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### The Fall of Public Opinion: The Tet Offensive, the Anti-War Movement, and the Media, 1963-1975

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THE FALL OF PUBLIC OPINION: THE TET OFFENSIVE, THE ANTI-WAR  
MOVEMENT, AND THE MEDIA, 1963-1975

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Arts

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December 2023

THE FALL OF PUBLIC OPINION: THE TET OFFENSIVE, THE ANTI-WAR  
MOVEMENT, AND THE MEDIA, 1963-1975

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# THE FALL OF PUBLIC OPINION: THE TET OFFENSIVE, THE ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT, AND THE MEDIA, 1963-1975

An Abstract of the Thesis by  
Taylor Ann Cusick

From 1963 to 1975, public opinion regarding the Vietnam War changed drastically. In the beginning, the public was largely on board with Americans going overseas to fight against the North Vietnamese military. Citizens felt the American military was doing what was necessary to secure democracy in a region where communism was spreading, and the public was not easily swayed by those who opposed the war. The media mirrored public opinion during the first years of the war. By 1968, support for the war declined dramatically, and the media's portrayal of the conflict reversed. Newscasters began to argue that the risk was simply not worth the reward, and the media broadcast the chaos in Vietnam for the TV-viewing public. Anti-war opposition might have prompted that change in the media's coverage, but developments in Vietnam finally changed the public's opinion of the war in 1968.

In this thesis, I argue that, with the support of the media, the Tet Offensive was more effective in turning the public's viewpoint of the war from positive to negative. While the antiwar movement and the adoption of a draft lottery system were prevalent concerns for American youth, the public was not as responsive to those developments as it was to the Tet Offensive. The antiwar movement did affect the change in public opinion, as the media consistently reported the movement's activities in conjunction with the increasing number of American casualties in Southeast Asia.

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## CHAPTER I

### WAR ON THE HORIZON

For more than sixty years, American historians have studied the Vietnam War. For military and political historians, the conflict stems back to post-World War II, when the United States recognized French occupation of the country as being necessary to the Truman Doctrine's policy of containment. Under this policy, the US was to provide aid to countries at risk of falling to communism. Social and cultural historians have tended to present the war as a conflict within American society divided by race, class, and gender. They focus on the social and cultural disorder prompted by the antiwar movement in close association with the institution of the draft lottery system in 1969. Providing background information on each historiographical discussion helps the overall understanding of how the US became entangled in the long-lasting conflict known as the Vietnam War.

#### **MILITARY HISTORY**

The history of American resistance to communism reaches to the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but that resistance expanded after World War II, when the US focused on how it could keep communism from spreading from the Soviet Union to other parts of the world. In 1946, historian and diplomat George Kennan wrote a message, the "long telegram," to the State Department in which he explained that the Soviet Union believed

it would eventually prevail in a conflict with the US and Great Britain. To counter this long-term and growing threat, Kennan advocated for an American policy of containment. Pressured by growing public concern over communists engaged in a civil war in Greece and unrest in Turkey, Pres. Harry Truman effectively adopted Kennan's policy in an announcement before a joint session of Congress: the US would provide assistance to democratic nations that were being threatened by authoritarianism. If communism were to spread to one nation, it would just as easily cross borders into neighboring countries, which would, like dominos, also fall to communism. The idea of this "Domino Theory" was to simply to "contain" the spread of communism to the Soviet Union and not allow it to move any further into Eastern Europe or Asia. The policy became known as the Truman Doctrine, under which the US would become interventionist, providing aid in a global struggle against communism instead of engaging in its historical bent towards isolationism. Just a few months later in July of 1947, Kennan anonymously published his arguments in "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," otherwise known as "Article X."<sup>1</sup> The policy of containment remained in effect until 1968, when "American foreign policy ... [became] something far different than 'containment' as the term had been defined."<sup>2</sup>

In 1950, the Truman Doctrine was militarized in National Security Council paper NSC-68, which increased defense spending and made containment an aggressive doctrine. The change seemed to be appropriate, in light of an escalation of conflict in Korea; communist North Korea had attacked South Korea to bring the entire country under one communist rule. That year, Pres. Eisenhower committed American troops to

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas F. Berner, "Who Won the Cold War?" Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2009, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Berner, "Who Won the Cold War?" 1.

join the United Nations fight in the Korean conflict. The war came to a stalemate along the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel in 1953, with North Korea remaining communist and South Korea being an independent democratic country.

During the development of this interventionist policy, the French had been engaged in a long-standing struggle in Vietnam, and when the Vietnamese defeated the French at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, it appeared to the rest of the world as confirmation of the Domino Theory.<sup>3</sup> While Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson has long been the scapegoat for American involvement in Vietnam, Eisenhower began that intervention in response to Dien Bien Phu. The Geneva Accords were signed in 1954, effectively splitting Vietnam into two separate zones – not two separate countries; the zones were to be reunified under one general election in 1956. With the policy of containment and domino theory in mind, Eisenhower decided to use intelligence forces to sabotage those elections, knowing the Vietnamese would elect communist Ho Chi Minh as their leader.<sup>4</sup> The American government created a committee based on “protecting” South Vietnam from communism, acting as though South Vietnam was a separate country from the North.<sup>5</sup> When Eisenhower left office in 1961, Pres. John F. Kennedy continued containment policies in Southeast Asia, and after his assassination in 1963, Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson’s administration did the same.

