

Week 10 Forum Legacy

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Legacy

by Joe Escobar – Sunday, May 29, 2016, 12:03 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Legacy 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: Legacy

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Re: Legacy

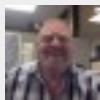
by Daniel Long – Monday, May 30, 2016, 10:33 AM

The Vietnam War was one that the United States ended up losing overall to the North Vietnamese, and losing the trust of their citizens at home. In one word it was humiliation for the United States government during that time, and it serves as a reminder that some of actions and support isn't needed. I think the overall legacy that should be taken away from this war is skepticism.

With the Vietnam war being the first televised war, it opened the gates for news casters and media to take control of events in North and South Vietnam, and show the United States people the real war that young men were signing up for. However, the response was unfortunate to see people yell at soldiers when they returned and gave them horrible names like "baby killer." And it is the domestic people, in my opinion, that see that the war is necessary or not. One of the speakers in the News Hour interview gave an important point to this same topic when she mentioned in the 1930s how Roosevelt gave an aggression speech to the American people that they should join World War two, however, they turned with negative response(News).

The U.S. people need a reason to fight, and when they see monks burning themselves, or public executions on magazines it sends a message that American soldiers and the North Vietnamese can look similar. Another point is the government. With the government and presidents in command to bomb villages and people, the people lose hope for a war that seemed unnecessary to them. And, in 1973, when the Watergate scandal came to light the people had even more reason to see that the people of the U.S. have no idea of the events going on behind monuments (white house) (Video). Then, when Robert McNamara states in his book, that the government "was wrong, we were terribly wrong" it only brings trust down farther (News).

Vietnam was one of the greatest mistakes in U.S. history and a victory to the North Vietnamese. Not just domestically, but foreign. Ho Chi Minh said that "if we can't beat them on the battle ground, then we beat them back in their land" (Video). This happened to be the case, in how the U.S. destroyed themselves with the media, and the scandals that surrounded the government, and overshadowed the peoples mind to see the negatives, and show mistrust in the government.



Re: Legacy

by Philip Highwood - Thursday, June 2, 2016, 5:47 PM

Daniel,

Wow, my friend you make some interesting points, America sadly, did lose the War in Vietnam on many fronts. The Vietcong (VC) were seasoned fighters, hardened by many years of combat; living underground; and having the will and desire to survive on there own land. That alone was reason to NOT go to Vietnam. For discussion, if you were leading a group of Soldiers to take a hill and you find out that the hill has 5 machine gun positions on top of the hill looking directly down the hill, are you going to give the command "AFFIX BAYONET'S-CHARGE"? Most likely no, not until you can take out all of the machine gun positions first. Because without the men, how will you complete the mission?

The facts that military persons were treated badly when returning home is absolutely horrendous, imagine walking in the door and your dog not coming to love you, or better yet biting your leg then walking away. Such disheartening thoughts, I will say welcome home to every Vietnam Veteran that I meet and shake their hand.

So here is a question for you Daniel. Do you consider the draft a form of communism? I look forward to hearing your thoughts.

Philip



Vietnam Veteran=Legacy

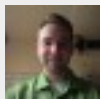
by Mathew Bohman - Tuesday, May 31, 2016, 2:22 PM

The legacy of the Vietnam War is the Vietnam Soldier. There are many, many soldiers who will never feel welcomed, appreciated, or be thanked for their service. Many of these soldiers still suffer from the damage that physical wounds did to them but also suffer silently with the mental wounds.

Almost everything we have watched and read in this class has at some point mentioned how the media played a huge part in the war and how the soldiers were treated when returning home.

In the Legacy of War the narrator in the beginning even makes a comment about US Troops killing innocents. The guest commentator that I thought had good insight and comments was Doris Kearns Goodwin. I appreciated how honest she seemed and her thoughts and comments were real. She spoke about how parents and family members really just wanted to know that their loved ones died and fought for a reason but no reasons were given.

The soldiers who served, the soldiers who died doing what they were told to do is the legacy of the Vietnam War.

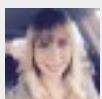


Re: Vietnam Veteran=Legacy

by Daniel Long - Sunday, June 5, 2016, 2:02 PM

Matthew,

Sadly I can't believe this either. But, then again, you can't blame the citizens. It was the first televised war, and as such, the new platform opened peoples eyes to deadly and foolish things that people can do when exhausted, angry, or distraught. I do however, feel sorry for those people who were innocent, but still were insulted by their very own people. War is terrible and it brings out the worst and best in us.



