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Continuing the discussion



by **Joe Escobar** - Sunday, October 20, 2013, 7:39 PM

After reading the NYT article and watching the second half of the AIM program, discuss specific examples of conflicting information you have encountered in the provided class sources (from the Herring book, PBS series, and AIM program). More importantly, which source gets your "vote", on that specific issue, as having the more correct/accurate/truthful interpretation or reinterpretation?

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Preservation through Destruction



by Matthew Schroeder - Tuesday, October 22, 2013, 6:41 PM

From each of the sources of information we have been given, there seems to be a different view point. As I see it so far there seems to be more debate over what is being discussed and what is being left out rather than there being outright lies told. One area that I find very conflicting is what our goal was in Vietnam.

Watching the second AIM video (approx time 17:30), there is a man discussing how the failure of American goals and policies, the noble policies that were trying to give the Vietnamese people the option to preserve their own way of life. After watching four episodes of the PBS series and in particularly episode four, I have a tough time believing that we were really trying to enforce these policies. The interviews of the three American soldiers and the two Vietnamese people in Episode four of the PBS series gave me the impression that we were in fact working very hard to destroy their way of life.

The attack of the one village described in the interviews paints a picture in my mind of mass killings and complete destruction. The Vietnamese villagers were killed, their houses were burned to the ground, their cattle were killed and crops destroyed. All of this was done to find a minority of Vietcong or North Vietnamese

supporters who were supposedly hiding in the village. As shown and discussed in both the AIM and PBS videos this was a common event and in fact took place throughout South Vietnam during the war.

Focusing on the question at hand, one side (including soldiers, leaders and citizens) say that the actions described above were justified to win the war and preserve the Vietnamese way of life. The other side (including soldiers, leaders, and citizens) do not believe that this was the way to win the war and preserve a culture. I find myself siding with the people who don't believe that these actions were necessary to achieve our goals. I cannot believe that the killing of thousands of people and the destruction of their land is answer no matter the question. I will keep an open mind as I am given more information during the term but I don't see my view changing on this matter.

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Re: Preservation through Destruction

by Josey Grant - Friday, October 25, 2013, 3:55 PM

I see your point but I also see that in the moment perhaps these solders and their commanding officers were at there wits end, and tied of being led to slaughter by ambush after ambush. I knew a man that had survived an ambush. and though he is dead now I still remember vividly his "war story"... trying to just stay alive long enough to complete orders and then being told you have to get your self out of an impossible situation with even less to survive on and fewer ammunition.

I agree that the mass killing of the villagers was not the way to go about achieving their goals but imagine trying everything and knowing you will die if you don't find the people that were hiding in the village? and when you think about it... Every solder of the Vietcong was in fact a villagers, farmer or fishermen men women and children... so in lite of that I could understand that though the actions were not the best insight of the "goal" I can understand how they could happen.

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Re: Preservation through Destruction

by Matthew Schroeder - Friday, October 25, 2013, 9:27 PM

I whole hardily agree with what you are saying. No one except for the soldier behind the gun can say for sure what the situation was. However quite often it was either kill or be killed. Their life was on the line, not the person who was issuing the orders who was often ten's, hundreds, or thousands of miles away. The thousands of deaths on both sides can often be traced back to the people in charge who gave the orders for the solders

to be in the situation they were. Reading through the Herring and Appy books and watching the PBS series, I have really began to understand that for the majority of the time a US soldier could not tell a North Vietnamese villager or farmer, a South Vietnamese villager or farmer, a Vietcong soldier, or most any one person they encountered from another. It was not as simple as being given orders to kill the enemy and go out and look for the people with red X's on their head.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Preservation through Destruction

by Enya McKinnon - Sunday, October 27, 2013, 4:24 PM

I too agree with your view point that the killing of so many of the Vietnamese and the destruction we did to their country was very unnecessary. The war was not handled the way it could have been to make a US victory possible. I am not saying that the war was justified, but I am also not saying that it was completely unjustified. Every source that we read in this class seems to have a bit of a different view point on why the war started, who was the most victorious in what battle and the amount of innocent people and young soldiers who died. Yet ultimately, I agree with you that the killing of these people was not the answer. A more peaceful answer could have been found if emotions had not ran so high and those incharge had sat down and used their heads.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Preservation through Destruction

by Matthew Schroeder - Sunday, October 27, 2013, 5:02 PM

The information we have been presented thus far showed many opportunities for alternatives to solving the situations in Vietnam through means other than all out war. The reason they never seemed to choose the alternatives was that it made someone look weak or was not in everyone's favor at that time. However some of these alternatives that we see clearly now were not so clear at the time. The thousands of Vietnamese and American deaths could and should have been avoided. We cannot however say hindsight is 20/20 because even now there is still debate about exactly how certain situations should have gone.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Preservation through Destruction

by Jacob Nelson - Sunday, October 27, 2013, 11:16 PM

I find myself agreeing with you when saying that these military actions taken by the United States during the Vietnam were unnecessary in achieving our ultimate goals in a victory in Indochina. However, at the same time I find myself understanding some of the actions that the United States military took against the enemy and people who were cooperating with the North Vietnamese. For the most part, the Vietnam War was a guerilla war in which it was nearly impossible to identify the real enemy. The Vietcong could often take the appearance of an ordinary farmer by day and a soldier by nightfall. With this being said I still can't condone the various accounts of violence American soldiers participated in against innocent civilians in North Vietnam that were mentioned in the PBS series. However, at the same time I understand that these soldiers were up against a faceless enemy and were often confused about who they were fighting. This theme of fighting a faceless enemy seems to have carried over to some of the wars that the United States is currently involved in to this very day in age. For example, one could argue that there is no real face to the war on terror.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Interest vs Truth



by Nicole Reese - Wednesday, October 23, 2013, 1:45 AM

So far I have found that it all really depends on which point of view the facts/stories are being told from. By this I mean, is it being told by the soldier who fought in the war, the politician, or the Vietnam citizen living in the middle of the war zone? When there's numerous people telling their version and point of view of a story, there's bound to be conflicting information.

