

1399 words

over the max limit

80/100

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Instructor: Joe Escobar
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(fine if the
paper is good
& on point, which Part 1 is not)

Part 1:

In the first part of the book Patriots, written by Christian Appy, one particular story resonates with me much stronger than any other story in this section. The first story, ~~the story told~~ from Bernard Trainor, stands out to me for three main reasons. In the second paragraph on page four I found myself full of questions when Appy penned:

- ① We viewed Communism as a monolithic dragon which controlled all of the Eurasian land mass. (...)
- ② We were on a holy crusade to stop the spread of godless Communism and to give the budding democracy in South Vietnam an opportunity to take root.

This Particular excerpt brings several pieces of information regarding the history of the United States to the forefront of my mind. I recalled learning about the colonists in the United States and our country's westward expansion being taught as the idea of Manifest Destiny. Through my experience learning about Manifest Destiny, I found that the United States seemed to collectively justify their actions and slaughter of the Native American population, because Manifest Destiny was saying that God himself desired the Anglos to inhabit and control the land of the United States. So when Appy writes about Bernard Trainor's understanding of the situation in Vietnam as a holy crusade to stop the spread of godless Communism, I find myself wanting to read the propaganda from this era that brought people to believe that the violence and the death of soldiers and civilians alike was in fact a holy event.

Furthermore, and from the same previously quoted excerpt, I find several more disturbances or questions arising from the two words godless Communism. The United States seems to continually push propaganda onto the nations civilians and military personnel collectively portraying any group of people that do not adhere to the expectations and desires of the United States ruling elite as godless people. Again returning to Manifest Destiny, the United States regularly portrayed the Native American population as godless savages to gain the support of the Anglo population in the United States attempt to conquer the country.

I found the story of Bernard Trainor to re-cement my preconceived understandings and beliefs regarding why the United States goes to war and how war becomes justified. I have a major problem with God and or religion being used as a qualitative reason for anyone to take the life of another person. Continually, and in conjunction with God and religion, I also have a problem with a group of people, in this case the U.S. Government, invading another country in an attempt to convert the people of the invaded country into a population of people that abide and live by the American standards, specifically governmental democracy. I cannot speak for you the reader or anyone else in the world, but I do not see how the U.S. has the right to forcefully attempt to tell any other group of people how to live and behave. So in conclusion as to why this particular story resonates with me the strongest, I found this story to enrage my intellectual being and increase my desire for the United States to mind her own business, so this story is likely to continually resonate in my mind for an immeasurable amount of time.

However, when coming to my conclusion regarding why this story resonates with me so strongly, the questions related to source creditability become paramount. Personally, I find a few reasons why this particular source is credible. First, and likely the most obvious reason for believe this source to be credible, Bernard Trainor was a general in the United States Marine Corps commanding troops in Vietnam during the war, so Bernard Trainor had to have been an upstanding, trustworthy, and responsible soldier for the Marine Corps to give him the rank of General, and Trainor was actually an on the ground eye witness to the struggles in Vietnam during the war.

Secondly, I believe the story Bernard Trainor shares is credible, because Trainor was also an instructor at the Command and Staff College. Although not everything an instructor says is completely factual and 100% accurate, being an instructor requires a person to be professional, knowledgeable, and trustworthy in the eyes of the institution that employs them. Furthermore, Trainor speaks of the Westmoreland tactics that are being used in Vietnam in a manner that reads as factual instead of entertaining when Appy pens, "You could see the disillusionment and unhappiness that officers returning from Vietnam had toward Westmoreland's strategy of search-

I'm worried here.
You focus on Appy's words,
not Trainor's.

Not Trainor, but
APPY

only
trustworthy
people
get
promoted
to leader?

is this
the
same
Government

you despise?

who?

not mine.

wrong

pwc

obsession? rant?

gva

and-destroy," in the fifth paragraph of page five.

