

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

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Legacy of the War

by Joe Escobar - Saturday, June 3, 2017, 7:59 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Legacy of the War topic.

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IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

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Proliferating distrust

by Stanley Cates - Monday, June 5, 2017, 2:59 PM

I think the most significant legacy from the Vietnam war era is the distrust of government. Make no mistake, I'm under no illusion that trust and faith in American leaders was ubiquitous prior to Vietnam; but the sheer severity of the lack of integrity of the leadership gave it a whole new dimension that has perpetuated through to the current generation. Stanley Karnow said about this: "You begin to see... what some reporters in those days called a credibility gap between the public statements and the reality on the ground. As a result of that... I think people look back and realize how much the leadership lied." (News hour 7:10). That statement taken in the perspective that this video was recorded and broadcasted in the Spring of 2000 really lends some credibility to its foreshadowing qualities (PBS.org). In the final chapter of his book Herring states: "Terrorist attacks on New York's World Trade Center and the

Pentagon in Washington on September 11, 2001, appeared to mark the end of the Vietnam era in U.S. history.” (Herring Page 367). I disagree, I think 9/11 demonstrated the distrust the American people had in the government. Karnow’s statement was before the 9/11 conspiracies, before the accusations that the government had information that could have prevented the attacks, and well before the information age came to full fruition with the proliferation of social media, on which some people still discuss reason to distrust what they’re told about 9/11. It’s undeniable that what Karnow mentions is everywhere you look on the internet.

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/asia-jan-june00-vietnam_4-5/

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3



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Re: Proliferating distrust

by Kayla Elliott - Wednesday, June 7, 2017, 8:19 PM

I agree that the most significant legacy of the Vietnam War was the distrust of government. Another quote from the "Legacy of War" video was from Jonathan Holloway who said, "The Vietnam War was the end of American innocence." It was the end of American innocence in the fact that people really started to realize how much the government could lie, hide, and be deceitful. Not only that, but all the horrific things people had to do and experience over in Vietnam, brought them back changed. After the Vietnam war, whether you went over there or not, changed you. It changed America forever. So, I think that is why it's the most significant legacy because it's the part of the war that changed the way we see our government, our country, and its people.

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Re: Proliferating distrust

by John Anderson - Friday, June 9, 2017, 6:52 PM

Great post Stan.

I think that I agree with a good portion of this, the only thing I might add, and I'm not even sure if I conveyed this properly in my post, is that distrust of Government is a symptom of a deeper revelation that the American people experienced. The US was forced to witness it's own hypocrisy, and it was televised to boot. I feel like the most long lasting impact of Vietnam was a complete change in how people viewed the world. International politics were no longer just private opinions that ended in phrases like: we should trust the government. People could form their own critical voices based on what they witnessed through the TV or read in an international magazine that was not affiliated with any government entity. Vietnam opened our eyes, it just so happens that the government was trying to blind them.

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Re: Proliferating distrust

by Stanley Cates - Saturday, June 10, 2017, 3:35 PM

I see what you're saying, but I think it's important to keep things in perspective. As I mentioned in my post trust in the American government wasn't just a given prior to Vietnam. Trust in the government has never been a given at any time in our nation's history. So I feel like I need to make a distinction about what I said. I don't think the legacy of Vietnam is that the people no longer trust the government, rather I think mistrust went from something that happened from time to time, to something that is common practice; not unlike your narrative about people having opinions about international politics.

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Re: Proliferating distrust

by Jerrel Brown - Saturday, June 10, 2017, 9:04 PM

You make some very good arguments for this spike in over-all distrust of our government system since the Vietnam war. Prior to the war in Vietnam patriotism wasn't something anyone really had to feel bad for expressing. The government worked for the people, so whatever it did it did for our benefit. but after so many years of elected government officials misleading the public and being just shady in general, That sentiment has drastically changed. The 9/11 conspiracies are a perfect example for this, because it was actions like those taken by Nixon that put Ideas like that into people's minds. If the government is willing to lie and cover up this that and the other thing, why is t so absurd to think that they are capable of doing more? the idea of the government working to take care of the people is no longer the majority share holder of public opinion.

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Re: Proliferating distrust

by William Wyatt - Sunday, June 11, 2017, 7:39 PM

Hello Stanley,

I see your point. Too often, the interests of politicians stop reflecting whats best for society, which is how many U.S. citizens felt during the Vietnam War. There is no doubt that the lack of faith in the U.S. government played a significant role in the failure of U.S. involvement in the war. I Agree with you when you stated that, perspective about the issue of distrust in the government becomes somewhat prevalent when you take into account that people still felt that way thirty-five years after the war ended. With no trust from it's citizens, how is any government supposed to succeed with war endeavors. I Would also have to agree with your opinion about 9/11 marking the end of the Vietnam war era, to me that statement seems somewhat out of place. I Don't think the 9/11 attacks necessarily ended the Vietnam War era for the U.S. Instead, in my opinion, I believe it just shifted the attention.

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Distrust

by Tyler Ritter - Tuesday, June 6, 2017, 2:07 PM

Tyler Ritter

Joe Escobar

June 6, 2017

Distrust. Distrust in the government and non transparency I believe, was the greatest legacy of the war. I agree with the statement Micheal Beschloss gave on the legacy of the war debate. He stated that "If we as Americans are going to make a sacrifice like sending 56,000 of our people to die in a war in Vietnam, that should be something our president should tell us about in advance, and give us a choice." The distrust in political leaders and decisions was very apparent in all of the protests of the time. People wanted the truth more than ever. With all of whats going on in modern times, I feel like we as a society now, know how easy it can be to be fed invalid information. (I.E PBS Vietnam Documentary).