One year after Johnson took office, the American presence in South Vietnam continued to escalate. On August 2nd of 1964, the North Vietnamese navy attacked the American destroyer *USS Maddox*. Five days after the unprovoked attack, Congress

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<sup>3</sup> Edward Cuddy, “Vietnam: Mr. Johnson’s War. or Mr. Eisenhower’s?” *The Review of Politics* 65, no. 4 (Autumn 2003), 354.

<sup>4</sup> Cuddy, “Vietnam,” 354.

<sup>5</sup> Cuddy, “Vietnam,” 355.



passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, giving Pres. Johnson the power to initiate military action at the scale he saw fit to the cause.<sup>6</sup> Through 1964 to 1965, Johnson escalated the retaliation towards North Vietnam, first with Operation Rolling Thunder in 1965 – a bombing campaign designed to force North Vietnam into submission – and then shortly afterwards with a ground troop commitment which increased heavily until 1969. Even though Pres. Johnson became the one responsible for sending the American military to fight in Vietnam, both Eisenhower and Kennedy had their hand in the escalation that came after their presidencies had ended.

The Vietnam War is one of the most well-known, yet controversial eras in American history. For decades, historians have debated and discussed the overarching power of the federal government, as well as the long-standing foreign policy that resulted from America's crusade against the North Vietnamese government in Hanoi. However, analyzing the war cannot simply be done from one historical perspective or interpretation, but rather a culmination because of the vast density of ideas and opinions centered around the public, the politics, and the military. Military historians have approached the Vietnam War from a military and political standpoint. Even though the American soldiers who were on the ground doing the actual fighting are infinitely important, the politics at play had a pivotal role in how they waged their war abroad. Political historians' analysis of the war is similar, yet they tend to focus on change over time, particularly in the realm of foreign policy. Social and cultural historians take a different path completely and usually evaluate how the war affected the society and culture abroad and at home - creating a basis for gender, race, and class arguments

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<sup>6</sup> Richard W. Stewart, "The Chief Historian's Footnote: Vietnam at 50 Years," *Army History*, no 92 (Summer 2014), 55.

surrounding involvement, opinions, and impact. Therefore, when studying the Vietnam War, it is vital to consider all historical perspectives as well as research each individual area of study for an overall history of how the Vietnam War started and eventually ended.

One area of significant debate within the field of military history is pinpointing when the Vietnam War started. Some historians say it began when Viet Cong insurgents killed seven American Marines and Pres. Johnson responded with the decision to begin bombing. However, others state that this war dates all the way back to post-Korea in 1950. Historian George C. Herring is a champion of that point of view, which encompasses the political dealings with the United States and Vietnam, as well as Soviet Russia and Communist China through the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations up until actual fighting began with Lyndon B. Johnson.<sup>7</sup> Pres. Johnson initially stated that he would not send American troops to Vietnam to fight a war that the Vietnamese soldiers should be fighting. However, after the Gulf of Tonkin incident when American destroyers signaled that the North Vietnamese had fired on them, Johnson believed a heavier presence in Vietnam was necessary. Even with the escalation of bombing as well as sending ground troops to Vietnam to invade, American citizens were unaware of how large the conflict would grow. In the beginning, citizens were not even fully aware of why the United States became officially involved in the first place. Even further into 1965, one year after the Gulf of Tonkin incident, students were advertising in their collegiate newspaper, such as Kansas State College of Pittsburg's (KSC) *Collegio* that "If it were all for real, wouldn't we buy savings bonds and make bandages for the Red Cross? Or is this new "unnamed war" that Americans are too sophisticated or scared to

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<sup>7</sup> George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*, 5th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2013), 96.

acknowledge?”<sup>8</sup> While the military was preparing for a full-scale war, the politicians in Washington were doing their best to negotiate the situation while also standing firm on their commitment to democracy and anti-communism - just as they had done numerous times within the Kennedy administration with the Soviet Union. Even though the beginning of the war was vague and misconstrued for many Americans, once the actual fighting started and war broke out, the realization of the seriousness of the conflict sunk in.

In *America's First Battles, 1776-1965*, Charles E. Heller and William A. Stofft, cease their writing during the initial stages of the Vietnam War.<sup>9</sup> The theme within their book is strictly military discussion, such as, the weapons used, the formations created, the style of war, and the war tactics designed to quell the insurgents. There were other styles of war before the Vietnam War in which foreign policy derived from, such as the Philippine War in 1900. American troops sent to the islands of the Philippines disbanded the insurgent groups fighting against their government, which was favorable to the United States. Thomas Bruno's article, "The Violent End of Insurgency in Samar, 1901-1902" does an excellent job of outlining how American troops quelled insurrectionist groups in the Philippines.<sup>10</sup> While the war with the Philippines described by Bruno is inherently different from Vietnam, battles tactics and foreign policy between both wars are similar. In Vietnam, history repeated itself while the US favored Nao De Diem for South Vietnamese President and reunification of the entire country under one democratic

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<sup>8</sup> Vivian Holden, "Americans Die in Nonexistent War," *Collegio*, April 30, 1965. Kansas State Teachers College of Pittsburg is now known as Pittsburg State University.

<sup>9</sup> Charles E. Heller and William A. Stofft, *America's First Battles, 1776-1965* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1986).

<sup>10</sup> Thomas A. Bruno, "The Violent End of Insurgency on Samar: 1901-1902," *Army History*, no 79 (Spring 2011): 32.

rule. However, that was contrary to the North Vietnamese aims, particularly those of Ho Chi Minh, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam's leader. After Vietnam, the American government continued to use the long-standing foreign policy surrounding detaining insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan Wars of the early 2000s - particularly after 9/11.

