



HST 195: History of Vietnam War Sp17 (Escobar 42050)

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Week 4 Forum

Continuing the Discussion

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Continuing the Discussion

by Joe Escobar - Saturday, April 22, 2017, 11:32 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Continuing the Discussion topic.

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, something that describes which question(s) you are addressing . Do NOT simply leave it RE: Continuing the Discussion

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Soldiers as pawns.

by Stanley Cates - Tuesday, April 25, 2017, 6:58 PM

The contradictions in the second half of the AIM video don't seem to be as explicitly intense as they were in the first part, almost as though they wanted to get all their hits in during the first round. That being said, I noticed some contradictions that might be better described as an underlying contradictory mentality than a direct contradiction, but because I'm concerned that it might get overlooked I wanted to cover it anyway.

The AIM video charges that the PBS series portrays American veterans of the Vietnam war as losers or victims (AIM 8:35). The AIM video goes as far as to describe the PBS series simply pointing out that some, ¾ of a million out of 2.5 million, are still negatively affected by the war as “objectionable” (AIM 7:50). William Jane of the Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program then gives a testimony which includes the statement: “Many veterans are now assuming leadership roles in society...Their leadership is um, their success in life so far has been achieved, and many of them say, in part because of their experience of having served their country not in spite of it.” (AIM 8:50) While I do agree with the general sentiment that PBS hasn’t yet (in the first four episodes anyway) given proper attention to who the veterans were and what their problems are I find the notion of it being “objectionable” to point out that some of them have what we would today call PTSD to be disturbing at best; presentism be damned. In this regard, I find that both of these sources are using the experiences and hardships of the warfighter as a tool to further their respective and contradicting political viewpoints. I’ll be watching closely for the remainder of the PBS series to see how they handle this element.

I find it inappropriate to group the experiences of the warfighter on either side with politics on either side, I think they exist dependent on each other, but separate from each other and because of this that views of the warfighter are better left to be displayed by the warfighter themselves as the Appy book has done for a great number of people. Consequently, I don’t see either of these video sources as holistically approaching the veterans experience. It’s not often that I inject a conversation with unwavering subjective opinion based purely on my own experiences. However, in this instance I’m compelled to say that I simply can’t see how a person can fight in a war and not be negatively affected, even if they don’t know it, regardless of how noble the cause is like Jane suggests; to quote a late associate of mine: “It’s a whole different story from the ground”.

Before I get ahead of myself let me ask you guys; do you think I’m reading too far into this? Is this a legitimate example of an instance when we should abandon the video sources all together and listen to what the veterans have to say in print sources like the Appy book? Am I being unfair to either video source with my unwavering opinion?

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Soldiers as pawns.

by Maxwell Ahrenkiel - Sunday, April 30, 2017, 5:27 PM

Stanley,

I’m glad you pointed this out, and think you’re right to feel the way you do. To address the question of whether or not this is a legitimate instance to abandon the video sources. I would say it’s an appropriate time to put more thought and effort into the sources like the Appy book. I think that people who were there in the fight definitely have the ability to present a clearer and more realistic interpretation of what the war was like for them, or as you put it, “the veteran’s experience,” as opposed to somebody studying the war, years later on the other side of the world. That’s why the Appy book is a much better source to get these views. For example, Nguyen Thi Kim Chuy wrote “I saw with my own eyes a bomb drop into a shelter hole. Everyone stopped working and rushed there, screaming and crying. We were on our hands and knees clawing at the dirt. Our arms were smeared with blood. There were five people in that shelter. Four of them just turned to porridge. We couldn’t tell them apart.”(p.105, Appy) This paints a pretty intense image of a bombing. She went on to talk about a woman that was holding her two-year-old daughter when the

bombs went off, "That woman was holding her child so tightly we couldn't separate them. We buried them together. After that terrible experience we still had two craters to fill. So we went on with our work as if it hadn't happened."(p.105, Appy) Truly a gut wrenching experience. I'm not sure how people could go through things like this, and not develop some degree of post-traumatic stress. So far I don't believe that either video source has proficiently portrayed what it was like for many of the people involved in this conflict, so I don't think you're being unfair. But, since we haven't finished the PBS series yet, your opinion may change.

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PBS Propaganda?

by Mason Peckels St.onge - Wednesday, April 26, 2017, 12:37 AM

After reading the beginning of Losers are Pirates I quickly realized that this was another piece of evidence that would attempt to destroy some of my current knowledge and beliefs on the American war in Indochina; which was based off the documentary. It started off very persuasive. The editors sounded very genuine with their beliefs of the inaccuracies within the PBS documentary. After I finished reading I was convinced that they had a mission to set the story straight; which meant significantly discrediting the film. I found myself very conflicted because I really enjoy the documentary as a learning tool, but now I feel like it was all just propaganda with some hidden agenda. I want to still base my opinions off of it but it's hard to when so many people have protested against it as inaccurate.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: PBS Propaganda?

by Joshua Meeker - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 1:45 PM

Hey Mason,

I understand your dilemma very well. I think the biggest thing is to realize that there is no single from of media that will give you the full picture or scope of the situation, no matter what. If that were the case then historians would be a dime and a dozen. It takes them many years to go through the material, from both sides to get a complete understanding. Even here you showed this to be true since you show a high regard from the Pirates book. But, you only know that you like that book when compared to the other media presented. Just go with it and understand that even historians still argue about evens; meaning that the learning stage on a subject is never over.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: PBS Propaganda?

by Mason Peckels St.onge - Sunday, April 30, 2017, 8:54 PM

Thank you for the response, and its true; you really have to take all the sources in to understand the full situation. The hard part is sifting out all the propaganda and fake news. I really like to read and examine eye witness accounts when it comes to historical documentations. That's why I enjoy the patriots book. I found that the interview with the OSS officer and General VO NGUYEN GIAP gave an interesting and critical viewpoint; that is necessary to understand the war.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: PBS Propaganda?

by Sydney Zuelke - Sunday, April 30, 2017, 10:56 PM

I also understand your dilemma! It's especially easy to enjoy/trust the author of "Losers and Pirates" when he's so transparent about what his mission is with this book, and admits to not having all the historical fact. I too enjoyed the PBS documentary, and the incredible human element it had. It's crazy to think that our opinion can so easily be flip-flopped when someone else gives us a new perspective to look at, or different humans to sympathize with.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Continuing the Discussion

by Joshua Meeker - Wednesday, April 26, 2017, 1:04 PM

Coming at the material with a fresh mindset since last week I found that the AIM video and the PBS are merely two different versions of looking at the material; and when used side by side can provide a more full picture. Though one blatantly obvious contradiction can be noted from this weeks material . This is the attitude of Americans toward their South Vietnamese ally. The historian Nguyen Ngoc Bich from the AIM video summed up this attitude presented in the PBS series by saying " ...North Vietnamese always portrayed as saints, revolutionaries, and being very dedicated. South Vietnamese (were seen as) rather passive, puppets, and things like that." This frustration that the Americans had comes across in both the main text and the PBS videos. At first I was questioning why it was the the Americans felt that way towards the South Vietnamese(our ally) especially when it was noted during the PBS video "America takes charge" that American soldiers 'respected their enemies'; why is the same not said for their allies?