Re: Vietnam Veteran=Legacy
by [Delynne Frank](#) – Sunday, June 5, 2016, 7:29 PM

Mathew–

It was hard for me to chose which legacy from the Vietnam War most impacted the United States. I feel that many of the legacies are important and have made a lasting impact on the U.S.

I'm sticking to my original response that the most impactful legacy of the war in U.S. is the shift in how American's view the government. The lack of trust and skepticism that is now part of our society as a result of the decisions made during the Vietnam war.

However, I do agree with you that the Vietnam veterans are a huge part of the Vietnam legacy in America. They risked their lives and since the war have suffered from PTSD, drug abuse, and homelessness. "Some were made to feel the guilt for the nation's moral transgressions; others, responsibility for it's failure." (Herring; page 361)

Much of the information that we've learned this term about the Vietnam War has saddened me. Especially, learning of the treatment that the veterans received upon returning home. They should have been thanked and recognized for their bravery; instead, many people made them out to be the bad guy. I can only imagine how terrible it must have felt to come home after serving your country– only to be ridiculed.

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Kennedy's legacy was?
by [Philip Highwood](#) – Tuesday, May 31, 2016, 3:10 PM

When we discus combat/war, it is important to understand your role/the mission, or the end state; or perhaps, what we expect to gain from combat. Is this a strategic choice, or perhaps a political stand? Other questions should be addressed for instance; can we accomplish the mission? Do we know and understand our enemy? Do we know the enemy’s tactics? Do we understand the enemy’s strengths and weakness? In my opinion (humbled of course), these questions most likely were not asked or addressed or they were ignored by the political powers of President and Congress.

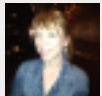
Let’s discus “Communism”, and the Vietnam War, from as far back as the Truman Administration, continuing on through Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and lastly Nixon. All Commanders in Chief, our elected political leaders, vowed to fight Communism to stick up for the little person (small countries). To ensure dominoes don’t fall, ultimately keeping the fight on foreign soil, juxtaposed on American soil.

Furthering our discussion, Americas vow to be World Police continued in succession with each new president, the passing of the torch, the legacy to protect the little guy; putting a stop to communism. Let’s discus the first pass of the torch from Eisenhower to Kennedy, where Eisenhower sent military advisors into Vietnam, the the war was passed to Kennedy; Kennedy never sent combat troops; he was assassinated and the torch/war legacy was then passed to Johnson. He then sent combat troops in. Interestingly enough Kennedy was never able to make his own legacy.

If Kennedy would have served at the vary least one term, would he have found a resolution to the Indochina, and communism other then war, and imminent death?

Philip

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Re: Kennedy's legacy was?
by [Tamara Berge](#) – Sunday, June 5, 2016, 4:30 PM

Just because Kennedy wasn’t the first to send in advisors and never technically deployed troops to Vietnam doesn’t mean he didn’t play a significant role in America’s path to war.

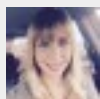
“The number of U.S. ‘advisers’ jumped from 3,205 in December 1961 to more than 9,000 by the end of 1962 (Herring p. 107).” Kennedy also hand a hand in the coup to overthrow Ngo Dinh Diem and his brother Ngo Dinh Nhu; While he didn’t directly approve it, he had knowledge of it and chose not to interfere. Because of the coup, “the United States assumed direct responsibility for the South Vietnamese government...Kennedy bequeathed to his successor a problem eminently more dangerous than the one he had inherited (Herring p. 133).” President Kennedy was also the first of our U.S. Presidents to authorize the use of defoliants, like to Agent Orange, in Vietnam to limit the use of cover for guerrillas; which ended up being used for the next ten years of the war.

While the Herring text does explain that Kennedy seemed to be on the verge of reassessing the situation in Vietnam and possibly would have had American advisers withdraw, no one can know for certain what his plan or intentions would have been.

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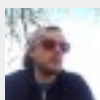
Vietnam War Legacy for the U.S.
by [Delynne Frank](#) – Wednesday, June 1, 2016, 9:47 AM

I feel that Stanley Karnow from the Legacy of War video made the best arguments about the effects of the legacies of the Vietnam War on America. He talks about how Americans didn't question their leaders– they had confidence in the government when it came to war decisions. Americans maintained this perspective until the "credibility gap" surfaced. This term referred to the gap between the publics statements and the reality on the ground. This credibility gap resulted in the American peoples realization of the lies and deception behind the Vietnam War. In regards to how Americans were now viewing their leaders, Karnow says that Americans had an "eroded faith in government." Yale Professor Jonathan Holloway reiterates statements made by Stanley Karnow. He points out the shift in the American people's views of the political process. Before the Vietnam War, Americans automatically believed the words of their President. The Vietnam War created a culture of skepticism and cynicism on American views of war.