Although I ultimately believe that Trainor's story is a credible one, there is one part of his shared experience in Vietnam that arouses some questions regarding the degree of credibility I can give this story. My question of Trainor's credibility comes from his story about how two marines found an entrance to a cave in the Hue-Danang-Chu-Lai area when Appy wrote:

A day or two later, two snuffies [marine infantrymen], out of sight of their maters and bored to death with senseless exercise, decided to entertain themselves with a Frisbee. They tossed it back and forth until it went over one kid's head and landed in a clump of bushes. When he went to retrieve it, lo and behold he spotted a hole. He enlarged it with his K-bar and sure enough it opened into a tunnel. It turned out to be one of the many entrances to a cave that was the Quang Da Special Zone headquarters for the Hue-Danang-Chu-Lai area. (Appy 6)

The possibility of two marines being bored and wanting to throw a Frisbee for entertainment is believable in and of itself. However, believing that the Marines found a cave entrance that later resulted in a large gain of intelligence information regarding covert agents from a poorly thrown Frisbee is hard for me to believe. But overall, and as I stated previously, I believe Trainor's story is credible, but one must decide for him or herself whether or not they wish to believe anything written in Trainor's story.

Part 2:

In the second part of the book Patriots, written by Christian Appy, one story was extremely disappointing for me to read. Malcolm Browne's story, "You could smell the burning flesh," was extremely difficult and disappointing to read, because Browne talks about a horrific event that he witnessed, and I became overwhelmed with feelings of grievance when Browne described the Buddhist monk Thich Quang Duc burning himself in protest against the anti-Buddhist policies of the South Vietnam catholic president.

Later on in Browne's story I again found myself being highly disturbed, specifically when Browne describes one of the common tortures during the Vietnam War known as the "ding-a-ling" torture. The "Ding-a-ling" torture was common. It was done with a hand-cranked generator used to produce electricity for radios. The interrogator hooked electrodes to the genitals of prisoners and turned the crank, causing agonizing pain. (Appy 66)

The idea of someone hooking a person up to an electric generator by electrodes connected to their genitals is disturbing and appalling. I cannot imagine being either the interrogator or the person in question when this torture tactic is being used, and being utterly disturbed by the burning monk and the "ding-a-ling" torture method is why Browne's story was the most disappointing story for me to read.

Unlike Browne's story, however, I did find a story in the second part of this book that showed me some signs of hope in humanity or at a minimum some goodness in the people involved in the Vietnam War. Daniel Redmond's story, "The doctor who won the war in Indochina," is one story that gave me some good vibes, although limited. When Appy writes, "Occasionally he'd suggest we go up to a field hospital and visit the French survivors of Dien Bien Phu. He was genuinely concerned about these people," I find my first real feeling of anything or anyone being something or someone positive during a time of atrocities. (Appy 49) To me, knowing that during a time of war someone was genuinely concerned about anyone involved in conflict provides me with a sense of faith in humanity, because caring about the wellbeing of ones fellow man plays a paramount role in a society being good, hole-some, and peaceful.

Justyn, it became clear that you wanted to write a paper on your preconceptions & NOT on my questions & with historical facts & evidence presented in this class & the given materials (textbooks & DVDs) Part 2 was much better & on track. There were a number of grammar errors which hurt readability.

Part 1

80/100

In the account from Phan Xuan Sinh he presented a personal view of his experiences in the war, and his feelings towards it. He endured many hardships, from a soldier in his reconnaissance dying from a landmine (Sinh lost his right foot), to his platoon mistakenly killing and wounding fisherman ^{including} with young kids. Sinh was in a position where he was drafted to fight, so he did, but all he wanted was peace between his people. This made him feel no passion behind the war, unlike the passionate Viet Cong, but still he had to endure these hardships which subsequently carried past the ^{end} finish of the War.

Hearing about the people that died, especially the innocent fisherman, hurt but what hurt the most, yet was peculiarly inspiring was hearing about the old couple in the "free fire zone." Sinh took them from there and to a refugee camp to make sure they were safe. Even though he burnt down ^{sp} their house in front of them, so they wouldn't be inclined to come back, they did. Sinh came to them and said, "Uncle, I told you before, this place is too dangerous to live in. Why in the world did you come back?" The old man said, "All my ancestors are buried here and this is our land. We're not going to leave." Land is very important to peasants and it just shows the ^{WN} passion that the Vietnamese have. ^{WN} Even though this was a very dangerous area, they would rather be there with the possibility of death, than in a different place that is safe. This strong will is inspiring, and reading this makes one feel close with the Vietnamese people.