In the AIM video it shows John McCain explaining how the North Vietnamese were using the American prisoner's of war to exploit them for propaganda purposes and for leverage to negotiate with the American's for a deal in which would help them earn a victory in Indochina. Now since that is the first time out of all of our sources that I've heard that idea, I find that to be an extreme statement. Also John McCain said that there was no reported or known instances in which Vietnam prisoners of war were tortured or mistreated while in the care of American's. I find that a little hard to believe since in episode 4 of the PBS series there's the testimony of the Vietnamese woman testifying on the horror she experienced when American soldiers stormed her house in search for Vietcong and threw a grenade killing everybody in the house but her, including her 14 year old son. If the American soldiers were ordered to go to such extremes as killing innocent families in search for Vietcong what would stop them from torturing their prisoners of war which could be potential Vietcong members? Point is, it was a war; killing and torture occurred on both sides, so to make the statement that makes it appear that only American soldiers were mistreated sounds a tad naive. But then again, it is coming from the point of view of an actual Vietnam POW, so naturally that is going to be his stance.

As I have said in my forum 1 post, I tend to trust written history more than cinematic or television history. I feel like books give more factual information and don't dramatize as much as movies/television does and although books can be reworded to add a certain desired affect, I still feel like I have the control to decipher my true feelings on the topic. Movies and television series tend to already have a predetermined motive or direction for the broadcast/ production.

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Re: Interest vs Truth

by Andrew Tignor - Wednesday, October 23, 2013, 9:10 AM

I really have to agree with you on trusting history that is written over what is shown on T.V. It is so hard to figure out what is the truth and what we should believe when watching T.V. But when you read about history it sends your mind in to another place and you try to put yourself there and figure out the truth of what really happened and what was going on at that time.

Andrew Tignor.

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Re: Interest vs Truth

by Barbara Lay - Wednesday, October 23, 2013, 8:41 PM

It seems that the written testimonies are more convincible than the televised we have seen so far. Since John McCain was a POW, even though we don't know what treatment he suffered, he could be biased against his captives, and who would blame him? I certainly wouldn't, not having walked in those shoes myself. And of course, would our countrymen want to let our nation know how they could have possibly mistreated the Vietnam prisoners? probably not.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Interest vs Truth

by Barbara Lay - Thursday, October 24, 2013, 12:52 PM

It's hard to say what the best bet would be. I know in events that have happened in my life, I have seen it in one perspective, and another family member would have it a different way. I do know that I have actually heard that in media, stories can be altered to depict what they want to say, and not how it was told. It all can be so darn confusing to know who to actually believe

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Re: Interest vs Truth

by Jacob Nelson - Sunday, October 27, 2013, 6:59 PM

I think you have made some really strong points and observations regarding the different sources of conflicting information we have examined thus far in this class. I also completely agree with you that stories and facts can differ when they are told from different points of view and/or differing sides. For example, I think you made a good point about how John McCain seemed to make a bold claim when he insinuated, "there was no reported or known instances in which Vietnam prisoners of war were tortured or mistreated while in the care of American's." I too found this hard to believe and didn't find it entirely true. I think this is a testament to how ones personal view on a subject can be formed by those individuals background and experiences. In the case of John McCain, I don't think it is too outlandish to assume that his experience as a prisoner of war as well as a member of the United States government had a part in making the statement that American soldiers didn't partake in any abuse towards North Vietnamese prisoners of war.

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false stories

by Andrew Tignor - Wednesday, October 23, 2013, 9:05 AM

The PBS series contained a lot of conflicting information. It seemed like they were delivering a message that was about what they wanted the people to believe. The NYT article that we read provided a lot about the way that the series is mess leading. The Herring book seems to have a lot of accurate information about what was really going on to a point that made you see the flaws in the videos. The stories that are provided by some of the people in the books are just amazing to read were others were questionable and seemed farfetched. There was a lot of none realistic circumstances that were put in to the PBS series to draw attention to the series and that made people want to watch it.

Andrew Tignor

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: false stories

by Matthew Schroeder - Wednesday, October 23, 2013, 6:42 PM

From what we have watched so far in PBS series, I agree with you that there has been some conflicting information when comparing it to information gathered in the AIM series, Herring book, and Appy book. The conflicting

information as I see it does not seem to be so much outright lies as it is blowing certain events up bigger than they were or minimizing other events. I also agree with you that some of the reasons behind why the PBS series chose to show the events of the war as they did was to draw more attention to the series.

Looking at some of the specific example discussed in the NY time's article, "The series makes Ho Chi Minh into a nationalist rather than a Communist; it ignores the role of the South Vietnamese Army; it minimizes the brutal treatment of American prisoners of war; it slights the actual conduct of military operations". (NY times article Pg 2) While all of these examples might be true of the series (I cannot give my complete opinion since I have not finished the series), none of them state that the PBS lied about any of the events as they portrayed them. I think the author and many of the people interviewed in the article come to somewhat of the same conclusion but it was a little hard for me to follow since they are going back and forth in discussion of the three Vietnam videos. I don't know however if I agree with your statement that many of the stories in the PBS series and the Appy book are farfetched. I feel that the vast majority of the stories in the Appy book are very real. However when looking at the stories in the PBS video's I feel that the stories are real but the editing that was done to them might have blown them up a little bigger than they actually were.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: false stories

by Andrew Tignor - Thursday, October 24, 2013, 7:43 AM

I agree that not all of the stories in the Appy book are farfetched. What I meant to say was that the memoirs that people have from those times are very, hard for them to talk about so they may hide something that would be of use in the truth of what was going on in Vietnam. It seems that many of the stories are open but when they share their stories with us they mention how hard it is for them to talk about what happened, this makes me believe that there is more then what is being said or that they are not allowed to talk about certain events that happened.

Andrew Tignor

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: false stories

by Matthew Schroeder - Saturday, October 26, 2013, 9:28 PM

I see where you are coming from. Just because someone I telling the truth but leaving out some details does not make it a lie. Probably many of the veterans who fought in the Vietnam War would like to forget the terrible things that they were ordered to do or had to do to

survive. But terrible things and war seem to go hand in hand. I can see several reasons why an event might be left out of an interview. As you mentioned it might be too hard for them to talk about. However they could still be under orders to not to discuss it, it could still be classified. I believe it was the Freedom of Information act that declassified many government documents including ones about the Vietnam War. But if no one ever talks about something, how do we know if everything was declassified or not. I guess this might be getting a little off topic. Oh well, still good discussion.

