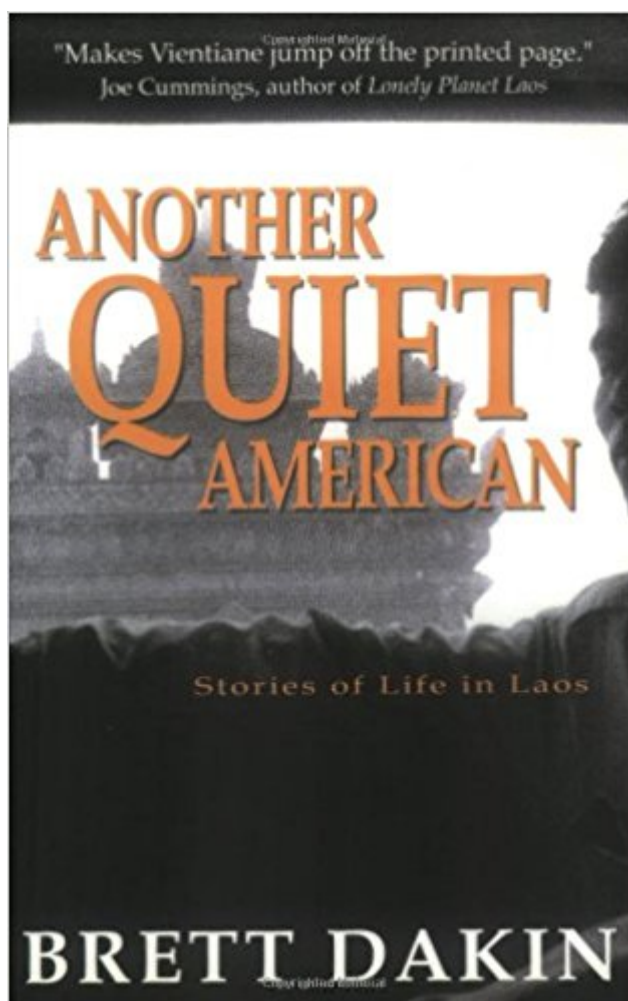


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# Another Quiet American: Stories Of Life In Laos



## Synopsis

Brett Dakin spent two years working in Laos and returned to the States a changed man. In *Another Quiet American*, he takes you through the corridors of power and the living rooms of the poor in Laos. You'll meet his boss, a wealthy general whose power and reputation scares his countrymen; a prince with connections to the French colonial past; an American pilot who left home for Indochina during the war and never returned; and, rich Lao twenty-somethings who have all the money they could want, but no happiness. Dakin provides a sympathetic yet irreverent glimpse into life in one of the world's few remaining communist nations, questioning the US's influence on the country and embarking on the soul-searching identity quest of an American abroad.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"A delightful insight into one of the forgotten nations of Southeast Asia." -- Metro magazine  
"A fascinating account, full of sharp insights about a country at a turning point in its history." -- Bangkok Post  
"A must for anyone looking to understand Laos today." -- Jeff Cranmer, author of *Rough Guide Laos*  
"A thought provoking book... Dakin writes with a maturity well beyond his years... An excellent book..." -- Lang Reid, Pattaya Mail  
"An excellent contribution to a better understanding of life in Asia." -- Far Eastern Economic Review  
"An intimate and honest look at the genteel chaos of a country that is deeply troubled but also highly inspiring." -- Amit Gilboa, author of *Off The Rails In Phnom Penh*  
"Honest, well written, entertaining and informative." -- South China Morning Post  
"No other personal account of contemporary Laos is as informative, under-the-surface and well written." -- Joe Cummings, author of *Lonely Planet Laos*  
"Probably the best introduction available on modern

