

Kristine Wallace Assignment #1

Part 1

There ^{are} so many stories that I encountered in this book that made an impact on me for so many reasons but I chose the story by Roger Donlon for the simple fact that it made the ~~LARGEST~~ impact on me. We have in the narrative an individual that was thrown into a war that, although he had great training, was working with a group of individuals that he could not completely trust. He had the small infrastructure, than the Nungs than the North Vietnamese Strike Force which he could only trust a small percentage of (which was unfortunate from the fact that so many people were being relocated at this point, it was impossible for the Americans to know who the infiltrators were and who were actually on the American side).

What caught my attention most was the fact that he was trying to deal with all of these individuals that could ~~ALMOST~~ be trusted but not quite so. Donlon went into this with full trust and that unfortunately was not the case. They were fired upon not only by the enemy but also by at least half the people on the perimeter that were supposed to be protecting them.

Donlon goes on to speak of his compassion for the people in his unit, specifically Pop Alamo and John Houston. The saddest line I believe I read refereed to Houston's wife having given birth to twin children. Because of the prematurity of the birth (which could most definitely be a cause from the fathers death), one of the children died. Donlon's line of "casualties of war go far beyond the immediate battlefield" (pg.15) resonates such a feeling that Donlon understands, as should many, that it is not just the soldiers in the field itself but so many others end up experiencing the pain and suffering that had occurred.

I believe Donlon to be a credible and apt party in his narrative, not only because he experienced the situation but that after so many years he can still account for everything with a sensible head. He is now a grandfather, living on a Kansas home with still a sense of pride for the American public. This I feel was represented in the red, white and blue birdhouse outside his home. American pride can be exemplified in many ways, and this was one small reminder.

Part 2

Malcolm Browne wrote a narrative on his experiences in the war and the Buddhist people he came into contact ^{with} through the war. The reason I found this disappointing was the fact that the Buddhist Monk ended up burning himself in effigy. Although, I realize that he and the other people that was with had their reasons, I do not feel like burning yourself would do anything to stop a war. This is why I found this story disappointing. Browne, I felt, wrote a really good narrative but the fact that a person would go to such lengths to protest something is a very hard concept for me to understand.

Although I ended on the negative, I am also going to look at the positive point to this issue. The monk (and his fellow compatriot) had obvious reasons for doing what they did. They did not want a communist take over and they did not want war. They simply wanted peace and although this is not the way I would go about trying to achieve this, they had their reasons. Buddhist Monks are known for their way of life including compassion, love and to live life with a moralistic ideal. So, I am guessing that they felt was their best way to make an impression, even as extreme as it was.

Don't use the same story for the positive and negative.

Grammar & spelling problems hurt readability.

Historical accuracy issues as well.

Lacking analysis in Part 1 - Part 2 became your own 2nd guessing the burning monk, which strayed from my questions.