

Assignment 2

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Part 1

The story given by Douglas Kinnard is a strong example of a turning point in how the war began to be viewed as a "losing proposition" (Appy pg. 322) by him and those in commanding positions during the war. He made a career of his military service and retired as a one-star general in 1970 after serving two tours in Vietnam, but he knew that the Vietnam War was a losing battle by the end of his first tour in 1967. He had volunteered to serve in Vietnam and upon arriving there in 1966 he described himself as "gung-ho" about performing his duties, but by the end of this first tour in 1967 he had "decided that the war was a losing proposition, that it could go on forever. I was glad to go home and be disassociated with it." (Appy pg. 322-323). He did not want to be involved with the war any longer, but he was called upon to serve another tour in 1969 and once again faced the same focus on "body count" and "kill ratio" that had frustrated him in his first tour.

He shared that his feelings were not uncommon among commanders in Vietnam. A survey that he conducted of army generals revealed that many of them did not understand the objective of the war. Asking questions such as; "Why were we doing this? What was the overall purpose?" (Appy pg. 321) These questions point attention upward toward the President and senior military officers. Kinnard explained that the generals questioned the political reasons given by the President and he expressed his own disappointment in the senior military officers for giving in to political pressure, which he felt handicapped the armed services.

In conclusion, Douglas Kinnard was a man who devoted his life and career to serve his country with an attitude of devotion, but when he came face-to-face with the realities of what was happening in Vietnam, he had a "turning point" and began to question (along with many other generals whom he surveyed) what The United States had to gain from the approach that was being taken in Vietnam.

"I wasn't disillusioned with the military, I was disillusioned with the nature of the war and what it was doing to our country." Douglas Kinnard (Appy pg. 321)

Good part 1
... missing some outside support from
Herring or videos.

Part 2

The fall of Saigon is the obvious physical end of the war and the story about that event by Frank Snepp (Appy pg. 496-504) is one of the most fascinating accounts in the

book so far. However, considering an "ending" to include the end result of the physical, emotional, and social toll that the country was experiencing at that time gives a deeper aspect of what had been accomplished by the war's end. The loss of the war from a social standpoint may be the most damaging and ongoing affect that it had on American society and the story by Beverly Gologorsky (Appy pg. 413-417) reflects the ultimate loss of the hearts and minds of Americans. It seems that U.S. tactics in Vietnam not only caused many of the people in South Vietnam to side with the communist North, but it also caused the same response by many protesters in America. While The United States was focusing on defeating communism in Southeast Asia, they were being flanked by ideology and communist views were taking hold back at home.

The story given by Gologorsky describes how she went from a seemingly mild-mannered typist for a nursing magazine to being consumed by the anti-war movement. Appy describes her activism as being "all-consuming", and she spoke of putting all other aspects of her life on hold, such as starting a family, until the war was coming to an end.

There was a hint of the communist beliefs of the people whom she surrounded herself with when she recounted sharing a home with twenty fellow protesters and all of them slept on the floor while refusing the beds. When she asked why, she was told, "That's too bourgeois." (Appy pg. 414) This is a term that is often connected with the communist manifesto to describe the materialistic middle class. This is an odd statement if the focus of their protest was just the Vietnam War. She grew to embrace the pro-communist view in addition to her opposition to U.S. involvement. This is evidenced by naming her daughter after Madame Nguyen Thi Binh who was the foreign minister for the North Vietnam National Liberation Front. (Appy pg. 413) She also cofounded a women's organization called the Madame Binh Brigade.

In conclusion, the end result of the war was that many young people in The United States adopted communist political views because of the war. The same U.S. military actions that turned many South Vietnamese to sympathize with the communist North had the same effect on some of America's youth of the era. Gologorsky was one of these youth who started out disliking the war, but soon became drawn into a movement that called for political revolution. Appy states that, "She doesn't want closure on the Vietnam War" so that it is not repeated, but it also seems as though those were the good-old-days for her; a romantic and exciting time of revolution. The end of the war left America more polarized and socially fractured with wounds that would endure for a lifetime.

Part 2 Story choice
1st time even, in 10 years, that
a student wrote on this story
as an ending. I accept you
premise - - - convincingly written