



Week 2 Forum

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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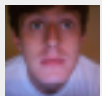
Re: Patriots and PBS

by Mathew Bohman – Wednesday, April 6, 2016, 9:20 AM

For me the most significant story from the Appy book that was also in the videos was that of Malcom Browne. The story regarding Buddhist monks and their protest against the way they were being treated by the South Vietnamese government is important. I believe the fact that Buddhist Thich Quang Duc was willing to sit in the road allowing himself to burn alive speaks volumes to how much anger there was towards the South Vietnamese Catholic government. I believe it shows that the South Vietnamese people were not feeling represented and persecuted because they didn't fall in line with the governments religious beliefs. Additionally since Browne got the film shipped out before the South Vietnamese government could get ahold of it to censor it allowed for the whole world to see what was going on and the feelings that surrounded the South Vietnamese government and the way they were treating its people.

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Martyrs

by Timothy Eckley – Thursday, April 7, 2016, 8:35 PM

I definitely agree to how extreme it must be to make yourself into a human torch in order to represent your distaste for the ideals that the government followed at that time. There isn't a cause out there that I would be willing to burn myself alive over, however, because it would remove any ability I may have to further influence change on that issue. Although it was extreme and dire, I don't find those types of actions to be admirable. It's likely that particular individual could have contributed a lot more than ending his life over a cause he believed in. I do, however, find their tactics for spreading their message extremely admirable and innovative. Using the English language to spread their ideals to the United States people by utilizing US media coverage was a fantastic idea. Whether in the war, or in spreading propaganda, the Vietnamese seemed very ingenious and resource as a people and culture.

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Re: Martyrs

by [Trevor Kaye](#) – Sunday, April 10, 2016, 4:42 PM

I don't believe that there is a cause for which I could purposely fatally injure myself either. However, it is important to consider that many of these Buddhist monks were born into a creed dictating that they must sooner harm themselves than harm others. As devout followers of a religion centered around peace, it is highly unlikely that they would directly involve themselves with the war or military propaganda. Although their methods were very unfortunate, they were highly effective in giving the monks a voice without compromising their strict system of values and beliefs. For these reasons, although I may not be able to put myself in their position, I do find their methods to be admirable under the circumstances they were facing.

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Re: Patriots and PBS

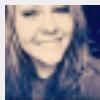
by [Bryce Tilton](#) – Sunday, April 10, 2016, 3:43 PM

Mathew,

This story really hit me deep. It is insane that they had so much anger and were so displeased with the South Vietnamese government that they burned Quang Duc alive in protest. I can't imagine how disrespected and angry they were to feel like they had to go about such an extreme protest in order to be heard by the South Vietnamese Government. That just shows the pride that the Buddhist monks have when it comes to sticking up for their religion and people. It also show how badly they were being treated. Pretty crazy stuff!

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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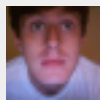
Re: Patriots and PBS

by [Amelia Hansen](#) – Sunday, April 10, 2016, 8:06 PM

I found Malcolm Browne's story to be very significant as well. I also found his story of life in Saigon to be very interesting and informative. I felt that he addressed the fact that there were no "nice guys" so to speak, in Vietnam very well in page 66 of "Patriots". Though I was somewhat aware of the atrocities that occurred during Vietnam, I wasn't aware of just how severe they really were.

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Babes in arms – Unknown enemies of Collins and Donlon

by [Timothy Eckley](#) – Wednesday, April 6, 2016, 11:04 AM

I found that the story Roger Donlon told in Part 1 of the Appy book directly relates to information about training of Vietnamese forces by Jay Collins in Episode 2 of the television series. It paints a picture that I seem to see repeated at times throughout the United States' history when it comes to wars. We were essentially training and equipping the enemy. The main difference I noticed is that Jay Collins identified the possible traitors within the trainees and had them removed very quickly, while Donlon seemed to hint towards recognizing an issue, he was unaware of who he could or couldn't trust besides his US comrades and the sixty Nung mercenaries sent with him for the training.

However, these two instances are significantly related as they pertain to the training of Vietnamese soldiers and the possible risks and backlashes that are presented by these actions. Donlon stated that out of the three hundred soldiers he was training, at least one hundred of them turned out to be affiliated with the communists and orchestrated an attack on those very troops. Jay Collins was also threatened by the Vietnamese Chief of Staff as that individual was also communicating his distaste and inveighing against Diem using resources provided by United States aide, such as the radio mentioned.

These instances greatly display our lack of information about the culture of the Vietnamese, which existed far longer than the United States itself. It shows how they were cunning and used our own resources against us in order to attempt to regain their independance. It's difficult in the moment, in a time with less technology and

even less information about the proposed enemy, to determine that these types of threats would exist. I cannot fault our intelligence for overlooking these setbacks at times, but it's clear that there were issues we had not foreseen that caused large detriments to our efforts in assisting the Vietnamese in becoming a Democracy. Reinforcing Donlon's claim that "we were babes in arms in every way."

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Babes in arms – Unknown enemies of Collins and Donlon

by [Bryce Tilton](#) – Sunday, April 10, 2016, 9:54 PM

Timothy.