Yet it is tragic and makes one wonder how many innocent people died in these "free fire zones," who were just trying to live their ^{life} life. Also how tragic it is for these people who love their land and country so much, to ^{NS} see it get obliterated in war, along with the people they love. This ruining of the land wasn't done from just the effects of war (bombing, Landmines, and shooting), but was done on purpose by the U.S.'s strategy to get the people out of the country and into the cities. Here they dropped Agent Orange, which had a disastrous effect on the environment. "An estimated 72.4 million liters or 100,000 tons of herbicides were sprayed on South Vietnam, affecting 43% of the cultivated area and 44% of the total area. Seventy per cent of the South's coconut groves and 60% of its rubber plantations were destroyed, together with 110,000 hectares of forest and 150,000 hectares of mangroves, along with enough crops to feed 2 million people. It has also been claimed that 43% of the South's plantations and orchards were destroyed, and 44% of the forest wealth.¹ All of this makes one feel for the Vietnamese people. Often in the U.S. we hear about how hard Vietnam was on our soldiers and youth, which it was, but it must have been ten times harder for the people of Vietnam. Here ^{click} the war was actually on their land, so innocent people and their beloved land took terrible undeserved punishments.

This account from Phan Xuan Sinh seemed very believable. Initially one may think that too much time had passed to really remember, and that people may want to skew the truth somewhat in order to make themselves look better. But Sinh gained credibility through factual truths he presented, showing the good things he did and the bad, especially the bad. Like when talked about how he and his platoon killed innocent fisherman, which included old and young people. (If he was going to skew the truth of what happened, he wouldn't have mentioned this.)

^{yes} too brief here, but great point.

Part 2:

In "The Emperor Has No Clothes," It was disappointing to hear about how the U.S government lied to the people. ^{he} Like when McNamara noticed how much worse Vietnam was after a two day trip, but told the press that there was great progress. Part of this is understandable, where he ^{was} is trying to lift the hopes of the people, but aspects later in this excerpt are even more disappointing. Such as the fact that the U.S was in Vietnam fighting a country for the purpose of fighting communism. ^{PT} Even though Vietnam had no desire to form this alliance that the U.S. spoke of. The Viet Cong was thought of as pawns to the communists of China and

of course

which?
N. or S.

factually inaccurate

Russia, and it was upsetting that the U.S didn't look into the culture and motives of the people of Vietnam before going to battle and destroying people lives and their surroundings. "Since the main enemy was always thought to be located somewhere other than the battlefields of South Vietnam, Washington never regarded it as a top priority to understand the particular cultural, political, and economic realities of the Vietnamese." Then even when it was seen that the War efforts were a lost cause and that the U.S wouldn't win, they still fought on through the egotistical pride of not wanting to lose.

very idealistic view -
All of this deceit the government put people through, was to push their mixed motives. This is extremely upsetting because the government is supposed to be in place for the people (they should never be able to get away with this type of behavior.) The fact that they are bigger than the law, and just make huge decisions for the people, covered by lies, is a terrible thing. They should go to jail for something like this. This resulted in killing of so many people from both countries, and for what? *No hype? ☆*

awk
It was refreshing to hear that there were people, like Chester Cooper (CIA intelligence analyst for Southeast Asia), that were actively trying to get out of this war. He saw the terrible things and did all he could do to chase any possibility of negotiating. "I traveled all over the world chasing every possibility, fighting for every extra day of a bombing halt, and looking for every indication of a diplomatic opening." This is a man that hated the war, and unlike the government officials that deceived people in order to keep the war going, He went around in an unpublicized, unheroic way, to do anything he could to resolve the war into peace.

