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Week 3 Forum

Accuracy in Media

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Accuracy in Media

by Joe Escobar – Saturday, April 9, 2016, 9:27 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Accuracy in Media topic.

To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post. To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

IMPORTANT – SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post, something that describes which question(s) you are addressing . Do NOT simply leave it RE: Accuracy in Media

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A Hero and a Mandarin

by Daniel Long – Monday, April 11, 2016, 4:26 PM

A Hero and a Mandarin

Between the two historical video documents, “Vietnam: A Television History,” and “AIM” video, each one fights off with the other on historical inaccuracy’s and tries to convey the right Historical story that went along with the Vietnam war. However, the point brought up regularly by each video is that of the rescuer known as Ho Chi Minh, who was a communist, and the American puppet, Ngo Dinh Diem, who wasn’t one at all.

In the “Vietnam: A Television History” PBS documentary, they tell the audience on many occasions, how Ho Chi Minh was a Nationalist turned to communism in 1949. “He was a nationalist, turned communist...but a nationalist first hand” (PBS video). The video later shows Ho Chi Minh as the leader of the Guerilla group known as “Viet-Minh” who opposed the French rule over Vietnam and wanted to free there country like their ancestors did before them (PBS video). They make Ho chi minh in the end sound as though he was the hero who ultimately saved the Vietnamese people from the Japanese and French. “During that time of famine, the Viet-Minh captured rice and distributed it to villagers, gaining followers” (PBS video).

On the other side of the coin, the AIM video states the wild inaccuracy’s that the PBS special put out, including the idea that Ho Chi Minh could be a respected and favored man among the Vietnamese people, Dr. Lobe states that “the villain in the PBS special is South Vietnam and America...and you need a hero in a story, and they decide to put Ho Chi Minh on the podium” (AIM video). They go on to tell that Ho Chi Minh was Communist first and stayed that way until the end. Dolf Doge says that "Ho Chi was a French communist in 1920, and went to Moscow to the Lenin Institute where he became a soviet Citizen and graduates in 1925." (AIM Video). Mr. Doge later says that Ho Chi Minh betrayed many nationalist, once they were apparent to Ho, he sold them out once they crossed the Vietnamese border in exchange for gold (AIM Video).

From Episode two of “Vietnam: A Television History” they open with the election of Ngo Dinh Diem who was appointed Prime Minster by the United Sates in 1954, however, they put the title of “Americas Mandarin” to his name. Throughout the episode they convey Diem as a stubborn and ignorant ruler who doesn’t listen to the U.S.

agreements, but wants to win over the people, and anyone who gets in his way, he will use force. They demonstrate this with constant riots around Vietnam, one involving Li Viem, a giant drug and gang lord who threatened to rebel against the government, though Diem was shown to burn a bonfire of Opium in response to this threat (PBS video).

Although this could be true or not, the AIM video, briefly addresses this point with Edward G. Lansdale who was a Major General in the USAF. He states that when he talked to some Vietnamese around him to find out some information about Diem they said, “He was very well known. Everyone that knew him said he was exceptionally honest, strong character, and felt that he was the best known living nationalist in the country and better known than Ho Chi Minh” (AIM video).

Each video conveyed different opinions about how they saw these two important figures that led towards the Vietnam War. Ho Chi Minh; reflected as the hero in Vietnam and shown to aid the people toward a free country in the video, “Vietnam: A television History.” While the video by AIM views Ho Chi Minh as a communist who began in France in 1920, and later back to his home, here he changed his name in 1941 and became a large communist in Vietnam who was part of the Soviet Union.

While Ngo Dinh Diem in the PBS video is seen as a stubborn and ignorant leader who wanted to express his power of military force to any protestors who arose to fight against him. Though, in the AIM video, he is briefly described as a genuinely honest man with a strong character, who is considered a renowned nationalist among his peers. These two sides of the coin for each man, expresses a true unawareness to the public eye that the PBS special portrays, while the AIM video only confuses the audience more with its backlash towards the PBS television special. So, the public is left in a more confused state than where it began.

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Contradicting Information
by [Brittany Aldinger](#) – Tuesday, April 12, 2016, 7:44 PM

The most alarming contradiction I recognized while watching Television’s Vietnam: The real Story, was while I was listening to Mr. Dolf Droge, of the AID, makes a statement at 11 minutes and 14 seconds, where he claims that the Vietnamese people didn’t have any idea who Ho Chi Minh was until after a year of him ruling Vietnam. If this is the case then how come “on September 2, 1945, some four hundred thousand Vietnamese” (Appy pg. 38) gather in the Ba Dinh Square of Hanoi to listen to what Ho Chi Minh had to say? By the end of his speech Ho asks his onlookers if they could hear him clearly, and the crowd enthusiastically roared back at him “YES!” I can’t imagine the people flooding to the square and being so supportive of a leader whom they have never heard of before.