Legacy of the war - 7:50

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Re: Distrust

by Kyle Martinson - Saturday, June 10, 2017, 4:29 PM

I completely agree with you. Throughout history there has been large distrust in the government.

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A New Opinion

by Tyler Ritter - Tuesday, June 6, 2017, 2:08 PM

Tyler Ritter

Joe Escobar

June 6, 2017

Ken Burns stated, "you flip the etch-a-sketch over and start over". I love that he has tried to step back and take into account that many different perspectives exist. I really think Burns is wanting to completely rewrite in the most unbiased form what really happened in the Vietnam war. Although, I ever since learning about the misinformation on the PBS documentary, I am skeptical. If the info truly does come off as unbiased and correct, I think it will be a great way to give everyone information regarding the war. Although, on the flip side, if it turns about to be biased, and misconstrued, I think it will be very

detrimental to how people perceive the Vietnam war. It seems to be referring to the countless ways the Vietnam war has been portrayed through the years, and seems to acknowledge that it is still a hot button topic.

Filmmaker Ken Burns aims for healing with new documentary about Vietnam War, John Wilkens, <http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/entertainment/sd-me-burns-vietnam-20170515-story.html>

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Re: A New Opinion

by Stanley Cates - Wednesday, June 7, 2017, 2:24 PM

I too am excited about the prospect of the uses of this documentary, but I think it's important to remember that there is no such thing as unbiased. It's one of those things that we can strive for but never truly achieve; your experiences are always going to influence how you perceive and project. I've had discussions about Burns before, and I'd also caution to keep in mind that from my exposure to him he is an artist first and a historian second. His Civil War series had its share of shortcomings in which emotion was favored of facts, and some "facts" were wrong (LCC HIST 209). I hope that the new Vietnam does a better job than the Civil War series; however, Burns throws up a red flag when he mentions that he was coming of age during the Vietnam era. How can we expect him to be objective and unbiased about a war that he did live through if we see that he wasn't diligent about a war that he didn't live through?

What I would really like is a little clarity behind Burns' statement: "Well you know, whatever my politics is now, I sort of allow it to be... influence flow backward... and influence how I [the viewer] feel about the Vietnam war but I actually don't know much about what happened." That's all fine and well, but how do you suppose he's going to go about achieving that? What I mean to say is, how does one convince an audience to have an open mind on such a divisive subject?

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Re: A New Opinion

by Kayla Elliott - Wednesday, June 7, 2017, 8:23 PM

I agree that if the film goes as they describe it, it should be a great way to bring people together and understand the opposing views of what happened. They talked to many people with different perspectives and positions on the Vietnam War and they said they listened to all of them equally without "making any of them wrong." In this way, they will be different from the PBS documentary. Although the PBS documentary talked to many different people, they edited it and showed the interviews in a way that would support their bias. So, I'm looking forward to maybe having a documentary about the Vietnam War that isn't bias, but like you, I am skeptical of this.

I think they are creating this documentary so they can bring people together again. This war divided America, and to this day, people still have such strong feelings about the war. With this video, they are hoping to bring clarity about what happened and to try to get people to understand that just

because someone was on the other side of the war, doesn't mean that they weren't doing what they thought was right from their point of view. There were good things and bad things both sides did, and I think they want to show this so that people can start to heal and come together again.

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Re: A New Opinion

by William Wyatt - Sunday, June 11, 2017, 8:43 PM

Hello Tyler,

I Also really appreciated Ken Burns's gambit to create a different perspective on the Vietnam War. Personally, Ken Burns's transparency on his new project left me with high hopes for this new documentary. After watching, reading, and learning so much about the misinformation that appears to riddle the overall understanding of the Vietnam War, part of me, like you, still remains skeptical about this new documentary. I'm not really sure what would happen if Ken Burns new documentary turns out to be misinformed and biased. My best guess is that not much would happen at all. Although, If Ken Burns is capable of creating an unbiased documentary about the Vietnam War, I also believe it could be an immeasurable resource.

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Re: A New Opinion

by William Wyatt - Sunday, June 11, 2017, 8:56 PM

Hello Tyler,

I Also really appreciated Ken Burns's gambit to create a different perspective on the Vietnam War. Personally, Ken Burns's transparency on his new project left me with high hopes for this new documentary. After watching, reading, and learning so much about the misinformation that appears to riddle the overall understanding of the Vietnam War, part of me, like you, still remains skeptical about this new documentary. I'm not really sure what would happen if Ken Burns new documentary turns out to be misinformed and biased. My best guess is that not much would happen at all. Although, If Ken Burns is capable of creating an unbiased documentary about the Vietnam War, I also believe it could be an immeasurable resource. To me, this documentary appears to be about creating a middle ground for discussion with regards to all sides and opinions concerning the topic.

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Re: Legacy of the War

by Kelsey Gilseth - Tuesday, June 6, 2017, 11:01 PM

Choosing the single, most significant legacy of the Vietnam War isn't an easy task, especially after spending almost ten weeks learning about it. However, if forced to choose, I would have to say that how we treated our soldiers upon their return home to the U.S. definitely is a highly significant legacy, even though it is so negative. The treatment of our soldiers at that time was completely different from any other time when soldiers were returning home from any other war. To this day, what transpired upon their return is up for debate, which we studied just recently. Thankfully, some of that controversy has been

turned around as efforts have been made to honor those soldiers within the last few decades. Doris Kearns Goodwin, a presidential historian said it best when she said "I think that's the most humiliating, horrible memory of it all. Here they had fought for us and were treated so badly by so many people who were against the war at the time. (Legacy of War 18:08). I couldn't agree with her more that it was humiliating and horrible, and in my opinion, unamerican. These soldiers went off to fight a war so far away from home, usually with no understanding of what they were even fighting for. The selective draft used in the Vietnam War often called on "poor, working class, and the middle class, better educated kids often got out of it," which was by no means fair. In our reading this term we have heard stories in the Patriots textbook of men who avoided the draft by going to college, a choice the lower class couldn't afford. People fled the country to Canada, because they were certain they would get drafted. In response to how we treated our returning soldiers, a legacy that came out of the war then was that the United States did away with the draft system and instead turned to a volunteer system.