Again, careful. Why listen to this one man? Index Yes, he is a positive example

1. "Vietnam: war and the environment. Green Left Weekly. Jul. 14, 1993. Web. Apr. 13. 2014

<https://www.greenleft.org.au/node/6044>

*While interesting #3 what "off topic" to focus on
something of obvious interest to you. ~~Then~~ While
I don't dispute the outcome, defoliants were used
to prevent the VC from being able to hide in
the jungles. It was not, first & foremost, an
ecologically based war strategy. Finding/seeing the enemy
was.*

*☆ The biggest error is to take one sentence
from one story & "sum up" the whole war.
Not good. Not historically accurate.*

*Proofread. Numerous
grammar errors
hurt readability.*

Assignment 1

Jordan Derrick

History of the Vietnam War

Joe Escabor

4-10-2014

PART ONE:

In the readings George Watkins stands out more than the other contributors of the war, because he tells his part of the war without emotion where a lot of emotion could be applied. Which, allows the reader to think of his story open mindedly and not from the view point of political party. Watkins began his story from the beginning when he knew he would be drafted, but honestly didn't know why he was going to war or what this war was about. He was severally injured, didn't know why exactly he was fighting, but he still went to serve his country. While serving the United States he stepped on a pressure-detonated mine and lost both his legs and eyes. His story is trustworthy, because he tells us the parts of the story everyone might not want to hear, like his eyes being hurt and looking like scrambled eggs. If he wanted his story to be more polished and not as true he would have left out significant parts like the eyes, not knowing the cause of the war, and not really knowing how to work the M-60 machine gun. His wounds will always be carried with him and the names of his fallen brothers will forever be etched on the wall, no amount of time can makes those memories fade. from him? for us?

PART TWO:

Ngo Vinh Long lived a heroic life standing up for what he believed in, but was forced out of his country due to being chased by his enemy. His father was beaten to the point of near death, for what he believed in, and by people who intruded his country. Fortunately the love for his son and country kept him alive, his son mentioned that he refused to die. Long was highly intelligent and learned Chinese and French. His country admired him for graduating when only about five percent of the people graduated high school (and invited him to public events, and rewarded him with cola). Long traveled Vietnam and had to witness the devastation happening in the country. People were starving, their crops weren't burnt, and forced to move from their homes. Long was disgusted by this and stopped his work to help the people. He fixed them food for three weeks until they got somewhat better. That's when he began to write to the U.S. embassy and Saigon government, but didn't receive any help. That is so sad that the United States couldn't help the people, and their excuse was that's how they will defeat the communist people.

(Long's story is believable and without exaggeration) because he starts out his story with all this love of the United States and kept that faith in them even when his father warned him of their intentions in Vietnam. It was when he saw that the United States was in the war for politics and not to truly help the Vietnam get back on their feet he lost hope. When he saw the heads of his people being chopped off by the enemy, because they thought the people of Vietnam were communist, the reader can almost feel the pain he felt by witnessing the harm of his people. In the end of Long's reflection on his past the reader begin to feel proud of Long for making his voice heard. Perhaps, even got a smile on their faces when Long noted "I made myself a nuisance to the government." When Long finally got out of his country he didn't stop protesting and even warned the people that if the United States invaded Vietnam there would be a long war. The United States probably

timing? I thought they were already there.

wished that they listened to his cries for help. - One man?

Malcom Browne, a strong man who has seen more than anyone wants to see. His story is especially sad, because what he saw and interpreted couldn't always be posted in his work due to the politics of the war. He had to write about the Dam Doi, and they were often attacked and their villages were burnt down and the people were also attacked just so the enemy could practice. He then witnessed twelve or thirteen of the people they killed and had put them around a flag pole with flag flown by the Viet Cong. Being a reporter is hard, because he had to write the story the American's wanted to hear and when he got out of line he would get a call telling him he had to rewrite his story. The part that makes the reader the most sick is an incident in 1963 when a Buddhist went on an anti-war protest. Browne knew that there were rumors going around about a ritual suicide, but didn't think that it would happen like this. He saw a bunch of monks and nuns gathering around and before he knew it there was chanting and then an old monk came out had gasoline poured over him and lit himself on fire. (His story is reliable) due to the fact the stuff has seen cannot be made up. While reading his story the reader automatically feels sick to their stomach and heartache for the people. Not to mention, the next story in the book was his wife Le Lieu Browne and she kept his stories in line too. ? huh?

