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Patriots and PBS

by [Joe Escobar](#) – Saturday, October 3, 2015, 10:21 PM

This forum thread is for Patriots and PBS posts and replies.

After studying the required materials, address the various questions. To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post. To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

IMPORTANT – SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post. Do NOT simply leave it RE: Patriots and PBS

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Lack of supplies

by [Andrew Strout](#) – Monday, October 5, 2015, 11:43 AM

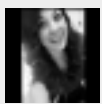
I find it incredible that the Viet Minh, were actually able to succeed when in the beginning they literally had almost no weapons. In the first video @ 35:13 Nguyen Thi Dinh expressed that they needed weapons. They had to defeat the French in battles with limited arms and ammunition, and take whatever they could from the enemy after they fled or died. This closely follows the same that occurred with Tran Thi Gung in the "Appy Book." She recalled having to pick up abandoned enemy weapons and turn them against the enemy in order to continue to fight.

This really shows the difference between what determination (the Viet Minh) and simple obedience (the French) can have on an army. The French would drop their weapons to run which allowed the Viet Minh to gain control.

It also shows the difference between the two societies; wasteful vs. frugal. The Viet Minh's determination and frugality of their resources no matter their source is what won them many victories and played a huge part in the early struggle against the French.

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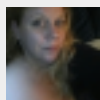
Re: Lack of supplies

by [Madison McCrory](#) – Friday, October 9, 2015, 12:03 PM

The lack of supplies is mind blowing. The army had no guns and weapons and the best important thing training. This men and women are going out there a risking there lives and they don't not even have to training they need to be successful. It was amazing that they succeed so well when the materials they had were so limited. I thought it was amazing that the american solders were able to go over and help them learn and train them properly. It was very cool that they could even speak the same langue as them. American

solders provided so much help and support.

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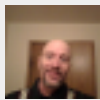


Woman of Vietnam
by [Amanda Watts](#) – Tuesday, October 6, 2015, 12:32 PM

Amanda Watts
Oct. 06 2015
Escobar
HST 195

In the Appy book I read a story about Tran Thi Gung, a small, young woman in Vietnam. She was a revolutionary of Cu Chi, southern guerillas, Viet Cong. She and her village had been fighting most of her life to overthrow the government and to drive out the Americans. She joined the guerillas in 1963 at age 17 and she was trained skilled killer. She talks about how she was a small young scared girl, and how she learned to steal guns after killing Americans. Also noting if you kill one GI , you just wait others will come to get him dead or alive, and then you kill them.. Also, how they learned things Americans did their patterns, in order to kill them better . I feel I seen this portal of these women who had to to fight for their country on both sides in the North and the South. In part two of Vietnam a television history showed women being trained to fight, they looked like special forces. They all had the same uniforms on and were prepared to kill. Also seeing lots of footage about Ngo Dinh Diem brothers wife. She was very strong and willing to do whatever was necessary, to protect her country. Another story in the Appy book was a view from an American soldier who said it's different when you're fighting on your own land, to protect your own country. You never give up when it's your homeland, these two videos definitely showed that, by the determination of the vietnam people to save their land.

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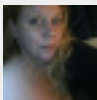
Re: Woman of Vietnam
by [Robert Johnson](#) – Thursday, October 8, 2015, 1:19 PM

In the Appy book on P. 15–19, I read about Tran Thi Gung too,

What a story, can you imagine how dangerous and scary that must have been?

In episode 1 of *Vietnam a Television History*, A Vietnamese lady named Nguyen Thi Dinh talks about her own personal experiences, in which are quite similar and related to the Tran Thi Gung story.

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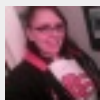


Re: Woman of Vietnam
by [Amanda Watts](#) – Sunday, October 11, 2015, 6:24 AM

Robert,

Thank you for your reply. As you ask could I imagine what these women went through? No, my mind can't even grasp that knowledge. I had forgotten about the woman in part 1 of our videos, I think they all were very strong. I guess you don't k ow how one would act, until your put in that situation.

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Re: Woman of Vietnam
by [Alanna Argentino](#) – Saturday, October 10, 2015, 10:28 PM

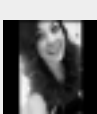
I was debating on writing about this, or the one that I decided on. When your in a war with another country, I do not think most peoples eyes are on the children. Yes the recruited young boys, but girls? Just goes to show how protective some people are of their country.