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Re: Vietnam War Legacy for the U.S.
by [Robert Taylor](#) – Friday, June 3, 2016, 3:56 PM

Hello Delynne

It appears that we came to similar conclusions to the legacy of the Vietnam War. I like to add that this legacy of skepticism and cynicism could be a good thing. An educated skeptical population is needed to keep a powerful government in check. The deceitful way the United States entered Vietnam left a bad taste in the mouths of Americans. Soldiers didn't like the idea of fighting a war they didn't understand in a place may not of ever even heard of. Now it takes a lot more reason for America to involve itself in a conflict, because the American people are vigilant and won't accept an unjust war. Ill admit that taking this class has sure made me more skeptical of my government, and it has reenforced my belief that more young people need to vote, because they end up taking most of the responsibility for the decisions made.

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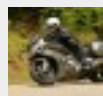
Re: Vietnam War Legacy for the U.S.
by [Delynne Frank](#) – Friday, June 3, 2016, 10:07 PM

Hi Robert,

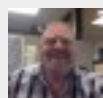
Thanks for your reply. I fell that you have made a very good point about Americans being more skeptical since the Vietnam War. I think that you're right in saying that it could be a good thing. I suppose during the years prior and leading up to the Vietnam War Americans were a bit naive when it came to the decisions made by our government. Actually, I believe that all of the antiwar protesting in American during the war was one of the first times that Americans showed great disapproval of a war. The Herring book talks about how crowds were growing in 1966 and 1967 at antiwar demonstrations and rallies and that participants were becoming more outspoken (page 218).

**Legacy of distrust***by Robert Taylor – Wednesday, June 1, 2016, 2:47 PM*

I believe the most significant legacy of the War in Vietnam is the general distrust that the public now has in the government. As Michael Beschloss pointed out in Legacy – News Hour video LBJ and Nixon were both being dishonest with the public during their campaigns. They led the public to believe that we would not be escalating the war, when they knew that it was a major possibility. In the Herring book we learn that the American public was led to believe we weren't in a war long after major escalation. This was also our first televised war, so these lies were staring people right in the face. After seeing these things play out most Americans that I know take everything told to them by politicians with a grain of salt. It became painfully obvious that most politicians care more about votes than being honest representatives of public opinion.

**Re: Legacy of distrust***by Mathew Bohman – Friday, June 3, 2016, 9:38 AM*

Robert I agree with your post about distrust. The war certainly did show the true colors of some of our leaders. I agree that dishonestly was a huge part of the presidential campaigns. Again, you are right, there was no way that they didn't know that escalation was more of a probability than a possibility.

**Re: Legacy of distrust***by Philip Highwood – Friday, June 3, 2016, 10:36 AM*

Robert,

Good day my friend, the title of your post "Legacy of distrust" turned a light on in my head; as you are right, we the people do often distrust or question the government by which we vote into office. It is important to ask if this legacy came from the Vietnam war or just in general—perhaps over time, the american people has grown to pass the legacy of distrust torch along from generation to generation. For instance, think of the questions after 9/11; like why did the towers collapse when they should have been built to withstand the worst accident like a jumbo jet falling from the sky and accidentally crashing into them. Or perhaps the Pentagon, which suffered little damage after a jet liner crashed into it. Seems questionable to me. Seems as though the legacy of distrust may be a continued cycle. Possible might have ended with president Kennedy. I look forward to hearing your thoughts.

Philip

**Re: Legacy of distrust***by Robert Taylor – Saturday, June 4, 2016, 3:34 PM*

Good afternoon Philip,

I completely agree that the legacy of distrust is an ongoing cycle. I believe that Vietnam helped spark a public consciousness that we are not always being told the complete truth, and that has continually been reinforced since. I'm glad that you brought up Kennedy, I recently found out that the media made a deal not to run stories on his sexual exploits. It was a weird time back then, when the publics trust in the president was an important thing to uphold. Years later with Bill Clinton the media couldn't wait to report on his sexual exploits. By then distrust had been established and became common knowledge.

One thing that I have noted though is that instead of people becoming more upset, they are becoming more complacent. It seems that many people have just accepted that we are being lied to, and that their is nothing we can do about it. Even in our current presidential election the leading democratic candidate may be indicted for serious security issues, yet she is polling like nothing ever happened. I consistently here things like "well thats just politics" in response to proof of complete lies from politicians. sixty years from now I wonder if classes will view the complacency of the 2016 voters similarly to how we view the trust of the 1950's voters.