Who is "the enemy" you?
keep mentioning?
(problem)

Part 1 again
Part 1 is much too brief
& not clear.
Watkins is emotionless & says scrambled eggs...
... therefore his story is believable? Huh?
* very awkward sentences made
readability difficult

Part 2
Very strange logic throughout. Historical timing
& events are NOT clear at all.
Definite grammar & proofreading problems
2 negative stories? Re-read the instructions

Assignment 1

Part 1

74/100

There were many stories in part one of the Appy book that caught my attention. Some in different ways than others. The one that had the greatest impact on me was that of Phan Xuan Sinh. It would be such a heart wrenching experience to be in a war in general. Always needing to be on your toes, Not knowing when you could be attacked or shot at. So when Phan told his story about ambushing near the beach south of Danang it really caught my attention. Just imagining being there at one or two in the morning hardly being able to see really opened my eyes. The fact that they started firing before they could really even see who or what they were firing at. How the boats got closer and saw what they thought looked like "many rifles silhouetted against the sky" and a full boat load of Viet Cong. I couldn't imagine the feeling of what it would have been like to open fire on the boats only to realize there wasn't any return fire coming back to them. Then to find out they had accidentally opened fire on a large group of fisherman would be heartbreaking. It really made me think about how in warfare it's better to be safe than sorry. The fact that you never know who it really could be coming at you in the boat. After this experience it seems you could think twice in this situation if it happened again. If you do that and it really is soldiers next time then you open yourself up to getting hurt next time. It's just an experience that is hard to imagine without seeing it first hand. I tend to think this speaker is a reliable source from the way the story was told. He seemed to remember many exact details. Like the things they thought were guns turned out to be fishing poles. You never know exactly what happened when you get a single persons point of view, after all they are speaking on what they saw through their eyes. They couldn't have possibly seen everything. Yet, I feel that Phan had a good feeling of what happened that night and did a great job of re telling this to us as the audience.

red
NS
? -
click
and it
hurts your
pocket
-NS
who?
Red
*
no, precisely
the opposite

Part 2

In regards to a story I found disappointing, There really hasn't been one that I would have to call disappointing. I have enjoyed getting to read these and really see from first person accounts what it may have been like to be a part of this conflict. If there was one that wasn't my favorite it would be the story of Henry Prunier about the "Deer Team". It was something that just seemed like a little extra information. I was kind of disappointed in the way he thought the Vietnamese were viewed as a whole by us. As being "ragtag". It made me think that we had severely underestimated the strength of the Vietnamese. That we thought they were a ragtag people and could easily be walked over without a fight. He told us that they were actually a very smart group of people. Considering the fact he said many of them could put together an M1 from pieces blindfolded after only doing it once. So like I said, I wasn't disappointed with the story. More disappointed in the way we were at the start of this conflict. The point of view and underestimation of a Nation. I feel if we had given them more credit originally that the war may have been a different story.

WW
who?
redundant
huh?
Contradiction

It can be a hard thing to find a positive aspect of such a terrible, bloody war. It was hard for me to pick one of the individual stories that we have read so far and try to make it into something "good". As many of these stories are presented in a negative light, or at least have negative influences on us. I think part of it in the back of my mind, As an American, it's just hard to find something positive out of the Vietnam conflict. The one thing that I keep coming back to in regards to positivity has come out of more than one of the stories, And is something that is a part of all wars. The idea of brotherhood, We see this a lot. The fact that these guys were in such a horrible thing, together experiencing it at the same time. The relationships that are built through an experience like this are never going to go away. To know that you weren't the only one who had to deal with this. That is how I find positivity in such a horrible event. So many times have the storytellers mentioned their friends they made while fighting. It's almost that the lucky ones to make it back became somewhat of an extended family. Sharing that experience seems to be a form of release for them. I find this to be the best way to find and make some "good" come out of this. The relationships that will last a lifetime

PICK ONE

and will never be forgotten. — cliché

* the credibility section of your paper was too brief AND contradictory.

You spent much of the first part empathizing with Phan, what it would have been like "for you." Not what I asked.

Many grammar mistakes & redundancies hurt the readability of your paper. (~~spelling~~ and capitalization errors throughout.)

Part 2
Following the directions.
Pick one story. You decide
to make a generalized comment
about all of them.