While the debate continues around when the Vietnam War truly started, there were also discrepancies between presidential administrations that military historians highlight within their work, such as Allan Millett and Peter Maslowski. In their book, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States from 1607 to 2012*, not only do they highlight the Vietnam War, but they also discuss the war with the Philippines, and the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, giving full descriptions with comparisons between each. For example, in the chapter, "In Dubious Battle: Vietnam, 1961-1967," Millett and Maslowski agree with Herring that the conflict in Southeast Asia began in the Eisenhower administration. However, Millett and Maslowski point out that Eisenhower's focus was regarding the country of Laos, not ever mentioning Vietnam to be a threat. The American government originally proposed that intervention might be necessary within Laos, "Yet Vietnam, not Laos, engulfed the presidencies of John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, and Richard M. Nixon."<sup>11</sup> The concept of military intervention in South-East Asia was not a new one during Kennedy's administration; in fact, Eisenhower briefed him on matters in the area before he left office. However, the administrations did not consider Vietnam to be a part of that threat until Ho Chi Minh's rise to power in North Vietnam. Like the article written by Vivian Holder in KSC's *Collegio* newspaper, Millett and Maslowski state the American people were unaware that they were even at

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<sup>11</sup> Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States from 1607 to 2012* (New York: Free Press, 2012), 627.

war until the brunt of it came their way. “No dramatic event – no musket volleys on Lexington Green, no artillery rounds battering Fort Sumter, ... announced to the American people that they were at war. Instead, the conflict approached stealthily, yet steadily, like a guerrilla setting up an ambush.”<sup>12</sup> Military historians tend to draw on those differences when interpreting the conflict in Vietnam, differences that played a pivotal role in not only the US intervention but also the outcome of the war itself.

In every other American war up to that point, the Americans were fighting against an enemy that was well-known in a traditional style of fighting. The American Revolution was a war of independence, World War I was presented as a struggle against imperialism and militarism, and World War II was a struggle against Nazism and Fascism. Yet in Vietnam, there was something drastically different about the way the war began, how the soldiers fought, and the American perspective on the fighting. Soldiers did not come home to parades through the cities such as they did after World War II. Rather, they came back to a broken nation in chaos from protests against the war, supporting the ongoing struggle of Civil Rights, and contesting second wave feminism. Overall, military historians do not necessarily incorporate the societal woes of the time, instead reviewing the specific areas in which Vietnam became a different beast, one that eventually led to the uproar in the US unlike anything seen in American history until that point.

Understanding the background of relations between the United States and Vietnam also requires historians to look back to when the French controlled the country as one of their colonies. The Vietnamese became increasingly more disconcerted with

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<sup>12</sup> Millett and Maslowski, *For the Common Defense*, 628.

their colonizers due to unequal treatment regarding the economy. Much like the British did to colonists in the United States, the French hindered Vietnam's ability to prosper economically by restricting their trade as to cut-out any other foreign competitors. In Vietnamese culture, a politically powerful nation is one that flourishes economically.<sup>13</sup> The uneasy sentiments against the French helped gain Ho Chi Minh support with the people as he radicalized others into communism. The Vietnamese began understanding that communist ideals could help them thrive in a way that the French colonizers could not. They looked to the United States for examples of economic prosperity, wealth, and equality. Anne Foster describes the viewpoint of the Vietnamese before the war and how many were conflicted between the treatment of the Americans versus the French. Some felt as though they would be better off with American colonization yet wanted to be a free nation as well. Even prominent Americans who found themselves in Vietnam at French request such as Dwight B. Davis - Governor General of the Philippines - admonished the French treatment of the Vietnamese harshly, yet not openly.<sup>14</sup> While Marilyn B. Young and Robert Buzzanco's book is primarily cultural/social history, it does give insight into how the faulty relations between the countries began, which is central to understanding the Vietnam War.

## **POLITICAL HISTORY**

It is no secret that historians consistently intertwine political and military history when analyzing the Vietnam War. On the home front and abroad in the capitals of each nation, is where the war itself took place. Many politicians and political figures of the

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<sup>13</sup> Anne Foster, "Before the War: Legacies from the Early Twentieth Century in United States-Vietnam Relations," in *A Companion to the Vietnam War*, eds. Marilyn B. Young and Robert Buzzanco (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 117.

<sup>14</sup> Foster, "Before the War," 119.

time had their own opinions regarding the Vietnam War, the strategies used, and what the outcome of the war was going to be/should be. The most notable piece of writing from the era itself was the Pentagon Papers, published by Neil Sheehan of the *New York Times* in 1971. From the start of the war, Americans who classified themselves as patriots were all-in for what their government thought was a justified use of the American military. However, after the Pentagon Papers became public, individuals started to not only question their government's intentions, but also the trust they had within the governing body that was supposed to be making concrete decisions for the welfare of the people. When the papers came out in hard copy form and sold nationally, within was a secret study of American involvement in Indochina from 1945-1971. After official publication, the Supreme Court stepped in to make the final decision on if the *New York Times* had legal right to print the documents. Richard Nixon's administration tried to halt the publication of the documents, but the Supreme Court argued for their declassification. Therefore, the situation within Vietnam became public knowledge to American citizens. The conflict deemed "unwinnable" by top military experts, was one of the dastardliest parts of the reading to the American public. However, through all the chaos and panic, the war abroad and the protests at home to end it, still waged on. The "Pentagon Papers" had a profound effect on the relationship between the public and its government and how the cooperation between them changed over time, and historians still study and cite them today. The release of the "Pentagon Papers" led to a surge in anti-war protesting across the nation, and it is on the protests that political historians have focused some discussion.

