

Part 1: Phan Xuan Sinhcccc

What caught my attention first and last was the sadness of his stories. The "accidental" shooting of the fishermen. The old couple who would not stay away from their land. The letters home of the enemy fighters. The apathy with which some of these drafted South Vietnam soldiers "fought", and the world they were going to have to live in when the war did end. The fact that the old couple would not leave their land was explained well. It was where their ancestors were and it was all they had, all they loved. In all of our reading so far it has been brought out that a lot of the Vietnamese soldiers did not fight well and that the countryside was inhabited by peasant farmers, so his story was believable and trustworthy to me. By 1971 the war had been going on for so long, his attitude of exhaustion and anger over the injustices he saw seem completely credible. Time does not change the things he saw or participated in, but maybe his objectivity has been re-focused by the passage of time and increased learning.

explain this. Is he "matching" his story to the history books?

Part 2, Paul Kattenburg

3 sentences of analysis

He was a Vietnam specialist from the 1950's, when most of us had never heard of Vietnam, so in 1963 why wasn't he listened to? Why did the National Security Council disregard his information? In fact, why was he excluded from all top levels of discussions of Vietnam policy? I found the governments' attitude disgusting. To send boys into battle in ever increasing numbers to save the reputation of the government or the people in it is wrong. To not listen to, or take into account reports from people who know more than you is irresponsible to say the least.

not analyzed well. I agree with your position, but to assume "the govt" will listen to "one person" is not reasonable.

Evelyn Colbert

"Dissent that contradicted the public optimism was ignored". That the Secretary of Defense could say he didn't know anything about Vietnam, and what was really happening was not understood was indeed "garbage" as she said. My, but that does sound familiar, so try as I may I am having trouble finding something positive out of these stories. I guess the potential for good exists where the worst has been lived through. The only hope or goodness I found was the story of Luyen Nguyen who became a student counselor.

I should have stayed with this story.

sarcasm about today? 2014?

Much more time, & many more words needed here.