You bring up some very good points when mentioning how much more the Vietnamese knew than the Americans. That had to be super stressful training Vietnamese not knowing that they may or may not actually be on the same side as the United States. Its crazy that a third of the men the United States trained sympathized with the enemy. Its tough to win any battle when you are training people siding with the enemy. And to add on to that the Vietnamese had a huge advantage on their home turf, and the United States not having the technology that we have today. Pretty stressful stuff!

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Rise of Ho Chi Minh

by [Bo Costello](#) – Wednesday, April 6, 2016, 9:11 PM

I believe when France surrendered at Dien Bien Phu to Ho Chi Minh’s Democratic Republic of Vietnam on May 7, 1954 had a great impact on the development and outcome of the War. In both the book *Patriots*, and in the TV series *Vietnam: A Television History*, theyboth mention the build up of the eight-year French–Indochina War and the impact of the French defeat. This was a moment when Communist gained tremendous momentum.

Before the start of the Indochina War, the Viet Minh started the August Revolution in 1945, which Ho Chi Minh spread through Vietnam in order to gain independence (*Vietnam*). This led to the Indochina War with France within a year. The TV series goes more into depth about the Viet Minh fighting tactics, stating their tactic of guerilla warfare, supporters using bamboo, and stealing whatever supplies they could from enemy. Both sources mentioned the US aiding France with nearly \$3.5 million. The US wants to prevent Vietnam becoming fully communist at all cost. Immediately after the France surrendered at Dien Bien Phu, 9 countries met in Geneva, Switzerland in order to settle the war (Patriots). Even other Communist countries were worried about Vietnam becoming fully a Communist country in order to avoid drawing the United States into war. The outcome of the Geneva was to split the country at the 17th parallel, North and South. This would be the start of a slow rebuild of the country and a 2 year wait for reelection, which would cause more uproar down the road. This one scenario shows how all the countries link with war and why each one has their view.

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Re: Patriots and PBS

by [Bryce Tilton](#) – Wednesday, April 6, 2016, 10:01 PM

One thing that immediately caught my attention while watching the videos was in Episode 1 on The Roots of War when the narrator mentioned drugs being really cheap and easy to get for soldiers in Vietnam. I wanted to know how serious that could get with the soldiers, so I went into the index of Patriots and looked for something about drugs. I found a writing by Sylvia Lutz Holland who was an army nurse that served at the 312th Evacuation Hospital in Chu Lai on page 172. She mentioned in her writing that some GI's would come in hooked on Heroin, and they would get thrown into big metal cones boxes that supplies came in and got locked in there for two or three days. They would be put the addicts in the medical ward, hydrate them with fluid and eventually get shipped back to their units. She said that was their way of giving those soldiers an instant detox. I thought that was a very interesting passage. What I got out of that was that they didn't have much time to deal with drug problems, and didn't want soldiers away from their units for much time, and their solution for that was pretty cool to read about.



Re: Patriots and PBS

by Mathew Bohman – Sunday, April 10, 2016, 7:17 PM

Bryce,

I too saw that and was a bit surprised that the narrator commented a pack of opium laced cigarettes could be purchased for a bottle of Tide and for 10 dollars you could get pure narcotics. The way it touched on in the video made me believe this was just a teaser and that it would come up later on in more detail when we get into the United States being fully involved on the ground in Vietnam. Having said that I didn't know about the detox methods and found what you provided quite interesting in how soldiers were treated.



The Wars in Vietnam

by Amelia Hansen – Wednesday, April 6, 2016, 11:25 PM

After reading the first few chapters of "Patriots" and studying the first two episodes of "Vietnam: A Television History", I found the early information regarding the wars in Vietnam to be the most interesting. I was completely unaware of Vietnam's deep roots to war, from not only fighting against the American's but against the Chinese and French as well. In the first chapter of "Patriots" and the first episode of "Vietnam: A Television History", both sources address the long duration of the Vietnam War. At 9 minutes and 38 seconds into Episode One of "Vietnam: A Television History", it explains how the Vietnamese were no strangers to war, having been fighting for over 2,000 years. According to page XVIII in "Patriots", Vietnam's traditional enemy was China, their neighbor to the North. In the year 40, the Trung sisters, who were Vietnamese military leaders, lead the first uprising against the Chinese, for the Vietnamese refused to abide by Chinese rule. It wasn't until 1428, after many wars, did Vietnam establish permanent independence from China. However, French missionaries began to arrive in Vietnam in the 17th century, and in 1883, took possession of Vietnam and divided the nation into three sections: Tonkin, Annam, and Cochinchina, as seen on the maps provided on both page XXI of "Patriots" and 12 minutes into Episode One of "Vietnam: A Television History". The Vietnamese's' refusal to comply to the French rule grew over the next century and resulted in a vicious war beginning in 1946 and ending in 1954. After a Vietnamese victory, the eight-year war came to an end with a peace settlement in Geneva, Switzerland.



