

Dan Duerfeldt

HST 195

Assignment 2

Part 1

Clark Dougan: Memorial Day 1968

After reading part four, this story by Clark Dougan struck me as a turning point in the war. The story starts with Clark as a high school student in Ohio. Because of his plans to go to college, Clark seems to have a disconnected attitude about the war in Vietnam at this time and his only reminder is the periodic obituaries of locals KIA the principle would read over the school intercom. He recalls having a conversation with a classmate named Greg Fischer who intended to sign up for the Marines. Fischer states: "I'm going to get drafted anyhow, so if I'm going to get drafted, why not the best, you know (Appy, 305)?" After graduation, Dougan goes off to college and is "really kind of oblivious of the war (Appy, 305)."

The turning point of Dougan's story seems to be a personal one, but it reflects how many Americans felt at the time. "On Memorial Day 1968, I opened up the *Cleveland Press* and there was an editorial on the front page with the title 'He Was Only 19 - Did You Know Him?' (Appy, 305)" It was a story about his classmate "Greg Fischer and how he died at Dong Ha up near the DMZ. It just hit me like a hammer. I remembered that conversation in the homeroom and it suddenly had this profound significance (Appy, 305)." "I think that was the moment when 'Middle - America' really turned against the war (Appy, 306);" and to Dougan personally. It is clear that reading about the death of his classmate was a turning point for Dougan about Vietnam that was shared by countless others.

Part 2

Daniel Ellsberg

In 1971 Daniel Ellsberg, "a former Defense Department official, released the Pentagon Papers, seven thousand pages of secret documents about the history of U.S. decision making in Vietnam from 1945 to 1968 (Appy, 432)." After reading the study, Ellsberg stated that "it stripped away all legitimate rationales for what we were doing in Vietnam (Appy, 432)." The leaking of the report resulted in the Watergate scandal and President Nixon's resignation. Ellsberg states: "Without Watergate I think Nixon might have been able to keep up the bombing of Vietnam indefinitely. I think Watergate shortened the war by at least a couple of years and possibly much longer (Appy, 436)." Daniel Ellsberg's story represents an ending or a beginning of an end to the Vietnam war because U.S. policy makers were forced to change direction as a result of leaked Pentagon Papers.

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far below
min
req's

good story choice, but no outside info used

big claims in need of much more analysis