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Re: Legacy of distrust

by [Philip Highwood](#) – Sunday, June 5, 2016, 12:06 PM

Robert,

Sexual exploits... Sex sells, and blood leads!! The media loves both and sadly we (people) thrive on others who are in power and make mistakes; like Bill Clinton. take for instance Hillary and the facts that she covered up Benghazi attacks; the one individual who could have saved the lives of American citizens and Soldiers who asked for assistance and were ignored by her Hillary Clinton! She should be held accountable at the vary let put on trial for manslaughter. That of course are my feelings my friend.

Philip

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Re: Legacy of distrust

by [Tamara Berge](#) – Sunday, June 5, 2016, 5:35 PM

It seems to me that lying politicians have been around long before our involvement with Vietnam. I believe a major change came in with television media. There was always a stigma put on slandering the leader of our country that seems to have disappeared during the late 60's and has yet to return.

Franklin D. Roosevelt as we know now used a wheelchair and had to have assistance to get and stand at podiums for recorded speeches. No one reported on or recorded his need for assistance to get up and speak. It was a secret to keep our President appearing strong and capable and the media, for the most part, accommodated this ideal. There are also numerous accounts of Presidents that had affairs as well as some with children out of wedlock. There was a certain level of understanding that we are all human but the appearance of greatness was priority. I don't think that voters have grown complaisant toward who their elected leaders are but instead maybe they just respect the position of the President less than they used to.

Here is one of only two documented recordings of Roosevelt walking with assistance to the podium.
<http://abcnews.go.com/US/fdr-walking-rare-video-clip/story?id=23742561>

Here is another about presidential affairs.

<http://www.nytimes.com/1998/01/25/us/president-under-fire-history-14-presidents-have-been-talk-pillow.html>

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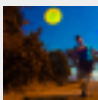
Re: Legacy

by [Zachary Sielicky](#) – Wednesday, June 1, 2016, 3:19 PM

In my opinion what America's involvement in Vietnam was exactly what Jonathan Holloway said, "It was the end of America's incense,"(11:05). It was the epoch of public opinion of the federal government. Yes, there has always been a group of people who have at least felt that the Government is corrupt, but this was the turning point where protesting and out spoken dislike for the government really found new grounds. The Vietnam war changed political ideology which is still seen in todays politics. Jonathan Holloway also discusses how the Vietnamn war changed what people expected out of a war and changed the notion that there is such a thing as political justice on such a large scale. This conviction has lead an increase in war and government involvement in

foreign countries and least in my generation. We also have seen how the "living room war" has disappeared and we are not shown graphic footage of our involvement abroad, which is we did, could lead to an even higher disapproval.

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Re: Legacy
by [Adam Clairmont](#) – Sunday, June 5, 2016, 11:01 PM

An interesting point Zachary,

While it is true that you can find videos of many of the more recent wars on the internet, it is also true that when something does make it on the news, it does not appear to be as graphic as many of the clips that exist out there. The media, it seems, had more of an unrestricted run when it came to what they could and could not put on their programs back in the later years of Vietnam. I would imagine this has something to do with how quickly the popular support plummeted after seeing all the images sent back from this war. Especially with regards to Tet. Here was this group of North Vietnamese who the American people had been told were nearing their breaking point. Despite this, we watched as they unleashed a massive attack that we thought was impossible. Sure the NVA lost many more troops than we did, not just in the Tet offensive but the war in general, but Americans at home saw something broadcast that was not supposed to be possible with the facts they were given. This led them to the logical conclusion that the government was not being completely honest with them. For years, our population had taken most everything that had been told to them on faith. Now, suddenly, there was another possibility. You are right Zachary, we see this shift in consciousness in our politics even today and I would be surprised if there ever comes a day in our future where the effects of the “living room war” are not felt.

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Legacy of?
by [Titus Young](#) – Wednesday, June 1, 2016, 3:42 PM

There seems to be many "legacies" that were left behind as a result of the Vietnam war. Stanley Karnow who is an author of an award winning book on Vietnam legacies, impacted me the most. One of the legacies that we have from the Vietnam war is our lose og confidencemin our military. In Karnow's book he states that we losed cofidence in our military invisibility. Being a military superpower was too quaint a term for how we felt about our military before Vietnam, after all we won the revolutionary war, the WW1 and WW2, it seemed like the US military was unstoppable. And then Vietnam happened. We lost a war to a small nation almost no one had ever heard about. That was a stunning blow to American pride and our belief in our military superiourity.