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Re: Legacy of the War

by Stanley Cates - Wednesday, June 7, 2017, 2:39 PM

On the one hand I agree with you that the changes in the way we fill our military ranks is a significant change and legacy resulting from the feelings about the draft during and immediately after the war, but on the other hand I'm afraid I must contest the way you phrased it. You said "...the United States did away with the draft system and instead turned to a volunteer system." With few exceptions American men are required to register for the selective service system. I had to carry my selective service card with me for 8 years, during which time it was my responsibility to inform them anytime I changed my address. A quote from the selective service act: "The President is authorized...to select and induct into the Armed Forces of the United States for training and service...such numbers of persons that may be required to provide and maintain the strength of Armed Forces." From the selective service website: "Failing to register or comply with the Military Selective Service Act is a felony punishable by a fine of up to \$250,000 or a prison term of up to five years, or a combination of both." Does it still sound like we "did away with the draft", or did we just throw a little political sugar on top of it as a result of the legacy that we're discussing?

<https://www.sss.gov/>

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Re: Legacy of the War

by Emily Gibson - Thursday, June 8, 2017, 2:07 PM

Kelsey

I was so excited to stumble across your post because of the difference of opinion of everyone else! I agree that the treatment of soldiers is a terrible legacy that should not be ignored. These soldiers in my eyes were innocent. The anti-war protestors treated them horribly and with such hate. I feel that they blamed the soldiers for the governments decisions which is totally unfair. Now today, I constantly see hatred of soldiers all over twitter and other social media. It disgusts me of the disrespect by so many people.

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Re: Legacy of the War

by William Barker - Wednesday, June 7, 2017, 3:26 PM

In my opinion I believe the single most important legacy of the Vietnam War is how American troops made the ultimate sacrifice for their country, even though the war was thought to be wrong and immoral. With all of the leaders who were against the war and the college hippies protesting in the streets, men and women still served their country with great honor. Even in light of how much the government lied to the people (and the troops) about what was going on, they served their country.

"What happens eventually, as the war goes on and there is no progress and Americans are getting killed... and you begin to see a, what some reporters would call in those days, is a credibility gap between the public statements and the realities on the ground... I think people look back and realize how much the leadership lied..." (7:00 Legacy of War - News Hour Stanley Karnow)

Though Mr. Karnow doesn't specifically address what I'm speaking about, his statement covering how much the American people were displeased with the war and how the leadership was lying to the people, really resonates with me on the incredible sacrifice those US soldiers put forth. I've always ever heard of the hippies and the anti-war kids who ran through the streets hysterically, but after understanding this war more thoroughly I've come to have an even greater respect for those men who put their lives on the line in service to the American public (past, present, and future) and this great country.

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Re: Legacy of the War

by Stanley Cates - Thursday, June 8, 2017, 4:28 PM

Correct me if I'm wrong; the way I'm understanding your thinking as you're putting it here is that you've formed a dichotomy between the soldiers serving in Vietnam and the protesters in the streets of America. Yes?

So then where do you put the people that don't fit inside those neat little boxes? How do you rationalize the soldiers that came back and protested the war after serving in it? What conclusions do you draw from the protestors that claim they were simply tired of seeing American's dying for no reason? You speak as if every single protester was some dirty drugged up "kid" -whatever that means-, and that every single American soldier in Vietnam was some sort of hero. In reality some of those protesters were well educated and definitely not kids -like the soldiers-, and some of the American servicemen in Vietnam were awful human beings; I mean, how many accounts of Americans killing Vietnamese civilians (I'm not talking about collateral damage) and *each other* did we hear about in the course material? The world doesn't fit inside neat little boxes.

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Re: Legacy of the War

by William Barker - Thursday, June 8, 2017, 7:54 PM

Young men went to war on behalf of this great country and died. Many of whom probably didn't even want to be forced into an armed conflict, and some even dodged the draft in order to not go to Vietnam! Those who did go were going into a very complex and unfavorable war, a war that was so negative it must have been incredibly frightening to enter into a conflict you knew little about and everyone was saying was wrong. So when men put their lives on the line and make the ultimate sacrifice, they deserve endless amounts of respect and gratitude for doing their service to you, me, and everyone else in the United States of America.

I never put anyone into a neat box. I never called them [protestors] dirty drugged up folks. I'm simply stating the ultimate fact that the legacy of the incredible sacrifice put forth by American troops is astounding. Maybe those protestors were right, maybe the war was a complete and utter failure in American foreign policy. But again, *the sacrifice put forth by American troops is astounding*. The fact that they go to war, then come back and get treated like crap after serving a tour of duty is really remarkable in my opinion. Yes, there were very isolated cases in which US soldiers became savage killers, we should acknowledge (and condemn) the horrors of war but not let that take away from all the good most US men and women did in Vietnam.

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Re: Legacy of the War

by Stanley Cates - Saturday, June 10, 2017, 4:07 PM

But aren't the sacrifices put forth by any troops astounding? Aren't they all someone's son? (Or daughter as the modern case may be) Don't you think all of them would have liked to have been doing something else? So why is the sacrifice the American troops made so much greater than the sacrifices the NLF troops made, or North Vietnamese troops? Weren't they fighting for what they believed in? Can't I just use any of those unfalsifiable and vacuous glorifications as an argument to defend the "great honor" of any army? What about the Australians and the Koreans that fought on our behalf? Where's their monument? Where's your undying love for their sacrifice? I agree that American soldiers deserve respect, I just don't think Americans are better than anyone else. You say things like "we should acknowledge (and condemn) the horrors of war" but then you don't, you just keep talking about how "great" we are and how much "honor" we have, and how much you hate communism; it's all just rhetoric. So maybe there are two legacies from Vietnam; mistrust in the government, and American ultranationalism.