84/100

Zoë Valentine

Joe Escobar

HST 195

13 April 2014

Assignment 1

The story that had the greatest impact on me from part one of Appy's book Patriots, was the account of George Watkins. He really gave the reader an intimate account of how bad things were for the United States infantrymen during the Vietnam War. It was shocking that even though Watkins was trained as a combat engineer, they merely threw him on the front lines as soon as he got there. Another striking thing about Watkins was his compassion, or at least respect he had for the Vietnamese people. "They's some of the most determined people I've ever run into. I don't hate them. They did what they had to do. It's the politicians that put everybody in that place." (Appy 23) Even after Watkins had stepped on the land mine which cost him both his legs and eyesight, he still didn't bear a great prejudice towards the Vietnamese people as a whole. This really breaks the stereotype some people have of all American GIs hating and showing cruelty towards the Vietnamese. Even though there were cases like that, stories like Watkins' are very important because it breaks that stereotype.

As for the credibility of the speakers in the stories read so far, they all probably suffer from a certain amount of subjectivity – everybody perceives experiences differently, whether because of ideas, political beliefs, moral code, station in life, et cetera. However, such subjectivity doesn't necessarily negate the truth of the stories or what they say of their experiences. Most of what these people say they experienced is true, but it is definitely warped in some stories, especially because of political belief systems. Directions.

This leads me to one of the stories in which I found disappointment. In Malcolm Browne's account in Part Two, I was particularly disappointed by what he said about John Wayne. While I have always been a fan of John Wayne, I am not inclined to think that he was a saint. It is entirely likely he had his drunk moments, but it was really disappointing to think that he got in a shouting match with this person Browne. It seems possible that a political slant of Browne's could have made him decide to embellish his interactions with Wayne. However, thinking from Browne's point of view, it's easy to see how frustrating his own position might be; being someone who can see and understand all the problems with the Vietnam war, and nobody wants to listen to what you have to say, simply because you ally yourself with certain political parties. The ineptness of the U.S. officials concerning Vietnam was really shocking. It seems like none of them even bothered to get to know anything about Vietnam or its people. It was this that was disappointing in Chester Cooper's account, where he said that the people on Kennedy's team "... couldn't [even] find Vietnam on an outline map of Asia." (Appy 85) It's rather bothersome to think that we were fighting a war in a country about which we knew nothing.

I did take away some positive lessons from these stories, however. A lot of the stories speak almost like it's impossible for our Western culture and that of Asia's to find connections with each other and get along. But, at the end of Richard Olsen's story, it was really touching to see that he was saved by a Vietnamese man from a riptide. "I thought, how absurd. I survived the war and here I am getting drowned as a tourist! ... All of a sudden a ninety-pound man came up to my face like a dart. We were face to face. The first thing I thought was Viet Cong! Here he was, rescuing me, eyeball to eyeball. We looked into each other's soul and he was

brilliant.” (Appy 64) A lot of the U.S. officials seemed to treat the Vietnamese almost like aliens – our cultures are so foreign from one another’s. But in reality, we are all human. Another surprising story was the account of Nikita Krushchev’s son Sergei, particularly what he said about how the Russian people perceived the Cold War. “The Russian people always wanted improved relations with the United States. They never believed that the American government was against them.” (Appy 88) Being someone who did not grow up in the right generation, I do not understand how frightening the idea of Communism was for people in this time. To someone like myself, it seems almost ridiculous the amount of fear-mongering the U.S. had about Communism. As Krushchev said, “I think ordinary Americans were far more affected by Cold War propaganda, much more hostile to Russians, and much more fearful.” (Appy 88) It tends to make one wonder how things would’ve gone if the governments of all countries had been more open to discussion, and less swayed by paranoid thinking. Overcoming prejudices has a lot to do with it, and maybe a lot of the failings in Vietnam were because we couldn’t overcome those prejudices.

You choose a less than truthful Russian communist to sum up the entire Cold War as paranoid US thinking? Not accurate.

Appy, Christian G. *Patriots: The Vietnam War Remembered from All Sides*. London: Penguin, 2003. Print.

AND is this supposed to be positive.

Part 1
the credibility analysis was supposed to be about Watkins. Instead, you presented a generalized perspective which lacked details.

Part 2
You wrote on multiple stories, instead of just one. And you strayed from the positive Olsen story back to a negative Krushchev story. Organization problem here.

Following the assignment directions more carefully was important in this assignment.