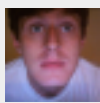
A few years after this speech, America spent a great deal of time working to get Diem’s name out to the South Vietnamese, so that he might be equally as known as Ho Chi Minh. “The AFV hired a major New York public relations firm to build support for South Vietnam and Diem” (Herring pg. 80). Diem went around the country meeting the Vietnamese people and letting them get familiar with him, as their Prime Minister. America thought it to be a good way for him to make friends with the South Vietnamese, and reassured him of this. This makes it clear to me that Ho Chi Minh was very well known amongst almost all of the Vietnamese, more so than Diem, unlike what they claim in Television’s Vietnam: The Real Story, at 19 minutes and 15 seconds.

Today it is fairly easy to be mislead on the internet, but our technology advancements can also be used as a great tool to look up proper facts and information. In history it is important to realize that contradicting information is bound to happen because of the different opinions that have been formed over the years, and what perspective you may be looking into the information from. It is not easy to deal with but thankfully our instructor provided us with two text books to find relating information and facts. I personally love that America’s Longest War has all of the citing at the bottom of every single page. It makes me confident as a student and as a reader that Herring is using real facts and information for me to put to use in my studies of the Vietnam War.

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Uncle Ho



by [Timothy Eckley](#) – Sunday, April 17, 2016, 6:07 PM

I think Droge makes a pretty extreme claim when he says that no one really knew who Ho Chi Minh was and if this is true; it's startling how quickly he could amass such a powerful following. Even being endeared as Uncle Ho in the Vietnamese community tells me that there was some sort of comradery shared with him and his followers in Vietnam. He must have certainly been much more well known than Diem if there was such an effort to spread word to citizens in South Vietnam about their new leader. These efforts even failed as his own generals organized a coup against him and had him killed. If he were so revered and well known, you would think his men would hold some standard of loyalty.

Along with this, if Diem were so well known; would we have been aware of his rogue tendencies and found a better fit for the leader of South Vietnam? He seemed to avoid any advice we gave him even when we publicly disapproved of a large amount of his actions. Perhaps I'm leaping when I say we should've been aware of his tendencies if he was a well known figure, but it's definitely possible. I agree with how misleading the internet and media can be. The Herring book is a great tool to scratch the surface of what information may be falsified or interpreted wildly. We can simply check the sources cited and make sure that the presentation is consistent with the source.

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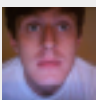
Re: Accuracy in Media

by [Mathew Bohman](#) – Wednesday, April 13, 2016, 9:53 AM

For me Dolf Droge (AIM) laid claim that PBS glossed over who Ho Chi Minh was and how he became to be known as Ho Chi Minh. As I read The Longest War (Herring pg 5/6) it had covered that Ho Chi Minh was formerly Nyguyen Ai Quoc which I had not previously known. I had always thought Ho Chi Minh was Ho Chi Minh. As I watched PBS (Episode 1) they referenced him as being born Nguyen Tat Thanh. It also stated he changed his name to Nguyen Ai Quoc about 1917. (PBS Ep 1) It also covered how people came to know that Ho Chi Minh was formerly Nyguyen Ai Quoc after a conference to form the Vietminh and he sent out a letter calling for support. Dolf Droge (AIM) laid claim that it wouldn't be too hard for PBS to point this out since history was clear. I think for the most part they did and Dolf Droge was incorrect in his statements that they didn't. I did note that Dolf Droge (AIM) covered a portion of Ho Chi Minh's life from about 1920 to 1941 that was not covered in the video (PBS Ep 1) and was only mentioned slightly in the book (Herring Pg 13).

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Loebs' interesting take and Pike's laziness

by [Timothy Eckley](#) – Wednesday, April 13, 2016, 10:04 AM

I'm incredibly disappointed by the first few minutes of this video. As an academic and an individual trying to make a case for the injustices that the PBS series did for the Vietnam War, Douglas Pike could've chosen his words much more carefully. He examines the four promises made by the producers of the show in their proposal with a lackluster approach. When you are being contentious, you must warrant your arguments. You must make some sort of point as to why these promises weren't upheld, rather than just simply saying they weren't. He doesn't do this with any of his contentions for the promises, but I'll just use one as an example. In promise three, they said that the PBS series would contribute to the healing of national esteem in the post war era. Pike, very lazily states, "it simply doesn't do this and doesn't display anything on screen Americans could be proud of." That's the beginning and end of his point, no impact of his conclusion, no warrant or example of his argument, just an empty statement that we are expected to just believe. This wouldn't be so much of a problem except it's right at the beginning of the video and sets a tone, for me as a debater, of a lazy production. If the video is going to just make empty claims then I don't expect to receive much education from it.