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Re: false stories



by Ryan Bendel - Thursday, October 24, 2013, 5:54 PM

It's very hard to determine what is truth and what is false, everything we have either read or watched has been edited down in some way and was made for a purpose, to make money. So clearly there is another agenda for everything which makes it difficult to know what to believe and what to take with a grain of sand. I wish we could get something that is truly for non-profit so we can get the actual truth, I guess the only way to do that is to talk with someone who was actually there, that we can get an unbiased view of what was actually said and done and how it was said and done

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Re: false stories



by Andrew Tignor - Friday, October 25, 2013, 8:29 AM

Yes, Ryan you are completely right the only way that we can truly get the real truth is by talking to someone that was there who has an unbiased view of the events that were presented during the war. This is a very good point and I really need to talk to one of my old high school history teacher's who was in Vietnam. I think that I would learn a lot from talking to him. It's just so hard to bring up the subject to someone that was there because of the pain that it has caused them with friends and family that they have lost and not wanting to bring up those memories.

Thanks for the post I am going to try and talk to my old teacher but hopefully it doesn't bring up a lot of emotion for him or me.

Andrew Tignor

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Re: false stories

by Rhonda Garcia Mondragon - Friday, October 25, 2013, 11:57 AM

Both of my grandfathers were in the Korean war and neither of them would approach the subject. The only thing that my one grandfather would brag about were the medals and hat that he recieved about 8 years ago. He wouldn't go into detail of what they were for but he was proud of the medals until the day he died. The hard part of finding out the real truth is finding a person that was there and who would actually share their memories of the war, and the unbiased view may be even harder. I think when going to war you are give an idea of the enemy or opposing country/countries and that alone may create a biased view before even engaging in war. Unfortunaetly, I was doing my clinicals for my CNA and I became very fond of one of the men there that was suffering from PTSD of the Vietnam War. He talked about agent orange and how awful it was over there and how glad he was to come home. His PTSD is so bad that he can't even go into the hallway or the dining area, because it would shove him into a major panic attack. I don't think that the veterans of the Vietnam war are even given a fraction of the care that they deserve. The emotions that I could just read on his face were awful, as they say it is the unspoken expressions that give better understanding of what the person is trying to say.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: false stories

by Andrew Tignor - Friday, October 25, 2013, 1:11 PM

What you are saying about the man who is suffering from PTSD is just the kind of reason that I do not want to or feel comfortable talking to my old history teacher. As far as I know he dose not suffer from PTSD but asking him about these events worries me because I do not want to bring up painful memories for him. He has always been very helpful in helping me to better understand a subject that I did not know well or understand, but we have never even talked about his time spent in the Vietnam war.

Andrew Tignor 😊

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: false stories

by Chels Staton - Sunday, October 27, 2013, 8:44 PM

You make a very valid point Ryan that I have yet to see anyone else mention, maybe they have and I missed it. "Everything we have either read or watched has been edited down in some way and was made for a purpose, to make money." Even though each piece we have to learn from seems to be trying to tell a strong story and convince us of one side or another, someone benefited from the production of said information. Good call on bringing up the agenda here, and hopefully that adds more perspective for some of us when we're trying to decide on whether or not to believe something.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: false stories



by Nicole Reese - Sunday, October 27, 2013, 12:47 PM

I agree with you about the Herring book. I have found that to be an accurate source as well. In reading the book, I've also started wondering what the war would've looked like had Kennedy still been alive. It seemed to me like he was starting to realize just how layered the situation in Vietnam was and that getting too deep involved probably wasn't the best idea. I know it's farfetched to think about and a big "what if" but none the less, it's interesting to think about.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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The devil is in the details



by Camren Bernico - Wednesday, October 23, 2013, 3:58 PM

So I sat through another grueling 30 minutes of the AIM program. As I watched it I could not help once again feeling annoyed. Annoyed that this program even existed and treated me like I was mentally inept.

It still came off as a bullied attempt to cram a bunch of personal onions down my throat, full of snide remarks and left out historians puffing hot air out at me.

A few things dawned on me during the time we saw John McCain on the program.

1) The guy even back then comes off as very shady and fake. He then opens his mouth to spew forth his anger about the PBS video now highlighting how hard it was for American prisoners while at the same time forcefully telling us how other prisoners were so much less important.

I think we all know horrible things happened but because PBS does not obsess over a personal area of interest and highlights the prisoner brutality from all sides. This sadly was what wasted my time, hearing him drone on and on about this.

Which lead me to point number 2

2) The devil is in the details. Most of us have heard this before but take some time to break it apart and truly look at what this means.

At the end of the day, these details, "facts", truths and personal opinions mean very little. I say this because if you take multiple sources you can easily piece together the big picture complete with a beginning and ending. What I took from it was how horrible war can be, how it destroys countries, communities, families. How a good idea can often be mishandled and made into something horrible.

I think our country often has a good idea, has good intentions and we as a people feel empowered by our ability to aid those in need. We are big brother. However with all this power and those holding said power comes greed and a good idea becomes one of personal goals and ambitions which leads to confusion and mismanagement and a destruction of trust.

I think we can learn from history based upon the big picture and the details are best served to fill in the blanks of such a large story but that is just it, the fill in gaps but are not what you base everything else upon.

As for my "vote" I find I do not like having to cast a vote when my own self knowledge is still limited and so it is foolish to blindly cast a vote. However since you asked and this is required....

I would side with the PBS series not so much because it may or may not be more factual but it is more thorough and I feel was made with better intentions. The AIM video was nothing more than a group of people wanting a space to complain and seem superior. It came off childish and opinionated and totally missed the mark when it came to what the perceived goal was.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: The devil is in the details

by Josey Grant - Wednesday, October 23, 2013, 11:02 PM

Please don't take this personally but the way that you so passionately talked about pretty much everything seems to me like you aren't give any of them the amount of time that you should. The assignment was:

After reading the NYT article and watching the second half of the AIM program, discuss specific examples of conflicting information you have encountered in the provided class sources (from the Herring book, PBS series, and AIM program). More importantly, which source gets your "vote", on that specific issue, as having the more correct/accurate/truthful interpretation or reinterpretation?

I feel like you were just ranting your way threw this assignment about how much you personally dislike McCain, or saying that "the devil is in the details and yet there was none really in yours. Mostly opinion, and not much in the department of "specific examples of conflicting information". I had a hard time with this assignment as well. I am sure we all did.

However, what helped me was trying to view it all as a puzzle. I looked for what was missing and what was similar and then I tried to look at it objectively. Also what did you think of the NY Times article? did it help you at all in your assignment? It helped me.

Also I am a little confused as to why almost every sentence has its own paragraph?

