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Whether someone agrees with war or not, stories of war can have a lasting affect on a person. Acts of bravery are respected by all types of people. However, many people had trouble supporting the Vietnam war. Opposing a war has a time and a place. Once our troops are there fighting for their lives and their country, support and prayers for their return home safely is all we can do. Troops knowing that they have support from their country is important because if they feel like they have no support, they will second guess what they are fighting for. It is not to say that it is an easy task to let a loved one just go off to war. More times than not, you hear of how men come back from the war, and they are never the same. It takes a strong, courageous human being to be able to mentally survive the horrors of war. Two men whose stories from the Vietnam war that were both courageous and interesting were that of Roger Donlon and Malcolm Browne. Roger Donlon was a Green Beret captain during the Vietnam war. He was the commander for the Nom Dong Special Forces in South Vietnam, near the border of Laotian. The mission of Donlon's men was to train, and assist the Vietnamese in the fight against communism. Outposts were set up for the South Vietnamese. "They had set up strategic hamlets to give the people a sense of belonging to a program that came from the central government" (Appy: 12). Diem's brother, ordered the construction of these strategic hamlets. Donlon's men were sent to aid the Vietnamese, to be sure they were capable of defending these outposts. On the night of July 6th, 1964, the Viet Cong made an attack on the camp. The camp was all of a sudden under heavy mortar fire. Under these circumstances, Donlon had to go into command mode very quickly. It would be quite difficult to have a coherent mind when everything is going up in smoke around you. Donlon had to be quick on his feet to protect as many men as he could. One moment in the story that deeply struck a cord was when one of the Vietnamese interpreters, George Tuan, was trying to run to his mortar and was taken down. A 57-millimeter took off his legs and, "He just kept running on the stumps. Within about thirty seconds he was dead. That's one of the things you'd like to forget." (Appy: 14) Seeing this happen to someone would cause some major emotional distress. Under the situations Donlon and his men were under, they had to keep going for the sake of their lives. In one second disaster had struck. It is sometimes difficult to understand what it would be like to lose someone from war. This story is just one that intensely paints a picture of the hell that the soldiers went through. Another quote from Roger Donlon's story was, "The casualties of war go far beyond the immediate battlefield." (Appy: 15) This reflects his intense pain even years later. Roger Donlon's story was an emotional one. It was an example of bravery and he showed a true love for his men. "What keeps you going at times like that is the love you feel for your fellow teammates." (Appy: 15) Donlon proved his love

for his teammates when he made a strong effort to rescue a World War II veteran. While trying to save his friend, Donlon suffered immense shrapnel wounds to his, legs, stomach, shoulder, and even his face. Roger Donlon's accounts of his experience in the Vietnam are credible because he received the Medal of Honor. He was the first American to receive the United States highest honor in the Vietnam War. "His dynamic leadership, fortitude, and valiant efforts inspired not only the American personnel but the friendly Vietnamese as well and resulted in the successful defense of the camp." (Appy: 12) After reading Malcolm Browne's story, his attitude was a bit disappointing. His story was not disappointing, but heartbreaking. The story seemed to have no glint of hope. Although, after witnessing some of the things he had to witness, it would be most difficult to have a positive outlook. Browne's patriotism was a bit shallow. "Initially, I spent more time with South Vietnamese troops than with the Americans." (Appy: 65) He seemed to favor the Vietnamese. One quote from the story read, "An impressive number of journalists were killed or wounded and the danger added a certain spice of life." (Appy: 65) So many men were fighting for their lives during this war, and Browne's attitude made it seem as though it were some sort of game. Malcolm Browne was the only journalist who captured the moment of when the elderly monk, Thich Quang Duc, burned himself in protest to the policies of Ngo Dinh Diem. Browne's description of the event was saddening and heart-wrenching. Malcolm Browne witnessed many disheartening events. He also witnessed the aftermath of village massacres. Some good is found in the story of Malcolm Browne's Vietnam perspective. Although it is difficult to read, the first hand account of witnessing the Buddhist insurrection is quite eye-opening to the absolute turmoil that occurred during the Vietnam War. It is an example that freedom of religion is one of the most fundamentally important freedoms for humans. Forcing religion onto someone to believe in something they don't is like imprisoning their souls. Malcolm Browne can be appreciated for his efforts in immersing himself into the people of Vietnam. It is one of the jobs of a reporter to not be bias, but to report facts. His sympathy for the Buddhist's was admirable, especially because they are such peaceful people. The first hand accounts of being involved in a war is the most intense, and truly gives us the insight into what the war was like from all sides. Including not only American stories, but those of the Vietnamese makes the book by Appy one of more credibility. Although time has passed for those involved in the war, here and gone; the things they have witnessed, fought for, and lost, would forever be a part of their lives.

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