With much thought I found myself thinking about what it must have been like to be an ARVN soldier. First ,off the government had a weak foundation which would cause morale to decline, and resulted in poor leadership . Second, their home was being invaded by the US who was promising "freedom", yet these people (Americans) never took the time to truly understand the Vietnamese people. Therefore no authentic relationship could be established. Not to mention the fact that it seems to the Vietnamese people that US was concerned with its own well-being, and not the nation of Vietnam itself. Third, I found it unfair that we did give the South Vietnamese grief and expected them to fight more efficiently; but how could we hold that belief when the US was the ones training these soldier, who were also ill equipt to deal with enemy units.

Would you have fought your hardest under these conditions?

While I respected what was said in the reading "Losers are Pirates" I found myself appreciating the NYT article more. The reason why I say this is because to me it offered a more balanced and rounded perspective. I also liked where John Corry (the author of the article) states "the paradox now is that the members of the public television community who deplore the AIM rebuttal rule out all points of view but their own." This line is great because it shows that it can be harmful to not take all points of view into account; since history is a collective story and should not be seen from only one angle. In this article, it is also stated that the rebuttal produced by AIM mentions that the PBS series left out the role of the South Vietnamese army, which is a contradiction that I mentioned earlier.

When choosing the media, I "endorse" (loosely) PBS. Though I did find their portrayal of the South Vietnamese unfair, with a little bit of thought and empathy it becomes apparent as to why their performance was so 'low'. Also AIM does little to nothing to educate the viewer to historical content, they spend their time picking apart the PBS series. I think AIM would have been better off just establishing their own history content rather than spending all their time disproving PBSs.

At the end of the day though I appreciate all the content and I take everything with a grain of salt. History needs to be seen from as many points of view, not just one source. To me studying history is like the law of large numbers. The more information you acquire the more accurately you can portray what happened.

Sum of ratings: 3 (1)

3



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Re: Continuing the Discussion

by Stanley Cates - Thursday, April 27, 2017, 6:16 PM

"Third, I found it unfair that we did give the South Vietnamese grief and expected them to fight more efficiently; but how could we hold that belief when the US was the ones training these soldiers, who were also ill equipped to deal with enemy units. "

"Would you have fought your hardest under these conditions?"

I like your first two points, but in reference to your third point I think it's pretty clear that the attitude of "giving them grief" was built up because American forces should have been there supporting them and not out there fighting the war on their behalf. This of course gets complicated when you throw in that America is fighting the war for its own purposes, which you aptly pointed out; but for the American soldier on the ground it probably wouldn't be very hard to question why you were sticking your neck out for someone unwilling to fight themselves. On the second portion of your third point: "but how could we hold that belief when the US was the ones training these soldiers", you can teach someone until you're blue in the face but it's not going to matter one bit if that person isn't in some way properly motivated to learn. With all due respect, I find that statement tantamount to a student blaming a professor for a poor exam score after not having studied for the exam and skipping a bunch of classes, or being otherwise disinclined to care.

Would I have fought my hardest under these conditions? I'd like to think so, but I'm not Vietnamese, my cultural values aren't the same as theirs. I think this question is more relevant to your first two points; having unclear leadership is going to determine your ability to wage war far more than your equipment and training. It's beginning to look a lot like clear leadership in-country was the crucial weapon that the North had more than the South. What do you think?

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

3



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Re: Continuing the Discussion

by Joshua Meeker - Sunday, April 30, 2017, 7:58 PM

I guess I did not word it correctly. I meant it more in a sense that how could we have expected ARVN to be combat effective against enemy units when we ourselves (The US) we having a very difficult time with the combat forces. So Im saying the physics teacher who has no effective means of solving a problem can teach his student any better. Thank you for bringing that to my attention.

And your absolutely right. Time and time again it seems that the leadership in the South left much to be desired. The North on the other had seemed to have their things together. Then again as it was mentioned in last weeks AIM video; they were able to execute all the leaders who posed a threat in the North. Im thinking this is was a definite contributor to their "stability".

Stanley thanks for showing such an interested in the subject. I always make sure to read your forum posts. You have a keen eye for this sort of thing. Keep it up.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2



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Support?

by Skyler Tidwell - Wednesday, April 26, 2017, 5:55 PM

When being confronted with the information at hand between the Accuracy in Media (AIM) and PBS, obviously like we have stated last week these two are on the opposite ends of the spectrum. In reflection PBS casted a dark shadow over the Vietnam War which led to altering the people's mindset of the who thing, on the other hand, AIM is a reaction to the PBS televised series and in turn attempted to put facts back in order to reline the truth of history. In the AIM's video they state that PBS ignored a key lesson that the Vietnam used the United State's virtuous untamed media to show that the people of Vietnam disapproved this fight. (AIM's video 23:05) Also Ho Chi Minh was portrayed decently in PBS versus AIM. Then another difference is that individual's stories between both videos show different views. As seen above, the New York Times shares the view of the indifference in media, the article was called '*TELEVISION'S VIETNAM: THE REAL STORY, ON PBS*'. Throughout this article they maintain the view of the media as opinionated. It does not matter of either side because they are confirmation bias in a sense because they both (PBS and AIM) want to share their consensus opinion sugar coated with facts to give the appearance of history. This article they have a man name Mr. Irvine and he states that "It

seems to me that what you're [AIM and PBS] doing is projecting your opinion". (http://media.lanecc.edu/users/escobarj/195/forums/week4/NY_Times_Article.pdf) I completely agree with this article because the news has its ways of shaping a situation to either to benefit their beliefs or object to something that opposes them. However I support AIM because PBS to my opinion didn't share the full view of the situation, on the other hand AIM repeatedly questioned PBS's fact. I feel like if there is a debatable situation that comes to light like this one and PBS's side is only saying what they want to and the AIM is telling their as well but also inquiring that facts told by PBS are not sufficient enough. That is why I Support AIM.