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Re: Legacy of?
by [Zachary Sielicky](#) – Friday, June 3, 2016, 11:52 AM

I do not necessarily believe that the lose in Vietnam produced a a lack of confidence in the military. I feel that Vietnam really exploited the Government and produced a lack of confidence in them. America still I feel had the belief that they were still the strongest power in the world considering they were still in the midst of the Cod War. I have talked with some Vietnam Vets at my work who still believe that the Vietnam war was not a loss for America as much as it was for South Vietnam, they believe that America was merely just assisting South Vietnam in a civil war and America had a lot to lose if they lost.

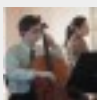
They legacy I feel was brought on by America's involvement in the Vietnam war was the necessity that the American people needed something to drastic to happen in order for them to be in war with another country. I like to look at 9/11 for example, most Americans did not think of Muslims as a threat to America till 9/11. Subsequent to the attack America grew this major fear of Muslims and media outlets across the country employed the belief that Muslims were behind 9/11, this gave the American people a reason to believe that America needed to go to war against terror, to protect the country.

This was not the case for the Vietnam war, instead Americans grew this disconnect with the war and some did not even know we were in war. The biggest legacy is the need for Americans to have a reason to believe

that America should go to war with another country.

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Re: Legacy of?

by [Titus Young](#) – Friday, June 3, 2016, 4:38 PM

Dear Zachary, I understand where you are coming from, and I see your point. Now that you mention it I see how the government lost more confidence than the people, but it seems to me that if our leader(s) isn't confident, we might doubt them more and more. After I posted my last post, I also had an opportunity to hear a Vietnam vet speak, and he held the opinion that Vietnam was not a loss, and as I heard him more and more I became persuaded by his point of view. Also, I agree that South Vietnam were the ones that lost the war because America was affected rather minutely compared to South Vietnam. Also, I like the example that you put out describing a major event that caused Americans to want to go to war. However, I think that through the Vietnam war, distrust was also a major legacy that was left behind.

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Re: Legacy of?

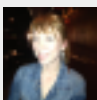
by [Zachary Sielicky](#) – Sunday, June 5, 2016, 10:22 AM

Titus,

Yeah distrust was a major legacy and we can see that even in today's world, I am always hearing people saying how corrupt and secretive the government is and I think that notion originated from the Vietnam war. These allegations would have never been made by the *Silent majority and Hard Hats*, patriotism was a much different animal pre-Vietnam. A classic example of this is Red Forman from that 70s Show, his love for the government and country is much different from the younger kids in the show and demonstrates how the Vietnam war changed the ideology of people. We can also look at the Snowden situation and his leaked documents. Today he is looked at by people as a hero and a brave man who has exploited the government's wrong doings. If he would have done this in the 1950s he would be hated and would have been called a traitor and a tyrannical radical. This is just one example of how the Vietnam war changed public opinion.

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Re: Legacy of?

by [Tamara Berge](#) – Sunday, June 5, 2016, 6:13 PM

I agree with your point that for Americans to support war they need to feel it is a justifiable war. There does need to be a sense of right and wrong and that was a problem with the longevity of the Vietnam War. The Gulf of Tonkin incident rallied support for Johnson in an election year and granted him the ability to proceed as necessary by congress. During WWII there was a massive amount of propaganda urging support from the American people mostly by instilling fear in them. Fear had served as a great political motivator during times of war. The news media however limited that ability where Vietnam was concerned. If you watch some of the actual footage shot by our national news stations, you can't help but feel ill. The Vietnamese men that are captured and killed looked like children next to our own young men. They are often without weapons or much clothing and look desperate and confused. If I wasn't taking this class, where I feel I have a good understanding of the abilities of both sides, I would feel such sympathy for the Vietnamese and a bit of shame towards the smiling U.S. soldiers that seem to have little regard for the crumpled and dismembered bodies in front of them.

Here is a link to ABC news coverage. It is disturbing by eye opening.
[http://www.aparchive.com/metadata/ABC-Vietnam-War-Clipreel-Vol-2-Part-7/62b7afdea6c012133627396f9fb7b9d9?searchfilter=Compilations%2FVietnam+War%2FVietnam+War+\(ABC\)%2F19623](http://www.aparchive.com/metadata/ABC-Vietnam-War-Clipreel-Vol-2-Part-7/62b7afdea6c012133627396f9fb7b9d9?searchfilter=Compilations%2FVietnam+War%2FVietnam+War+(ABC)%2F19623)