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: The devil is in the details

by Barbara Lay - Thursday, October 24, 2013, 12:43 PM

It's not always interesting to hear all the different opinions of the the historians, and who is to say their opinions are the truth? We are just trying to do the required work for the class we took. It takes discipline to read all the material, watch the videos, and try to write our opinions for the forums.

Since we are Americans, and not living in some communist country, you are entitled to your opinions, and I am to mine, thanks to all those who fought in wars to keep us this way. But I feel you are probably bored with all these videos we are listening to, and not keeping an open mind that this is what we have to do for this class. I am speaking for myself here, but I found myself actually

offended by your reply, and this is not what I want out of this class myself. John McCain was a prisoner for I believe six years, and who knows what he had to endure over there. He went over to fight for this country, and in my mind any veteran who did has my respect.

I hope the rest of this term will be better for you.

Sum of ratings: 2 (1)

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Re: The devil is in the details

by Ryan Bendel - Thursday, October 24, 2013, 6:12 PM

I agree with you, my vote goes to the PBS series as well. The AIM video simply attacked the PBS series and like you said, it only spewed out opinions, which it did. The AIM video had a conservative viewpoint and basis for it. So obviously its gonna to be a one sided attack. Its hard to figure out what is truth and what is not, especially in a hotly contested subject like the Vietnam War Even today we have people pewing out details that they claim to be facts but really these facts are just opinions so we are left to discovery what is an actual detail of this war and whats the Devil, more often then not we find ourselves face to face with the devil claiming to be a detailed fact

Sum of ratings: (1)

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Money is at the Root of the Truth

by Ryan Bendel - Wednesday, October 23, 2013, 5:18 PM

Its very difficult to determine whats true and whats false. Everything we have either read or watched was trying to make a profit and has been edited, so trying to sort out truth from fiction can be difficult especially after editing as occurred. In the Appy book the author interviewed 350 people involved in the Vietnam War, but only used 135 so obviously some things were left out, the author picked and choose what stories worked for the purpose of the book. Likewise the PBS video and the AIM video have similar motives. Even though PBS is a Public Broadcasting Channel its still out for profit and according to the AIM videos it has quite a few inaccuracies. According to the AIM video the PBS videos claim to portray the South Vietnamese as saints almost while portraying the North Vietnamese as "racists". The Aim video spoke in quite a bit of detail about the 13th episode being inaccurate. In the 13th episode the PBS series portrays soldiers as being unable to come back into society. Not having seen that episode yet its very hard to say weather PBS does portray soldiers in that light or weather the AIM video is blowing things out of proportion as I feel they do. One example of them blowing things out of propotion can be seen when the AIM video also claimed the PBS series to portray all the soldiers as being drug addicts and all the soldiers treating the Vietnamese with brutal actions. I didn't get that at all, I feel the PBS video was the better of the two, especially the last episode we

watched. We got to hear from a number of soldiers who fought early on in Vietnam and I got a little bit of a sense of brutal treatment but they were remorseful about it, and the brutal treatment only happened a few times, it wasn't an ongoing thing that the AIM video claimed it to be.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Money is at the Root of the Truth

by Rhonda Garcia Mondragon - Wednesday, October 23, 2013, 7:11 PM

I am totally seeing how there are biases in what information is used and what information is not being used. It would be nice to just have some kind of a knowledge of which way to lean when it comes to all the different information that is just being presented in polar opposite ways.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Navigating the Minefield of "Truths"

by Kristin Sledge - Wednesday, October 23, 2013, 5:46 PM

I will admit I am posting so close to the first deadline because I had a hard time picking through the material. There are so many things that contradict in each source that it is hard to zoom in and find a source that in the end will get my vote of confidence, but I think I have finally found my way through a minefield of information to present a solid opinion. It's not one you have to agree with, but hear me out before passing any judgements.

When it comes to the Vietnam War it really comes down to the South Vietnamese taking a stand against the Communist movement in North Vietnam. It is "Nationalism" vs. Communism, so why in all of the resources provided were the South treated so poorly?! They were fighting for political freedom, something that we wanted, and yet according to Douglas Pike during the AIM program the South was looked at with "contempt, almost racist, kind of non-people. They were something that we brought in, slandering South Vietnamese forces. Not a scrap of empathy" towards the people of South Vietnam. When it comes to the reading, I read "Westmoerland had called for American fources because he doubted the battle-worthiness of the ARVN..."(Pg. 190, America's Longest War, Herring). Yet a few pages later I found that the people of South Vietnam had someone's attention. Sure, it may have been a propaganda ploy, but upon reading "Improving the South Vietnamese standard of living was the one area of the war that struck a responsive chord in Johnson. A populist reformer at heart, he identified with the people of South Vietnam and deeply sympathized with their presumed desire for political freedom and economic progress."(Pg. 193, America's Longest War, Herring) it's hard for me to believe that all LBJ did was solely for image.

Another thing I took issue with was the way the American soldier was depicted in the

PBS series. Heck, right from the very first episode, "Roots of War" and within the first 5 minutes you see a group of soldiers sitting around smoking pot. They also have appeared very heartless to me throughout the series when it came to the Vietnamese; especially in episode 3, "LBJ Goes to War" where a soldier says over the radio, "Great job, I just saw one of the rockets blast through one of their backs". I fully agree with Dan Craig's analysis of the American soldier in the AIM program where he said, "I think the great injustice of this film is that it portrays the American Soldier in Vietnam as a drug addict, as a racial bigot, and a man who murdered his officers and NCO's almost at will. The 100's of thousands of Americans who went to Vietnam and served honorably and bravely have got to be incensed(?) at this terrible misrepresentation of their bravery on the battlefield."

