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The theme that I have chosen is perseverance. I believe that the Vietnamese people had shown this quality during the Vietnam War. My first example is that from Duong Thanh Phong from the section Cameras, Books, and Guns. In this section Duong speaks of being a photographer and having to go to the "R Zone". He describes having to be in tunnels to survive. He also describes sleeping as much as possible during the day and moving at night. This was the only time they could move safely, so there was no other option for them. Duong recalls almost being killed numerous times, and also the first time he realized that Americans were human as well. Throughout all of that, Duong and his comrades kept going on. Duong states "The ultimate goal was always national liberation, so we just kept on" (pg 249) This to me totally describes and helps to convey my theme of perseverance.

Another example of perseverance is from Randy Kehler from the Prisoners Of War section. Randy describes how he came to protest the war and avoid being drafted. Randy at one point was not sure how he felt about the Vietnam War, and he believed himself to be a patriotic man, but events in Africa and learning that America had been dropping napalm in Vietnam help sway his opinions. He no longer could stand back and not say or do anything to try to change what injustices he saw from this war. Randy had been arrested several times; he was also threatened and intimidated because of his beliefs and his vocal opposition of the war. Randy was moved from a minimum-custody prison to a medium-security prison. He states that he was put in the hole at La Tuna for thirty days to see if he would change his mind about working. (pg 237) After all of that, in the 1980's Randy still managed to co- found and lead the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign. He still tries to persevere and speak of the injustices in the United States.

Finally in the section of Air War the account from Nguyen Quang Sang, I believe helps demonstrate my theme. Nguyen speaks of fighting not only against the Americans, but the French as well. He speaks of being at Dong Thap Muoi and what he went through there. He describes being by only water and having to hide in the water from bombs being dropped from above. "From eight to five I hid in that canal with a lot of other people". (pg 216) Nguyen also states "Often we had to hold our breath and dive as deep as possible". (pg 216) He goes on to say that he is still haunted by nightmares. This last excerpt I think also helps with my theme. To have gone through all of that and not have given up and just folded to either be captured or killed proves to me that my theme of perseverance really existed during the Vietnam War.

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