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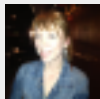
A legacy of distrust

by [David Leavitt](#) – Wednesday, June 1, 2016, 4:57 PM

The largest thing that the Vietnam war caused today, that we still see today, and probably will in the far off future is the peoples distrust in the U.S. government. Michael Beschloss talked about this in the “Legacy of War” (at the 8 mins mark). He said that “One of the ideas of the American system is that if we Americans are going to make a sacrifice like sending 56,000 of our people to go die in a war in Vietnam, that should be something that our President tells us in advance, and gives us a choice on.” This represents one of many instances in the Vietnam war where the American people weren’t told things about the war, and people knew it, which is why there were so many protesters. Not saying protesting the war like they did was the right thing to do, but it was a reflection of them being lied to by our government. It was then that we Americans realized that we need to take everything the government says “with a grain of salt”.

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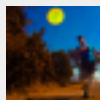
Re: A legacy of distrust

by [Tamara Berge](#) – Sunday, June 5, 2016, 7:23 PM

I agree with you that during the 60’s was the first time that people used their voice and then realized that the voice of the people didn’t hold much weight. A large portion of the country no longer trusted that our government was looking out for them. Not only were the people’s sons, brothers, husbands being sent off to war against their will, the people were being lied to about the details of the war. It began even with the very trusted John F Kennedy, “Initiating a pattern that would come to stigmatize the U.S. war in Vietnam as a whole, the Kennedy administration went to considerable lengths to deceive the American public about the extent and nature of its growing involvement. It refused to divulge the actual number of ‘advisers’ sent to Vietnam and continued to insist that they were advisers long after they were actively engaged in combat. Elaborate schemes were devised to maintain that fiction. (Herring p.107)” The United States was getting involved in a major conflict that the actual people of the United States knew nothing about.

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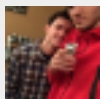
The credibility gap widens

by [Adam Clairmont](#) – Wednesday, June 1, 2016, 8:13 PM

The legacy of the Vietnam War is that American military is not untouchable. We spent millions of dollars, lost over 58,000 troops, and for what? To keep South East Asia from falling to the might of communism. However, after withdrawing from Vietnam, we discovered something unexpected. Many countries we were trying to protect from the domino effect were able to hold their ground against the ever growing communist influence. Stanley Karnow seemed to make the best points in the video Legacy of War. He spoke to the fact that the United States government kept the public in the dark about what was going on in Vietnam and in general. “Those were the days when people didn’t ask questions, people had confidence in the government.” The “credibility gap” was an interesting point. The public statements and the realities on the ground were very different he goes on to say. This created mistrust between the American people and the elected officials. Michael Beschloss later said, “we don’t have much confidence in our system, a lot of it goes back to that period.” Perhaps this is another big legacy of the Vietnam war. American’s loss of confidence in the word of the government. I realize that the government must not divulge everything to the public, many tidbits of information are sensitive and could be dangerous if revealed. However, there should be honesty when dealing with things like casualties while at war. Padding the death toll is not a good way to win support.

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Re: The credibility gap widens

by [Zachary Sielicky](#) – Friday, June 3, 2016, 11:39 AM

I also think it is interesting to see how the Government said just weeks before the Tet Offensive how America was near victory in the war. I think most people would agree that Tet is what really changed the minds of the American people and exploited the Government for not being honest about how well America was really doing in the war. Another thing I thinks important to add to this discussion is the vital resources that were used by major companies in America and other western worlds like rubber for the Michelin tire company and tin that was essential for multiple companies around the world. The government never seemed to highlight

this point and only focused on the Communist threat that was brought by North Vietnam invading the south and the domino effect.

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Re: The credibility gap widens

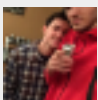
by [Adam Clairmont](#) – Saturday, June 4, 2016, 9:30 PM

Zachary,

Thanks for the comments. I also find it interesting that our government said we were nearing an end to the conflict just before Tet. After this offensive Americans were stunned, having been told by our leaders that the NVA and the Viet Cong were nearing defeat and were incapable of launching anything anywhere near as ambitious as Tet. This offensive may have led to a huge loss of life for the North, but also made Americans watching at home very uncomfortable. I would agree with you, watching the reports coming in from the battlefield in Southeast Asia played a large part in our withdrawal from Vietnam. Your point about the vital resources being used by major American and other foreign countries being underplayed is indeed food for thought. While I believe that our leaders were indeed primarily in Vietnam to stop the communist wave, the natural resources must have had a large effect on foreign policy as well.

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Re: The credibility gap widens

by [Zachary Sielicky](#) – Sunday, June 5, 2016, 10:12 AM

Adam,

Great response!