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Re: Legacy of the War

by William Barker - Sunday, June 11, 2017, 11:00 AM

Ultranationalism? This is the sad state of society today. Love for one's country over other countries and the respect for people who died and served on the behalf of a fellow countryman over other countries fallen soldiers, is now considered a bad thing. Why would I possess a solemn respect for NLF troops because of their sacrifice? They did nothing for me or my country. Yes they did fight for a cause they deemed just and honorable (though I'd highly disagree with their position), but just because they felt passionate about their cause does not mean it overpowers my love and admiration for the country I live in. On the

other hand I look at America's allies who'm share common beliefs about freedom and when I reflect on how we worked together, and in some cases died on the battlefield together, it is a truly honorable thing and something I hold dear to my heart.

Stanley, I would respectfully suggest asking me my personal opinions on some matters before making blanket statements, which have no ground to stand on. I think about how the US and Britain forged an incredible bond during WWII to repel and eventually defeat the incredible military power that was Nazi Germany. I think about the RAF defending their homeland against the German Luftwaffe and saving the lives of many British people. I think about the French Resistance and all the sacrifices they put forth to defend Western ideals of freedom. Those are truly noble and honorable acts of courage which I respect.

Yet, as I digress, I'm straying from the whole point of this forum thread. The greatest legacy of this war is how American troops made the ultimate sacrifice for their country, even though the war was thought to be wrong and immoral. That is honorable and should be undyingly respected.

PS I would recommend watching this interesting video that covers nationalism (it really is a good video). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EmnaMK8JF1k>

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Re: Legacy of the War

by John Anderson - Sunday, June 11, 2017, 11:45 AM

Just so as you are aware William, Ultrationalism was one of the primary causes of WW1 and WW2. To imply in the same post that Ultrationalism is something to be proud of and that we should celebrate the national pride of countries fighting against Germany in WW2 is a tremendous misunderstanding of what was going on in the world at the time. It also belays a complete misunderstanding of what was going on in the US. It wasn't nationalism that encouraged the Allies to win, it was the opposite. The people of the world realized that isolationist and Ultrationalist beliefs, like those that led the US to refrain from involvement I might add, could no longer help the world, only hinder it. It was this abandonment of Ultrationalism that led to the victory over the Nazis.

It greatly disturbs me also that you also share a video that has such a base misinterpretation in terminology. The 'nationalism' that Colin is referring to in your video as a positive is called Patriotism. One can have pride in their culture and heritage while accepting that that doesn't make it better then every other country. Let me just do a comparison for you so its a bit simpler.

- **ul·tra·nat·ion·al·ism**

ˌʌltrəˈnæʃənəˌlɪzəm/

noun

1. extreme nationalism that promotes the interest of one state or people above all others.

"the Yugoslav president is fanning the flames of ultranationalism"

- **pa·tri·ot·ism**

'pātrēəˌtɪzəm/

noun

1. the quality of being patriotic; vigorous support for one's country.

"a highly decorated officer of unquestionable integrity and patriotism"

Do you see the difference? Honestly, the "sad state of society today," as you put it, is the inability of people like you to look at the world with a shred of empathy. The lasting legacy is the people who died you say? So the fuck what. People have been dying since people have existed. What do you truly think makes that special? Many of them, if they had been given a choice to go and die again would have chosen not to go. So what makes them more patriotic, more heroic then the men of WW2? Grow up.

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Re: Legacy of the War

by William Barker - Sunday, June 11, 2017, 3:51 PM

John,

That's unfortunate you had trouble reading my last post. I was arguing that the sad state of the world is, taking nationalism and patriotism and turning into ultranationalism. Never once have I stated that other countries are worse than America or that those who died who aren't Americans are any less human or important than our troops.

Your way of talking down to me is incredible foolish and child like. Also, you're incredible disrespect towards those who gave their lives for you to have this conversation without being condemned is quite frightening and sad. I have no more bandwidth to deal with this sort of condescending behavior.

And what do you mean by, "the inability of people like you to look at the world with a shred of empathy." Seems like you're lumping together a people group and making more blanket statements. Grow up.

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Re: Legacy of the War

by Stanley Cates - Sunday, June 11, 2017, 4:04 PM

"Also, you're incredible disrespect towards those who gave their lives for you to have this conversation without being condemned is quite frightening and sad."

That isn't what they died for. The history of Vietnam clearly sets precedent against the notion that the Vietnamese had any interest in doing anything other than solidifying their own nation. The citizens of the US were never in any danger from Vietnam. We went in under the pretense that we were defending our ally but then when they going got too tough and too expensive we left them to the wolves. How can you say that they died for your freedom when you still have freedom despite us having lost the war. That is to say that if the war was about American freedom then how do explain the fact that freedom still exists? It's all propaganda rhetoric and you just seem to believe that the American side is the right side no matter what because it's America. By the way that's not a "blanket statement", it's an educated inference based on reading your posts for the last 10 weeks.

Oh, and by the way, disrespect founded and built this country.

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Re: Legacy of the War

by Stanley Cates - Sunday, June 11, 2017, 2:52 PM

"The greatest legacy of this war is how American troops made the ultimate sacrifice for their country..."

That isn't a legacy, a legacy is a continuation or receiving something from the past.

Legacy:

anything handed down from the past, as from an ancestor or predecessor

And as John said, there's a difference between ultranationalism and patriotism. Ultranationalism is much more reminiscent of ethnocentrism; and it's dangerous. Virtually every genocide from Armenia to Rwanda has been preceded by a wave of nationalism that in one form or another claimed that the problems of the society were from a minority group and that the solution was to expel or exterminate them.