Political history surrounding the Vietnam War also considers how the antiwar protests happening during the time affected politics in the United States. An interesting

article put together by Yang Su and Doug McAdam bring to light the patterns of protests and how those protests related to House and Senate votes for legislation either pro-war or anti-war. However, in the article, they state that political science often lacks analysis over social movements because in that respective field, the common ideology is that social movements are “politically ineffectual.”<sup>15</sup> However, sociologists have considered social movements an acceptable form of social and political change. Therefore, in their article, Yang and McAdam take pieces from both fields to analyze how protests affected voting. Their results showed a disproportionate change in voting with more violent protests (e.g., arrests, violence, vandalism, police involvement) and a trend toward more willingness to listen to public opinion when protests were mostly larger, more peaceful demonstrations. Therefore, while protests waged on in the United States during the Vietnam War, it was not until public opinion began to shift that lawmakers tended to listen to the will of their constituents on how/when to end the war, the biggest caveat being peace.<sup>16</sup>

The various presidential administrations wanted full victory in Vietnam, which did not seem possible especially after the publication of the “Pentagon Papers.” The North Vietnamese government in Hanoi was not willing to unconditionally surrender to the Americans, most notably because it argued it was not “losing” the war to begin with. Its armies were still strong and capable, and they still had enough resources to outlast the American military, or at least outlast the American disdain for the War. Public opinion began to shift swiftly, “So much so that Lyndon Johnson was forced to withdraw from

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<sup>15</sup> Doug McAdam and Yang Su, “The War at Home: Antiwar Protests and Congressional Voting, 1965 to 1973,” *American Sociological Review* 67, no 5 (October 2002): 697.

<sup>16</sup> McAdam and Su, “The War at Home,” 697-98.



the 1968 presidential race on the strength of growing antiwar sentiment.”<sup>17</sup> To regain control of the national conversation, Pres. Nixon ran a different kind of campaign and defeated Johnson’s vice president, Hubert Humphrey. Nixon stated that he would be the president to bring an end to an unpopular war that he unfortunately inherited from his predecessor. However, politics during the 1960s and ’70s were on full display, which meant he had to navigate how to keep the American people satisfied with his efforts while also showing strength in the face of adversity in Vietnam.

Tom Hayden was not a political historian, but his work can benefit political historians, as it is a primary source to the interactions between the government and the American public during that era. Hayden was one of the most prominent antiwar advocates during the movement and was the founder of the Students for a Democratic Society on his college campus at the University of Michigan. He went on to become a representative in the California state legislature and continued his political activism. In his tell-all book, he goes into detail of each individual piece of the antiwar movement and the activism in the United States, especially against the Johnson and Nixon administrations. Hayden became a political radical, most well-known for his part in the Trial of the Chicago Seven, which gained him an audience to listen to the injustices cast upon him and the other defendants in the trial. Hayden was a prominent participant in the antiwar movement and passionately believed that with the right strategies, demonstrators could end the war abroad. What he had not realized was that the more violent the protests became, the less lawmakers wanted to listen to their opinions. In part, Hayden explains in his tell-all that many of the violent protests were not necessarily the

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<sup>17</sup> McAdam and Su, “The War at Home,” 699.

demonstrators doing, but rather police brutality with little empathy or compassion for the cause of the protests itself - especially in Chicago during the 1968 riot. Another key part of Hayden's testimony is regarding the mentality of the older generations versus their own. His father was a WWII pilot, fighting the Japanese from the sky. He thought little of Hayden and was not proud of his insistence on advocating against the American military; he thought of his son as a direct threat to everything he had fought so hard for just twenty years prior. Hayden describes the differences in the mentality between the generations, which political historians can also use to piece together the ideology behind the antiwar movement, their participants, and the relationship with the American Government.

One of the most embossed pieces of writing to come out encapsulating the vast areas of history and the general discussion by historians is Eric Foner and Lisa McGirr's, in cooperation with the American Historical Association, book titled *American History Now*. The book covers the scope of historiography in fields ranging from religious, environmental, Native American, African American, and women's history. For modern political history, Meg Jacobs covers 1940 to 1973 in "The Uncertain Future of American Politics."<sup>18</sup> While Jacobs does mention Vietnam and surveys the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, she goes into more detail with issues such as Medicare and Johnson's War on Poverty. Even though Vietnam is not Jacobs primary focus, it is clear that among all other political items of the period, Vietnam was a glooming cloud laying over the entire Nation's mood, with many Americans opposing the war by 1970.<sup>19</sup> Like Hayden, Jacobs

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<sup>18</sup> Meg Jacobs, "The Uncertain Future of American Politics, 1940 to 1973," in *American History Now*, eds. Eric Foner and Lisa McGirr (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011), 164.

<sup>19</sup>McAdam and Su, "The War at Home," 699.

does mention the Baby Boom and how the previous generation influenced that generation's beliefs. For example, she states "the baby boom of the postwar years, along with economic growth, resulted in a generation increasingly critical of the affluence in which they grew up."<sup>20</sup> Her statement inherently sums up Tom Hayden's argument regarding his father's generation's apathy towards younger citizens, but Jacobs takes a different approach in focusing on the communist image given to liberal reformers and progressives because of the Cold War. What became known as the "American New Right" challenged the ideas of the New Left and the young liberal democrats, specifically those on college campuses, by emphasizing "the evils of communism as well as the dangers of liberal permissiveness and social welfare."<sup>21</sup> The shift toward conservatism with the victory of Richard Nixon in 1972, should not have come as a surprise to many, Jacobs suggests, because the behind-the-scenes workings from 1940 to 1973 was far greater than Democrats and young liberal advocates realized. In sum, Richard Nixon's presidency and the harsh pushback against the antiwar movement was a result of far greater frustrations within the American public - Vietnam and antiwar activism was just the beginning.