Absolutely I think that our leaders did want to stop Communism from spreading and one reason for that would have been for the resources and if communism did take over Vietnam would become an independent nation which made it hard for western countries to exploit Vietnamese labor. This seems like a very pessimistic view but it is interesting to look at these aspects of war and see how companies and people profited off the war, just like the war now.

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Re: The credibility gap widens

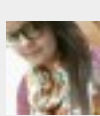
by [Adam Clairmont](#) – Sunday, June 5, 2016, 10:14 PM

Zachary,

Pessimistic or not it is a fact that money is a very large factor, if not the largest, that influences many decisions that happen not only on a personal basis but also on a much larger scale. Large companies contributing massive sums of money to certain representatives in our government to help push their agenda so that they can make even more money. All the way down to the average college student. Why are many of us going to school? To secure a better job that nets us more money than we could have potentially earned without the education. I wonder how much of our decision, on the state level, was really geared toward securing the natural resources in the area and not on stopping the domino effect. How influential was the Michelin Tire company or other major and minor companies? When we originally began our “aid” in Vietnam, France controlled the colony and was primarily interested in just that, the natural resources. Makes a person wonder why we actually take many of the actions we do. To defend life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness? Or to defend our assets? Most cases I would have to say are a hybrid of both.

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by [Mikayla Cervantes](#) – Friday, June 3, 2016, 11:46 PM

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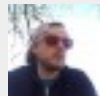
Legacy(s)

by [Titus Young](#) – Saturday, June 4, 2016, 7:43 PM

The more that I look at all the legacies that were left by the Vietnam war, the harder it becomes (for me) to decide were the most important ones that were left behind. I see that distrust might be the most prominent. I see that people have become rather distrustful of our government more than ever. I have been struck with a conversation I had with a Vietnam vet, and he thought that America didn't lose the war. He wasn't being obstinate and just ignoring the fact that we didn't win, he was just pointing out the South Vietnam lost the war because they were actually affected in a major way, while America only suffered a loss of life and time, which is a major thing to lose don't get me wrong, but South Vietnam was acctually taken over by the opposing Nourth Vietnam. So, as I have explored the materials and our classmates different views, I have come to the conclution yhat distrut, whether it is of neighboring countries, our government, or whatever else, has been fostered by the Vietnam war.

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Re: Legacy(s)

by [Robert Taylor](#) – Sunday, June 5, 2016, 4:29 PM

Titus,

That is an interesting perspective from the Vietnam Veteran that you talked to. In most ways for most of the war the United States at least pretended that they were only providing support for South Vietnam. Even though it was clear that America was pulling all the strings, South Vietnam was really the country at war. I would argue that even North Vietnam lost, because when they finally "won" they became puppets of Russia, which was not the independent Vietnam they were fighting for. It seems that whether North or South Vietnam won, either way they would be carrying out another countries agenda.

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Re: Legacy(s)

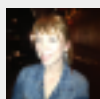
by [Titus Young](#) – Sunday, June 5, 2016, 7:50 PM

Robert,

I totally agree, it seems so weird to me that two countries can fight a war and then someone else winds up winning. You bring up an interesting point, though, if South Vietnam would have won, would America still have remained in Vietnam as an influential source or would they leave anyway? I wonder, would it have been as easy for America to take control (if we would) as it was for Russia?

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The legacy of the Vietnam War

by [Tamara Berge](#) – Sunday, June 5, 2016, 1:13 PM

I feel the most significant legacy of the War in Vietnam was best stated in the News Hour video as an excerpt from Stanley Karnow's book, Vietnam: A History; "The names of the dead engraved on the granite, record more than lives lost in battle, they represent a sacrifice to a failed crusade; however noble or illusory its motives. They bear witness to the END of America's absolute confidence in it's moral exclusivity, it's military invincibility, it's manifest destiny (Stanley Karnow; News hour 5:20)." This is the unfortunate legacy that has been left by the Vietnam War.

America's mentality behind manifest destiny began with the United States' expansion West across North America. It is defined as "the belief or doctrine...that it was the destiny of the U.S. to expand its territory over the

whole of North America and to extend and enhance its political, social, and economic influence (Dictionary.com)". Eventually our interests in "expanding and enhancing" went beyond North America's west coast and later led us to our involvement in Vietnam. There was faith in our political system, before Vietnam, that our President and his advisors served us the people. After the secrets, lies, and mistakes of Vietnam were exposed, along with America's failure to defeat the enemy for the first time, our faith in our government and military abilities were damaged; as was our unshakable faith that our country was a moral high ground that all others should be measured against.