Sum of ratings:3 (1) 3

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Use of propaganda sources

by Jay Autry - Wednesday, April 26, 2017, 8:09 PM

A point that I found to be very profound and quite surprising while both watching the AIM video and reading the excerpt from *Losers Are Pirates*, was the use of communist propaganda as legitimate sources in the PBS series. The PBS series uses stock propaganda footage and interviews from communist officials throughout the series. This is concerning given the fact that communist sources are often inaccurate and always biased (*Losers Are Pirate*, pg. 6, first paragraph).

One point to emphasize this claim of biased propaganda use by the North Vietnamese was footage taken of Jane Fonda during her visit to North Vietnam in 1972. Fonda made a statement on her official website in 2011 referencing the footage where she is seen smiling while sitting on an anti-aircraft gun (AIM video, 5:00). On her website she stated, "I hardly even thought about where I was sitting. The cameras flashed ... It is possible that it was a set up, that the Vietnamese had it all planned. I will never know. But if they did I can't blame them." This clearly shows the lengths in which the Vietnamese went through to use American citizens to discredit the United States via propaganda film.

The failure to accurately depict the war from all sides causes me to lose faith in the educational legitimacy of the PBS series. When there are endless accounts of atrocities committed by the communists against the South Vietnamese and POW's during and after the war, careless omissions and gaps in the information produced are inexcusable.

Sum of ratings:3 (1) 3

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Re: Use of propaganda sources

by Stanley Cates - Thursday, April 27, 2017, 6:27 PM

"...careless omissions and gaps in the information produced are inexcusable."

While I'm always inclined to agree with that sort of statement I have trouble giving as much credence to the *Losers are Pirates* piece as you seem to. I would be interested in seeing, and perhaps the rest of the *Losers are Pirates* book has one, a list of which film bits they're

referring to. I say this because I seem to recall at several points in the PBS series that announcement that what was on the screen was propaganda, including some reenactments produced by Soviet filmmakers. How does that play into your thoughts on the subject?

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Use of propaganda sources

by Maxwell Ahrenkiel - Sunday, April 30, 2017, 7:12 PM

Jay,

I agree with you completely. I find it very odd that something that claims to be educational, would leave out so much. To relate this to the questions of discussion this week, I find it very hard to “endorse” the PBS series because of this reason. Although they present a lot of factual/credible information, their use of omission so far throughout the series is a bit unsettling.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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War and the Media

by Emily Gibson - Wednesday, April 26, 2017, 8:12 PM

After watching Part 2 of the AIM video, more concerns and thoughts about the PBS video were embedded into my head. The biggest controversy of the second AIM video in my eyes is how the influential the media was in, in the outcome of the war.

In the AIM video, John McCain, a former vet of the war and an Arizona representative, spoke about his experience as a POW and how the PBS video misconstrued the information of how the POW's were used. He says “The North Vietnamese had a calculated program of mistreatment, psychological and physical, in order to exploit the POW's for propaganda purposes.” (AIM historian “McCain”) PBS conveniently left out how the POW's were used by the Viet Cong for propaganda purposes, which is huge considering the propaganda altered the war's outcome.

Now keep in mind, news sources all over the nation were thriving off of the Anti-War movements. McCain speaks about how much this helped the Viet Cong retrieve victory and quotes Ho Chi Minh saying “We won't win the war in the battlefields of Indochina, we'll win the war in the streets of San Francisco, Detroit, New York, and Washington D.C.” (AIM historian “McCain”) Later in the AIM video, they talk about one of Support the Troops movements that took place on May 13th, 1967. The AIM video tells us that this was the 3rd longest parade in United States history. Narrator Charlton Heston says “This massive display, one of many by ordinary Americans, was glossed over by the media” (AIM narrator “Heston”) What many have either not been informed or failed to recognize is the role the media played in the outcome of this war. In my Journalism course I am taking, we are currently looking about a media research theory called the “Agenda Setting theory” which I see very present in the way media portrayed the war movements. In sum, this means that news sources choose what material they believe is most important/what the public should believe and therefore present only that. The public

then only takes in that information, and it alters their mind. I think this theory was used a lot during the war, and it had a negative impact on not only soldiers fighting, but the war outcome.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: War and the Media

by William Barker - Sunday, April 30, 2017, 10:47 AM

Emily,

I agree with pretty much everything you had to say. Throughout the war, the media portrayed the soldiers in Vietnam as "in over their head." Ho Chi Minh must have been leaping for joy while seeing the misconstrued information flooding the news papers and tv stations across the nation.

"The quality of the American fighting man in Vietnam, was as high or higher as we've had serving on behalf in any previous war." (6:55 AIM Video, Kenneth Moorefield)

Kenneth was a CO (Company Commander) during Vietnam and saw these heroic men, serve first hand in the field. With the combination of the fake news in the 60's and the PBS video seen as the all knowing source of knowledge for the general public, no wonder people have such a bad taste in their mouth about the war.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Vietnam Soldiers

by Emily Gibson - Wednesday, April 26, 2017, 8:13 PM

Another huge controversy the AIM video brings to attention is how the American Vietnam soldiers were displayed in the PBS video.

Now, the AIM video talks a lot about Episode 13, which I obviously have not seen. But, from what I have seen, PBS is not only wrong, but slightly disrespectful towards the Vietnam soldiers who served this country. After watching the AIM video, and reading other sources, how the media chose to portray the situation on the home front, no wonder people had doubts about the war and the soldiers fighting in it. The frustrating part is how the American soldiers got a lot of the criticism and hatred from the anti-war movements. In the assigned in class, Patriots: The Vietnam War Remembered, I read an account from a stewardess during the Vietnam War who carried troops over and back from the war. She speaks about bringing troops home and arriving at Travis Air Force base to a crowd full of protesetors. She says "I had to tell these boys that had just served their country to get out of their country's uniforms as soon as they could. If they weren't wearing their uniforms then maybe they wouldn't be targeted by protestors." (Appy, pg.110, Helen Helelheimer speaker) After spending months in the jungle, putting their life on the line, and this is what they came home to. According to the AIM video, PBS portrays the soldiers as a "drug addict, a racial bigot, and a man who murdered his officers and NCO's." (AIM historian "Cragg") Described in Helen's piece, these soldiers were actually the exact opposite. She says nothing but good things about each of the men even saying "Of course there was a lot of sexism in those days but I don't remember any of the guys on the Vietnam flights ever giving me a bad time." (Appy, pg.107, Helen Helelheimer speaker) Later in the AIM video, as a former commander Kenneth Moorefield talks

about his troops and says "They were brave, they were young, they showed initiative, courage, every quality you could possibly hope for." (AIM commander Moorefield) The men who fought in the war in my eyes deserve endless recognition and respect. From what I can tell, the PBS video makes them out to be the villain which is an injustice to them.