Of all these sources that we have been provided with, I feel that every video that we have seen, while they could be majorly historically accurate, has had an agenda. Of all the resources we have available, I believe that the "America's Longest War" would be the piece that gains my vote of confidence. I feel it demonstrates a good understanding of both sides while not making the US the good guys or the bad guys. When I'm sitting at home reading this book I feel like I can trust what I read not only because it does not play "favorites" with the North or the South, but facts are cited at the bottom of the pages where I can further research and see where the author was getting his information. The PBS series does not have this, and neither does the AIM program. While I do trust much of what the Appy book has to offer me, it only offers certain incidents within the war for me to analyze instead of the war in a bigger picture that the Herring book does. For this reason, I place my trust in the Herring book.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Who is to believe

by Rhonda Garcia Mondragon - Wednesday, October 23, 2013, 7:21 PM

In part two of AIM they are still trying to prove their side of the story, and how North Vietnam was shown as a saint by PBS and the South Vietnamese were puppets of the United States. John McCain was held prisoner by the North Vietnamese for 6 years stated; went on to say how as a prisoner of war in Northern Vietnam you are psychologically and physically tortured but in South Vietnam there are no documented cases reported of torture while being held in a South Vietnam prison. He continued to state later on in the AIM interview that the North Vietnamese used the prisoners of war for propaganda purposes. *The New York Times* article mentioned some of the same points that were mentioned in the part one of the AIM series. It said how HO Chi Minh was portrayed as a nationalist and not a Communist, and it ignores the role of the South Vietnamese Army. *The New York Times* stated about "Televisions Vietnam: The Real Story" that it is not so much the program itself but the controversy surrounding it" and that the AIM is interested in their own point of view. I honestly am not convinced by either side but I do realize that both sides are trying to win a vote on what they believe to be the most accurate truth. If I had to pick a side I would go with the AIM series since they point out areas in the way that I am

understanding them from the Herring book. I think that both the PBS and AIM were on opposite ends of extremes of the views of how the war happened, and I do believe that there could be a revision by someone that isn't looking so much at the polar political opposites but at the facts that can be presented.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Who is to believe

by Ryan Bendel - Thursday, October 24, 2013, 6:03 PM

As we learn more and more about this war its clear that this war was a divided war. As we learned it was the first heavily protested war that America fought in. So clearly if we take the PBS series which is a more leftist view point and the AIM video which is a more conservative viewpoint they will have many opposing views and they will try to tell us that their viewpoint is the right one, its only after we take all sides into consideration, the PBS series, the AIM video, the Herring book, even the Appy book that we can truley form our own opinions of what actually happened, short of creating a time machine and going back to the 1960s its our only real option, reading and watching as much as we can and forming our own perseption of what actually happened, because with the Vietnam War its almost impossible to get a for certian idea of what actually happened, because everything we read or watch is going to have some kind of biased view added to it

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Who is to believe

by Rhonda Garcia Mondragon - Friday, October 25, 2013, 12:07 PM

That is what I was thinking why can't there be someone that could piece together the view in a tasteful way without attacking and pointing fingers. There needs to be the view of the North Vietnamese, South Vietnamese, United States, French, etc. If the facts were presented instead of giving a onesided view it would be easier to follow, but that is why it is history to pick through the details and understand which ones make the most sense. If PBS or AIM was to take the biased views out and combine their information they would have a nice piece of historical information, but they would rather point fingers and argue about whos view is right.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Who is to believe

by Barbara Lay - Saturday, October 26, 2013, 8:04 AM

It would be interesting to get a view point from the French in here also. Although they weren't in it till the end, I would hope they would have some interesting information on the war also. It does seem the PBS and AIM are presenting their own perspectives the way they want it to be seen.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re:fact or fiction

by Barbara Lay - Wednesday, October 23, 2013, 8:35 PM

The Herring book talks about the battle of Tet, and how the Americans won that battle, But yet, according to the AIM video it was broadcast in the PBS documentary the Americans lost that battle. It makes me wonder if they are true Americans or not. To have the media portray the enemy as the good guys and the Americans as the bad, to me, is just un-American. It is hard to trust what the actual truth in media is anymore. Who is to say that news is not documented the way one wants it to be told, and not the way it should be told? Seems to me, that is the way a lot of this is heading, being told the way one wants it be, not the way it actually should be. I was appalled at Jane Fonda visiting the North Vietnamese, and looking like she was actually cheering them on to win the war. It could also be actions like that, where history would be documented the way a person would want it to be, and not truthfully. But at least that one is documented on film!

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re:fact or fiction

by Andrew Tignor - Thursday, October 24, 2013, 9:53 AM

I really like this point, I did not think about it like this but it does seem to be very conflicting. the way that one thing says that we have won a battle but another is saying we lost the battle. This type of information is what makes it hard for us to really understand what was going on in the war and if people really are sharing the correct events with us.

Andrew Tignor.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

Show parent | Edit | Split | Delete | Reply



Re:fact or fiction

by Josey Grant - Friday, October 25, 2013, 3:35 PM

I completely know what mean about not being sure if what we are being force fed by the all forms of the media (mostly contradicting one another). It's truly

made life and what is playing out in the world we live in difficult to decipher.

I'm glad to see that I am not the only one that caught that and was alarmed by the extreme difference in the loss that was actually a win at the battle of Tet. Even in the New York Times article, they talked about how "no new Interpretation of History is allowed".... A scary thought if history is wrong I think.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re:fact or fiction

by Nicole Reese - Friday, October 25, 2013, 4:08 PM

I was just appalled as you were when we watched the clip of Jane Fonda laughing and smiling while sitting on a Vietcong anti - aircraft gun. It was obvious she was using her star power to speak out against her own country and support the enemy. Also, I've read in articles that she called the POW's hypocrites and liars. Seriously disgusts me. To top it off, to this very day she doesn't believe she did anything wrong by going to North Vietnam and saying the offensive things she said! Unbelievable.

But you're right, I'm glad they at least got that clip on film. I hadn't been aware of Jane Fonda's involvement but I'm glad I know now, really shows her true colors.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re:fact or fiction

by Chels Staton - Sunday, October 27, 2013, 8:53 PM

Barbara, Jane Fonda's visit has been controversial since it happened. The media dubbed her "Hanoi Jane" and there are accusations that she handed letters from POW's over to their captors. There are so many articles on her regarding the war it's almost mind-boggling that a celebrity is getting so much attention even today. If you're interested in more I suggest doing a Google search in your down time. There is so much information and it's really interesting to read, at least I think so. I always liked her as an actress but the more I learn and read I find I have a growing disdain and disrespect for some of the things she (supposedly) did and said.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Opinions matter, or do they?

by Chels Staton - Wednesday, October 23, 2013, 10:00 PM

After watching the second AIM video and reading my classmates posts I am beyond

heated and have rewritten my entire forum. I'm not upset the way some of my peers seem to be though. As the daughter of a Vietnam Veteran and a Veteran myself I find it incredibly difficult to believe that PBS does not "speak in detail to veterans, who they are, and their problems today" (AIM part 2). Obviously I haven't seen the whole series so I can only take from what I've already observed. To cast a general blanket over the veterans and insinuate that the American soldiers in Vietnam were "drug addicts, racial bigots, and men who murdered their officers and NCO's at will"-Dan Cragg in reference to Vietnam: A Television History (AIM part 2) is infuriating. He goes on to mention that the PBS series portrays our soldiers as not the equal of their adversaries, although some are well-adjusted and established members of our political system.

