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Week 2 Forum

Longest War and Government Documentaries

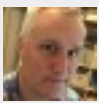
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Longest War and Government Documentaries

by Joe Escobar – Saturday, April 2, 2016, 9:23 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Longest War and Government Documentaries 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: Longest War and Government Documentaries

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Who to Trust?

by Daniel Long – Monday, April 4, 2016, 11:36 AM

“Roosevelt (Franklin Delano Roosevelt) viewed the Vietnamese as an inferior people, backward, politically immature, and unready to govern themselves without tutelage from an “advanced” Western nation” (Herring pg. 11). With a statement so transparent for everyone to see you would think that the United States would be opposed to aiding the Vietnam people. On the contrary, the topic of aid between the U.S. and Vietnam is the same as a person who roots for both teams, but when there’s a winner, you choose the winner.

When comparing the two films, “The First War in Vietnam,” “Why Vietnam?” and the book “Americas Longest War” you become confused on whose side to take. In 1945, The U.S. aided the Vietnam rebellion group called, Viet-Minh, by assisting them to defeat the French Government. The Viet-Minh were successful from the training in combat and military strategies, as well as, ammunition and firearms supplied from the U.S. unofficially (First Vietnam video). However, by the flip of a coin, when President Roosevelt died in 1945, the U.S. policy moved sharply toward France (Herring pg. 12). When the French Admiral Georges Thierry d’ Angelico launched a move to separate Cochin China, this would lead to nearly three decades of war.

With this launch that later separated Vietnam by a seventeenth parallel into a China and France owned country, the United States shifted to the aid of France. While France was still recovering from the humiliating defeat and loss of territory from Vietnamese in 1945, the U.S. made the Marshall plan that was committed to give massive funds over the reconstruction of Western Europe (Herring pg. 13). Additionally, when Ho Chi Minh asked for the U.S. assistance in aid for the Viet-Minh again, the U.S. denied him, seeing the Vietnamese people were an unknowing people, who could not govern themselves (Herring pg. 13). And, in 1949, Ho Chi Minh and the Viet-Minh officially joined the Communist “bloc.”

By 1950, the U.S. was officially partnered with France in Vietnam, and by 1954, the U.S. was paying eighty percent of the funds to French military (First Vietnam video). The U.S. had given nearly one billion dollars a year to the side that had previously ruled Vietnam and they had aided in overthrowing for a revolution.

However, when watching the video “Why Vietnam?” it shows American soldiers aiding villagers and people from the warfare. It even includes film of an American soldier speaking their native tongue to train Vietnamese “eager” men to fight with firearms. The film even mentions Ho Chi Minh to be a communist who would kill innocent people.

The two videos and chapter one of “Americas Longest War” suggested a complicated and complex view to see if the U.S. was either aiding the Vietnamese or the French. Overall, economically, they seemed to favor the French, however, they aided the Viet–Minh unofficially in supplies and tactics to overthrow the French, leading the U.S. to pay billions of dollars in aid to the French. The three sources all relate to each other on topic of aid to the French and Viet–Minh, but the book by Mr. Herring suggests that America was wasting away the money that overall led to their involvement to fight against the Vietnamese. While, the video, “Why Vietnam?” supports the U.S. involvement and shows them as active heroes who train Vietnamese soldiers and give care to the villagers while they defeat the “rebels.” Finally, the video “The First War in Vietnam” seems to be neutral with the idea that the U.S. was responsible for secretly aiding the Viet–Minh and funding the French who were ultimately defeated.

With all three sources conflicting the idea of America as either good or bad, I believe that “Americas Longest War” is one that I can agree with. The U.S. set its own path to Vietnam and shouldn’t have been involved at all. They set a path with Viet–Minh leader Ho Chi Minh into falsely believing we were there ally, however, with the funding of French military, the Marshall plan, and our government views about the Vietnamese people we set out to fight a war we would lose in the end.

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Re: Who to Trust?

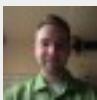
by [Gabrielle Heehn](#) – Saturday, April 9, 2016, 8:18 PM

Hi Daniel..again!