Sum of ratings:3 (1) 3

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Re: Vietnam Soldiers

by Stanley Cates - Thursday, April 27, 2017, 6:48 PM

"From what I can tell, the PBS video makes them out to be the villain which is an injustice to them."

I don't see it. From what I can tell, the PBS videos, so far, have simply removed the romanticism often associated with war and subjectively labeled "noble causes". The fourth episode, "American takes charge", includes a testimony from a Vietnam veteran, Private Bill Ehrhart; "I don't have nightmares about killing armed soldiers in combat, sorry, the thing I have the nightmares about is the woman in the rice field that I shot one day because she was running, for no other reason because she was running away from the Americans who were going to kill her and I killed her."

Nobody made him say that. Sure, the possibility of taking it out of context in the editing room exists, but that fact remains that he gave a testimony about how he was affected, he gave a real display of what war is that contradicts the image of valor that we're fed and people don't like that.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

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Re: Vietnam Soldiers

by Emily Gibson - Friday, April 28, 2017, 5:46 PM

Stanley,

I understand where you are coming from, but I have to disagree with you. In my entry, I never "romanticized" the war. I talked strictly about the Vietnam soldiers. Just because some disagree with the war or why America went to Vietnam, doesn't have anything to do with the soldiers who were sent there. The government's decisions don't give Americans the right back then or now to disrespect the men who served. In the Appy book, we are also given "a real display of what war is" through a number of different people who were involved in it. A man named Dennis Deal's account talks about him losing one of his friends in his platoon. He writes "I got down, kneeled next to him, and I held his head in my hands. I focused on him as hard as I knew how because I never wanted to forget what this wonderful man looked like." (Appy, pg. 132, Dennis Deal account) Men not only lost their own lives in combat, but also their friends. Coming home to a crowd full of protestors after serving 365 days in a jungle of war, isn't the welcome these men deserved. The clips of what happened in the Vietnamese villages because of the American soldiers, I am not going to lie are brutal. But even Jack Hill

says, "You got an angry 18-year-old kid behind that machine gun, and he's just seen his buddy get killed." (Video Episode 4, 36:02 minute mark) What PBS leaves out is the brutality of the Viet Cong's actions on Americans. Also in Dennis Deal's account he says "Sure enough, the North Vietnamese had rigged an ambush and within seconds eight Americans were killed, twelve were critically wounded..." (Appy, pg. 131, Dennis Deal Account) The bravery of the men who served do not deserve to be ignored or chastised because of situation most were forced in to. You see, my entry was never about if the war was "noble" or not, it was about respect for the men who fought.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Vietnam Soldiers

by Stanley Cates - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 1:18 PM

First of all, I never said that you romanticized the war. I was simply pointing out that the gripe that AIM has with the portrayal of the soldiers in the PBS series seems to be centered around the idea that the bad things that American soldiers did shouldn't be talked about. Sure, the atrocities of the North Vietnamese aren't adequately covered, I agree, but this business of being up in arms at the very notion that the United States has done something wrong is silly. Also, just to keep things in context, Dennis Deal never described Wilbur Curry as his friend; he said he "...was the most valuable man in my platoon..." (Appy p. 132).

How about the fact that American doctors broke the Hippocratic oath and violated the 1949 Geneva convention? (Not to be confused with the 1954 Geneva accords) The aim video never seemed to get upset about that. Consider the following excerpts from both the 1964 Geneva conventions and the Appy book:

"Article 12, second paragraph, of the 1949 Geneva Convention I provides that members of the armed forces who are wounded or sick shall be "cared for by the Party to the conflict in whose power they may be ... [T]hey shall not wilfully be left without medical assistance and care, nor shall conditions exposing them to contagion or infection be created." (Customary IHL)

Article 15, first paragraph, of the 1949 Geneva Convention I provides that "[a]t all times, and particularly after an engagement, Parties to the conflict shall, without delay, take all possible measures ... to ensure ... adequate care" of the wounded and sick. (Customary IHL)

"One time after we'd had three or four bad days they brought in a VC. We got his litter up on the sawhorses to check him out and the doctor just took a scalpel and carved VC on his chest. Then he just put the scalpel down and walked away." (Appy p. 173)

"I held the baby's head down and milked the throat and it started to cry spontaneously. The doctor walked back in, grabbed it, wrapped it in a chuck—a disposable pad—and said, "The baby's dead. It's premature and we can't waste the oxygen." He handed it back to me and I put it in the trash." (Appy p. 174)

Can you call these two things anything but war crimes? I'm not making excuses for the Viet Cong; but there are rules, and we broke them too, and it's equally irresponsible to gloss over that as it is to gloss over the actions of the enemy.

Customary IHL - Practice Relating to Rule 110. Treatment and Care of the Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked. International Committee of the Red Cross, Web. 29 Apr. 2017.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

3



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Re: Vietnam Soldiers

by Emily Gibson - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 6:08 PM

Let's not forget that the United States never signed the Geneva Accords. History.com says "U.S. officials felt that the Geneva Agreements, if allowed to be put into action, were a disaster." (History.com, Geneva Conference begins) Also, Dennis stating that Wilbur was a "wonderful" man clearly meant he valued him and considered him a friend. After reading the different entries in the Appy book, I have concluded that these men became close colleagues and friends through the war. I even stated that the things the Americans did were horrible, but in my eyes they do not deserve to be disrespected because of what they were forced into. Let's agree to disagree.

Sum of ratings:0 (1)

0



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Re: Vietnam Soldiers

by Stanley Cates - Sunday, April 30, 2017, 9:08 PM

I specifically noted that I was not referring to the Geneva accords of 1954, and that I was instead referring to the Geneva convention of 1949 which the U.S. was most certainly party to.

