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Tyler Stark assignment 1

I find the patriots book to be a very a very insightful read. For my paper, I didn't want to choose just one story to write about because, what I was inspired by was the human spirit of the combatants exhibited from both sides of the war. The one story in part one that I feel wholly captures this is the recollection of Tran Thi Gung, pg. 15. In this story I was impressed with the young woman's strength. In this war she was the enemy, but more importantly she was human, I was impressed that though faced with a numerically superior, better equipped, better supplied and funded force these people fought with such a tenacity and strength that they made taking their country an impossibility.

The young woman in the story fought and killed men, and survived bombing raids in underground tunnels at an age when her cultural counterparts in the U.S. would still be on a swing set, or playing with dolls. She Exhibited strength of the human spirit, bravery, and the will to survive. I was greatly impressed with her frankness as well, she spoke in a very factual manner, I'm not saying that her recollections are perfect, but she did not shy away from describing the acts of violence she committed with an honesty that would make me believe her. If she wouldn't lie about killing a man, or dozens of them, I cant think of anything else she would lie about.

In searching through the passages of the Patriots book for one specific thing to focus on that I found most disappointing I found it in the account from Ngo Vihn Long, pg 54. His account starts with so much hope and national spirit, here is a man who genuinely want to help his people, and believes in his government. What I found to be disappointing in his account was the political maneuvering and psychological warfare committed on the south Vietnamese. The southern Vietnamese government's brutal attempts to control the population by scaring them from joining the northern rebel army by means of public executions, and the corralling of the populace in the small agrivilles. Wars are messy brutal and viscous, every one suffers, but to see the government torture and brutalize its own populace in order to stop them from becoming rebels sounds like a perfect recipe of fuel for resistance and defection. The second part of my reading, the search for something good or positive comes from the same story. I found Ngo Vihn Long's compassion for all the individuals in the war a stark contrast to the brutality that was also present. He demonstrates, and speaks of the fact that not every individual involved in such a brutal disaster such as war is evil. Ngo Vih Long recognized that soldiers go to war, but they don't start them, that no one wanted to be risking their lives on a battlefield when they could be home

living peacefully. I was impressed with his ability to remain hopeful, inspiring, and see that even though the war and the governmental policies were devastating, he didn't necessarily attribute that quality to the men fighting it.

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