The evaluation towards the end of the video from Dr. Bruce Loebs is much more detailed and I find it to be the most blatant contradiction in the series for me. As his analysis on the denial of elections from Diem paints a very different picture than I'm seeing from the PBS series so far. He states that no elections were actually ever promised unless they are supervised by the United Nations in order to maintain the freedom those elections are meant to have. Even citing an Eisenhower quote about how we are not bound by the Geneva Accords. The PBS series makes Diem appear as a tyrannical villain that was power hungry and denying any advice from the United States. When presented with conflicting information such as this, we should cross reference as much as possible

to get a clearer image of what is being presented and what is fact. This can be done by further investigating sources that are cited not only in the videos, but in the books as well. We can't only read the textbooks and watch videos, but independently delve into the sources cited by these publications. This is to verify the legitimacy of the information provided and make sure it wasn't misinterpreted in some way.

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Re: Loeb's interesting take and Pike's laziness
by [Mathew Bohman](#) – Wednesday, April 13, 2016, 12:57 PM

Timothy, I have to agree with you regarding Pike's laziness. I didn't really feel the need to address it because it struck me as a "just cuz" response. One can't really debate or have open communication with that approach so I generally just ignore such statements. You, however did a nice job addressing him.

I also agree with you that checking and cross referencing to get a better understanding of what is fact and what is opinion is important so as to not blindly accept what you are being force fed.

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Can't let it slide
by [Timothy Eckley](#) – Saturday, April 16, 2016, 2:10 PM

I think it's super important that we address arguments like this and point out their faults. Statements without claims or warrants are passed off as true in the media in many forms too many times each day. It's even more disappointing when someone which as much clout as Pike uses them and expect people to simply believe them, which happens a lot. The first 5 minutes of the AIM video made me so angry that I had to cover it first. I'm such a heavy believer in backing up contentions that I tend to spend more time critiquing the argument itself than actually trying to dispute it, because the main point to a video like the AIM one is education; no education is actually taking place if they choose to relay information like that.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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The Vietnam War Was Simply Complicated
by [Robert Taylor](#) – Wednesday, April 13, 2016, 4:11 PM

The most glaring inconsistency i found in the AIM video was the Ho Chi Minh’s past connections to international Communism. The documentary tells about Minh’s soviet citizenship in the 1920s when he studied at the Lenin Institute in Moscow. After this in 1926 he apparently went to China as an international communist organizer. Although the PBS documentaries acknowledged the Ho Chi Minh’s Communist agenda and ties, they were somewhat glossed over. The AIM video attempts show that there was a much larger communist threat than the PBS documentary showed. I was surprised that in the section we viewed of the AIM video that they didn’t seem to present more obvious flaws in the PBS documentary. Instead of blatant flaws in information, the AIM video simply added more information that doesn’t necessarily fit the narrative of the PBS broadcast. I don’t believe however that this new information was nearly as damning to the integrity of the documentary as Charleston Heston was implying. It seems more like this was a complicated war, and no matter what there is going to be conflicting information and strong opinions on both sides.

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Agreed
by [Timothy Eckley](#) – Wednesday, April 13, 2016, 5:25 PM

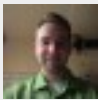
I'm surprised that they left out so much information about Ho Chi Minh. Even if they were to be portraying him as some hero of Vietnam, they covered a lot of information about the past prior to our involvement in the war. It's difficult to choose what information is the most significant when you're trying to condense all of it into an 11 episode series, but his previous experiences that lead to his communist agenda seem very relevant to me. It would have been nice to have been provided more information than he had simply been a

deckhand and cook throughout Europe before coming back to Vietnam. That is not nearly as important as the history that was omitted.

I did notice that they didn't directly refute much, but included information that was possibly left out. Which is why I'm severely disappointed in the way the video sets the tone. The unwarranted claims by Douglas Pike weren't elaborated on later in the video, which would've made that introduction much more legitimate in my opinion. They simply set the table as a completely false episodic series and didn't delve deeper later on, only adding more information. The points of the series they refuted seemed very minor for the most part.

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Re: The Vietnam War Was Simply Complicated

by [Daniel Long](#) – Friday, April 15, 2016, 5:46 PM

Robert,

I have to agree that there were some glaring information that was missing from both the AIM and the PBS documentary considering Ho Chi Minh. With the PBS documentary they give information saying that he was loved among the people as a nationalist and leader of the "Viet-Minh" (PBS video). however, the AIM video doesn't mention about the Viet-Minh, leaving out a good chunk of information about how Ho Chi Minh was or wasn't a nationalist hero among the people. Even though, the AIM video later tells the audience that Ngo Dinh Diem was more liked amongst the people, this information again is conflicted with the PBS video that marks Diem as a stubborn and forceful leader(PBS video).