"...but in my eyes they do not deserve to be disrespected because of what they were forced into."

I don't think so either. My whole point was that what you see as "disrespectful" I see as a, supposedly, objective observation. Telling the truth is not disrespectful, or at least it shouldn't be.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1



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Re: Vietnam Soldiers

by William Barker - Sunday, April 30, 2017, 2:47 PM

Stanley,

The horrors of war cannot be put to rest or ever forgotten, but these were men facing incredibly high stress and high risk situations. These situations were not asked for nor were they desired by those men whom had to endure them. Though we must condemn war crimes of all nature and size, we cannot pin a label on all soldiers who served in a conflict as baby killers and savage murderers.

This should hold true for all soldiers in any conflict. The Wehrmacht soldiers weren't all cruel killers, I would assume most were truly just trying to defend the homeland even though they were defending pure evil. Same for the North Vietnamese, a lot were probably true nationalists who wanted all outside forces to leave their homes, but again they were defending a political system that would eventually bring genocide and a mass exodus to the land.

The VC have open and much more widespread accounts of war crimes, which again isn't to be labelled to all of the individuals, but is to be real with ourselves and admit the truth: The VC was more savage and brutal than The United States of America.

"They launched this big propaganda campaign, and on July 6 sixty of us were marched through Hanoi, handcuffed in pairs... Every time we raised our head we'd get hit on the back of the head with a rifle." (pg. 225 Appy)

"The communists carried out a massive campaign of assassination of all non communist nationalist leaders they could get their hands on." (AIM Video 20:30 Stephen Morris)

I have never seen or heard of this happening to an enemy of America before in my life. If this has happened, please enlighten me.

Also you said that Dennis Deal never thought of Wilbur Curry as a friend, just the most valuable man in his platoon? I'd like to know why Dennis Deal says, "... I held his head in my hands. I focused on him as hard as I knew how because I never wanted to forget what this wonderful man looked like." (pg. 132 Appy)

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Re: Vietnam Soldiers

by Stanley Cates - Sunday, April 30, 2017, 9:36 PM

My word, I never put a blanket label on all soldiers as murderers and baby killers. You're certainly right that "the horrors of war cannot be put to rest or ever forgotten". However, my main point is getting glossed over; and that is that, like you said, extending a label to all soldiers is irresponsible whether the label is negative or positive. Yes, clearly " The VC was more savage and brutal than The United States of America." But that statement presupposes that America was indeed savage and brutal. In other words, like I said to Emily, making objective observations and drawing conclusions isn't disrespectful just because they were American soldiers. We've developed a notion in this country that the American soldier is the epitome of nobility and valor and consequently any attempt to criticise any American soldier in any fashion is often met with

accusations of disrespect; and I find that nonsensical, if anything it would make sense to hold them to a higher standard seeing as how we insist that they're the best in the world.

As for your other statement: "I have never seen or heard of this happening to an enemy of America before in my life. If this has happened, please enlighten me."

Nogeun-ri, My Lai (which I'm sure will come up soon enough), and Abu ghraib, just to list a few.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Continuing the Discussion

by Maxwell Ahrenkiel - Wednesday, April 26, 2017, 8:20 PM

The excerpt from Losers are Pirates and article from the New York Times were both skeptical on how PBS went about making the documentary. I thought the excerpt was definitely more critical on the issue, saying in the preface, "the program contained enough misinformation to make us wonder what kinds of education the viewers were supposed to be getting," and to put it more bluntly," the program was grievously biased."(p.i) Both of them have made me question the PBS source more, as they clearly expressed how it has misguided many people. They've also shown me to generally be more aware and consider the motives that these sources have, and why they are really presenting this information.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Bias opinions vs facts

by Brent Roessler - Wednesday, April 26, 2017, 8:29 PM

The first thing that stood out to me in the "Losers are Pirates" book was this... "We, the editor and sponsors of this book, will readily admit to our own personal bias." (pg. 9)

Though the PBS series might have had misleading or distorted information I never got the feeling that there was an underlying bias. I still believe PBS provided (to the best of their knowledge) without bias a clear understanding of the impact the Vietnam War had on not only the US and Vietnam, but all of Indochina and the world for that matter.

After reading this introductory statement by the editors and sponsors of Losers are Pirates, I immediately felt a disinterest in their bias views. As a student, I seek the truth, not someone's personal bias or criticism. In order to obtain the truth, I believe, you have to approach the situation with zero bias. Being able to see and comprehend all perspectives is most crucial.

To me this is controversial because they flat out say they aren't trying to provide us with raw uncut material such as the facts. PBS made no attempt to discredit any other source of information. I understand through media, pictures, interviews, and other communication avenues facts and statements can be manipulated, but with that being said, I get a sense of authenticity from PBS that I don't receive from either AIM or Losers are Pirates. There is a lot of finger pointing and "you're wrong, I'm right" kind of stuff coming from AIM and Losers are Pirates, which to me discredits their statements of PBS and its false portrayal of the war.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2

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Re: Bias opinions vs facts

by Joshua Meeker - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 2:25 PM

Hey Brent,

I appreciate the fact that you are skeptical about the AIM videos. I share the same opinion. While scrolling through the comments I got the impression that a lot of people are put off by PBS now that AIM was introduced. During the first AIM video it didn't dawn on me too much but during the last one something struck me. I do not mean to sound bias or judgmental, but something about the AIM videos was slimy; some of the things that the reporters said were just ridiculous. For instance Col. Summers who said that "It was obvious that people protesting the war desperately needed a justification for what they were doing"...What the ****? Regardless of your feelings on the topic but cant the same be true the other way around? Guys like Col. Summers, who seemed like they wanted the war to continue were acting with the same actions the protesters were; justifying their point of view. Bottom line I didn't appreciate this high-horse mentality. After closer inspection I also got the feeling that these men were representing the conservative aspect of the politics in Vietnam. After looking online with some research I found there to be some validity behind it. I also took a look at the types of corporation that are funding AIM. I got some very interesting results. A lot of their funding involves corporations such as Exxon, Pepsico, IBM, and Chevron. Corporation who have not been known to tell the truth. (Especially oil companies) This was a huge red flag for me and shows me that if people say that PBS is bias that AIM is in no way better or more valid. They merely talk about the points that support their view.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2

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Re: Bias opinions vs facts

by Brent Roessler - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 2:46 PM

Hey Joshua,

Thanks for the reply. I know exactly what you are talking about. I just finished WR227 and a lot of our teachings had to do with fact vs opinion. Smear campaigns are funded by these big multi-billion dollar companies with the sole purpose to put doubt into the consumer's mind, sometimes without any real evidence backing their statements. I get the feeling the AIM and Losers are Pirates video/letter were only made to discredit PBS because some big name company foresaw drastic consequences if the PBS series was allowed to show uncriticized.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Bias opinions vs facts

by Joshua Meeker - Sunday, April 30, 2017, 8:09 PM

Hey Brent,

Absolutely. It is pretty scary how much lobbying and media can affect our politics; its almost just like they warn about in our medias . As much as I get the feeling that AIM is questionable at best it seemed to me that the Losers are Pirates book was a little more legit, but you might be right. We didn't get the full copy of the book so I honestly cant say for sure.