I was fascinated by the way she explained how she learned the Americans patterns and when one dies, more come, then you have a many more soldiers to kill was very smart on her part.

I also feel that they used this same tactic in the North and the South. You can easily use a sweet innocent woman or child, and have them not suspect a thing, and they would never see it coming. I personally feel a few things about this war were messed up, but this one, by far, was the smartest move to me.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Woman of Vietnam
by [Madison McCrory](#) – Sunday, October 11, 2015, 10:27 AM

Dear alanna,

My heart was very heavily on the children that had to live through this. The country was so full of haterted there was no one to protect the children that both sides were fighting for. The north and the south were fighting for what they believe in and while doing that left the children in such dangerous situation with the protection or guildnesss. We are very privileged to never have a war on our soil. we never have had to see this as children with our own eyes. We hear these horrible stories about children sitting in the streets see the war in front of them. its a horrible thing!

Sum of ratings: (1)

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Shelby Powelson: Patriots and PBS forum response
by [Shelby Powelson](#) – Wednesday, October 7, 2015, 2:19 PM

In the Appy book, on page 5, Bernard Trainor speaks of an ambush he lived through during the war in Vietnam in 1965. Saigon intelligence told the Marines that what the natives said was a leper hospital was actually a communist rest and recuperation center for the Viet Cong.

“We sent a team in there firing as they went, and they killed a lot of people. It turned out to be a leper hospital just as the Vietnamese officer had predicted.” (Appy, Patriots pg. 5)

Of course, in every war civilian death is inevitable. It’s the greatest tragedy of war. In Trainor’s case, was there anything he or the military unit could have done to avoid wrongful death? How are people whom are cornered in such a powerless state protecting themselves from the misinformed? Vietnamese natives were driven out of their homes, starved and murdered with no way of protecting themselves. In the documentary Vietnam: A Television History, a woman by the name of Nguyen Thi Dinh spoke of her person experience of at home security.

“We didn’t have any weapons except bamboo spears... I replied that we needed guns; Uncle ho said the central government could only give us so many guns because they didn’t have any. He said was to capture the enemies guns, and to use these guns against them.”

These people living in the middle of war are forced to either take 1 of 2 paths when attacked. 1: you fight for your life hoping to retrieve more weapons, or 2: you listen to what the soldiers tell you and hope not to get shot.

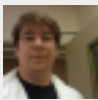
The connection between these two stories is the inevitable act of war killing innocent human beings. I enjoy the contrast between the two points of views; Dinh shows the victim’s side of war, where she finds herself frantically trying to find protection from Ho Chi Min. While you get Trainor’s perspective of being on the other side of bullet, how the wrong information can get more people killed who don’t deserve to die.

Trainor says “ these people were going up north based on their trust in the accuracy and dependability of American intelligence. “ (5)

Without these people having the correct information, it could save the military tremendous guilt and also mass amounts of lives.

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Re: Shelby Powelson: Patriots and PBS forum response
by [Joseph Ragsdale](#) – Friday, October 9, 2015, 10:05 PM

Shelby,

I really liked your analysis, you brought up an excellent point about the decision to fight, and what that's like

on both sides. I think that the decision to fight was a natural one for the Vietnamese people, as they have a history of invasion and subjugation, as we saw in the first chapter of the books and the first video in the series.

I can't imagine the kind of internal pressure that has to put on someone, such as Mr. Trainor who, as you pointed out, destroyed a leper hospital full of innocent non-combatants. We also read stories from the Viet Minh soldiers, such as Nguyen Thi Dinh as you said, who talks about her strategies for ambushing and killing American soldiers. As an American that part was hard for me to read, but I also realized that it would be just as hard for a Vietnamese student to read the American's stories about killing their countrymen. It also helped me realize just how brutal and merciless the war was, how it turned children, basically, into soldiers to be ground up in a war over an ideal. It is definitely a decidedly human viewpoint of a massive conflict.

Thank you for the great analysis!

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Re: Patriots and PBS

by [Madison McCrory](#) – Wednesday, October 7, 2015, 3:03 PM

American lives had to be lost. The american aid helped the people believe in hope. the US signed a treat to help the South East Asia. The south tried to build up there society and they needed american help to be successful.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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Arguably the Most Important Figure in Vietnamese History

by [Robert Johnson](#) – Wednesday, October 7, 2015, 7:05 PM

One of the people in the history of Vietnam War who catches my attention first is Ho Chi Minh.