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Re: The Vietnam War Was Simply Complicated

by [Gabrielle Heehn](#) – Friday, April 15, 2016, 10:03 PM

Hi Robert!

Although technically I'm not allowed to say I agree because that was one of the rules for our forums posts I just want to say I AGREE with the fact about the conflicting information and strong opinions on both sides. I think the reason why it was glossed over was because 1.) media can do and say whatever it wants and 2.) it may of be too much to explain and far to complicated for us and everyone to understand just by watching the film. To my the Vietnam war was just a political mess, Our leaders didn't know how to handle the situation we got ourselves in because it was already a mess before we go involved.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: The Vietnam War Was Simply Complicated

by [Joe Escobar](#) – Thursday, April 21, 2016, 9:37 AM

Gabrielle,

Of course students are allowed to agree with one another, especially if one student has made a convincing, well-analyzed argument, complete with citations to support their position. I reply that simply says "I agree with what you said", and doesn't add anything else, such reasons why (perhaps with more citations of different sources) or fails to provide another historical example that also supports the original poster's position, will not earn any points.

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Re: The Vietnam War Was Simply Complicated

by [Mathew Bohman](#) – Saturday, April 16, 2016, 8:44 PM

My father served in Vietnam from 1968 to 1969. I bring this up about my father because I know my father influenced the way I viewed Vietnam and what I took from the history lessons I learned in school even before he told me anything about his experiences. With all that being said I get to my point about the media and responding to some very well stated points and comments.

I can accept inaccuracies and biases in media when it comes to entertainment or telling a story. I can understand biases when people are forced against their will. When we start telling the history of events those biases need to be put aside and the history needs to be told fairly and evenly from all sides. The inaccuracies of events and facts either by acts of omission or commission should not be tolerated. Both PBS and AIM are responsible in that sense. Red scare or not, liberal or conservative. Facts are facts and they shouldn't be altered to fit an agenda when telling history.

Thank you.

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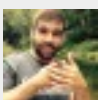
Re: The Vietnam War Was Simply Complicated
by Robert Taylor – Sunday, April 17, 2016, 9:49 AM

Good morning Mathew, thank you for the response.

I think it is really cool that you are taking this class and learning about the war that your father served in. Im sure it is going to make for some interesting conversations and a unique perspective on the Vietnam War.

Regarding your point about how inaccuracies in the form of omission or commission should not be tolerated. I agree to a point, yet this standard does not seem to be met in most tellings of history. As time goes on we find out more and more that almost all history has been written with an agenda. Think of the story you were told about Christopher Columbus as a child compared to the reality that is taught now. Throughout history societies have told history in a way that makes them look good. With the PBS documentary the big difference is that the agenda was to show Americas possible mistake instead of portraying us in an only favorable way. Not that I am defending misinformation, but i absolutely prefer a narrative that points out our faults over one that only defends our actions.

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Re: The Vietnam War Was Simply Complicated
by Bo Costello – Sunday, April 17, 2016, 6:15 PM

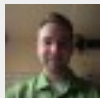
There is going to be some slight inconsistencies in most information that we are given these days. There seems to always be 2 or more sides to every story, and from the 2 sides there are hundreds of different angels to approach from. When learning history, we are trying to take information that was collected 50 plus years ago and consider it credible. When comparing these two films, I found it hard to take the AIM video as seriously as the PBS, because there is a sense of urgency to prove some other sources information flawed, but the information they presented doesn't hold enough proof to show that PBS was glorifying Ho Chi Minh. I thought of Ho as a communist since the first episode, I had to actually go back to listen to why AIM was implying that PBS lacked facts on Ho's past.

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Does the media put in what they want us to hear?
by Gabrielle Heehn – Wednesday, April 13, 2016, 4:54 PM

I've come to the conclusion that the media says what it wants to portray and wants the viewers to believe because magazines, television, and newspapers would never lie, right? I'm a victim of believing everything that is said on the media so I can't say much! The most glaring contradiction was how PBS discussed the elections and the Geneva agreement. In the short clip they mention that the elections were supposed to be held in 1956, but PBS says that the U.S. and South Vietnam just renamed the election. They said they do this because they wanted to legitimize Ho Chi Minhs aggressiveness. I think the two textbooks that we're reading for the class really help us because first we get the historical stand point that gives us dates and quotes and then here and there the author will put in his opinion, but to me the Appy book really helps because those are people who were there and experiencing what was going on and I know that they're not going to give false information or biased. They're going to tell us as the readers how it really was over there and that's promising.