The point that many seem to be missing is that the AIM production *is* an opinion piece and a rebuttal like the NYT article states. It may not be what everyone wants to hear but it is in fact another side of the story. AIM is one-sided and seems to be pointing fingers and placing blame but that's their job as a "media watch dog". It seems that the NYT article is correct in saying, "Vietnam history will not be so much rewritten as it will be reinterpreted . . . that partisans of one side or another will resist the new interpretations." Even those of us who were not there have taken sides and clearly have passion about what we believe happened or should have could have happened. All our generation can do is learn from the mistakes that we saw and attempt to change the future of war. We will never live in a world that is completely at peace but we can fight better wars, and choose better battles. PBS is one-sided as well and from what I've seen so far seems to be taking the stance of "this is what happened, period, don't question it." To which the NYT article clearly agrees, "No new interpretation of history is allowed. . . it cannot be reinterpreted unless the reinterpretation has their approval."

I can't place a vote on who is or is not correct because I think both sides have chosen their position and don't allow room for opposition. As far as what I think is most reliable from our class sources I have to go with Patriots. Reading first-hand accounts from those who were there is riveting and brings the imagination to life, answering questions we may have about what *could* have gone on in a war, that again, none of us was fighting in.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Opinions matter, or do they?



by Barbara Lay - Sunday, October 27, 2013, 7:47 AM

I think the Vietnam War is going to be an on going subject for debate for decades to come still. Our country is still full of vets who remember coming home from war and being spit on by the people protesting the war. And it's not just these videos that portray our soldiers as drug addicts, but I have seen it in almost every movie that has been made of Vietnam showing our soldiers smoking pot or drinking. So it's not just the news media painting that picture. At that time our soldiers were drafted, you had to be 21 to vote, but only 18 to go

fight in a war. Go figure that one out! So sure, some of those kids probably did smoke and drink, but they were scared, not knowing if they would be coming home or not. Yes, they should have spoken in detail to veterans, how they viewed the war, what kind of adjustments did it take to get back into society when they were out. We have a lot of well adjusted veterans still around.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2

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Re: Opinions matter, or do they?



by Chels Staton - Sunday, October 27, 2013, 8:38 PM

Thank you for responding Barbara, I completely agree with you! I feel that in order for this to be more accurate or at least balanced then PBS and AIM should have included more material from other sides. It's sad to see that Vietnam Vet's are clumped together into stereotypes when they were doing what was asked of them by their country. I feel that it's a lot like when we see gossip about celebrities and athletes, there seems to be more coverage of the negative aspects about their lives then the positive. Vietnam was also in a time when drugs and sex were peaking in different areas rolling us into the 70's and a lot of experimental things were accepted because of changing times. They don't show the percentage of people who protested the war that might have been drug addicts or at the least, smoking pot. Thank you for your response again!

-Chelsae

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2

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Re: Opinions matter, or do they?



by Kristin Sledge - Sunday, October 27, 2013, 9:20 PM

Chels,

I SO agree with you about the AIM production! I find it INSANELY convenient for them that they can come along a mere few years later and rip this special apart piece by piece with, what I feel, was not enough evidence to back their play.

Sure, the soldiers in the beginning were smoking what looked like to be joints, and some of the things said over the radio were a bit harsh for me to hear, but we have only seen the beginning pieces of the puzzle! I feel that the brave men that served have been portrayed that way in the Herring book and especially with Patriots. I feel like these would be the most reliable sources as well, but I would as you, respectfully and in the spirit of discussion, do you think that even Patriots could have had an agenda by omitting certain stories in order to drive drasic points home? I am proud to say that I'm American and live in a country where we have soldiers who are proud to serve for their country, yourself and your father included, but do regular stories sell books? I am certainly not

attacking your views and apologize if it feels like I am, but I am simply trying to add to the conversation and get your view point.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2

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Re: Opinions matter, or do they?



by Chels Staton - Monday, October 28, 2013, 2:10 AM

I appreciate you taking the time to respond and do NOT feel attacked at all. I am always open to hearing other's opinions, especially when they're different from my own. I think that you're right about Patriots, there are over 100 interviews he conducted that we don't have the benefit of reading. Regular stories absolutely do not sell books! It takes a dramatic almost Hollywood feel, too strange to believe effect to sell any sort of publication whether it be film or writing. Thank you for responding Kristin!

Sum of ratings: -

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Re: Continuing the discussion



by Matthew Alsin - Wednesday, October 23, 2013, 10:08 PM

Watching the AIM program, it was hard to take much of it to heart strictly based on it being such a Conservative piece - which typically I don't lean toward. The NYTimes article did an excellent job of being critical with the original PBS documentary and 'The Real Story', and did make it easier to form an opinion about especially based on them bringing up the point that the controversy... Is the controversy. America's Longest War seems to be the most accurate in depicting prior events so far, and based on my own knowledge from prior history classes.

In the AIM program, they mention the 9 hour parade that attracted a quarter of a million people in support for the men in Vietnam and how it wasn't brought to attention at all by the media. Instead, PBS covered an irrelevant side story. Maybe a bigger deal then, but there is so much in today's media that doesn't even touch base on bigger issues of the world. I can't blame PBS for this. PBS has always seemed like a positive network to me, and typically does seem to cover both sides of the story. So I also attribute the AIM program to being "old-school" and very comparable to many news sites in 1969. However, NBC news did bring PBS to light and accused their misaccusations. It was too late at that point though. Maybe the basic truth was overlooked.

America's Longest War informs of the Americans winning, vs the AIM program complains of PBS botching and hiding the realities - they say Vietnam was the Victor. Simply being 40ish years ahead of the PBS and AIM programs, I give more validity to the truth in it. Aside from that, NYTimes counters that the program tells us "communism is wicked", and that it remains interested in its own point of view. Controversy.