The Vietnam War was unique in the sense that those individuals entrusted with the responsibility of making sure Americans' best interests were at the forefront, did not necessarily handle their duties as well as originally planned. For example, Robert McNamara, Secretary of Defense for Lyndon B. Johnson's administration had much to do with sending troops to Vietnam and the pursued strategy to win the war and bring peace to both countries, one without a communist Vietnam. In retrospect, McNamara

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<sup>20</sup> Jacobs, "The Uncertain Future," 166.

<sup>21</sup> Jacobs, "The Uncertain Future," 166.

believed himself to be doing the right thing, even after Pres. Johnson had pledged to the American people that he would not send troops over to Southeast Asia to be doing what “Asian boys ought’ to do for themselves.”<sup>22</sup> However, after Johnson had made the decision to in fact send American boys to fight, McNamara became lead on negotiations, foreign policy, and wartime strategy. Once the Pentagon Papers became public, the American people realized that not even Mr. McNamara believed what he was doing to be right, but rather also considered - like many - Vietnam “unwinnable.”

Dr. Robert Brigham is a renowned political historian and professor whose book focuses on and analyzes Henry Kissinger, Richard Nixon’s National Security Advisor, and the role he played in Vietnam. Unlike other pieces of political history discussed thus far, Dr. Brigham has a different historical perception of Henry Kissinger. He argues that Kissinger was not a political phenomenon overcoming adversity within Richard Nixon’s cabinet, but he was a calculated strategist who knew exactly how to navigate the White House and the situation in Vietnam to satisfy his war aims, thus making a name for himself on Capitol Hill. Pres. Nixon inherited a terribly unpopular war, and it became his responsibility to find a way out of Vietnam with as few casualties as possible. Henry Kissinger became Nixon’s right-hand-man, even partially ousting his Secretary of Defense, Melvin Laird.<sup>23</sup> When Pres. Nixon began his secret bombing campaign of neutral Cambodia, it was none other than Henry Kissinger who not only advised him to do so, but also helped to cover it up.<sup>24</sup> With the presented evidence, Brigham speaks to

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<sup>22</sup> Tom Hayden, *Rebel: A Personal History of the 1960s* (Los Angeles: Red Hen Press, 2003), 285.

<sup>23</sup> Robert K. Brigham, *Reckless: Henry Kissinger and the Tragedy of Vietnam* (New York: Hachette Book Group, 2018), 10.

<sup>24</sup> Brigham, *Reckless*, 37.

the character of Henry Kissinger and how his interworking in the White House gravely endangered the democratic process of foreign policy proceedings and international relations. Brigham's book sheds light on a narrower area of political history, one that has a clear argument against the actions of individuals in government and how those actions were to the detriment of the American Government - not to its benefit. Kissinger and Nixon decided on their strategy of "Peace with Honor" to end the Vietnam War while still upholding the reputation of the United States."<sup>25</sup> The unfortunate part being that Henry Kissinger believed that he, himself could and would be the sole entity for making such ideas happen.

From the publication of the Pentagon Papers in 1971 onward to Robert Brigham's 2018 analysis of Henry Kissinger, the practice of political history has expanded. The most recent political history of the Vietnam War has revealed intricate details about the individuals as well as the political parties and interest groups involved in that conflict. Historians sometimes argue that any evaluation of a president's impact on the American government should wait twenty-five years after their exit from office. Therefore, an increasing number of political histories of the 1960s are being completed.

## **SOCIAL & CULTURAL HISTORY**

Social and cultural history thrive in the era of the Vietnam War. That is partially because of its significance within American society, propelling thousands into antiwar activism, while also inciting a pro-war movement from within as well. The 1960s and '70s became a pivotal time for the heart and soul of not only the United States, but for all the citizens living in it. It would be wrong to claim that historians mostly focus on the

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<sup>25</sup> Brigham, *Reckless*, 64.

fighting abroad and politics of such without understanding the rich history forming at home too. Social and cultural historians of the 1960s and '70s look to the national antiwar movement as a beginning for their research when developing theories and ideology based on how citizens worked together to try and put an end to what they felt was an unjust war that the American military did not need to be involved in. Not only was the time for historic legislation, but it was also a time for change in the media as well. For the first time in history, Americans had a front row seat to what was happening directly in Vietnam, which is why it was exceedingly difficult to believe what their government was telling them about the war. They could see the statistics of men KIA and MIA every night while they sat down for dinner. They could also see live footage videos and pictures captured in real time by brave journalists willing to risk their lives for the sake of documenting moments in history. Sociology is the science behind the relationships within society and institutions and how they interact with one another. While sociology is relevant and important, social history is the history of the topic that uses historical arguments, theories, and facts to align together information for the next generation of people and other historians alike to read and make new commentary, thoughts, and more analysis on. However, the events that took place in America from 1963-1975 did not become widely discussed within the historical field until well into the 1980s. Mainly because it is difficult to accurately assess how a movement, political institutions, or war affected the people - society - until years later. Therefore, many of the prominent social or cultural historians that wrote about and discussed the 1960s and 70s published their work years after the dust had settled regarding Vietnam. The early 2000s was a critical period for more historical analysis on Vietnam and the antiwar

movement because of the similarities and concerns round sending soldiers to Iraq and Afghanistan. While 9/11 was immensely tragic and a trigger for war, it left some who had lived through the Vietnam years worried again for the heart and soul of the Nation and if another tragic ten years were about to replay itself.