Re: Does the media put in what they want us to hear?

by [Daniel Long](#) – Friday, April 15, 2016, 5:56 PM

Gabrielle,

Media can manipulate and bend the rules of truth when writing or filming a story, but that's what makes them more interesting. Not that I agree with the bent information, quite the opposite. I feel the same way about the books we are assigned, especially, the Appy book. It really gives us the "truth" about how when imagine the war experiences from both sides. With the story of "Mick", the first story, it throws the audience into the view of a soldier. While the video of "Why Vietnam?" glorifies the war and supports Americas mission to restore peace to the world, the Appy book, instead, gives us first person perspective. With "Mick," he say, "you know, were not fighting a war; were out here campaigning" (pg. 27). This, in my opinion, really shows the true red, white, and blue know how.



Re: Does the media put in what they want us to hear?

by [Gabrielle Heehn](#) – Friday, April 15, 2016, 10:08 PM

How I interpreted Mick stating that we weren't there fighting a war, but there campaigning..to me that made it seem like we were just trying to show how much power we have and also at the same time trying to bring our modernized ways and western culture over to SE Asia where we simply had no being to be over there anyways. We had more ties with Europe than we did South Vietnam to begin with. And as far as the media always bending the truth a little. I wish they wouldn't either!



Re:ACCURATE HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE? OR PERHAPS PERCEPTION OF TRUTH?

by [Philip Highwood](#) – Wednesday, April 13, 2016, 6:03 PM

If in fact, we can have an accurate account of any historical event; we have to discuss memory issues, miss–representing information that we feel to be true, the media and what they want us to hear; or possibly, what they don’t want us to hear.

For discussion, lets start with memory issues and the facts that some information might be miss–represented due to numerous concussions, age or other factors like mental illness or brain disease. Therefore, when we read stories about how an actual event unfolded from someone who was actually there; we can gain a little knowledge however, facts may be enhanced much like a “fish tale”

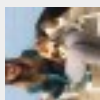
Furthering our discussion, let’s discus the role the media has on representation or perception of the facts. We have many stories or representations of factual events and how they took place. Or should we say there are two sides to every story? For discussion, let’s re–visit Ho Chi Mihn and communism. The perception that he is and was an extreme communist and worked directly with the Soviet Union and China; with the intent to bring communism to the entire world, may have been amiss–representation of his intention. All the while American President Kennedy and Vice President Johnson show a power stance; as they both agree that America will “Uphold democracy and protect the little guy at all costs” (PBS 1–2–3). However, in (APPY) and in (AIM historian “Smith”) it is stated that Ho Chi Minh tried many times in the early 60’s to contact President Kennedy. Can we ever say factually that this man was wanting to bring a war to America or South Vietnam; is it factual to say that he was not wanting to work with American forces; or perhaps just reaching out to have tea and rice patties with President Kennedy?

If President Kennedy and Johnson had children (boy’s) of draft age, would they feel the same way; in preaching “AT ANY PRICE”? Would we have even been involved with Vietnam?

Philip Highwood

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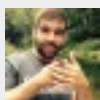
Perspective is key

by [Brittany Aldinger](#) – Friday, April 15, 2016, 7:06 PM

It is crucial to think about the perspective that the information we are being given is portrayed. The author uses methodology and technique to sway us to think about issues or information the way they are forming for us. As in the controversial film we just watched the producer interviews men who have strong opposing opinions on the subjects and issues discussed about Ho and the goings on in Vietnam. I noticed the arguments were not brought to light in chronological order. There was a lot of jumping back and forward between dates in the film, making it easier to lose sight of facts and be lead to believe their inaccurate arguments. While it may be easy today to recognize foolishness of the situation, is it always so easy to recognize while the situation is at hand?

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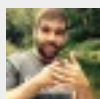
Re:ACCURATE HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE? OR PERHAPS PERCEPTION OF TRUTH?

by [Bo Costello](#) – Sunday, April 17, 2016, 7:23 PM

Hey Phillip, I wanted to address your question. That statement was very strong for supporting the draft because that is pretty much was supposedly our last option in order to maintain diplomacy. " I don't find it easy to send the flower of our youth...into battle" Johnson said in his speech (PBS ep.3) I would have to agree with you that this was a power stance. There was no sure fact stating that if Ho Chi Minh were to liberate his country, that he would push communism. This was a good example of the U.S. trying to be a part of what they consider "their business", because it's the only way to protect diplomacy in our country.