**Deciphering history**

by Josey Grant - Wednesday, October 23, 2013, 10:20 PM

I have never before been set with a task that seemed doom like this assignment. History has so much to offer us and this subject alone the material that I have been poring over and over this week has left me in a haze. Though I believe that I trust one of these sources more than the others I still am left with doubts. Though these doubts are brought on primarily due to the onset of misinformation that is in history due to things such as what was brought to my attention by 'TELEVISION'S VIETNAM: THE REAL STORY,' ON PBS an article published by The New York Times, when a falsehood was found not only publicly but historically wrong the truth was now the not accurate nor true and no one would change it. What's worse is those that could change it didn't... "No new interpretation of history is allowed." (NYT Article Page 3). How can this be how historical documentation is kept? How can we hope to not repeat or learn from history if we don't know what happened? As the AIM program stated a good example with the report of a one of the larger successes was reported to the public as a loss.... Sense when is a win a loss? And why could this not be corrected. They said that it was because the public had accepted it as a defeat, therefore that's what it was. How can that be an answer, let alone justify what was done and the lives lost? That's like saying everyone believed the lie when it was bad, the truth is good... why tell anyone? Really!? This makes me fear for our children.

The NYT article made a good point about both the AIM and the Vietnam series; they are pushing there opinions but that it's not bad propaganda everyone has their own opinion. They had some good sources and one that truly stood out, McCain. His explanasion of war crimes and how the POW's were treated from all sides was a good way to clear things up.

I was surprised when learned more and more about Ho Chi Minh and yet the PBS series makes Ho Chi Minh into a nationalist rather than a Communist, while ignoring the role of the South Vietnamese Army, and minimizes the brutal treatment of American prisoners of war and it slights the actual conduct of military operations. (NYT Article page 2). On page thirteen in "America's Longest War", Herring even says that Ho had established himself as the "symbol of nationalism" but Herring also goes on to tell a more complete account of what really happened. I saw that the PBS series also did little things to make American soldiers out to be fools or monsters like in the first episode "Roots of War" they do small clips US military men shown painted up to blend in and camouflage themselves with the jungle and the looks on their faces that's says they seen a lot of death; something in its self that was meant to strike a small nerve of fear. In that vary same episode they showed the men

smoking pot. This was shown, one could guess, to help discredit the American soldier.

Threw all the material that I have pored over one stands up against the personal options and/or agendas, and that is the book “America’s Longest War” by George C Herring. He has facts and many sources that come accost just as they should, as history.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Deciphering history

by Matthew Schroeder - Friday, October 25, 2013, 9:41 PM

You really touched on a lot of different points. One thing I was really questioning when watching the second AIM video was when McCain was talking about POW's. I have no doubt and cannot fathom what he and the many other POW's went through. But the thing I am questioning is when he stated there are no documents that report any abuse of Vietnamese POW's once they were in the custody of a US detention center. With all of the different US agencies that were involved in Vietnam especially the CIA, I cannot believe that there was not some torturing of prisoners or mistreatment done as means to extract information or for some other reason. Heck, I honestly wouldn't be surprised if in some dark government hole in the ground there are still some POW's from the Vietnam War. For all the crazy things that our government does like at Guantanamo Bay, I think there many other far worse things happening that we haven't and probably will never hear of

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Deciphering history

by Barbara Lay - Saturday, October 26, 2013, 7:43 AM

It just seems that there had to be some torturing on our part going on also. I don't believe there was none. Just because there was no documented statements saying there was none, does not mean it did not happen. It seems to go hand in hand in war as a means of acquiring information one side or the other is after to get. That's the way it goes when nations are at war, but perhaps our country does not want known what went on.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Deciphering history

by Matthew Schroeder - Saturday, October 26, 2013, 9:06 PM

Our government (or any government for that matter) will almost never come out and admit anything that they did was wrong during a time of war. It seems like the only reason we hear about the bad things such as torture that happen is because someone leaked the information or the government found out it was going to be leaked and shared what they saw as fact first. I really don't think I would want to know most of the terrible things our country does in the cover of darkness. It would just darken the already bad view I have for many of the people who run our government.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

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Re: Deciphering history

by Josey Grant - Sunday, October 27, 2013, 9:21 PM

that's a really good point Mathew. No government wants it know what they do in the dark times of war.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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Re: Deciphering history

by Camren Bernico - Sunday, October 27, 2013, 6:00 PM

Josey,

I enjoyed reading your post because while you touched upon many of the same issues I had with these videos (more so the AIM video for me), that finding the truth within history is often very difficult and more so when you are not a scholar of the subject or field.

However why I chose to reply to your post was that while we saw many of the same problems you viewed them very differently.

What I mean is when you spoke of John McCain and how his explanation of war crimes helped you to understand things better.

I may not be an authority on this subject or even close to it. That said I knew full well the atrocities of war and that there were no sides of purity to be found. When I heard Mr. McCain speak about how American soldiers were treated, and I understand this issue is dear to him since he was a POW, I felt as though he tried to do exactly what they blamed the PBS series of doing.

The blame PBS for not going into the details of American POW's and clearly McCain took great offense to that. However he took such an aggressive stance that it took away any earnest desire to enlighten us, and more as a trivialization of other groups involved while raising American POWs above that of other men

and countries.

That favoritism and unprofessional demeanor while teaching, taught me nothing I was not aware of and instead insulted me and my intelligence.

Another way we saw similar problems but came to different conclusions was your feeling the PBS show somehow discredited Americans.

The reality as the footage shows was that soldiers did smoke pot and much more. Why this is shocking? Why would we not expect men to seek substances and comforts while living in the most fearful, chaotic and horrible conditions?

People confuse history with morality at times which leads to censorship and misinformation. The AIM program decided to highlight the brief truths of drug use by soldiers and then tried to make the drug use seem almost like it was not real or rare while bashing PBS for showing us that truth of war.

It is WAR people, with that comes expectations that may not meet those of civilians.

I did not feel the American Soldier was portrayed poorly but more so we do not like seeing our own side doing things that may be morally offensive. Such as drug use, such as torture and so AIM tries to divert these truths by overly stimulating our senses and emotions with terror the other side did to us.

