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One main theme that I found occurring in the readings over and over again was the theme of finding the positive. This theme is something that is a bit personal to me, because, quite ironically, I'm a person that tends to find the negative in a lot of things. So in order to sort of work my way around that bad habit, I tried to find the positive in a lot of the words the people spoke. I think I realized that many of the speakers were doing that for me, hence, why I chose this theme.

The first war account that I found the most positive was that of Vu Thi Vihn. She was a young Vietnamese woman who volunteered to work on the Ho Chi Minh trail. I was astonished to see that she kept mentioning the positives in every thing she did. In this jungle, in which death was around at every corner, she manages to admit that "The tough jungle gave us life" Amidst all of the fighting, death, her everyday struggles against malaria, fatigue, bombing raids, she managed to find happiness in it all.

The second story I found that the speaker had found a positive by accident. Dennis Deal, who retold his story about the battle of the Ia Drang valley, was mostly tactical war story with little feeling. However, at the end of the passage, Appy asks him about the significance of the Ia Drang battle. He immediately responds "It was a tremendous success!" However, he retracts his statement, saying that it in fact was not a success. He mentioned General Westmoreland was rather careless with his soldiers, and how the rest of the general staff tried to cover up the fact that morale was low and that the entire battle was a stalemate. However, I'm fairly sure, that given a chance to rethink his statement, he would have emphasized the success of the soldiers on the ground and not that of the Generals at HQ.

The third story is yet another Vietnamese account of Quach van Phong. He was an artist that served in the South as an artist to boost morale. His jobs included sketches of soldiers (which he would give back to them, and they would treasure them forever) and also sketching the battlefield, sometimes with nothing but spit, dirt, and twigs to draw with. He mentions the fact that many of his superiors found that his job in the army was useless. However, he mentions that he had developed bonds with his comrades, making him feel more important. He mentions that "An artist can be as important in war as a soldier" Also another positive that Phong found was that he could connect with American GI's more than he could with those who were not in the war. Despite being enemies, he says that "it's surprising and ironic that when I talk with American veterans I feel that we have more in common in some ways that I have with Vietnamese who were not in the South." That really struck me as someone who could really put animosities behind him and talk with his enemy. He found something positive in something that could have been a very negative situation. Something that really inspired me to do the same.

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