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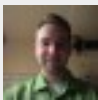
Analysis of Sources

by [Bo Costello](#) – Wednesday, April 13, 2016, 7:07 PM

Right when I thought I was starting to understand this war, everything took a twist. As in all research I quickly realized to know the truth/or best interpretation of any subject, especially history, extra research of multiple sources must be done. When watching the series, I did notice the slight softening of what might have “actually” happened. Did anyone else notice the Ho Chi Minh always look happy in the clips that they show of him? To me, the most glaring contradiction the AIM video addresses would have to be that the PBS series fails to show Ho Chi Minh’s true career involved with communism. If Ho Chi Minh was primarily a communist, then the Vietnamese might see him as a threat since communist promote violence on anti-communist (AIM, historian “Morris”). They continued call Ho Chi Ming a Soviet puppet. But in our *America’s Longest War* reading, it says that Ming was fully willing to accept help from communist, but was not willing to “subordinate Vietnamese Independence” (ALW pg. 24.) Ho Chi Minh once said, “It is better to sniff French shit for a while than eat China’s all your life.” The book did make it understood that Ho was founder of the French communist Party and the Indochinese Communist Party (ICP) (ALW pg. 6). This makes it hard to make out what Ho might have been thinking in his position. I would say that all his invested interest was to bring independence to his country, but there are also plenty of other facts that show that it might have been much deeper than that.

Another point that AIM claims that PBS missed was that mass amounts of Catholics that moved south after the Geneva Accords wasn’t primarily because of religion, that it was to get away from Ho’s violence against (AIM “hester”). The *ALW* says that “7,000” Vietnamese were pouring into predominant Buddhist South Vietnam. The PBS also states that many were fond of Ngo Dinh Diem’s catholic upbringing (PBS ep. 3). I’m sure that many of the of the Vietnamese were trying to get away from the violence, but I would be worried about Ho invading the south. Resources and religion are two of the main causes for any migration, and would say that a majority of the migrants moved due to religion.

I find that the reading from *ALW* and the videos from PBS are more similar than between PBS and AIM. The AIM video was produced in order to prove that Ho Chi Minh wasn’t as heroic as the other sources portray. I would say that Ho is a hero to some, but a villain to most.



Re: Analysis of Sources

by [Daniel Long](#) – Friday, April 15, 2016, 6:11 PM

Bo,

I agree that the PBS video glorified Ho Chi Minh as a Vietnamese hero among the people, leading them to victory over the French in 1954, when they pulled out after the defeat in Din Bien Phuh (PBS video). However, I have to say that with the deal made by the U.S. to gain intelligence from Minh to defeat the Japan is what really clouded the information and image of the United Sates who "supposedly" doesn't negotiate with terrorists. What's worse is that in Vietnam, the PBS video says that Ngo Dinh Diem was not as well known as Ho Chi Minh. This was addressed by the AIM video stating that Diem was," Highly intelligent, trustworthy, and well known among the people... one of the few nationalists still alive" (AIM video). This contradictory is what really makes you reconsider–not just this information on the Vietnam war– but all history that you read.



Re: Analysis of Sources

by [Bo Costello](#) – Saturday, April 16, 2016, 3:31 PM

He Daniel,

Since learning a lot of history over again from high school, I quickly realized the major parts that were taught differently in order to glorify the U.S. Going all the way back to the the Revolutionary and the Civil War, we were just a savage as everyone else. Your example of the U.S. making a deal with Minh is a perfect depiction of what can easily be hidden from our history. It gives justice to why there would cause for protesters to make a stand, for example in the video AIM. The protesters were disgruntled by the portrayal of the leader Ho Chi Minh that PBS presented (AIM). In episode 3 of the PBS series, historians said that it took the the U.S. to warm up to Diem, but once they saw that the people were going to back him, the U.S. supported him (episode 3 PBS). There is a lot of information to dissect, which has clouded my mind when reading other articles. The information has been getting all jumbled up. I have had to go back to try to remember what source stated what.

Thanks for the reply,

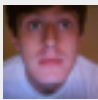
Bo Costello



How to deal with conflicting information

by [Carter Smith](#) – Wednesday, April 13, 2016, 8:59 PM

From the two videos; PBS and AIM, we find that the information is strongly conflicted. To deal with this we need to look into more then just these two videos so that we can see which side is actually telling the truth. To accomplish this task we could look into our textbooks to find information that supports either side. We can also look online at credible sources to confirm which side is actually telling the truth.



No side is lying

by [Timothy Eckley](#) – Thursday, April 14, 2016, 4:02 PM

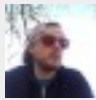
I don't think that either side is telling a dishonest story. I think it's more likely that the individuals in the AIM video are not happy with the information that was omitted in the PBS series. However, I'm not sure how extensively the AIM video can cover the information that was supposedly omitted from the PBS series in just 30 minutes when there are 11 hours of content in the PBS series.