From The SAGE Handbook of Nations and Nationalism (Maybe put this academic source on your summer reading list instead of relying on some guy with unknown credentials from youtube):

"Nationalism is the doctrine that 'the rulers should belong to the same ethnic (that is,national) group as the ruled'(Gellner 1983:1).The doctrine assumes that a ruler belonging to an alien nationality or ethnic group is illegitimate (Connor 2004).However,the inverse formula is a sure recipe for ethnic cleansing,forced assimilation, mass deportation and genocide: to claim that the inhabitants of a specific constituency must share the same ethnic lineage of its leaders is to give *carte blanche* to mass expulsion and the drastic redrawing of boundaries to suit the group's

pedigree. Nationalism also holds that 'nation and political power should be congruent' (Gellner 1983:1)... "The twentieth century has been widely recognized as the century of nationalism and genocide. Most historians and social scientists are in concordance on this grim assessment of the past century (see Carmichael 2005; Hobsbawm 1995; Kuper 1981; Levene 2000, 2005b; Melson 1996; Shaw 2003)."

And if you don't think that "sort" of nationalism has been present in our country then you should check out *Strangers in the Land*, by John Higham. (It's a dry read though, so devote some time)

So, in harmony with John, the "sad state of society today" is the inability to actually learn from the past and utilize proper terminology instead of twisting history and language to fit your narrow scope. Because the bottom line is that while you believe that those men died for your freedom, I think it's been well demonstrated that they died to preserve the blind pride of a nation that stuck its nose where it didn't belong, no matter how well intentioned it was.

Delanty, Gerard, and Krishan Kumar. *The Sage Handbook of Nations and Nationalism*. London: Sage, 2006. Print.

Higham, John. *Strangers in the Land Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2011. Print.

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3



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Re: Legacy of the War

by Emily Gibson - Sunday, June 11, 2017, 7:27 PM

Stanley,

I understand where you are coming from in your post but I think you have falsely accused William for saying or believing certain things. I read and re read his posts and I do not find anywhere where he said "drugged up kids." And if you wanna constantly throw in definitions of words let's lay this out...

A hippie defined on dictionary.com is

"a person, especially of the late 1960s, who rejected established institutions and values and sought

He ALSO never said anything about these kids being uneducated. All he was saying was that he did not appreciate how the soldiers were treated during the war because in his opinion he thinks they deserve respect for their sacrifice for this country. Again, this is an opinion and we are blessed in this country that we are allowed to have our own opinions that differ from one another. I think it's unfair that this entire term you have attacked people for their beliefs and called them out for every little thing. Thought you deserved some in return. Good luck with your finals.

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1



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Re: Legacy of the War

by William Wyatt - Sunday, June 11, 2017, 9:52 PM

Hello William,

Great point. It does seem like one of the most important legacies of any war fought is the sacrifice the soldiers make for their country. Sadly, during the Vietnam War, distrust in the government led to resentment for the soldiers. Which they certainly did not deserve. Many of the soldiers fighting in Vietnam were drafted, and fought only to survive for the future prospect of possibly coming home. I also have found a deeper respect for all of those who have or are willing to sacrifice their lives to protect and serve the American people.

To me it seems that American soldiers became a scapegoat for anger and hatred t'words the government. As the war continued, only more people grew to hate the war, and returning servicemen were the easiest way for upset individuals to vent their anger. This course has showed me that the 1960s ended up becoming one of the most turbulent decades in American history. Turbulence in the 1960s becomes more apparent when you take into account all that was happening within the US besides the war effort; With civil rights marches, massive protests all over the country, and US citizens fleeing to Canada in hopes to evade being drafted.

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2



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Lack of Faith in Government

by Riley Ahrenkiel - Wednesday, June 7, 2017, 3:52 PM

Personally, the most significant legacy of the Vietnam War for the us in the United States is our lack of trust in government. Nobody wants to see their own fellow Americans perish, especially when they aren't informed as to what they are truly fighting for. Michael Beschloss, a speaker in the News Hour video nails this one on the head saying, "We don't have confidence in our system, a lot goes back to that period. If we Americans are going to make a sacrifice like sending 56,000 people to die in a war in Vietnam, that should be something our president tells us in advance and give us choice." (~8:00 into Legacy of War, Beschloss) As another one of the speakers said, "The Vietnam War was the end of American innocence, as far as thinking about political culture." (11:05 into the News Hour video) Truly for one of the first times, Americans could see that their government wasn't so perfect, and pretty much since then we have always questioned our leaders or had at least had a lack of faith/sincerity with those who govern us. Look today at the public's opinion of the government, there is a definitely a diverse range of opinions that people have on our government, but I feel that more than ever our trust in government and the agenda of our leaders is in question.

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3



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Re: Lack of Faith in Government

by Emily Gibson - Thursday, June 8, 2017, 1:37 PM

Riley,

I completely agree with you about how important the legacy of the mistrust in the government is. I believe this also could be a reason why tension in politics could still exist today. The hatred and division of the left and right side is so significant today, that a lot of people don't even open their

minds to other opinions. I like how you mention the quote about the innocence of America. Do you think American people were just "innocent" when they did trust in the government? Also do you think the loss of soldiers was the reason America started mistrusting the government? Or do you think the lack of morale from the government and the killing of so many Vietnamese people was the reason? Or both?

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Lack of Faith in Government

by William Wyatt - Sunday, June 11, 2017, 10:27 PM

Hello Emily,

I Think you couldn't be more correct with regards to your remark that a reason why tension in politics still exist today is because of a manifestation of mistrust in the government over decades. It's sad that politicians representing us won't open their minds to the opinions of others. I Mean the entirety of the constitution is political compromise, and every representative and politician must be willing to make compromises as well.