According to the Henry Prunier story (Appy book, p.38), he wasn't just possibly the most important figure in Vietnamese history, Ho Chi Minh was also regarded by five American presidents as a dangerous enemy.

So I guess being considered a dangerous enemy by even one American president, could make anyone an important figure in history, much less five presidents. But after watching the videos and reading Prunier's account in the Appy book, I imagine to the Vietnamese people, Ho Chi Minh (uncle Ho) was a tremendous inspiration. He was a motivator who kept the dream of independence alive, and who helped the poor farmers.

Within the first half of episode 1, it is mentioned how Ho Chi Minh gained favor with the peasants, and farmers especially during the famine period when millions died of starvation during Japanese rule in the mid 1940's. I think in gaining that favor, they were glad to support his patriotic movement by providing men to be trained and fight for the cause.

The Henry Prunier story is about training those troops for uncle HO. I'm thinking the troops this story refers too, are a direct result in relation to the mention in episode 1, where it is mentioned that Ho Chi Minh had the support of the people.

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Re: Arguably the Most Important Figure in Vietnamese History

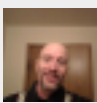
by [Amanda Watts](#) – Sunday, October 11, 2015, 6:32 AM

Robert, thank you for your post. I also agree that Ho chi Minh was an important figure in the Vietnam war. I didn't realise that five presidents found him to be a dangerous enemy, but I can see why. But to his own people I feel like he was more seen as their Robin Hood. Someone to fight for them, their Uncle Ho.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Arguably the Most Important Figure in Vietnamese History



by [Robert Johnson](#) – Sunday, October 11, 2015, 11:17 AM

I think you could be right Amanda, about how Ho Chi Minh was too many of his own people, especially in the north, like a robin hood or even a hero.

Even though many Vietnamese did flee south, there is a fair amount of evidence that shows uncle Ho was a popular patriot among his people. Such as in the film *Vietnam A Television History*, episode 1 (video time 14:00), Ho Chi Minh was in France agitating for Vietnams independence which helped make him famous among his people.

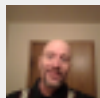
Educated by the French, yet Anti-French/Japanese. Ho Chi Minh (he who enlightens– Video time 17:07). According to Hoang Quoc Viet, uncle Ho sent out a letter of support that rallied the entire country around the movement, (17:14, episode 1). Hoang stated in translation, “he had been widely known, people knew he was a great patriot”, (17:17, episode 1).

These were just a few of the examples of evidence that to his people, Ho Chi Minh was a true patriot of their country, but there are more examples in this episode.

Just my opinion here, but I don’t see uncle Ho as being such a bad and evil person, unlike Diem in the south. To me Diem seems more like the evil controller, or dictator if you will. I feel like it’s the Herring book rather, that gives good examples of Diems will to control, such as parts of *NATION BUILDING IN SOUTH VIETNAM*, p. 68–80.

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Deer Team Mission

by [Robert Johnson](#) – Wednesday, October 7, 2015, 8:36 PM

In 1945 the Deer Team mission was ordered by Archimedes Patti, a OSS Officer who appears in the 1st episode (approx. 22 minutes from the beginning).

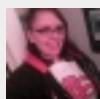
Patti recalls the Deer mission, his description of Ho Chi Minh and the 200 elite Vietnamese troops are very similar to the descriptions given by Henry Prunier, in his personal account and story (Appy book p.38–39).

Prunier was a 23 year old private in the military, and a member of the Deer Team who parachuted into north Vietnam to train Ho Chi Minh's troops.

Clearly Pruner’s story is significantly related to the Deer Team mentioned by Archimedes Patti in the film. (episode 1)

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Burned Alive

by [Alanna Argentino](#) – Wednesday, October 7, 2015, 10:58 PM

In Part 2 of the Appy book, Malcolm Browne “You could smell the burning flesh” talks about Buddhists and how they sacrifice themselves by burning their bodies alive. In 1963, Thich Quang Duc, a 67 year old Buddhist monk, burned himself alive to protest and preserve religious teachings. Before having the gasoline poured on him, Thich Quang Duc said this, “Before closing my eyes and moving towards the vision of the Buddha, I respectfully plead to President [Ngô Đình Diệm](#) to take a mind of compassion towards the people of the nation and implement religious equality to maintain the strength of the homeland eternally. I call the venerables, reverends, members of the [sangha](#) and the lay Buddhists to organize in solidarity to make sacrifices to protect Buddhism.” (Wiki)

When watching Episode 2 you hear that several Buddhists monks followed in Ducs footsteps. This is the connection from the book to episode 2. This became what seemed like a way to get attention and to get press. Buddhists learned how to develop a political press, if they were to contact American journalists that they would get more attention and be able to speak to more people about their rising issues. After Ducs incident, Diem was told by America that if he did not meet with the Buddhists, then America would no longer associate themselves with South Vietnam.

