

Hugh Thompson, Jr.:

*Grass Roots Blogging across the political divide:
Honoring the passing of a man who helped maintain
the standards of what makes a HERO*

"His Survivors Span the Globe"

*A partial listing of more than
3000 Blog postings*



Hugh Thompson, Jr.
"Portrait of a Moral Man"

By Frederic A. Moritz

BLOG: WORLDLYMIND: Exploring on the roads less taken

XML

*"BLOG is short for weblog. A weblog is a journal (or newsletter)
that is frequently updated and intended for general public consumption."*

*Remembering Hugh Thompson, Jr., the man whose compassionate courage during
the My Lai massacre helped inspire this writer to research and publish on the web:*



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[Times-Picayune Obit \(portrait of a moral man\)](#)
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[ABC News: the Death of Hugh Thompson, Jr.](#)
[Remember My Lai: 1989 "Frontline" Documentary](#)
[CNN: 1998 Interview with Hugh Thompson](#)
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HUGH THOMPSON:
"During flying around we came across a ditch. It had bodies in it, a lot of them -- women, kids, old men. I remember a thought going through my mind, 'How did these people get in a ditch?' And I finally thought about the Nazis, I guess, and marching everybody down into a ditch and blowing 'em away. Here we are supposed to be the good guys in the white hats. It upset me."

-- A 1989 "Frontline"
PBS documentary,
[Remember My Lai.](#)

More than 3,000 blog entries
have been posted since the

January 6 passing of Hugh Thompson, Jr., the military helicopter pilot who landed his bird in the midst of the March 1968 "My Lai Massacre." He is credited with helping to stop the killing.

The blogs are from Left, Right, Center. They show a national grassroots outpouring over the death of little known 62 year old Thompson. The new blog technology allows a national ceremony of grief and admiration for a man rarely honored in the mainstream media.

The blogs celebrate in a new technology something philosophers and theologians, movies and novels have been honoring from ancient beginnings -- appreciation for those special individuals who answer the call of the moment to risk all -- to do what must be done -- whatever the cost.

Thompson ordered his gunners to shoot American soldiers if the killing of civilians continued. G.I.'s had ran "amuck" to kill more than 500 Vietnamese civilians in the hamlet known as "Pinkville" -- herding them into ditches, raping and shooting young women in what was later described as ["a Nazi kind of thing."](#)

Few, if any, shots had been

fired that morning at American forces. But the destruction at My Lai was carried out by stressed, poorly led soldiers who had suffered numerous sniper and booby trap attacks -- and viewed civilians in the village as part of the communist war effort.

Thompson's life moved on in [obscurity](#) while the anti-establishment whistle blowing journalist Seymour Hersh moved on to fame. Only in the 1990's did the story get fuller play when Thompson finally received military honors.

Thompson refused to condemn the Vietnam War, viewed My Lai as a largely isolated incident, and remained loyal to military culture.

A 1989 "Frontline" PBS documentary, [Remember My Lai](#) hosted by Judy Woodruff moved Thompson into the spotlight. A gripping on camera interview with the sometimes weeping ex soldier relived the moments when he moved into action. One result was lobbying to get official recognition for his deeds

How Hugh Thompson inspired this writer

Thompson's story touched many of us in different ways.

I taught a unit on media and My Lai at University of Rhode Island -- showing the "Frontline" documentary [Remember My Lai](#) to a class of 300 as part of a case study of how a scandal seeps into the mainstream press after military whistle blowers force an internal investigation. Freelancer Hersh had seized upon the story to create a national scandal which helped force the United States out of [Vietnam](#).

The interview with Thompson in the "Frontline" documentary helped inspire my research and writing for the website ["American Human Rights Reporting as a Global Watchdog."](#)

Here is a [Guardian account](#) of what happened:

Early in the morning of March 16, 1968, Thompson, door-gunner Lawrence Colburn and crew chief Glenn Andreotta came upon U.S. ground troops killing Vietnamese civilians in and around the village of My Lai.

They landed the helicopter in the line of fire between American troops and fleeing Vietnamese civilians and pointed their own guns at the U.S. soldiers to prevent more killings.

Colburn and Andreotta had provided cover for Thompson as he went forward to confront the leader of the U.S. forces. Thompson later coaxed civilians out of a bunker so they could be evacuated, and then landed his helicopter again to pick up a wounded child they transported to a hospital. Their efforts led to the cease-fire order at My Lai.

In 1998, the Army honored the three men with the prestigious Soldier's Medal, the highest award for bravery not involving conflict with an enemy. It was a posthumous award for Andreotta, who had been killed in battle three weeks after My Lai.

"It was the ability to do the right thing even at the risk of their personal safety that guided these soldiers to do what they did," Army Maj. Gen. Michael Ackerman said at the 1998 ceremony. The three "set the standard for all soldiers to follow."

Lt. William L. Calley, a platoon leader, was convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment for his role in the killings, but served just three years under house arrest when then-President Nixon reduced his sentence.

A HERO

- 1. In mythology and legend, a man, often of divine ancestry, who is endowed with great courage and strength, celebrated for his bold exploits, and favored by the gods.**
- 2. A person noted for feats of courage or nobility of purpose, especially one who has risked or sacrificed his or her life: soldiers and nurses who were heroes in an unpopular war.**
- 3. A person noted for special achievement in a particular field: the heroes of medicine. See Synonyms at celebrity.**
- 4. The principal male character in a novel, poem, or dramatic presentation.**



LATER YEARS: [still loyal to the military](#)

Hugh Thompson: partial listing of more than 3000 blog postings

[++ relapsed catholic ++ religion politics entertainment blog](#)

[A Perfectly Cromulent Blog: "When you have evil, sometimes, in the midst of it, ...](#)

[allthelivesofme: RIP](#)

[Argghhh! The Home Of Two Of Jonah's Military Guys..](#)

[Asean News Network: My Lai War Hero Hugh Thompson Dies](#)

[Barry Fockler: My Lai Hero Hugh Thompson Jr. Dies at 62](#)

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[Bill Baar's West Side: RIP Hugh Thompson](#)

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[CanadianPerspective](#)

[Culture of Life Breaking News: Hugh Thompson, Hero of My Lai, Died Today](#)

[Culture of Life News II: Hugh Thompson, Hero of My Lai, Died Today](#)

Cynical-C Blog Archives

Democrat From Kentucky: Hugh Thompson Jr. A Knight of Absolute Quality, Dead at ...