When you say that we find that the information is strongly conflicted, what portions of the videos seem to conflict the most to you? I think there are some great examples in the AIM video and some extremely

underwhelming examples as well, when it comes to why the PBS series wasn't as strong as it could have been.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: No side is lying

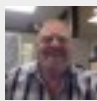
by [Robert Taylor](#) – Friday, April 15, 2016, 5:53 PM

I absolutely agree that the examples in the AIM video were extremely underwhelming. Even the evidence of Ho Chi Minh's ties to international Communism didn't convince me that our actions in Vietnam were any more correct than i previously thought. In 1983 when the AIM video was released there were still a lot of people who grew up under the Red Scare, but as far as I'm concerned Communism is just another form of government. I understand that there has been a lot of bad done in the name of Communism, yet the same could be said about Democracy, or any religious group at that. It reminds me of how our politicians currently use the word "terrorist" to justify whatever they want.

I did a little research on the AIM video after my initial post and found out that it is actually 2 hours long. Although this does leave some room for more information, I would imagine that it is more of the same. The one surprising thing was that i didn't find much from the creators of the PBS documentary defending themselves after the AIM documentary was released. All i could find searching google is that PBS stands by their original documentary, and aired the AIM documentary in an attempt to be fair.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: No side is lying

by [Philip Highwood](#) – Saturday, April 16, 2016, 2:10 PM

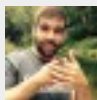
Robert,

You know, interestingly enough I have to agree with you. I don't think that either side is lying either. I am most certain that the PBS documentary did not intentionally falsify information. I do however, feel as if we as Americans might never have full disclosure of the facts. When discussing facts of history before we were alive; one also has to discuss facts of history that we lived. For instance, lets discuss Osama Bin Laden, and Al-Queda. Conflicting reports state that America sent money to OBL and only when our Government started stealing Saudi oil did OBL become an enemy of ours. Did we cause 9/11? Did America– (President's Kennedy and Johnson) ignore Ho Chi Minh; ultimately involving us in a War with no meaning. War is hell!

Philip Highwood

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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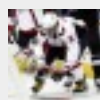
Re: No side is lying

by [Bo Costello](#) – Sunday, April 17, 2016, 7:29 PM

Yeah, I don't think that PBS wasn't intentionally trying to botch the war. It seemed as if though they were trying to present information with out being completely biased with there opinion. Writing a script for such a touchy part of history would be extremely difficult. Imagine the amount of fact checking that must go into a video series such as PBS's. I think that AIM had it easy, they were just saying that PBS was wrong without backing it up completely with reliable sources. That is why we must refer to textbooks such as the ones for this class.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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PBS depiction of Ho as a Nationalist instead of a Communist

by [Jonathan Logue](#) – Wednesday, April 13, 2016, 9:15 PM

What I found interesting in the AIM video was how they pointed out the fact that Ho was depicted as a Nationalist

instead of a Communist. Seeing as that Ho in 1930 founded the Indochinese Communist Party(ICP).(Herring 6), I find interesting that PBS was trying to not call him a Communist even though he had founded a Communist Party in the Region. PBS trying to depict South Vietnam and America as the "bad guys" in these situations makes me think about how many people look at what people look at in all wars. If the war is not just to them then we are seen as bad, but if the war is what beliefs they favor then it is alright to carry out.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2

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Re: PBS depiction of Ho as a Nationalist instead of a Communist

by [Daniel Long](#) – Saturday, April 16, 2016, 10:23 AM

Jonathan,

It was interesting and perplexing to consider why the PBS series has made Ho Chi Minh a hero among the people of Vietnam with the rebel group "Viet-Minh". Although they did say he was considered both in the Americans viewpoint in the first episode, they somehow justify that he was the one who freed them from the French government. Even saying in the video that the "Viet-Minh" helped the people of Vietnam through the famine of 1945 in giving them rice (PBS video 1). Ho Chi Minh was a communist who attended college in Luxemburg and got a soviet passport in the 1920s. You have to question the reason why PBS would choose to justify Ho Chi Minh character.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2

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Re: PBS depiction of Ho as a Nationalist instead of a Communist

by [Philip Highwood](#) – Saturday, April 16, 2016, 1:23 PM

Jonathan,

Hello, I hope that you are out and about on such a beautiful sunshine filled day. Interestingly enough it seems as though all Wars have that "BAD GUY"; who is always the person of blame. Do you think that we as a society want to have someone to lay the blame on? Possibly it is easier that way; you know, easier to justify the tragedy of so many service men who paid the ultimate price for freedom. Ho Chi Minh might have been that scape goat as Kennedy and Johnson called the shots putting Americans at WAR. History is amazing is it not?