Vientiane." -- Farang Magazine

Brett Dakin grew up in London and has lived in Washington, Tokyo, Vientiane, Vienna, Sarajevo, The Hague, and New York City. His writing has appeared in Foreign Affairs, the International Herald Tribune, The Washington Post, The Christian Science Monitor, The Guardian, the Washington Monthly, and The Diplomat. Brett has served as Chair of Legacies of War, a NGO dedicated to raising awareness about the Vietnam War-era bombing of Laos, a Term Member of the Council on Foreign Relations, and a member of the PEN American Center. He is a graduate of Princeton University and Harvard Law School.[facebook.com/BrettDakin.Author](https://facebook.com/BrettDakin.Author)

The story is about the authors first job after graduation working for the Laos tourism bureau so the story is told from that perspective. Good, updated prologue and the rest of the story focuses on individual author encounters and experiences. Focuses heavily on Vientiane and would have liked some more info on Luang Prabang, Plain of Jars, etc. If the author traveled to these areas during his employment it would have been nice to know about these areas. The Kindle version is kind of butchered - no table of contents linkage and font sometimes different sizes.

Brett Dakin's book is to Vientiane, Laos what Peter Hessler's book "Rivertown" was to Fuling, China. In my opinion, they are both classics. Another Quiet American is a wonderful read that I didn't want to end. Dakin's story telling, observations and wit made this a most enjoyable read. My only criticism is that Dakin hasn't written another book.

An entirely accurate portrayal of the Falang life in Laos. The joy the people are to live and work with, combined with the craziness of the 'system' of government. The world has changed a little since then as the world encroaches on the Lao people, but the base of the story still rings true. I guess I can't fault an autobiographical account for being self-centred, but it is relatively shallow in it's account of why things are the way they are, but this matches the Lao way of shrugging and going on with things. The writing is engaging and the story is worth telling. I recommend it.

This book is a pretty good read and shares the author's experiences about his time in Laos. His descriptions concerning the life and culture of Laos in modern times are refreshing. The communist society has many shortcomings and the author shares them while taking them in stride with daily life in Laos. Most of his experiences was within one city (Vientiane) but it is well written and from a fair

perspective. Definitely worth reading if you either want to visit Laos or perhaps served there prior to 1975. The comparison is entertaining. The author seems to take the government intrusions without much problem. Perhaps because he knew he could return to the USA after his employment was done. The author is highly respectful of the Lao people and that shows in his writing.

This is *the* book to read before travel to Laos or for anyone with a love of southeast Asia and a curiosity about where Laos is headed. The description of life in Vientiane as an expat in the late 90s is beautifully scripted and contains insight still relevant to any further study of Laos and its history or simply pre-travel prep. The author's personal accounts capture a rare window of transformation in Laos which leaves the reader wanting to relive his carefree days as a college graduate exploring the world. Anyone who studied or taught English abroad will relate to his excellent descriptions of life as an outsider and the amazing sensation of discovering a love for another culture. Dakin's genuine interest in the welfare of Laos becomes apparent in his updated introduction which focuses on his continued involvement in banning cluster bombs and raising awareness of unexploded ordnance in Laos.

I was impressed throughout by Brett Dakin's thoughtful and insightful account of his two years in Laos. At every turn, I felt he looked beneath the surface and brought out a view enhanced by genuine empathy with the Lao people while maintaining his identity as a young, well-educated Westerner. Indeed, I had the feeling that he didn't need to make any special effort to look beneath the surface; it seemed to come naturally to him. This balanced view made the stories Mr. Dakin told of his experiences in Laos far more valuable to the reader. And when, after the fact, I pondered yet again how young he was when he lived in Laos, I was even more impressed by the wisdom and grace manifested throughout his account of his stay in the country.

A very interesting and well thought out book about the author's two years living in Laos. His description of the people he meets are sensitive, and the characters come across as being full of life. A sad book in a way as the story of Laos, as it unfolds, is sad.

I was lucky enough to read this book when I visited Laos. It was a fascinating read. The author, there as a student volunteer, interacted with others at all different levels of life, from his dirt poor neighbours, to the richest man in the country, to the expats and he has something insightful to say about every level. It was slightly sad to read about the foreign aid "industry" and the long history of

Laotian dependence on outsiders. I highly recommend reading if you're going to be in the neighbourhood.

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