Its really interesting to see that every side has something to add to the story. Its actually fun piecing it all together.

Sum of ratings:0 (1)

0



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20 Year Old Kids Turned Savage Murderers?

by William Barker - Wednesday, April 26, 2017, 9:11 PM

After reading both the New York Times article, Losers Are Pirates excerpt, and watching *Vietnam: A Television History*, I've come very close to concluding that the PBS series is too corrupt to be accepted as historically accurate.

During my viewing of *Vietnam: A Television History*, right around the time code of 33 minutes and 20 seconds, a Vietnamese lady and young kid are both interviewed about their experiences with US soldiers. Le Thi Ton, the older woman, speaks about how her family was blown up by a grenade and killed indiscriminately by the soldiers. Also the young boy, Nguyen Bay, speaks about these soldiers basically torturing these farm people by shooting their stomachs and bashing their skulls in with the butt of their rifles. (PBS Video Episode 4) The only rebuttal we receive is from Private Jack Hill and Captain Edward Banks, who both recount this same encounter. They both never speak of any of these terrible atrocities occurring. Private Jack Hill even says, "...it wasn't anything unusual about burning them hooches down and digging them Vietnamese people out of them holes." (PBS Video Episode 4) He also later speaks on behalf of himself and states that he cannot speak on behalf of any of the other Marines that were there that day (maybe alluding to the fact there were crimes committed, or there weren't any).

Though I truly respect Jack Hill and his story about this event, I think the PBS producers could have found other Marines that were there which maybe had another point of view that differed from their (the producer's) own. Mr. Hill's testimony is a little ambiguous about whether or not there were atrocities committed that day, the PBS producers liked this because it pushed the narrative (very passively) that slaughtering villagers was common place. Even John McCain believes the PBS series was pushing this agenda. McCain states that, "... there is not one single documented case of mistreatment of a Viet Cong or North Vietnamese prisoner once they were in the prison compound." (AIM Video 3:30) Though there were *isolated* instances of unjust murders in the field (which has happened in every conflict ever), this was not a daily occurrence. The communists forces were much more brutal than the South and the US to POW's, but again I've only heard good things about Ho Chi Minh and the communists.

The PBS series never makes that point clear. These were not reoccurring acts of murder in all Vietnamese villages, again, these were *isolated* incidents.

Some other food for thought which I think adds to this discussion. First, how are we to believe these Vietnamese people being interviewed? The ruthless communist regime still held strong during the time these people were interviewed. Where is any evidence these people were not spoon fed lies by the government to further sway opinion against the United States?

Remember, Ho Chi Minh said they'd win not in the battlefield but in the streets of America due to the bad press! Secondly, how are all these small town American boys all of a sudden turned into savage murderers? Their whole lives they were listening to Dorris Day and raised by the Greatest Generation! I cannot fathom that all of these young men were turned into wild murderers thirsting for blood. I think bad press and bad history perpetrated these fallacies.

Sum of ratings:3 (1) 3

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Re: 20 Year Old Kids Turned Savage Murderers?

by Mason Peckels St.onge - Thursday, April 27, 2017, 4:53 PM

I really like your point and I have to agree. I think that the media, with the help of Ho and the communist, portrayed the Soldiers in Vietnam as savages when dealing with the villagers. I can see this being something the NVA would have loved to see in American media, its exactly what Ho wanted. I think that war makes people do terrible things, and I don't doubt that JI's were involved in some accounts; however, I don't think it was to the extent the media portrayed. The questions is, why were they so willing the story about savage JI's, when the communist were torturing POW's?

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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Lies in Vietnam

by Aaron Rocha - Wednesday, April 26, 2017, 9:13 PM

The lies depicted by the USA stand out in the documentary. There was tragedy on both sides of the war. The south had no record of POW's on their side being mistreated in terms of war, however that was not the same on the other side, Northern Vietnam. The north was recorded using both mental and psychological torture. In doing so, the north used their captures for propaganda reasons which in turn help with negotiations on their behalf.

With veterans speaking up about the film PBS put out, is showing that even our media services is capable of its own propaganda and lies. People were protesting the war, and wanted some sort of justification which is where the PBS broadcast uses propaganda to ease them. This even included avoiding showing coverage of protest against the war which was much greater than the nearby parade supporting the war.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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Communist mistreatment of POW's

by Mason Peckels St.onge - Wednesday, April 26, 2017, 11:10 PM

After analyzing the NYT article and the second AIM video I noticed that there was a focus towards the treatment of American POW's. When watching the PBS documentary I did not see this. In fact so far, I don't recall seeing anything in the film about the mistreatment of the POW's. However both new sources claim that there was mistreatment and it was significant to the war. The AIM video interviews John McCain, who was a POW, he says "the north Vietnamese had a calculated program of mistreatment, psychological and physical; in order to exploit POW's for propaganda purposes." (AIM video, 3:47). And the NYT article agrees with the AIM video, stating that "intelligent criticisms are offered" for example "it minimizes the

brutal treatment of American prisoners of war”. If I follow the assumption that the PBS series favors the Vietnamese Communist, then this makes sense. The PBS series wouldn't have wanted to show the Communist in a negative light.