Philip Highwood

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Did anybody notice the bias before week 3?

by [Dustin Brown](#) – Friday, April 15, 2016, 7:58 PM

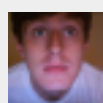
Did the bias stand out to anyone else in the first two videos, or only after watching “Television’s Vietnam, The real story”? I didn’t catch it until watching the real story video, and I believe it is because even today almost every mention of Vietnam is negative which has been ingrained in the public’s mind. I think the most glaring contradiction and probably most influential one would be the way that Ho Chi Minh was portrayed in the PBS series video “The roots of war” compared to the facts stated in “The Real Story” video. In the roots of war Ho Chi Minh is portrayed as a nationalist first, who had been known to the Vietnamese people as a freedom fighter for more than a decade. In “The Real Story” it is revealed that Ho Chi Minh did not assume that name until 1944 less than a year before he gave his independence speech in 1945. So it becomes apparent that the common Vietnamese person had no knowledge of Ho Chi Minh.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

3

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Definitely noticed a bias



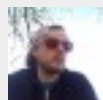
by [Timothy Eckley](#) - Saturday, April 16, 2016, 2:09 PM

I did notice a bias towards Vietnam. I even went to some friends, two specifically, that are veterans of this particular war. I expressed my feeling that it seemed like Vietnam was a country that simply wanted its independence and we probably shouldn't have gotten involved. The two people I know are open to having some conversations about the war so I wasn't very shy about asking their opinions. One of their children is also a very good friend of mine and he's loving that I relay information I learn in this class about the war. He has lead me to research other aspects of the war and I'm really excited to hear about them in the series.

I think there's a good amount of bias from the PBS series but that comes from the perspective in which they tell the story. It's very hard to remain purely objective when expressing a historical event that has so much controversy and different points of view.

Sum of ratings: [1 \(1\)](#)

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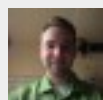
Re: Did anybody notice the bias before week 3?

by [Robert Taylor](#) - Sunday, April 17, 2016, 10:12 AM

Actually Dustin I didn't catch the bias until the PBS documentary until watching the AIM video either. I think it is important for us to be exposed to both and make create our opinions from somewhere in the middle. Lets take your example of Ho Chi Minh not taking that name until 1944. To me this is an important detail, but does this mean that he was not a nationalist? The way the AIM video portrayed this as a definitive defense of our actions is almost as bad as not including it in the PBS video in the first place. Similarly to how the AIM video used proof of Ho Chi Minh's ties to Communism as definitive reasons why he could not be a Nationalist. Is being a Nationalist or Communist mutually exclusive? I don't think that with this was especially we can make any definitive statements. I believe some of our actions were justified, and some were not, and only through an honest review of the facts will we be able to learn from this war.

Sum of ratings: [2 \(1\)](#)

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Re: Did anybody notice the bias before week 3?

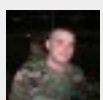
by [Daniel Long](#) - Sunday, April 17, 2016, 10:56 AM

Dustin,

I think the bias was for both the United States and Vietnam in the films, "Roots of War" and "The First War in Vietnam," also. They both seem to support Vietnam guerilla group "Viet-Minh" and show the leader, Ho Chi Minh as a rebel hero. The only video that I found to show how the U.S. are bias against the Vietnamese is the video, "Why Vietnam?" That video seemed to show patriotism to the U.S. and to justify to the claim that this war was unnecessary. "Roots of War" did have moments of showing patriotism, and showing the guerrillas to be, not only adults, but children as well. One of the soldiers in "Roots of War stated that, "back home kids are playing cowboys and Indians with fake guns and arrows, here they play for real" (PBS video). It not only shows the Vietnamese to seem savagery, but also shows the U.S. how they're lives are during the war.

Sum of ratings: [2 \(1\)](#)

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Reading between the lines

by [Dustin Brown](#) - Sunday, April 17, 2016, 8:50 PM

How can our two textbooks help us approach the information in the videos and be confident that what we're learning is historically accurate? That is a complicated question, considering throughout human history it is usually the victor who gets to tell the story, certainly omitting less flattering details while demonizing the other side. I think the best one can do to help substantiate the information in the videos is to see what parts coincide with the information in the two textbooks, and do ones best to read between the bias and personal opinion. In the Appy textbook it might be hard to separate fact from personal opinion or hatred for the other side, but if the claims can be corroborated using information from the Herring text book, and or videos then it would be safe to assume that the claim is historically accurate. We must remember that war is horrible for all involved, and when each side thinks that their cause is righteous facts and accurate accounts can become as muddled as the battlefield.

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