One of the earliest pieces of work discussing the media and the role it played within Vietnam is Daniel Hallin's, *The Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam*; television was just at its beginnings during the Vietnam War. This is a big point of interest for social historians because of just how gravely the media affected Americans without their realization. In previous wars, there was a gap between the reality of battle and the public's awareness of what was happening on the battle field. The news and the military censored information, only revealing what would work towards the advantage of overall war aims. The script changed in Vietnam because the media was able to reveal more of the reality of the battlefield and do so more rapidly, and the public could sit on their couches and see for themselves just how brutal the fighting was in Southeast Asia, especially after the Tet Offensive began. Bodies upon bodies of Vietnamese citizens as well as American military members lay dead for journalists and photographers to capture for the rest of the world to see. Hallin describes it as "one of the things that makes television a more ideological medium than the newspaper: television forces much more of the news into the unity of a story line—and therefore of a world view."<sup>26</sup> Television versus print journalism changed the way reporters did their reporting - drastically. Instead of an overview of the subject with specific details, the broadcasters of television news were able to give their own body language and nonverbal communication into the

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<sup>26</sup> Daniel C. Hallin, *The Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 121.

story itself - elevating public opinion in one way or another. Seeing it, rather than reading it, made an enormous impact on how citizens felt about the news and the opinions they formed about the war, which is why it became so pivotal in the overall history of Vietnam. In the beginning, specifically from 1961-1964, journalism mostly focused on political spats or government concerns with Vietnam, the soldiers being deployed, and the foreign policy enacted. By 1965, more televised broadcasts began, and the escalation of American men began. Going from 175,000 men in 1964 to upwards of 400,000 men (about half the population of Delaware) by the end of 1966 was a far cry from peace negotiations and public support for the war.<sup>27</sup> In using televised media, broadcasters began to think of themselves as “patriots” - discussing the Government’s plan for peace talks with the North Vietnamese government in Hanoi and the pause in bombings for weeks while waiting on negotiations. When North Vietnam did not want to compromise with the United States, it was then reported in a way that slighted the North Vietnamese, and of course the broadcaster’s words, body language, and facial expressions represented the “bad guys,” in a way in which would create more public support for an increase of soldiers in Vietnam.<sup>28</sup> While the American news was broadcasted in the homes of citizens, social and cultural history focuses more closely on what was happening outside of the homes in America - the antiwar movement.

Social and cultural historians identify the effect of the Vietnam War on class, gender, race, and ethnicity to a greater extent compared to other historical fields. For example, Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones goes through four specific groups: students, African Americans, women, and those in the labor force. He chooses these groups specifically

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<sup>27</sup> Hallin, *The Uncensored War*, 115.

<sup>28</sup> Hallin, *The Uncensored War*, 120.



because of their attachment to the War at home, and how it took away different pieces of their life. For instance, those in the workforce did not get the II-S deferments students in college received for the first part of the War. Therefore, their chances of getting drafted and sent over were significantly higher than other individuals who went to college directly after high school. Jones discusses the impact of the War on students because they, too, also had to serve within the military ranks, but were able to be activists on their campuses during the first part of the War before the end of the II-S deferment process. However, once those deferments ended, more individuals came home from Vietnam, rather than sent over. Discussing the two groups in tandem allows for a well-rounded perspective on not only the draft lottery process, but the lives of those forced to join a war that they may not have necessarily agreed with.<sup>29</sup>

Another revealing history of race, class, and gender lines in the Vietnam War is Marilyn B. Young and Robert Buzzanco's *a Companion to the Vietnam War*. Within this edited collection are specific chapters focusing on African Americans and Mexican Americans. An eye-opening chapter by George Mariscal - "Mexican Americans in the Viet Nam War" - leads to the understanding the minority groups in the Vietnam War, specifically Mexican Americans, did not have the means to simply just resist the draft unlike American college student activists that pressured them to do so. Whether they wanted to go to Vietnam to fight or not, they felt pressured by society and their family culture to do so. Mariscal describes a Mexican's duty to his family as primarily as well as the overwhelming pressure by American society to "fit in" and assimilate into the culture. By already "standing-out" so-to-speak, they did not have much of a choice than

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<sup>29</sup> Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *Peace Now! American Society and the Ending of the Vietnam War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

to join up arms and fight in the American military. They felt as though their service would provide them with the ability to finally claim themselves to be truly American. Their families would be immensely proud, and they would be able to support them with their service. However, they did not realize what was waiting for them in Vietnam, and yet they still felt they had to do their duty and go. Mariscal sums up that pressure eloquently by stating, “The material conditions of poverty, job discrimination, and educational tracking together with what was felt to be the overwhelming obligation to serve and “prove” one’s loyalty according to traditional notions of nation and masculinity were responsible for the relatively low number of Chicano draft resisters during the Vietnam era.”<sup>30</sup>

James Westheider describes what it was like to be an African American during the Vietnam War era and how that differed from white individuals either resisting the draft or joining up for the armed forces willingly. Westheider describes it similarly to Mexican Americans, viewing military service as an opportunity to prove loyalty and their patriotic ability to the United States. However, African Americans have served in all wars throughout American history, notably with “pride and distinction,” yet even in the 1960s and 70s, in the heart of the Civil Rights Movement, they were still not viewed equally to their white counterparts.<sup>31</sup> The Armed Forces were noted by African Americans as offering them the best opportunities for advancements within an America that still did not treat them as equals. Southern culture, institutional racism, and legalized segregation all left African Americans feeling as though joining the military was their

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<sup>30</sup> Barbara Tischler, “The Antiwar Movement,” in *A Companion to the Vietnam War*, eds. Marilyn B. Young and Robert Buzzanco (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 350.