I believe that because multiple sources have discussed the mistreatment, then it is safe to say that it happened and is a vital piece of the war's history. However, I have to share how I feel about the mistreatment, and would like to respond to McCain's comparison in the AIM video. He says that no mistreatment happened to the Viet Cong POWs, but Americans were tortured. Now, I don't condone the torture of ANY POW's, especially our troops, but I have to say I'm not surprised the Vietnamese were so brutal to the POW's. To the NVA and Viet Cong the American troops were seen as another foreign power attempting to prevent them from gaining independence. And on top of Communist Propaganda, their hatred for us was very high. If in the American Civil War some foreign power came in and helped either side, they would have been seen and treated, in my opinion, very similarly to how the North Vietnamese treated us. So..... How the Vietnamese treated POW's was tragic, but can you blame them?

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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When Bias Meets Reinterpretation

by Sydney Zuelke - Wednesday, April 26, 2017, 11:31 PM

It was interesting to me that after watching the second part of the AIM video (BEFORE I had read the NY Times Piece) that many of my gut-reactions and takeaways I had during the video, were echoed in the NYT. Primarily, the fact that the AIM documentary began to sound as biased as the PBS documentary was made out to be. We're seeing men who won't budge when it comes to their patriotism, their pride, and their opinion on the war – and although they make fair points, and seem to point out true historical inaccuracies within the PBS documentary, they still fail at painting a whole picture, and not just one side.

The most significant takeaway I had from the NYT piece was: “No new interpretation of history is allowed. The opposition to broadcasting the AIM program suggested that the producers of the Vietnam series and their supporters feel this way about history too. It cannot be reinterpreted unless the reinterpretation has their approval” (NYT p. 3). Basically, we're stuck between two documentaries with polar opposite viewpoints on the war – and there's no in-between. History is not meant to be interpreted, but in this case, it's being manipulated.

Some additional conflicting ideas I now see is the divide between the South Vietnamese and the North Vietnamese, and how their position in the war is explained/portrayed. According to Captain John McCain, the PBS series recognized an “unfortunate juxtaposition” between the treatment of American P.O.W.'s in North Vietnam and the treatment by Vietnamese and/or Americans of Viet Cong or North Vietnamese prisoners (AIM video 3:20). He says, the series did not give attention to the way the Vietnamese manipulate Americans for propaganda purposes, and captured Americans for these purposes – in helping them forge some kind of agreement for a victory in Indochina.

This may just be in keeping with our Herring book. “Captured U.S. fliers gave Hanoi hostages who would assume increasing importance in the stalemated war. The continued pounding of a small, backward country by the world's wealthiest and most advanced nation gave the North Vietnamese a propaganda advantage they exploited quite effectively. Opposition to the war at home increasingly focused on the bombing, which, in the eyes of many critics, was at best inefficient, at worst immoral” (Herring 80). Which again, is reinforced by the AIM's mention of the 1967 “march that never was” in New York.

Ultimately, it's difficult for me to "approve" or "endorse" either video. But I do have an appreciation for the both of them – in reminding me to look at the bigger picture, look at every perspective, and be aware of the inevitable biases that come with the war. If I had to choose a video that seems to be more in keeping with historical facts (slightly persuaded by the "Losers are Pirates" excerpt -- which admirably doesn't admit to having all the facts), I might have a more faith in the AIM video. But I take it with a grain of salt – because I do feel they're on the defense.

Sum of ratings:3 (1) 3

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Re: When Bias Meets Reinterpretation , built on lies

by Mason Peckels St.onge - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 10:57 AM

I also found it very interesting that it seems both the AIM video and the PBS film seem to be manipulated by their beliefs of the war. After reading further on in the Herring book it started to make sense as to why it's so hard to get the truth. The end of chapter four, and beginning of five emphasize how sneakily LBJ was making delicious in Vietnam "The president continued to deceive the nation as to the significance of the steps he was taking."(Herring, 172). They also mention that that in 1966 he approved the deployment of 100,000 ground troops; in contrast, he only told the public he approved 50,000. I can only imagine that if we were lied to about something that big, there are still lies we believe today. Some of these lies might reinforce peoples beliefs towards the war. It seem Vietnam was built on lies.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

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Re: When Bias Meets Reinterpretation , built on lies

by Sydney Zuelke - Sunday, April 30, 2017, 10:52 PM

I definitely agree that it seems both sides were manipulated. It's interesting because both videos appear to have valid/historical accuracies BUT a great deal of omission. You make a good point that it wasn't easy for people to get the truth/might not be entirely their fault that they have such a strong or biased viewpoint (it's almost as if they're brainwashed!) It really is up to us to do our research and not immediately believe whatever we're told -- as was the case in the example you gave about LBJ. Sometimes we rely on the media to tell us the cold-hard truth... Which could be a negative as well.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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Re: When Bias Meets Reinterpretation , built on lies

by Mason Peckels St.onge - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 11:00 AM

I also found it very interesting that in both the AIM video and the PBS film, the history seems to be manipulated. After reading further on in the Herring book it started to make sense as to why it's so hard to get the truth. The end of chapter four, and beginning of five emphasize how sneakily LBJ was making delicious in Vietnam "The president continued to deceive the nation as to the significance of the steps he was taking."(Herring, 172). They also mention that that in 1966 he approved the deployment of 100,000 ground troops; in

contrast, he only told the public he approved 50,000. I can only imagine that if we were lied to about something that big, there are still lies we believe today. Some of these lies might reinforce people's beliefs towards the war. It seems Vietnam was built on lies.

Sum of ratings:0 (1)

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Re: When Bias Meets Reinterpretation , built on lies

by Brent Roessler - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 2:09 PM

I'm really glad you touched on this matter! The lies and deception the U.S. used to portray a "worthy and noble" cause for war is truly disturbing. In the Abby book I found many instances of deception and corrupt practices. For example, "By the end of 1961 he had increased the number of U.S. military personnel in Vietnam from eight hundred to three thousand, though termed *advisers*; they included fighter pilots, helicopter companies, Special Forces teams, and regular army officers and enlisted men. The administration denied any of them were engaging directly in combat, though in many instances they were." (Abby, pg.61)

Even though the information is unsettling, I believe it's the type of material we, as students of the truth about the war, need to strongly evaluate and consider as truth. There isn't any sugar-coating, it comes from a personal perspective/experience (not filtered through media). Thanks for the post Mason.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1

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Re: When Bias Meets Reinterpretation , built on lies

by Brent Roessler - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 2:26 PM

To help strengthen and back up your point Mason, here is another great example, from a different source (Herring book), which mentions the same information... deception, and moral corruption!