This event forced Diem to negotiate with the Buddhists. Ducs plan, was beginning to work.



Dien Bien Phu
by [Nathan Miller](#) – Wednesday, October 7, 2015, 11:03 PM

In my post I wanted to talk about the French conflict with Ho Chi Minh’s northern government. In the first video of *Vietnam a Television History* it goes over the effort the French took to take back northern Vietnam and Ho Chi Minh’s eventual victory over the French. What I found most interesting about their conflict was the battle at Dien Bien Phu. The French saw the northern territory as a strategic strong hold that they could hold without threat from the Viet Minh putting up any kind of fight because of the surrounding terrain. Not only did the base see a lot of conflict, they were completely dominated. The episode showed the Viet Minh pushing heavy artillery by hand up steep grades and using bicycles to carry ammunition and guns to get in position to attack Dien Bien Phu. After the defeat, the French were forced to abandon their campaign in northern Vietnam. The American government had given the French \$2 billion and the French could still not defeat Ho Chi Minh’s Viet Minh.

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Re: Dien Bien Phu
by [Robert Johnson](#) – Thursday, October 8, 2015, 12:14 PM

This caught my attention at about 42 minutes into episode 1, *Vietnam a Television History* begins covering Dien Bien Phu.

I think the French really underestimated the determination of the Vietnamese, especially Ho Chi Minh’s Viet Minh. The footage of the Viet Minh moving weapons and supplies with carts, bikes, and on foot like they did through all that rough terrain was impressive.

I read about the Dien Bien Phu battles in part 2 of the Appy book, “Deliver Us From Evil” on p. 44–45.

The information in the Appy book is about the same as in episode 1, but the numbers differ slightly between the two sources.

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Re: Dien Bien Phu
by [Madison McCrory](#) – Friday, October 9, 2015, 12:18 PM

I thought the moving of weapons with the wrong or no equipment really showed how expressive the United States is. We are so lucky to have the army and the protection that we do. We have the strongest army that not only protects us but that risks their lives and goes and helps other countries that are in need of our support. Moving weapons by hand and with bikes is sad with the lack of resources..

Sum of ratings: (1) 0

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Re: Dien Bien Phu
by [Robert Johnson](#) – Saturday, October 10, 2015, 1:51 PM

In regard to moving weapons by hand and bike is sad, Well yes I think so too. However it was, what it was, and I give credit to those Vietnamese for not letting the lack of resources stop them, they did it anyway they could.

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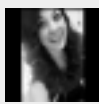


Re: Dien Bien Phu
by [Tre' Gooding](#) – Saturday, October 10, 2015, 10:42 AM

Nathan, I think Dien Bien Phu is one of my favorite battles I have studied. It is quite incredible how much the

strategy to pull back the Viet Minh from attack to a strategic position. Who would have thought in the beginning of this move that it would help cut off all of the French supplies, practically drowning them in the superior tactical moves of the Viet Minh. As you stated the moving of weaponry in that terrain was quite impressive, and to me that hard work and dedication ended up winning this battle for the Viet Minh.

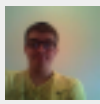
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Re: Dien Bien Phu
by [Madison McCrory](#) – Sunday, October 11, 2015, 10:33 AM

i thought this move helping to cut off the french supplies roots was very smart on the Veit- minh. Supplies is one of the most important things in the war. from the rev ail side cutting over supplies is one of the most smart thing to do. I give them no access to anything to help them. it was a important.

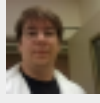
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Re: Dien Bien Phu
by [Brady Goodman](#) – Sunday, October 11, 2015, 5:13 PM

Nice post, Nathan. I liked reading about Dien Bien Phu. In 1953 the French deployed 15000 soldiers to Dien Bien Phu. After that 55000 Viet Minh soldiers were deployed (44–45). Those numbers are startling. It was all strategy for the Viet Minh. The Viet Minh played a great hand at Dien Bien Phu.