I'm not sure if your question was solely for Riley... But I will take a swing at it regardless. In my opinion, a certain level of "innocence" comes with ignorance. Although, my answer would change if blind ignorance wasn't the case, but rather chosen ignorance. As for your second question, I think both can be attributed to American distrust in the US government, and would go as far to say that a copious amount of other factors can be attributed to the overall mistrust as well.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Lack of Faith in Government

by Stanley Cates - Thursday, June 8, 2017, 4:42 PM

"...but I feel that more than ever our trust in government and the agenda of our leaders is in question."

Have you considered the idea that you might think that as a result of presentism? I would put forth that American society has been much more divisive in the past; that's not to say that your assessment that we're divided now is incorrect, but I don't hear anyone in contemporary politics arguing over the right to OWN human beings.

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Trust

by Maxwell Ahrenkiel - Wednesday, June 7, 2017, 4:07 PM

I think the most significant legacy of the war is the growing mistrust in our President and government. When responding to the question about if there was a basic and fundamental distrust now in government Jonathan Holloway responded with, "I don't want to say there's a fundamental mistrust, but there is a first step that's missing, the first step used to have been, we'll trust our President, we'll support

our president. Where the first step now is a cynical and skeptical first step, which I think actually is a fairly healthy and in maybe we'll trust our leaders after that." (11:40 into Legacy of War-News Hour) I think skepticism in our government really arose during the war, and the amount of suspicion of the government continued to grow throughout the years up until now. With the Kennedy assassination, a lot of conspiracy theorist created doubt, then Nixon and Watergate, and so forth. In more recent times, there was suspicion raised with 9/11 and the Bush administration, not that I believe Bush was in on it because I don't think he was, but more questions were raised. Then Hillary had her email scandal, and now Trump possibly working with Russia. It's just surprising to me how far we've come, and it makes me wonder when the trust will be restored?

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3



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Re: Legacy of the War

by Emily Gibson - Wednesday, June 7, 2017, 4:49 PM

Picking and choosing the greatest legacy of the Vietnam War is tough. Being America's longest war, so much went on it's almost hard to keep track. I think, above all, the emotional toll it had on Americans was the biggest legacy left after the chaos ended. The reason I believe this is the emotional legacy spiraled into more than just the emotions of people, leaving tiny legacies along with it. People rioted in the streets because of the men overseas, which was mostly brought on by emotions. The horror and sadness felt by so many Americans because of the people they lost I think ended up influencing their reactions to the war and therefore spiraling into the cultural legacy. Like the video had said, America split during the Vietnam war, into people who trusted the government and people who didn't. Before then most people held their trust that the president would make decisions for the good of America and all people. After learning about the Vietnam War, a lot of people turned on the government and lost trust in their decisions.

I agree with what the video had to say. The Vietnam War started all the way back in the Truman administration, which was also the start of the people's mistrust in the government. From the beginning and even to the end the government held back a lot of truth about what was going on in Vietnam. By the end, even Nixon lied about the secret bombing campaign killing so many Cambodians. In a way, I feel like the American public felt betrayed. They were sending their loved ones overseas and never had full truth on what was going on in Vietnam. This obviously played with their emotions and they felt betrayed by the American government. On the other hand, "the hawks," supported the war and continued to have trust. People back then obviously had differing political views, but the Vietnam War split them entirely. Hatred separated the left and right at polar opposite ends. This I think is how the emotional legacy ended up leading to the cultural one.

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3



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Re: Legacy of the War

by William Barker - Saturday, June 10, 2017, 2:07 PM

Emily,

I agree with your statement. That era saw huge sweeping changes in how people viewed the government, the world, and life itself really. I think the US government tried to do too much in too little of time during those years and I don't think they were fully capable yet to handle all of the

moving parts. Obviously the US government has always been incredible powerful and forward thinking, but I feel as if they got a little in over their head for where the technology of the time was and how people viewed the world in those days.

"... you just think about the emotional response to McNamara's book when he finally came out and said, 'we were wrong, we mis-estimated the situation in the North, we over-estimated the strength of the South, we should have gotten out in 63' or 64'..." (10:06 *Legacy of War - News Hour* Doris Kearns Goodwin)

I don't think the US had any hidden, insidious intentions by keeping the American people in the dark about the Vietnam War, I think they just didn't want to make themselves look foolish in front of the Soviets. So in order to keep our image honorable, we didn't show our cards, so that if we failed there would be no public knowledge about it. Also we wanted to stay in Vietnam to show our strength and to say that we wouldn't allow communism to spread throughout the world.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Legacy of the War

by Kyle Martinson - Wednesday, June 7, 2017, 5:15 PM

In my opinion the most important legacy of the war is the Vietnam wall in Washington D.C. It is a grim reminder of the tragedies and those who lost their lives in support of the US during the war. I think the purpose behind the new Vietnam documentary is smart and makes a lot of sense. It sounds very productive way to learn about the war. In my opinion it is addressing what happened during the war but with more information that was hidden until recently.

http://media.lanecc.edu/users/escobarj/195/forums/week10/20_legacy.mp4

<http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/entertainment/sd-me-burns-vietnam-20170515-story.html>

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Legacy of the War

by Skyler Tidwell - Wednesday, June 7, 2017, 5:59 PM

The Vietnam War which has been in the back of every American's mind, either from the stance that we should have never been in Vietnam or more home based with the major conflict that grew at home like wildfire. It is a very big and broad subject that people can take a stance at any of its many sides. When faced with the question of the War's legacy I find it best described by Author George Herring from his book *America's Longest War*, when he stated "[T]he principal legacy of the war was continued human suffering." (pg.354) which if you look at the facts, it is true. The war has been over for some time now and yet when this subject comes up people argues for their sides. During and post war veterans and citizens had and have to learn to forgive one another for fighting for what they believe in, which is the same thing "America". I feel that the books gave more of an ethical way of looking at the war and made the best arguments. What is the "stated purpose behind this new Vietnam Documentary," I think that they were attempting to A) discredit the military/ government, B) progress amount of opposed people about the war which would in turn lead to withdrawal of Americans in Vietnam, and C) to deliver enlightenment. The documentary I would say it is an unethical way of learning about the Vietnam War because of the political biasness that portrays Americans as murderers, child killers, invaders, and interveners. Yes, there are some informative works that are bias from the other side. However, I feel like the books by Mr.

