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70/100

Part 1

Which single story, other than that of Jo Collins, in Part 1 of the Patriots book caught your attention? Why? How reliable, trustworthy, believable do you believe that speaker to be? After all, unlike you or me, they were there, at that specific point in time. Does that give them more or less credibility? Are they objective and factual or do they suffer from too much subjectivity, too much time having passed, too much forgotten? (These are not easy questions... please take some time to analyze what I'm asking for here.)

The story that caught my eye first in this chapter was the story of Tran Thi Gung, I think I feel a connection due to us both being women. I also did not know that any women were allowed to fight in Vietnam or any place at this time, so that also caught my eye. I thought that it was very interesting that she was a member of the Viet Cong, **basically everybody's enemy at that point.** She seemed to be very angry at the Americans in general and went to fight in the war to avenge her father's death, at the same time she says "But I never felt guilty about the killing I did. It was war. Wouldn't you shoot me if you saw me holding a weapon and pointing it at you? I think it was justified." page 19, lines 11-13, Appy book. These lines made me wonder why she would even justify her role in the war, especially when she already stated that she was seeking revenge and avenging her father's death.

I really believe her to be true to her experience. She remembers the Americans as being easy targets saying "As soon as I started to fire, he fell, some of his friends came rushing to his aid. They held his body and cried. They cried a lot. This made them sitting ducks. Very easy to shoot." Page 17, lines 2-4, Appy book. In my opinion, she was scared initially because the Americans were so much larger than her, physically, but after she started to get to know their patterns the fear diminished. I personally feel like her credibility as far as this goes is true to her personal experience and believable, but as far as believing that the Americans were easy targets in general, I would never take the enemy's understanding as credible proof.

You are on to something here, but it needs more explanation
I would also like to add that Tran Thi Gung seemed to be very proud of the fact that she had been awarded a decoration titled "Viliant Destroyer of American Infantrymen". In my opinion she have been so obsessed with the first battle in which she was awarded this decoration that all other battles may have been put on the back burner. After all she is a war hero in her country, right?

I don't know what you
are getting at here.

In the second half of Part 2, address any positive lesson(s) you may have learned from one or more of the accounts in Part 2 of the book. Is there any "hope", "compassion", "goodness" or the "potential for good" that comes out of any of these stories?

The story of Daniel Redmond and his recollections of his time active in the Operation Passage to Freedom in Vietnam sparks a negative feeling in my soul. I guess I have a real big issue with the thought of Tom Dooley, possibly, exaggerating the truth by publishing a picture of an innocent peasant who was most likely born deformed. I understand that this is hearsay from Daniel Redmond, but his interview seemed to reflect Tom Dooley as a good guy. Also, I did not get the feeling that he was jealous of Redmond's success, basically no motivation to sabotage his book by telling lies. Though I am not sure exactly what exaggerations were made, I can assume that Dooley's personal experience may have been different than Redmond's, even though they worked very close.

On the positive side of things, I liked the way that Redmond stated that "I developed a tremendous liking for the Vietnamese, and since I'm Catholic I felt a religious affiliation with the refugees." Page 48, lines 20-21, Appy book. It seems to me that not only did Redmond serve his country by helping carry out Operation Passage to Freedom; he found a way to identify with the people he helped on a personal level. This is something that I personally find enlightening. I also like that Tom Dooley had returned to the region to set up medical clinics in Laos despite being discharged from the Navy due to his homosexuality. It just shows that he had in fact had found a very special spot in his heart for the Vietnamese people and their tremendous need for medical attention.



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If the paper length was correct, you would have taken the time and words to more fully develop you comments with the level clarity that was missing in this draft.