Re: The Wars in Vietnam

by Trevor Kaye – Sunday, April 10, 2016, 4:06 PM

Prior to the readings and videos, I was unaware of Vietnam's extensive war history as well. It's history was well-described in a profound quote from Ho Chi Minh found on page 12 of *America's Longest War*. "If ever the tiger [Viet Minh] pauses, the elephant [France] will impale him on his mighty tusks. But the tiger will not pause, and the elephant will die of exhaustion and loss of blood." Although Ho said this in 1946 during the war with France, he unwittingly predicted the outcome of future conflicts, including that of the notorious "Vietnam War" with the United States. Perhaps the fact that the Vietnamese have fought in various conflicts for "over 2,000 years" contributed to their astounding success in the face of modernized, better-equipped enemies like France and the United States.



Counterinsurgency – A Double-Edged Sword

by Trevor Kaye – Wednesday, April 6, 2016, 11:52 PM

About halfway through episode two of *Vietnam a Television History* (26 minutes in), the "counterinsurgency" program implemented by President John F. Kennedy is discussed. Members from U.S. special forces groups were deployed to train South Vietnamese soldiers, utilizing advanced military technology. This can be tied to a story by Roger Donlon in *Patriots: The Vietnam War Remembered from All Sides* written by Christian G. Appy.

Donlon discusses the training of a Vietnamese Strike Force by American soldiers, and the substantial issues and complications it yielded. According to Donlon, "Of the three hundred members of our Strike Force it turned out

that about a hundred sympathized with the enemy." (13) Historically, the United States has used Kennedy's method on numerous occasions, aiming to enable the "oppressed" to fight for themselves through training and aid in the form of military hardware. Many times, this backfires and the hardware and training falls into the hands of the enemy. During a recount of an Viet Cong attack, Donlon estimates that "a third of [their] Vietnamese forces on the outer perimeter fought for eh other side. While training local forces to defend themselves against a common enemy may have sounded like a bulletproof plan on paper, it came with grave risks that appear to have been overlooked by President Kennedy.

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Re: Counterinsurgency – A Double-Edged Sword

by [Trevor Kaye](#) – Thursday, April 7, 2016, 12:35 AM

I forgot to close the quotation "a third of [their] Vietnamese forces on the outer perimeter fought for the other side." I apologize if this complicated anyone's reading.

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Ho Chi Minh is the connecting factor

by [Dustin Brown](#) – Thursday, April 7, 2016, 9:58 PM

I would say that part 2 of the Appy book entitled “History is not made with ifs” is most significantly related to part 1 of Vietnam a television history entitled “Roots of war”. Both the video and the reading explain the widely unknown history of Vietnam and the constant state of war and colonialism it endured for centuries. The most touched on timeframe between the two is between the early 1900s to the mid and late 1950s. I think the biggest connection between the two is Ho Chi Minh (Uncle Ho) the content of the two focus in depth on his beginnings, beliefs, followers, and Impact in the region.

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Uncle Ho

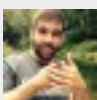
by [Timothy Eckley](#) – Saturday, April 9, 2016, 10:02 PM

It’s interesting to me just how revered Ho Chi Minh seemed to be in that region. He was looked up to so highly they even referred to him as Uncle Ho. With what we’ve covered so far, I get the impression that he was like George Washington was to the early colonies fighting for their independance here in the, now United States. I would love to see some statistics, if possible, on the percentage of the Vietnamese that were supporting his cause as I feel like it was the vast majority.

I get the impression that Vietnam was simply tired of being exploited and treated like an insignificant country. While I don't yet know all of the nuances behind communism, it appears that independance was their first and foremost priority. While we instilled a dictator that most of the people didn't seem to like, as he denied them elections and let his power go to his head. This likely created even more disdain for the United States from the Vietnamese. I see, early on in our studies, that the Vietnamese had a lot of grit and determination when it comes to defending the country they felt was home and display a lot of similarities with us in our infancy. Uncle Ho's likely the main cause for the majority of this determination, possibly due to his revolutionary status.

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Uncle Ho's Supporter Statistics

by [Bo Costello](#) – Sunday, April 10, 2016, 12:28 PM

Having a strong and powerful figure stand up for your country in order to form recognition from other countries during this time period, would be considered a "godsend". The people in Vietnam didn't have much choice. They could either continue to believe in liberation without the country being controlled by communist, or they can surrender to a communist man that is indigenous and fighting for his country. I could see this being the deciding factor for Vietnamese to follow Ho Chi Minh. During these times, I could only imagine the only thing you would truly desired during a time like this, is food on the table without the sound of aircraft flying overhead to go drop bombs on your own race.



Re: Ho Chi Minh is the connecting factor
by *Bryce Tilton* – Sunday, April 10, 2016, 11:34 PM

I agree that those two are related. Vietnam was just sick and tired of being pushed around that they needed a leader to look up to, and give their country independence. Uncle Ho found every single option to better Vietnam and give it freedom. He moved all over Europe trying to free Vietnam. He was a nationalist first and a communist second so the United States didn't mind Ho Chi Minh. Just from these first couple weeks I know that Ho Chi Minh was a huge huge part oink the war of Vietnam.

◀ Patriots and PBS

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