Herring is on the middle road, and yes the road has curves in it but in time it finds the middle lane. Since 40 years have passed, it is safe to say that it addresses the problem that America is still not over it and that we lack the forgiveness between one another in order to move forward.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

3



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Legacy of Distrust

by Kayla Elliott - Wednesday, June 7, 2017, 6:52 PM

I think the most significant legacy of the Vietnam War is the distrust in government. Before the war, people would mostly just support the president and other elected officials. But during this war, there were so many lies told by the government, that we have never trusted them the same way again. In the "Legacy of War" video, Stanley Karnow said, "I think people look back and realize how much the leadership lied." I agree with this because in most videos we've watched or articles we've read, one concept that is continuously brought up is the fact that people stopped trusting the government. Another way to put it, which I found powerful, was in the "Legacy of War" video, when Jonathan Holloway said, "The Vietnam War was the end of American innocence." It was a time when people woke up and started questioning their government and seeing the faults in it.

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1



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Re: Legacy of Distrust

by Brandon Dibble - Sunday, June 11, 2017, 11:57 PM

Hey Kayla,

I also feel that distrust in our government is a significant legacy from our time occupying Vietnam. With this war being the first televised, live piece of battle our country participated in, the population was able to watch and keep track of the events unfolding across the world during this time. The US population was able to see the violence that war brings. The US population was able to actually SEE what was happening in a war for the first time with large amounts of information being shared publicly on a daily basis with reporters and news agencies.

The population at the time would also know if they were being lied to or if something wasn't communicated well enough from our leadership at the time. This is what contributed to the distrust in our government officials, the lies and deceit that these leaders thought they could get away with. This, like you quoted in you post, is when America became awoken to the fact that we are not a perfect society and the government needs to be questioned.

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New Vietnam Documentary

by Kayla Elliott - Wednesday, June 7, 2017, 6:53 PM

I think the way they are going about making this new documentary about the Vietnam War and the concept behind it sounds like a good idea. They are listening to many people from Americans that support the war, to Americans who protest it, then from North Vietnamese to South Vietnamese. They made me feel like they were really going into this project with a clean slate and no bias. They listened to everyone the same without "making any of them wrong." So, if this is really how it turns out, I think it will

be productive. I think the legacy they are trying to address is the divide between people when it comes to the Vietnam War, that still happens to this day. People are still confused about what happened, why it happened, and if it was even worth it. I think they are trying to bring clarity to everyone and to get people to understand where others with opposing views are coming from.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Big Fish

by Jerrel Brown - Wednesday, June 7, 2017, 7:06 PM

After going through the course work for this class, watching the videos, pouring over the various resources, the most significant legacy of the War in Vietnam for the USA is the use of misdirection and secrecy to from our commander and chief's to get their policies through and handle the war how they pleased, making promises they knew they wouldn't keep to get the American public to give their support. It was Michael Beschloss who first made the argument in the legacy of war video, that If out government is going to send thousands of Americans to die in a foreign land, then it is our right to know, and the presidents job to inform the people ahead of time. Both LBJ and Nixon made promises to end the war, and those promises ultimately won both elections. 1964 people who wanted the war to end voted the man who deployed thousands of more men to the very war he promised to pull out of, then in 1968 people who thought the end of the war was in sight and believed that soon it would no longer be a burden on the US, voted the man who widened the war to Cambodia into office. These deceitful actions lead to a general distrust of the government within the American people. Doris Kearns Goodwin goes on to say that it is imperative to for policy makers to be straight forward and forth coming to keep the nation behind you. Because the government was so misleading with the progress in the war Americans keep reaching for the light at the end of the tunnel and became understandably upset when they would not get straight answers about what was going on with the war. The government should have leveled with the country so they fully understood what was at stake and just how long this war was going to last, instead of stringing the public along like a cat-fishing profile on tinder.

(Legacy Of War)

(<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=catfish>)

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Big Fish

by Emily Gibson - Thursday, June 8, 2017, 1:57 PM

Jerrel,

I think the common agreement with the class from what I have read is definitely how the secrets from the government and the mistrust it instilled in the American people. Your post stuck out to me because of how you mention McNamara's secrets and how the elections were altered based on the secrets. Even today, many people's first reaction to most politicians are, is this all bullshit? (Excuse my french). After watching McNamara's video my mind kind of changed about him. I think he meant

his best when making all of these decisions, but there is still the fact that he as well as the rest of the government lied to the American public. Do you have any opinion on why you think McNamara decided to deceive the American public or what his motives were behind the whole thing?

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Re: Big Fish

by Jerrel Brown - Saturday, June 10, 2017, 8:42 PM

Emily,

I am a little confused by your reply to my post, because I did not mention McNamara in this most recent post. But if you meant if I had an idea for why Nixon and LBJ mislead the american public in their efforts to end the war I can definitely weigh in.

President Johnson was well known for being hot head and sometimes rash, so it is no surprise to me that he would feel that sometimes the public didnt know what was best for themselves and the country. And when you bring into account LBJ's ambitious plan's for his 'Great Society' already demanding so much public money and resources, it's no surprise that the ugly truths of the war would be swept under the rug.