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Rufus Phillips and US Intelligence
by [Joseph Ragsdale](#) – Thursday, October 8, 2015, 9:41 PM

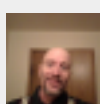
When I read this question I immediately thought of Mr. Phillips account of his time as a US intelligence agent working to manipulate public sentiment against the Viet Minh and for the Diem regime to help support America's immediate interests.

To me, the lead up to America's involvement in the war has been 100% public relations oriented, because throughout the stories and the history lessons we see that America is careful to appear to only be supporting the interests of the French, and then Diem afterwards. They worked tirelessly to raise popular support for the regimes they were propping up, and even harder to campaign against the interests of the Viet Minh. Rufus Phillips was attached as an advisor and psy-ops agent to help turn public opinion against the North and more towards Ngo Diem, but also towards the idea of a free, independent (if possible) South Vietnam that could successfully oppose communist incursion. As Mr. Phillips puts it, "But it was very obvious to the Vietnamese after a while that we were there to help them. It wasn't an ego trip. We had no ulterior motive." and while I don't believe that that was the thought process in Washington, I do believe that the advisors on the ground (intelligence and special forces) truly believed they were doing a good thing for good people, based only on their accounts of their time in the country in the mid to late 50's and early 60's.

The second part of my thought is that our aim was to prop them up, as I said above, and let them stand against communist might on their own, probably with only the threat of US intervention to keep the full weight of China and the USSR from invading. To that end, Mr. Phillips had this to say about the South's army, "At first the Vietnamese had very little self-confidence. The French had put them down so much and never really let them get into decision-making positions. All the miltiary operations were run by French officers. The Vietnamese were told where to go and what to do. So a big part of our job was to help them build up confidence."

This paragraph sums up the main point of our operations in Vietnam up until our full commitment to prevent them from being toppled by guerillas from the North. I think that this perfectly captures the spirit of the first two chapters so far, our goal was only to help, never to carry them, and yet we can see the chain of events spilling our country towards an all out war.

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A Strategic Hamlet Way of Life.
by [Robert Johnson](#) – Friday, October 9, 2015, 3:52 PM

The Ngo Vinh Long story in part 2 (p.54–59) of the Appy book, brings horror to the imagination and sadness to the mind.

He describes seeing dead human body’s floating in the rivers and lakes when he was a child, as a daily occurrence. Long’s story goes on to mention, and describe what sounded to me like a concentration camp. These camps were called “strategic hamlets”, under the U.S supported South Vietnamese government, led by Ngo Dinh Diem.

Episode 2 of *Vietnam A Television History* sheds some light on this, at about 29.5 minutes into the film. The South Vietnamese Government describe their “strategic hamlets” in their own 1962 film. After reading Long’s personal story, the picture I imagine of those camps is a lot different from the safe havens that the film (about 30 minutes in) in episode 2 try’s to make them out to be.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Patriots and PBS
by *Tre' Gooding* – Saturday, October 10, 2015, 10:00 AM

I find one of the more interesting things to me is that these two references are more different in most aspects that similar. One of the differences to me that is concerning is the Appy book makes it seem as if the American People themselves took no stand or had no idea what was going on for the first twenty years we were involved. While the video shows plenty of involvement of the Americans on home soil.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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America's Expenses
by *Brady Goodman* – Saturday, October 10, 2015, 11:46 AM

“Deliver Us From Evil,” a story told in the second part of Patriots, talks about how America was involved in the beginning of the Vietnam war. By 1954, America was paying 80% of it’s allies war expenses (44). After the French surrendered at Dien Bien Phu on May 7,1954, there was a meeting in Geneva, Switzerland. Nine countries gathered to settle the war. That meeting divided Vietnam at the 17th parallel into North and South. Two years later there was supposed to be a nationwide election. The United States supported Ngo Dinh Diem, “a Catholic aristocrat from central Vietnam”(46). America gave the approval to Diem to refuse the nationwide elections.

This story is related to quite a bit of the first episode but more closely to the part that Dien Bien Phu and about America helping with aid. America helped France by giving them aircraft, weapons, and funding. America gave 150 million dollars in aid to the french forces (planes, tanks fuel, and napalm). By the end of 1953 the U.S. was paying over 1 billion dollars a year to contribute to the war.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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