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Re: The legacy of the Vietnam War

by [Mathew Bohman](#) – Sunday, June 5, 2016, 10:50 PM

Tamara,

When I first saw this assignment I too thought about the wall. That wall represents so much to so many people.

I have been to that wall and witnessed first hand the reunions of some veterans and other vets be themselves crying as the recognize banes on the wall. Seeing families search for a lived ones name us also very sad.

Again, I had a tough choice about the wall being the legacy of the soldier being the legacy. I guess the truth is that there is too many legacies to list.

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Doveryai, No Proveryai

by [Trevor Kaye](#) – Sunday, June 5, 2016, 10:03 PM

There are several important legacies that society can take from the Vietnam War, but one of the most important can be ironically summed up with a Russian proverb commonly used by President Ronald Reagan while discussing U.S. relations with the Soviet Union; "doveryai, no proveryai," meaning "trust, but verify." The Vietnam War is well-known as the "television war," as it was the first large-scale war that well-covered by the media. The vast media coverage enabled regular citizens to get a glimpse of the horrors of war for the first time, and resulted in "a nation furiously divided against itself" (Herring 268). The publicizing of the war did not only take a toll on public approval of the war itself, but also on the public's trust in the government.

As evidenced by public polling, trust in the U.S. government by its citizens dramatically decreased for the years during which the Vietnam War gained momentum. "A credibility gap between the public statements and the realities on the ground," as mentioned by historian Stanley Karnow, certainly contributed to the distrust during those decades. The Vietnam War brought a substantial amount of justified skepticism of the U.S. government by the public. This skepticism has persisted even until today, which in a way can be considered a blessing. There are several historical examples of why it is dangerous to have blind faith in one's government. Wariness of the government, while generally unpleasant, keeps them in check, and is a good legacy to take from the Vietnam War.

Information on the Russian phrase: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trust,_but_verify

Poll regarding public trust in U.S. government: <http://www.people-press.org/2015/11/23/public-trust-in-government-1958-2015/>

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Re: Doveryai, No Proveryai

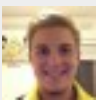
by [David Leavitt](#) – Sunday, June 5, 2016, 11:17 PM

That's a really good quote from the Russians: "Trust, but verify". It sums up when I think the American people practice in dealing with he American Government today. Before, the communication was lacking, without television, communication from the battlefield to the American people was very limited, so I think that after Vietnam, that the American people knew more about what was going on and as a result were more

distrustful. Today, the word politician has become synonymous with "someone who's under qualified", or a "liar", or "someone who says one thing, but does something totally different between closed doors". This is as a result of the Vietnam war, but I also think that politicians have gotten more dishonest since the 60's.

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Re: Legacy

by [Justin MacDonald](#) – Sunday, June 5, 2016, 11:44 PM

After the Vietnam War "the nation experienced a self-conscious, collective amnesia" (Herring 305). Why was this war so scarring for the American people?

–Poor Leadership: The draft lead to thousands of young, unprepared, undertrained citizens being flung into a war they weren't ready for. Compare your average Vietnam soldier to that of a joe on the front-lines in Afghanistan. Today's soldier is better equipped, supported, and trained for the terrain for their combat role. On top of the fact the government back then was almost bipolar from the Presidents to the Generals. No set in stone strategies other then to stop communism at all costs.

–Domestic Support: Dorris Goodwin said, "no foreign war can succeed without that large domestic support" (Legacy 9:30). Vietnam was the first widely televised and watched war in history. Seeing the horror of war in your living room really brought home some serious question about our involvement in the war. Even when we seemed to be winning, media bias reported otherwise. Walter Cronkite, a widely respected new anchor for CBS, following the Tet Offensive, reported, "To say that we are closer to victory today is to believe, in the face of the evidence, the optimists who have been wrong in the past.to say that we are mired in a bloody stalemate seems the only realistic, yet unsatisfactory conclusion"(Hallin, 1986, p.170). Even though the numbers and facts were on the U.S.'s side that the North was losing, the media decided we lost the war.

–Casualties & Veterans: Over 200,000. 60,000 of those died, with the rest wounded in action. The American people weren't looking forward to more and more people dying, especially it being not long after World War II and the Korean War. On top of that the veterans coming home weren't treated well. Healthcare didn't cover their physical and psychological scars. There were no parades, no welcomes home. A stark contrast to the previous wars.

The legacy of the war was a heartfelt blunder in Asian. We tried to stop Communism, and we failed to execute an effective plan for Southeast Asia at the cost of many American lives and resources.

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