor