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Internet Testimonies

by Joe Escobar - Saturday, May 13, 2017, 9:45 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Internet Testimonies topic.

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IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post. Use a title to describe which questions you are addressing. Do NOT simply leave it RE: Internet Testimonies

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To Log History

by Tyler Ritter - Tuesday, May 16, 2017, 1:25 PM

Tyler Ritter

Joe Escobar

May 16, 2017

Question #3 & 4

I completely believe these stories should be in Appy's book. The "welcome home" Vietnam veterans received was quite frankly, terrible. No veteran, or any person for that matter, should be spit on. I honestly don't know how we can still be arguing over if it happened or not. There are countless first hand accounts of how veterans were mistreated upon arrival into the states. I remained skeptical at first, but with how many accounts there are, and all of them seeming to have the same content, it seems overwhelmingly true. We should have these first hand accounts stored away, because when all the Vietnam veterans are gone, their stories disappear as well. This goes for WWII veterans as well. Without first hand accounts, it will be easier for the historical waters to be "muddied".

How do we rectify misinformation in the media? Do like AIM did with the PBS documentary. Pick it apart piece by piece and site factual information. Make the real history more popular than that of its fake counterpart.

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Re: To Log History

by John Anderson - Friday, May 19, 2017, 3:38 PM

In reference to your response on fact checking, how do you suggest one determine what the "factual information" is? I feel like this is a more difficult task since there is nothing objectively false about people's truthful account of events. This assumes that the accounts we receive are not fabricated, of course. In my opinion, the information that we get from these real accounts is never completely factual, it is all tainted by the curse of perspective. You will never hear the exact same story from two people who witnessed an event because they saw it differently. So, I ask again, how does one determine the "factual information?"

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Re: To Log History

by Tyler Ritter - Sunday, May 21, 2017, 2:15 PM

I completely agree that finding a piece of info "factual" is a very hard thing to do. Perspective does indeed taint information, but at the same time each account is based in truth. With all of these culminating into one, maybe we find what is the most common occurrence between each story? Other than that, I am at a loss.

Sum of ratings:0 (1)

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to truth or not to truth, that is the question

by John Anderson - Wednesday, May 17, 2017, 5:52 PM

How do we determine what is true and what is less than truth? This question is relevant today, even more than most days amidst calls for impeachment in the House of Representatives. History has often been presented to the student from the perspective of the winners of the war. For many years this was the US, but, and not unlike the current trials we face from a lost conflict, the return of defeated servicemen from Vietnam created a rather different view of what transpired. For me, the pursuit of facts has always been more important than the pursuit of truth.

In history, science, and life, truth is a term that is often interpretive. It is much easier to determine events from facts than with 'truth.' As we have noted from both video and text interviews, the truth of what transpired in Vietnam is largely dependent on the person. For many, the war in Vietnam was a war that we should not have waged. We fought the Vietcong in ways that we had thought would be effective from our experience in WW2 and Korea, but largely our tactics were unable to win the hearts and the minds of the people of Vietnam.

What complicated the issues further was the involvement of media. Vietnam was groundbreaking for many reasons, amongst these was television. Vietnam was the first truly televised war. The boob tube had been employed in addresses and conflicts like the Cuba missile crisis, but never to the same effect. The world had a dilemma on its hands: how do we determine the validity of video journalism? Do we take all video at face value, and who determines what gets put on tape? The answer came in the form of trying to determine bias on the part of the film-makers. What are their views, and what do they have to gain?

Many of the groups supporting the war in Vietnam were opposed to the depictions that were released on film. The shock value of these films were viewed as a form of propaganda. Realistically, the horrors of war had never been so 'in the face' of the American people. There is no way that anyone could have anticipated the dramatic impact of media on the public.

For us, as students of the war in Vietnam, we have to judge these films as almost equal in their value. That is, that they are all subject to equal criticism. We have to look at the credentials of the film-makers and the credentials of the 'experts' that they cite. Even veterans must be subject to this criticism, with a degree of respect of course. It is up to us to weigh the facts and the opinions to try and find some objective truth, if that is possible. It is in this way, that the real history of an event or period can be determined.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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varying sources

by Kyle Martinson - Wednesday, May 17, 2017, 6:48 PM

Question 3

I think Appy should use some of these testimonials in the book. Part of the reason people are still arguing these events is most likely because now we don't want to think of that happening, Americans treating a soldier poorly. After the Vietnam vets pass away historical record will most likely get even more distorted.

Question 4

The only way I see being able to rectify the historical information between the sources is compare them. Usually the most repeated and used information is most accurate but it still needs to be taken cautiously because it still could be false.

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1



Re: varying sources

by Tyler Ritter - Thursday, May 18, 2017, 2:44 PM

I completely agree that when Vietnam vets are gone, a huge piece of history will go with them, the same goes with WW2 veterans. First hand accounts are very important when telling a story. Although this war was, the first majorly televised war, first hand stories still matter greatly. It makes me wonder of what will happen of first hand accounts from Iraq veterans, or people serving in the armed forces now. Will we want to rely on them less because we have way better technology to film now? Will first hand accounts not matter as much anymore?

Sum of ratings:0 (1)

0



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Re: varying sources

by John Anderson - Friday, May 19, 2017, 3:41 PM

Could you expand on your answer to Q 4? I feel like just comparing sources could just confuse things more at times, or, even worse, give completely conflicting information. Do you feel like the sources need to be evaluated for their academic merit on a scale of expert support? Do you weigh the first hand accounts of veterans on the same level as a Vietnam historian who never set foot on the same soil as them?

Sum of ratings:0 (1)

0



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Trust all Veterans

by Brent Roessler - Friday, May 19, 2017, 4:23 PM

Question 1:

Yes, they should be included. Every single statement should be recorded. Who are we to say which story is valid and which isn't. I'll admit the second video wasn't as powerful, or didn't make me "feel" emotional when watching, but that doesn't make it any less real.

I think whether or not veterans were "spit on" will be disputed forever. The fact that it is still being disputed today, in 2017, just goes to show that wherever there is a shred of doubt, whether it be honest or "smear campaign", masses are influence.

One of the biggest reason I think we need to take careful note of every single statement by Vietnam vets is the simple fact that there are so few that still exist and have a story to tell. Stories will always be passed down through the years, but every person the story travels through is another filter. The purest, most raw and uncut material is the first person interviews, such as the videos and letters provided in this week's forum. All are valuable, all are worthy of remembering, and all should be absorbed as truth unless there's outlandish claims where there is physical and testimonial record proving otherwise. These men and woman have no reason to lie to us. I appreciate their courage to share their stories and I use each and every one as a little piece of history to understanding the whole truth of the Vietnam War.

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1

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Re: Trust all Veterans

by Kyle Martinson - Sunday, May 21, 2017, 4:51 PM

You only have one question listed but there were two, Was your response for both? You say that very statement should be recorded, Do you think that even those would be distorted in the future if they were recorded?

Sum of ratings:0 (1)

0

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Re:kyle- Trust all Veterans

by Brent Roessler - Sunday, May 21, 2017, 6:10 PM

Hey Kyle,

I wasn't saying my statements should be recorded; I was speaking about the Veterans stories. They are the single most valuable and directly related source of information there is. Those first hand statements along with authentic camera footage are the best two raw sources of information we got.

Unfortunately yes, I do believe if this statement was passed down only by word of mouth, there would be a degree of tampering with the exact words said. That's why I think a recording or hand written letter would be great for further analysis and understanding the truth.

Also, I don't think I answered more than Question 1; there were multiple questions within the question.

Sum of ratings:0 (1)

0

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First person interviews!

by Brent Roessler - Sunday, May 21, 2017, 6:25 PM

Question 4 is the ultimate challenge, We have so many sources, but which do we deem creditable or not? And who are we to say who's telling the truth or not? But, I do believe all sources should be examined thoroughly, reviewed by peers (veterans, historians), and given good credibility when it's first person compared to a story handed down for generations with many filters. And last but not least, trust your gut when deciding whether or not to allow some new information to influence your truth about the war.

Sum of ratings:0 (1)

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