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Throughout the three stories I have had the privilege to read I have notice a common theme among them. I believe each story represents the support, love and respect that the people had for their peers and the men and women they interacted with on a daily basis. When a person goes through dramatic situations the automatic thing that starts to happen is bonding with your fellow brothers/sisters. In all three of these stories this theme has a crucial effect on how the main characters survived the war in Vietnam.

It doesn't matter what kind of research you are doing it is important to look at all sides of the subject. That's why reading the story called "We came home hairless with ghostly white eyes" by Nguyen Thi Kim Chuy was so interesting. The fact that this woman volunteered for this job is shocking. It only shows how much she loves her country and willingness to contribute for the overall goal of her leaders. Her job to clear trees and produce/maintain trails shows that the task she had chosen was no easy job. During the story the author writes about the hardships that occurred when there was shortage of food and shelter. She follows by explaining how the woman worked together to provide the essentials just to survive. The author also explains how they respected the soldiers, as they would see them pass by walking towards the danger zones. The woman the author spent time with during the war became sisters for life. A love like that cannot be broken apart.

The story I chose to write about is called "Man, if we're up against this, it's going to be a long-ass year." By Dennis Deal I was drawn to this reading from the very beginning of the class because I myself have been through Airborne and Ranger school. I understood the type of fearless superman effect that kind of training could have on a soldier. Within the early parts of the story there is a soldier who believes he knows were a group of enemy soldiers are so he instructs his squad to follow him into battle. The sad part was that he led his men to death. The reason I bring this up, because for men of that caliber to follow another man into combat. With the conditions that would make most soldiers want to hide and never push forward really shows how much trust and commitment they have for each other as brothers. The leader of that squad knew without a doubt in his mind the men with him would fight to the death to protect each other. Towards the end of

the story the main character was pinned down by a machine gun and another soldier flanks the enemy and destroys the threat. The author said himself if help didn't arrive he would have been a dead man. He to this day remembers how that fellow soldier saved his life. That soldier could have done the same thing to do which is hide behind cover, but he saw a fellow brother in need so he was willing to sacrifice everything to prevent the enemy from causing him harm.

During this last writing I read was called "The Knife Man" written by David M. Smith. The main character was described among his peers as a hard ass. I think that is interesting because I believe this man portrayed himself this way because he knew he had a strong emotional side as well. That part of him was portrayed later on in the story. The images this man saw on a regular basis would make a normal person just become sick. That is why it takes a special person to be a surgeon. This man saw the horror of war every day. He understood the effects of it. He gained a great deal of respect for the men in the field. He knew from experience that most nights a high amount of the soldiers that went out on patrol would come back in body bags, or severely injured. It was his job to stay focused and fix the men up. He wished there was a better way to control the effects of post surgery illness due to the fact that a great deal of the patients that did have surgery would die from infection. Towards the end of the story the author explains how he has visited the Vietnam memorial site and all he could do is break down and weep for the men and hard times he experienced in the war. The author might have had a hard way of showing it but he will forever be grateful for the men who died during the war and wished he could have helped more. At the very end the author mentions again that his peers seem to believe that he is a hard ass then he says "but they never talked to me about Vietnam."

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