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Patriots and PBS

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Patriots and PBS

by [Joe Escobar](#) – Saturday, April 2, 2016, 9:22 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Patriots and PBS 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: Patriots and PBS

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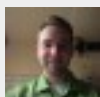
Vietnam: The war against Communism

by [Titus Young](#) – Tuesday, April 5, 2016, 1:25 PM

The biggest connection that I have made so far has been that violence in the Vietnam war was a "last resort" of sorts as politicians tried as best as they could to find a peaceful solution. When Vietnam was separated into two different countries, North Vietnam (Communist) tried to force the South to become Communist as well. America's first involvement in the war was to help supply and teach the South Vietnamese how to fight back for their freedom. Our Herring book points out that the communist leader Ho Chi Minh was the first to declare Vietnam free from France, and it seems to me that he soon became the new communist president of North Vietnam. The Secretary of state Dean Rusk was put in charge of the political measures that were taken to find a political solution to the communists forcefully taking over South Vietnam. Dean Rusk said "...South could be subjected to Communist domination", that, to me, is a scary thought that if all the political answers are turned down be the communist and forceful actions taken, Vietnam could still be as a whole, a communist nation.

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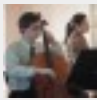


Re: Vietnam: The war against Communism

by [Daniel Long](#) – Saturday, April 9, 2016, 10:18 AM

Hey Titus,

I agree that it is a scary thought to think that the south was close, and considered to some politicians to be communist, and still are by some today. But it wasn't until 1949 that Ho Chi Minh declared to be part of the communist "bloc". And it wasn't just the French who tried to take over their land, when the French were exhausting their military resources and money with WW2, Japan came in and owned much of the south border from 1940–44. It was very divided as well with America first secretly training and arming the "Viet-Minh" and then later funding the French.



Re: Vietnam: The war against Communism

by [Titus Young](#) – Saturday, April 9, 2016, 7:14 PM

Hey Daniel,

I had forgotten that the Japanese also came into Vietnam. Thanks for reminding me. Also, I'm not sure about you, but I find it a little surprising that the USA would first train the Viet-Minh, then later fund the French. It seems really contradictory like they were trying to help the French defeat who they had trained. What do you think?



Re: Vietnam: The war against Communism

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

It is really contradictorily on the U.S. part, but in 1945, the U.S. looked to the Viet-Minh for intelligence to fight the war in Japan, because the Viet-Minh had given the allies troop movement information (Roots of war video). On agreement to the information, a selective few Americans were sent to aid the Viet-Minh in training and ammunition. However, as the years past and WW2 ended, the U.S. became more involved with the French in funding, and saw that Vietnam was officially part of the communist bloc in 1949.



Civilians Perspective

by [Daniel Long](#) – Wednesday, April 6, 2016, 11:49 AM

The story of a small girl, Tran Thi Gung, showed the issues of civilian lives and points of view from their perspective, rather than, the U.S. perspective. This story alone helped shape an incomplete circle of understanding; the U.S. view and the Vietnamese view. Through the story of Ms. Gung from the book, “Patriots: The Vietnam War Remembered,” and the PBS television show “Roots of War” These sources show similarities into how Vietnamese civilians were affected by the Vietnam war, and reminds the U.S. how unmatched they were in foreign land.

How this story relates to the first episode of the PBS show, “Roots of War” is that in multiple interviews with past Vietnamese soldiers and civilians alike that lived to tell about their experience in the war. From their perspective the U.S. viewer can see how much the government was there to “help” the civilians from harm’s way. One woman elder stated that, “I didn’t see Guerrillas being shot, just villagers” (PBS video). This point of view suggests how we (U.S.) lost 58,000 men, but the Vietnamese people lost 2 million (PBS video).

Going back to the story of Tran Thi Gung, she was a small girl, who in fact was the only girl in her outfit at the time (Appy pg. 37). Ms. Gung referred to the U.S. soldiers as “puppet soldiers” after her father was killed by U.S. soldiers when the revolution of her country broke out in 1962. She recalled that U.S. soldiers came to her house saying, “Your father was a Viet Cong so we killed him. Go fetch his body” (Appy pg. 38). This message made an impression on a small girl to take this personal and remember it through the war. When she was seventeen, Ms. Gung joined the guerrillas. She goes on to describe her first battle in 1965 near Dong Du outpost, an American base. There she killed an American soldier and recalling the carelessness of their attention. “They held his body and cried. This made them sitting ducks. Very easy to shoot” (Appy pg. 38).

During that same battle, Ms. Gung recalls how the U.S. soldiers were unfamiliar with the area. “When the American pulled back we knew they would call in artillery fire, maybe even air strikes. So we grabbed their rifles and ran for the tunnels (Appy pg. 38). This knowledge of land and military strategy proved to work in the favor of Vietnamese soldiers. Innovating ways to, as HO Chi Minh stated, “A stork can’t shit into a bottle, so with our tunnels we shouldn’t be scared of American bombers” (Appy pg. 39). This same tactic of shooting a few then running to tunnels is what helped the Viet-Minh to win their largest battle at Din Bien Phu (PBS Video). The soldiers used the mountains to get around the area of fire and carry large loads of ammunition and guns. Additionally, during the fight, a new tactic was placed to pull back the guns and dig trenches and regain morals. They continued to dig a perimeter around the base, and artillery against the planes made the supplies drift

toward the Vietnamese side (PBS video).