Dreams Into Lightning: Hugh Thompson

error_203: RIP Hugh Thompson Jr.

Far Outliers

Fiona McCann: Comrade pays tribute to US army helicopter pilot who intervened to...

Flimsy Sanity: My Lai Hero Hugh Thompson Dies Friday

Florida Cracker: Hugh Thompson, RIP

Flutterby! : Hugh Thompson Jr 2006-01-09 06:35:33.65141-08

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geek boi - uncensored: a trillion dollars of what?

Harry's Place: RIP Hugh Thompson

Have Coffee Will Write » HUGH THOMPSON, DEAD AT 62...

Hootsbuddy's Place: Hugh Thompson, My Lai whistleblower, R.I.P.

<http://battlepanda.blogspot.com/2006/01/saluting-american-hero.html>

<http://photos1.blogger.com/blogger/2348/242/320/verti...>

Hugh Thompson Jr

INDC Journal: RIP: Hugh Thompson

Innisfree: RIP Hugh Thompson, Jr.....

It's News to Me » Goodbye, Buck

itlookslkethis

Jack's "Straight-Speak": My Lai Hero Hugh Thompson Jr. Dies at 62

james_nicoll: Hugh Thompson, Junior (1943 - 2006)

Kiko's House: Hugh Thompson (1944-2006)

Lafayette Democrats: More on Hugh Thompson: "Skimming over the Vietnamese villag...

LeighmDotNet: An American Hero Passes - Hugh Thompson, Hero of the My Lai massac...

LeighPerson: Death of an American Hero

Leonard Stegmann: Useful Information: Hugh Thompson Jr.

Life and Deatherage:

Liquidtoast » Blog Archive » Hugh Thompson, 62

Lost Budgie Blog: God Bless Hugh Thompson - A Good Man at My Lai in 1968

Majikthise : Saluting Hugh Thompson, Jr.

Managing Complexity - Hugh Thompson, Jr.

Mano Singham's Web Journal: The courage to stand up for what is right

Mike the Mad Biologist: A Hero Falls: RIP Hugh Thompson, Jr.

Military Christians Worldwide

moquol - Journal - Hugh Thompson, Jr. has died.

Moon's Favours

[My Lai Hero Hugh Thompson Jr. Dies at 62](#)

[News Compass](#)

[No Blood for Hubris: Hero of My Lai Dies at 62](#)

[no great matter: rest in peace](#)

[Not in My America](#)

[Opiniatrety: RIP Hugh Thompson, Hero of My Lai](#)

[Owen's musings » Blog Archive » Hugh Thompson dies](#)

[pinkville: Hugh Thompson - My Lai \("Pinkville"\) / Ariel Sharon - The Butcher of ...](#)

[Please Don't Kill The Paramedic: Hugh Thompson Jr.](#)

[Progressive Gold](#)

[R7 News Outlet](#)

[Rants: Hugh Thompson Jr. Dies. Requiescat In Pace](#)

[Rational Resistance: Reading & Writing: Sharp Sand: Hugh Thompson Dies at 62](#)

[REAL ART \(and politics and culture\)](#)

[Righty in a lefty state: Milblog linkfest](#)

[Scars and StripesScars & Stripes: Reading behind the lines » Hugh Thompson Revil...](#)

[Silent Running » Blog Archive » Hugh Thompson](#)

[SIVACRACY.NET: Opinions, Rants, and Obsessions of Siva Vaidhyanathan and his Fri...](#)

[Suspect Device Blog: Hugh Thompson](#)

[t r u t h o u t - Hugh Thompson, Hero at My Lai, Dead at 62](#)

[The Bait and Switch President: RIP: Hugh Thompson](#)

[The Coalition of the Swilling: Another Florida Cracker Post](#)

[The Cosy Alcove: Death of a Hero](#)

[the cucking stool: Hugh Thompson dead at 62 . . .](#)

[The Democratic Daily Blog » Blog Archive » My Lai Hero Hugh Thompson Jr. Dies at...](#)

[The Kenosha Kid's Blog: American Hero Dies](#)

[THE NEWS BLOG](#)

[The Old Grey Ent: Hugh Thompson, My Lai Hero Dies, 62](#)

[The Truth*: Hugh Thompson, 62, Who Saved Civilians at My Lai, Dies](#)

[The Underview](#)

[The Word of Sinna Luvva: t r u t h o u t - Hugh Thompson, Hero at My Lai, Dead a...](#)

[Tuxxee: Hugh Thompson Jnr](#)

[TY: My Lai Hero Hugh Thompson Jr. Dies at 62](#)

[Vegacura: Courage under fire](#)

[VoxInfo: Information is Power: My Lai Hero Hugh Thompson Jr. Dies at 62](#)

[waterbones](#)

[whatsakyer?: Hugh Thompson - Man of Honor, Soldier of Integrity](#)

[wild bill's blog: Hugh Thompson: a man you should meet](#)

[Winds of Change.NET: Honor at My Lai: Hugh Thompson Has Died](#)
[Your Ever Well-Wisher: RIP Hugh Thompson](#)

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