<sup>31</sup> Tischler, “The Antiwar Movement,” 333.

best chance to create a life for themselves. The Vietnam War was the first war in American history in which the armed forces integrated entirely, creating a backdrop of equality and freedom throughout the military. However, unfortunately for the men of color that joined up to fight, they were soon to realize that it was not in fact the end-all of institutionalized racism, but rather it continued within the ranks. Post-1968 there became a substantial amount of racial violence within the military, just as there was within society.<sup>32</sup> Even the US military was not safe from racial persecution for African American men, yet they still felt they had a duty to their country and wanted to prove to themselves and those who felt they were not worthy of the title “American” that they would fight and die just the same as their white counterparts for the United States. Therefore, men of color were more likely to join the American military willingly rather than through draft from either societal expectations, familial compliance, or proof of their true patriotism and loyalty to the US. Yet, even in doing so, society did not treat them as equals, and thus the Vietnam War disproportionately affected people of color. That is not to say that white military members did not have their own daunting experiences in Vietnam. More soldiers were drafted from the labor/workforce than from colleges, the source of the students who engaged in the largest share of the activism in the streets.

Social and cultural history begins and ends with how institutions, groups, events, and legislation affect those individuals within that society. Unfortunately for this time, the Vietnam War was more likely to negatively affect people of color and those in the workforce than any other individual. Another excellent piece of writing that illustrates how the workforce were huge proponents against the war - specifically because they were

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<sup>32</sup> Tischler, “The Antiwar Movement,” 334.

more likely to be drafted to go - is Penny Lewis' *Hardhats, Hippies, and Hawks: The Vietnam Antiwar Movement as Myth and Memory*.<sup>33</sup> She focuses on the antiwar movement, as a substantial portion of 1960s social historians do, but brings to the light the concept of working-class individuals not having the same opportunities as college-age students to avoid the war, specifically the II-S deferments. Therefore, working class men and women were prominent in their disdain for the war and in their service and activism in the antiwar movement itself. While they did not necessarily have the same opportunities or life-paths to go to college and obtain those deferments, they did make sure to make their voices heard. Unlike other social historians, Lewis highlights how important it is to understand the working-class' unique perspective on the Vietnam War and how many of them did not want to go, but also could not afford to draft-dodge or resist as other "wealthier" college students could. Therefore, social historians have a unique opportunity in highlighting the struggles that different races, ethnicities, and classes went through during the Vietnam War era without taking away from the totality and severity of the War itself and those who advocated against it.

## **CONCLUSION**

Through political, social, and military history, the Vietnam War is a constant point of discussion and research. Even with the abundance of material available today on the topic, historians still leave pieces of it untouched or underdeveloped. The antiwar movement, with involvement of student activism, specifically was a point of tension in American history for not only those who lived through it, but those who continue to teach and research it. The foreign policy created from it that has lasted throughout the 21<sup>st</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Penny Lewis, *Hardhats, Hippies, and Hawks: The Vietnam Antiwar Movement as Myth and Memory* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013).

Century for every engagement with international issues. Ensuring that there was not another Vietnam War became the basis for politicians and diplomats in the American government because of its handling and the chaos it created within America. Therefore, to prevent history from repeating itself, it is incredibly important to continue to add to the historical discussion as well as evaluate new points of view within American history.

This thesis fits into the historiographical realm of 1960s history by not only discussing one piece of the Vietnam War but considering the perspectives of individuals from all levels of society. By examining military men and their feelings towards the war, more specifically the draft lottery, as well as students, working class citizens, African Americans, and the United States Government, this thesis encapsulates the ways the Vietnam War affected American society. Many people opposed the War, some being more vocal than others. This thesis highlights those trends of individuals that vocalized their disdain for the war and why they did so and how the draft lottery had a significant impact on the beginnings of individuals listening to those voices. It also speaks to the antiwar movement and the trends highlighted along race, ethnic, and socioeconomic lines for participation in such an advocacy against the war itself.

Even though the center of this thesis is regarding student activism, it is also important to address the question as to why other citizens did not feel the need or drive to effect change within their government as the students that participated felt it was their duty to do. For far too long history has painted over the antiwar movement as rich, college students advocating against a war because they were either “unpatriotic” according to older generations, or “too scared” to fight and die for their country. This thesis points out that neither of those myths about the movement were true, but rather

they felt they were doing what was right to protest an injustice happening on behalf of the United States Government half-way across the world. The draft lottery influenced not only public opinion, but also how students changed their area of aggression and started burning draft cards, draft-dodging and encouraging others to do so as well, as touched upon previously. Yet, public opinion remained the main priority of the American government. Therefore, to understand how the draft lottery pushed more students into active participation in the antiwar movement and thus negatively affected public opinion, it is also important to touch on how those tensions came to grow so strong in the first place and why students were some of the only ones that felt as though they could speak up and use their voice for change.