I was a bit confused on who to trust as well when I first started the documentary I was wondering if we did or didn't get along with the French and why we helped them in the first place. To my understanding the French we almost offended we were putting so much into the war because we were making them "look poor". Also my second thought is why were we handing out supplies to the Viet Minh when they were the ones that we were fighting against? The video "Why Vietnam" was nice to watch because of all the recognition to the men who served over in Vietnam, but I think they should've mentioned more of why we were really there and not just stating we were there because we had promised South Vietnam freedom.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Who to Trust?

by [Daniel Long](#) – Sunday, April 10, 2016, 11:22 AM

In the documentary, "Roots of War" it shortly describes why the U.S. sent a select few to train and arm the rebel group. In 1945, the U.S. was looking to find intelligence for the Japanese war, and since the Viet–Minh had been giving the allies information on troop formation about the Japanese, the U.S. made a deal with Ho Chi Minh to give the U.S. intelligence while the U.S. supplied the ammunition, guns, and training, so they sent a select few of men to oversee this.

The French were probably looking poor, but after their defeat in Din Bien Phi, they were humiliated. Later, the U.S. set up the Marshall plan to help fund the French in the war, but later tried to recapture Vietnam. However, the Chinese wanted the territory as well, so a seventeenth parallel went into affect. We helped fund their military so they could later try and take over Vietnam again, so they could feel poor, but that's only because after they were driven out of Vietnam, they were poor. The French spent much more funding around other areas during WW2, and when the Nazis captured some of France, they lost more money.

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Geneva Accord

by [Gabrielle Heehn](#) – Tuesday, April 5, 2016, 11:00 AM

- I’m going to talk about the Why Vietnam? Video and the stories or topics that related to the readings of

chapter one or two in the Herring book. The signing of the Geneva Accords and what would bring upon the world was brought up in the both the video and the book. In the Herring book on page 45–50 it discusses how each party would participate in the Geneva Accord or back away from it. The U.S. wanted no part in the Geneva Accord on page 46 it states that, “negotiation with any Communist nation was anathema.” What America planned on doing instead of agreeing with the Geneva Accords they said that they would help Southeast Asia and by doing that they would initially draw an imaginary line that made it so communists couldn’t try and take over noncommunist South Korea and that the U.S. would help push them away from South Korea as much as they could. For this to happen Dulles had actually threatened to drop being a part of the Geneva Accords (p.48). The Geneva Accords was then put into action shortly after and South Korea was free of Communism. Now in the video Why Vietnam it talked briefly about the Geneva Accords saying that all this did was separate the North from the South. It then talked about how the South had a lot of resources that the North wanted like rice, rubber, metals, etc. And this only cause more turmoil. Both sources did agree on how the Geneva Accord was handled.

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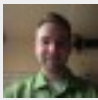
The differences in America and Vietnam

by [Titus Young](#) – Wednesday, April 6, 2016, 2:50 PM

In our Appy book, we are exposed to two sides of a coin. One side is the side of the American experience of the war, the other side is the Vietnamese experience. Both seem to in some way or another to be scared of the other side, whether as an American fighting on very foreign soil or as a Vietnamese being scared of the American "war machines" like tanks and helicopters, as Dang Vu Hiep said, "With all those choppers they seemed terribly strong.". It is not often we have access to both sides of a war's stories, so it has been very interesting to see what both sides outlooks on the war were.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: The differences in America and Vietnam

by [Daniel Long](#) – Saturday, April 9, 2016, 10:30 AM

Hey Titus,

The two sides of a coin can seem different but on the same structure. The U.S. comes in with the greatest military and technology that was far ahead of the Vietnamese. However, they still managed to create struggle and won against the U.S. I think its fascinating how just the advantage of home field and motivation can really drive a person to create conflict against a greater developed opponent. The fact that just by using the tunnels that they created, could outlast bombings after bombings from airstrikes. They used this same technique to win against the French at Dien Bien Phu.

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