To accept history you must accept the good and the bad of all sides. AIM clearly to me, wanted to push the PRO American image while trying to discredit PBS.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2

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Re: Deciphering history

by Chels Staton - Sunday, October 27, 2013, 9:26 PM

Hello Josey,

I too was left in a haze this week, and found myself re-viewing the PBS videos after reading the article and completing the AIM videos. I have gone through a couple spiral notebooks already, trying to take notes and keep information and its source straight so that I can better complete assignments, but there is so much information I find myself questioning all of it. It seems that each new source we get disagrees with at least one of our previous sources! You're correct (I believe) in saying that your doubts are brought on by misinformation. I also used the NYT article in my forum and found it hard to believe that no one would change or publicize information about an event after they found that it was indeed falsely stated and published/broadcast. It really makes you wonder what else we believe that may not be true, but we have learned from the media. In the past few years I have become more and more skeptical about news coverage, especially on our current war in Iraq. I myself served in Baghdad and have many friends who are there now, have served, or have died fighting this

war. What we are lead to believe is not always even part-truth, but fillers and pointless information to keep our minds distracted from what's really going on. I am in no way a conspiracy theorist, I don't think, but it seems that more often than not I find discrepancies in what we're being told and shown. I too fear for our children and wonder what they will be taught about our generation and the obstacles we have faced and overcome. If an American win was broadcast as a loss, found out to be a win, but not re-broadcast to correct the mistake then what else don't we know? What else happened for either side(s) that is misinformation but we've already accepted as the truth?

McCain was the first interview I saw that I truly felt had truth in it and wasn't forced or opinionated. He did state some opinions but there is also the undeniable fact that he was a POW. Maybe because he's a well-known politician now it makes it easier to relate to or believe him, because we immediately recognize his name and face. As with every war there is a reason it started and more than one side. I don't think either side is blameless in anything but a company such as PBS, in my opinion, should have shown more sides to the story and could have portrayed American soldiers in a more positive light. I enjoyed your response to the forum and appreciate the points that you brought up. I feel like at this point we are both at a similar place mentally in this class and I enjoy reading more work from you!

-Chelsae

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Continuing the discussion; Considering Sources



by Jacob Nelson - Wednesday, October 23, 2013, 11:29 PM

After reading the New York Times article and watching the second portion of the Accuracy In Media program it has become apparent that we have been presented with conflicting pieces of information. In general the Accuracy In Media television program was strongly opinionated and seemed to express the most conservative viewpoint of the Vietnam War. For example, the Accuracy In Media program viewed the Vietnam War as a noble cause worth fighting. This differed from the other sources of information we have read such as the New York Times article and the PBS series in the sense that these two outlets of information never formed an opinion like this on the war. Instead of claiming the legitimacy of the Vietnam War these programs presented facts so that the viewer could then formulate their own opinion. Another piece of conflicting information I found intriguing was the accusation of the Accuracy In media program that the American media contributed to the loss of the Vietnam War. I personally thought this alone was a bold interpretation of the effect that the media had on this war. In my opinion the PBS series went into greater detail about the role of the American media in the Vietnam War, which then painted a more detailed picture. This differed from the Accuracy In Media piece because it seemed to be much more opinionated and partially blamed the media for defeat. Lastly, I thought it was interesting that the Accuracy In Media program accused the

PBS series of painting a dark image of American soldiers and calling them drug addicts. In my opinion the PBS series didn't present the majority of American soldiers as racial bigots or drug addicts nor did they accuse our soldiers of being ineffective. Rather, the PBS series took a more balanced approach of describing American soldiers from a wide range of the spectrum. While the PBS series did indeed note the fact that some soldiers were using drugs in Vietnam it didn't accuse all of our troops as being drug addicts.

After absorbing all of the provided class sources I think it is safe to say that not one of them is solely right. It is important to take into consideration all of these sources before formulating an educated opinion. While I do believe that I have taken more valuable information from the Herring book and PBS series, I think it has also been valuable to consider some of the perspectives of the Accuracy In Media program.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Continuing the discussion; Considering Sources

by Josey Grant - Friday, October 25, 2013, 3:34 PM

I thought the same thing when this assignment was asked of us. I then realised that the teacher is trying to get us as individuals to not just believe blindly what we are told to read or whats in front of us. This made me see this project with a hole new meaning.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Continuing the discussion; Considering Sources

by Barbara Lay - Saturday, October 26, 2013, 8:07 AM

I have always been told not to believe everything you hear or read in the media, and this confirms that. How do we trust news anymore? Even watching CNN or FOX or MSNBC, it seems they all have their own biased opinions even now.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Continuing the discussion; Considering Sources

by Kristin Sledge - Sunday, October 27, 2013, 9:13 PM

I agree with you that you shouldn't believe everything that you hear or read in the media but I think it extends so far beyond the news aspect. We can plainly see the agenda on FOX news or on the other channels, however to simply think that the news are the only ones

omitting truths would be a bit of a stretch. How about the publishing houses that omit truths in their textbooks hoping that a history teacher with their own agenda will pick it up and place it in the fall line up?

Even hearing a story from your best friends can vary on their own agenda, so it's really hard to pick through things that we have not experienced for ourselves. We can hope and dream that somewhere, someone has made an account of history that is true and accurate without an agenda towards the US or Vietnam and just told it like it was. Or we can build our own beliefs about it with what we're given, check on facts presented in one form of media against another and hoping that they will match up to start forming a proper picture.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Continuing the discussion; Considering Sources

by Nicole Reese - Friday, October 25, 2013, 4:20 PM

I agree with you, I have taken more of my valuable information from both books though. I find the PBS series and AIM program a little too conflicting for me. Since I started this class with very minimal knowledge of the Vietnam war, it's been kind of a struggle for me to consider all of our sources and to determine which one I feel like I can trust the most. You're right though, considering ALL of the sources collectively will better help me to form an educated opinion. Also these forums have become a great source for me personally, as it has been very helpful reading other's thoughts/questions. We even have some people on these forums who their family members actually served in the war, which provides great insight!

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Re: Continuing the discussion; Considering Sources

by Barbara Lay - Saturday, October 26, 2013, 8:12 AM

I will read something in the book, or see something on the video, and tell my husband about it, and he will say that's not what happened. He served in the war, and I would hope he would have some knowledge gained during his time there. He does not talk much about it, and I know there are things that happened he does not like to talk about so I don't pressure him to. I am not sure, but if he did, would he tell everything the way it actually happened? I don't know, maybe facts would get altered because he wouldn't want us to know what really went on.

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Re: Continuing the discussion; Considering Sources

by Jacob Nelson - Sunday, October 27, 2013, 2:19 PM

Barbara, thank you for your input and thank your husband for his service. I think you bring up a valid point. A first person account of the Vietnam War (while undoubtedly difficult to share) can be far more truthful and enlightening than anything that can be learned in a textbook or television program. For this very reason I have mainly focused on the personal anecdotes and writings of people who were fighting in this war on both sides as my main source of information. When learning about a historical event it is incredibly important to consider both first person and third person accounts into consideration before forming your personal opinion of what may have taken place.

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