The story of Tran Thi Gung showed not only resilience in the Vietnamese towards the U.S. soldiers efforts in using airstrikes and better technology of artillery, but showed the side of Vietnamese civilians that would help them win the war through their strategies and knowledge of their land. This story from the book, “Patriots” and the documentary, “Roots of War” shows how the civilians were affected in fighting on and off the battle field through this horrific war. However, these stories and documentaries also demonstrates the knowledge that these Vietnamese people had through their background and morale of the revolution against France in 1945.

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Re: Civilians Perspective

by [Gabrielle Heehn](#) – Saturday, April 9, 2016, 8:06 PM

Hi Daniel!

To talk a little bit more about the PBS documentary and what was being televised and how the general civilians were taking that information and how I'm going to compare that to someone that I know personally and also had to go to war in Vietnam. So how the person I know, his name is Jeff, and then how the civilians reacted to this war were somewhat similiar just from Jeff's point of view. He told me that he himself was confused at the time as to why they were there fighting a war they shouldn't be fighting. What was interesting to hear from him was that he thought that we should've been trying to win over some of the countries we had lost to Russia rather than trying to modernize South Vietnam. Maybe if someone can answer this for me because the Vietnam war is very confusing to learn and understand, we went to war there because we didn't want a domino effect of what communism would do to that country and then also we joined the war because we wanted to modernize over there? Like you had stated that doesn't make much sense to me because we went in not knowing the geography of Vietnam.

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times in vietnam

by [Gabrielle Heehn](#) – Wednesday, April 6, 2016, 10:20 PM

A topic that was both discussed in the Vietnam Television series and also in one of the readings in the Appy book was first in the reading “Paying the Price” told by George Watkins he describes the events he had went through and how awful it was in Vietnam he actually ended up getting his legs amputated. He had one leg for 7 days, but ended up getting gangrene and so they had to amputate it. Now, with this being said in the Vietnam Television series it shown short glimpses of film in Vietnam and the short clips shown were graphic and I couldn’t imagine what was going thru all those soldiers heads to be in that situation. I really tried to think of topics or events that were discussed in the first reading of Appy and then first episode of Vietnam Television and I was drawing a blank

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Re: times in vietnam

by [Daniel Long](#) – Saturday, April 9, 2016, 10:23 AM

Hey Gabrielle,

I agree with the horror of war through the soldiers eyes and not the glory of film. It really lends perspective. The story from Roger Conlon in the App book also has some scary scenes described. When the building he was in was blown to bits by the Vietnamese, and how the phosphorus from the mortar could create silhouettes from the fires so the soldiers could see them, and made them sitting ducks, while he dragged one of the other soldiers away. Horrifying!



Joe Collins and Vietnam
by *Titus Young* – Thursday, April 7, 2016, 3:22 PM

Vietnam...a boiling country full of strife, and yet unknown to most of the world. In both the Joe Collins video clip and the Joe Collins story in our Appy book, Joe Collins seemed to think the Vietnam was just some peaceful country in Europe. She was excited to go, as most people would be if they didn't know what was happening in Vietnam. At first, the trip seemed harmless enough but as she went deeper into the country she soon realized how much danger she was in. Imagine thinking you're going to a safe place on earth, but instead, as you land mortars are launched at you as you try to make your way to troops that haven't been at a base for some while. Away from home, getting shot at, and spending your days in a foreign country seeing wounded soldiers. Such an experience would be quite traumatic.



Re: Patriots and PBS
by *Delynne Frank* – Sunday, April 10, 2016, 10:01 PM

I found connections between Henry Prunier's story in the Patriot book and episode one of the PBS series. Prunier's story is about the Office of Strategic Services's "Deer Team." He was part of this seven-man team that went into the northern mountains of Vietnam. When the war in Europe came to a close attention shifted to Asia and the war against Japan. The most important need now was intelligence and American's turned to the Viet Minh, who were lead by President Ho Chi Minh. The Viet Minh were in need of training on automatic weapons and infiltration/exfiltration missions. In Prunier's story, he tells us about the two hundred Vietnamese men who were seeking training from the Deer Team. However, Prunier and his team were only prepared to train around eighty-five men. Troops were hand-picked and Prunier describes the group that they trained as "an elite group". OSS Office, Archimedes Patti was interviewed in episode one of the PBS series. He explains that the U.S. got to see what type of troops the Viet Minh were. He describes them as "fine, young nationalists." They were willing to fight and risk their lives for their cause and that cause was to gain independence from the French. Both the documentary and Prunier's story talk about how people saw Ho Chi Minh. It sounds like most everyone saw him as a sensitive, soft spoken, and frail-looking person. But because of his willingness to pick up a gun and kill people, Prunier said, "I guess he could be ruthless in his mind."