As for Nixon, he was by all accounts suspicious and un-trusting of a great deal of the american public, going so far as to authorize the unlawful surveilling of ordinary US citizens. To think that a man who is comfortable with bugging Joe hard hat's phone and listening in on phone conversations would go out o his way to be honest with the people he serves seems laughable to me.

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Re: Big Fish

by John Anderson - Sunday, June 11, 2017, 11:52 AM

Correct me if I am wrong in your point here, but it seems to be that you believe the legacy of Vietnam was politicians using subversion to enact their own agenda. If that is so, I would say that that is nothing new. Leaders have used these tactics since the dawn of civilization to exert control over a populace that largely just held blind faith in them. If anything, I would say that what was new was the reaction to these actions. People didn't want to just go along anymore. People challenged their systems of government. That I think is a stronger legacy then one of politicians lying to get votes.

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1



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Re: Big Fish

by William Wyatt - Sunday, June 11, 2017, 10:52 PM

Hey Jerrel,

"Misdirection and secrecy" within the government definitely created a lasting legacy. Stanley Karnow has been brought up a lot this week in the forum because he spoke about the credibility gap, stating that not all public statements from the government represented what was really going on. I Like that you brought up LBJ and Nixon, because the the Johnson and Nixon administrations became somewhat notorious for fabricating false public statements. I Believe you are correct when you state that the government should have been forthright about the war effort. In my opinion, the main reason why they didn't tell the public their true plans and motives is because the majority of US citizens would have been in opposition.

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1



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My life, my love, and my lady, is the sea

by John Anderson - Wednesday, June 7, 2017, 8:23 PM

This week's question has troubled me greatly. We are all living in a very unique time relative to the lessons learned from the Vietnam conflict. Much like Vietnam, the youth of today are dealing with the aftermath of a war that was fought under false pretense. The government has lost its hold on us, yet they continue to exert their will through force. We live in an age of violent reactions and volatile divisions. What do I think the lasting legacy of Vietnam is? The people have become awakened. If I had to choose one consequence it would be that the public largely regard the government as their employees. We want accountability. That, however, does not always happen.

Four days ago my friend was shot with rubber bullets. He was maced and pummeled with tear-gas. He was not assaulted with these munitions on foreign soil. He was assaulted just a few short hours away from where I sit writing this post. What was his crime? He was voicing his opposition to a radical group called the alt-right. He did not shoot at anyone, he did not throw anything. He showed up armed with the power of his words and a camera. I am very troubled.

It wasn't long ago that Nixon had to deal with the aftermath of another protest, not unlike this one. On a college campus 4 students died trying to defend their right to disagree when the government dictated something. What Nixon learned then was something mirrored in the Legacy video we watched this week, "no foreign war can succeed without that large domestic support." (Goodwin; 9:30 Legacy)

This issue has become increasingly larger since the era of Vietnam since the public became more socially minded. We no longer wanted to simply agree with our leaders, we wanted to know why we were going to war. The media allowed us an avenue to explore this that no other age had. Vietnam was televised, and so has every major conflict with US involvement since then. The President can no longer hide behind a wall of ignorance. Vietnam and the marvel of media has forever emboldened the political activist.

To this day the reverberations of Vietnam impact the political climate. Sen. John McCain, a formerly favored spokesperson for the Republican Party, was himself a Veteran. People of his generation identify themselves by their willingness or unwillingness to join in the war. And, like Goodwin said about Vietnam,

people want to know that their "Children ... died for some good reason."(Goodwin; 10:40 Legacy)

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3



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Re: My life, my love, and my lady, is the sea

by John Anderson - Sunday, June 11, 2017, 12:05 PM

SOMEONE COMMENT ON MY POST!!!!

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Re: My life, my love, and my lady, is the sea

by William Wyatt - Sunday, June 11, 2017, 11:35 PM

Hello Stanley,

Sorry I am late to your post. I Wanted to say great title, "My life, my love, and my lady, is the sea".

We truly are living in a unique time with regards to what we have learned from the Vietnam War. Today, modern conflicts represent many of those from the Vietnam War era. It's truly troubling to think about the government is "losing it's hold on us", when that was never the purpose of the government. The fact that government oppression is somewhat apparent in our democracy is just depressing. When you stated that, "We want accountability. That, however, does not always happen.", personally, I would go as far as to say that it almost never happens. Police officers getting away with murder and unnecessary aggressive force is a prime example. I'm terribly sorry to hear your friend was assaulted. It probably only cements your exquisitely stated belief that "we live in an age of violent reactions and volatile deviations." I think your somewhat correct, remembering all the horrible things makes it all to easy to forget the good.

Connected and socially minded individuals is a powerful weapon against government control. It is difficult to be connected and socially minded when politics become a complete haze. Among a million other reasons, one of the main causes as to why the US politics seems so confusing today is because our constitutional institutions have evolved over the centuries into something that no longer represents their original form... I digress. You couldn't be more correct when you say "To this day the reverberations of Vietnam impact the political climate.", and I wonder myself how long it will be until the reverberations shift into repose?

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2



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The complete story

by Maxwell Ahrenkiel - Wednesday, June 7, 2017, 8:31 PM

I believe the purpose behind this new documentary is to tell the story of the war without any biases. They want to include all sides. Burns added, "it's particularly true in war that you can have more than one truth happen at the same time." By including all of the 'truths' they can show the complete story of how it all happened. They want to avoid being like PBS, leaving out major details and end up getting called out for it. This seems like a more productive way to learn about the war because if they actually include all sides, it's less likely that students will be misguided to believe a particular point of view. They seem to be addressing a legacy about how divided we were as a country and the tension that created.

Sum of ratings: