

In part one of Appy's "Patriots", Phan Xuan Sinh's story was the most impacting. Hearing a perspective of someone who fought for the South Vietnamese military was very enlightening. Most military stories of Vietnam come from soldiers from the United States. His retelling of removing an elderly couple from a "free-fire zone" and burning their house down, only to find them there again in a couple of weeks because they couldn't leave the land where their ancestors were buried was a shocking story. It showed how much the Vietnamese loved their country and their dedication to their traditions. Operation Passage to Freedom, mentioned in Daniel Redmond's story, which transported 900,000 refugees from North Vietnam to South Vietnam in 1954, showcased the same loyalty to tradition and culture that the Vietnamese had (Herring 62). The U.S. and South Vietnam played on the fact that many people in North Vietnam were Catholic and used the fact that Diem was Catholic and many types of propaganda to convince people to move to South Vietnam. In disc two *America's Mandarin* of "Vietnam: A Television History", the hesitation of the people in North Vietnam to move was discussed. Many were afraid to leave or did not want to abandon their homes and the place where their ancestors were buried. They had respect for their ancestors and did not want to leave. Propaganda had to be made to help push them to make the decision to leave. The culture and tradition of the Vietnamese was shown just as it was in Sinh's story. The Southern Vietnamese Army and the United State's attempts to relocate and move the citizens would not help their cause. By doing this it only interfered with their culture and way of life and created more hostility.

Sinh appears to be a reliable speaker but one can never be certain. No records can back up his story yet he was the one who lived them. Taking his word as law is not something that would be advised, but understanding that it was his point of view and experience that can be interpreted as another way of looking at the war. Since he was there during the war, some of what he says can be taken as more credible but at the same time credibility can be taken away. Some of what he remembered could have been changed over time as he has gotten older and his mind could have been tempered with his memories to help make them easier for him to digest. Depending on how many times he ~~was~~ retold his story he could have also elaborated what actually happened without realizing it over the years. However, the fact that he was there and lived through the war gives him a credibility that can not be taken away from him just like any other person that fought during the war. It can not be denied that he was there and fought. Therefore, he can be counted on as a reliable speaker who is telling his own story.

Luyen Nguyen's story was very disappointing. The way that he was treated by North Vietnamese soldiers while captured as well as the way that the Americans that he encountered treated him was horrible. It would be easier to understand the way that the North Vietnamese treated him since he was one of their prisoners and was their enemy. However, the fact that a U.S. captain told him that he did not know anything and told the student commandos that they were not fighting for their country but for the Americans since they were paying them was absolutely disappointing. Although this was obviously not the case for many Americans in Vietnam it was surprising to read that the U.S. advisors that Nguyen encountered were so arrogant. The fact that he had not told his family any of the terrible conditions that went through while imprisoned is saddening. For someone to hold those memories and thoughts in for so long is something that no one should have to go through.

A story that one might find to have plenty of negatives is Malcolm Browne's. Being the journalist that took the famous photo of the Buddhist monk committing suicide by lighting himself on fire in protest against anti-Buddhist policies in South Vietnam, it would be easy to only see the negativity that takes place in Browne's story. However, there are moments of hope and good. Browne's friendships with several Buddhists is an example of how many Americans that went to Vietnam made lasting relationships with citizens, and his marriage to Le Lieu is another. He spoke of the Buddhists with respect in his story. When Browne sent the raw film of the monk it showed that he was reporting the truth without censorship. His need to constantly push the boundaries with his writing despite his own safety being put on the line showcases his compassion which is admirable.

Part 2 felt a bit rushed. (Page length 700-1100 words)
so feel free to take more time.
Overall, very good first effort.