"Many liberal internationalists who had supported World War II, Korea, and the Cold War found Vietnam morally repugnant. By backing a corrupt, authoritarian government, they contended, the United States was betraying its own principles."(Herring, pg.216)

Even countries that once supported the U.S. and its "worthy and noble" causes for participation in major Wars, saw and knew about the corruption behind the U.S. objectives (in Vietnam). This should have been a huge wake up call for the U.S. that their involvement in the Vietnam War wasn't as "noble" as they might have hoped to portray it as.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1

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Re: When Bias Meets Reinterpretation

by Emily Gibson - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 7:06 PM

Sydney,

I really enjoyed reading your forum this week. It calls out both videos on their bias views which I think we tend to try to pick out either side. For me, I tend to lean towards the AIM video because of the sources they use, but obviously there is a lot of bias there as well. Considering a lot of the sources are part of the republican point of view makes you question things a bit. The problem I have with the PBS video is not what is in the video, but what is missing. Again, I see a lot of bias and they tend to leave out the horrors that came from the Vietnamese side as well. For me, I've enjoyed the Appy book the most for distinguishing between the different views. I think they give entries that come from all over including veterans, citizens, reporters, etc. from both sides of the argument. For example, the Helen Heleheimer is a stewardess that was not connected to anything except picking soldiers up, and dropping them off. The fact of the matter is, the war effected everyone differently, and therefore every person has a different bias opinion. Like you said "history is not meant to be interpreted." It's up to us to do research and find what we believe to be factual.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

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support vs. opposed

by Skyler Tidwell - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 1:38 PM

The fight for America's approval for the Vietnam War took its toll on veterans, their families, and public. The people that were still in the states disapprove of the whole situation. Well it was no help from the PBS series. They portrayed the Veterans as murderers and child killers, and even worse. Eventually, people who watched the shows grew an opinion that struck a match and allowed a fire to burn across the nation. With no help a picture "Saigon police chief with street execution of a Vietcong". (Herring pg.232) In the picture it looks like the police killing an unarmed man in the streets with his arms tied behind him. Now if we were the people back home and knew nothing of the situation we would be angered and irritated that we sent our people over there and the Vietnam's police are executing people at will. Now that puts a picture in to their heads. The majority of the people thought that the United States should have never been in Vietnam to being with. There is a graph that best shows "trends in support for the war in Vietnam". (Herring pg.221) If we look at it we can gather that in 1965 the support was at 50%. Then the support was at its highest was in between 1965 an 1966 after that it went downhill fast, but never reached below 25%. However, the people opposed to the War in the being were about 25%, then as 1970 approached the people who disapproved were at its all time high. This war took a toll on everyone involved for both supporters and opposes, people questions the ethics of their nation and the people serving it. However, PBS and the opposed turned a situation to help the world one nation at a time to be free from tyranny, oppression, and slavery; to be free to do as they wand without communist controlling them. The PBS series was manipulated by the people in Vietnam to make the war look horrible. However, the AIM's video stays true. Although the AIM's video did not say this, but it is what I took from their video that this war is a fight there is no doubt about it but it was also a war of mind (opinion) of the nation.

Sum of ratings:3 (1) 3

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Re: support vs. opposed



by Joshua Meeker - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 2:50 PM

"The PBS series was manipulated by the people in Vietnam to make the war look horrible"

No offense Skyler I must address this statement you made. For when is a war not horrible? Many people died and it is safe to say that the US forces weren't always the most pleasant. Imagine having your brothers in the field killed by the enemy forces time and time again. You would want to do terrible things to the enemy forces, wouldn't you? I would. The biggest problem: to a US soldier it seemed every Vietnamese was an enemy (As suggested by several soldiers who interviewed in the PBS program). So yes, I'm certain that US forces did execute immoral actions against people in Vietnam, but the same can definitely be said for the other side as well.

I also want to make it a point that I'm not blaming one side or the other.

Moorefield from the AIM video said that we were going into war with "A noble policy, a noble commitment, we were trying to preserve them (Vietnamese) the option of their own way of life, of their own culture." Really think about that for a moment.

Did we really go over there and present ourselves with a "Hey there, we really want to help you."? This is not the impression I got. We went over there and expected them to meet our standards, to force our beliefs and ideologies on them; we wanted THEM to change. I'm sorry but very little about the AIM videos stays true. They merely convinced you that they did.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

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Re: Continuing the Discussion

by Brent Roessler - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 1:48 PM

I really like this passage out of the NYT... "It's great strength was that it offered room for many points of view. The paradox now is that the members of the public television community who deplore the AIM rebuttal rule out all points of view except their own." (NYT, pg.2)

This passage helps strengthen my argument that the PBS series wasn't intending to mislead or rewrite Vietnam's history. Their aim was to inform the public on facts and allow them to form their own conclusions. The bias opinions of AIM and Losers are Pirates is clearly stated and conveyed in their writings/cinema. So far, I give most my attention and approval to the PBS series, Herring book, and Abby. Smear campaign's and bias opinion aren't of value to me in the history and understanding of what really happened in the Vietnam War.

Sum of ratings: 0 (1)

0



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LAP

by Skyler Tidwell - Sunday, April 30, 2017, 10:36 AM

The Book by James Baneriam who wrote *Loser are Pirates (LAP)*, it is an interesting read. It discusses and explains very important about the PBS television series: Vietnam. This reading claims that the PBS series is strung out in the far left field. Not only does James disagree with the accuracy in the 13 videos from start to finish, he shares the opinion of the Vietnam refugees. They feel that the misrepresentation of the first aired video in 1983 not only makes them look incompetent, but the fear for their next generation and how their parent's actions will reflect on them. Then again Mr. Baneriam goes on to touch another subject about why the Television series is bias. He says it best when stating "approval for the series seems to come from two groups: those who opposed America's involvement in the war and others who have limited background in the history of Southeast Asia and the war." (LAP pg.5) He later gives details about how they only looked for facts and points that already supported their theory. That is called "Confirmation Bias", which means if a person only look at things that support their idea then they will be like I was right and research will end, and the other side will not be heard because it conflicts with what they agree with. James believes that the producers were trying to influence the general public's opinion to see if diplomatic relationship can be reestablished between communist Vietnam and the United States of America. Later he attaches a thought to that, that they considered if we as a country did than then maybe the U.S would pay for damages that we caused while in South Vietnam. I agree with James that we were there to support them and defend ourselves; any damage done was not intentional but necessary in time of war for freedom.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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