## CHAPTER II

### THE WAR AT HOME

While American troops fought overseas against the North Vietnamese military, citizens at home were fighting an entirely different battle – a battle for peace within both countries. The antiwar movement was at the forefront of the media’s attention, and much of the American public did not look fondly on those who were protesting and rallying in the streets. However, those who participated in the movement believed what they were doing was justified because of the thousands of civilians and soldiers that were dying in Vietnam. The induction of the draft lottery system in 1969 also became a point of contention, even though draft eligible men were already opposing the war before 1969. The draft lottery selected men for service, starting with the youngest of the group – 19-year-old men. The public was not particularly fond of sending thousands of young men abroad, especially after 1968 when public opinion declined rapidly in the wake of the Tet Offensive. Even with the public not fond of the antiwar movement and radicals within that effort, it is important to discuss the movement in its entirety. This social movement encompassed a broad range of sub-groups, each with their own individual assets and difficulties and all with the common goal of ending the war and bringing the troops home. Whether it was the draft resisters, the veterans against the war, or those who

defied the war on moral grounds, the media cast all of them under the umbrella of “antiwar protestors.”

## **THE ANTIWAR MOVEMENT**

During the Vietnam War, society was reeling from unrest, disillusion, and distrust of its government. Unlike any other period in American history, citizens of the United States took it upon themselves to evaluate whether the war in Vietnam was an acceptable use of the American military. Thousands concluded that the American government overstepped by placing thousands of soldiers in Vietnam to begin with. However, there was an entirely different generation that saw those who were against the war as un-American and un-patriotic. They were soldiers and ancestors of those who fought in WWI and WWII - members of the Silent Generation, who produced the baby boom. Their ancestors taught them that fighting against a fascist, communist, anti-Democratic government was at the center of the American military and its ideals. Therefore, when televised nationwide protests began to spring up throughout the country, clashes between the groups - and the police - were bound to happen. The antiwar movement was not that of hippies and youths spreading awareness about the war abroad, but rather a fully organized movement to bring the American troops back home from Vietnam and end the war entirely. Chapter leaders organized protests on college campuses, but the faculty of those collegiate institutions helped as well. High schools eventually became involved in the protests in their own way, but not quite to the scale of their collegiate counterparts. Those who opposed the antiwar movement did not allow rallies and protests to go on without a hitch; they were just as prominent in their support for the US military, as well as their disdain for those on the other side. Households became divided, usually between



youths and their parents. For those who were deep into the heart of the movement, it was simply not an option to give up and allow the government total control over the Vietnam War; rather, they wanted to make sure their government was aware of how they felt about their handling of the conflict.

The US policy in Vietnam was lackluster at best, constantly changing with administrations and creating confusion with Americans. In 1970, the *New York Times* published an article by A.J. Langguth titled, “1964: Exhilaration 1968: Frustration 1970: Hopelessness,” bringing together the feelings of many Americans about the government’s handling of the Vietnam War. Langguth describes his time in Vietnam and what he observed within the South Vietnamese government and the Vietnamese citizens. He states that South Vietnam measured their political aspirations in terms of American presidents. Every four years they expected another election which would either increase or decline financial and military aid to South Vietnam. After Nixon inducted his policy of Vietnamization, slowly giving the reins back to the Vietnamese for a full American pull-out, citizens of Vietnam expected a peace deal to come quickly. “We do not expect him to sacrifice his political future for Vietnam as Pres. Johnson did,” a shrewd Vietnamese said. “There will be a deal.”<sup>34</sup> Therefore, even the citizens of Vietnam themselves were unsure of what was to come next, just as individuals in America were. Those who protested in the streets believed pulling out of Vietnam was the right choice to make to end the violence. They believed that America was involving themselves in what could be considered a civil war between North and South Vietnam, thus the presence of the US military was unnecessary. Yet, they also understood that the violence and carnage

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<sup>34</sup> A. J. Langguth, “1964: Exhilaration 1968: Frustration 1970: Hopelessness,” *New York Times*, October 4, 1970.

that took place killed thousands of Vietnamese citizens, which did not aid the justification of the War itself. By 1970, Langguth described the position in Vietnam as “hopeless.” Without full reunification of the country under a communist government, peace was not likely – regardless of American intervention. The difference in attitude of one that saw the events untangle in Vietnam to those who rallied in the streets in America is striking. Most had the same idea that the war needed to end, but the conclusion about why and how each group came to it was different. Protestors and activists wanted to save lives of innocent civilians and American military members in Vietnam, while those like Langguth believed that no matter the amount of American financial or military aid, it was the Vietnamese’s conflict to fight out on their own. However, even though there were differences in conclusions for the result of the War, each side believed themselves to be justifiable in their position. Most of the members of the antiwar movement had not been to war, but felt they were fighting a completely different battle of their own in the United States.

While American troops fought in the Southeast Asia countryside, folks like Tom Hayden and Bruce Dancis fought against the war and against the draft that supplied it troops. These draft-eligible individuals interpreted Vietnam as an unjust war and did not want to participate in the violence. The draft resistance movement came to fruition during the antiwar movement and was a sector of such. Those who were protesting the war, were also protesting the draft, especially those who were at risk of being drafted into the war in Vietnam. The draft resistance movement, however, is a bit more complicated than just those who faced military service and did not want to do so. For Bruce Dancis, his motivation was more aligned with resisting the draft, and finding a legal way to do so,

while also participating in the antiwar movement overall.<sup>35</sup> College campuses across the nation were similar in their execution of protest to Dancis and Hayden by making organizations that would rally students to areas of campus, or for Tom Hayden and his group, marching across state-lines to the Democratic National Convention. Protests ranged from small gatherings at Midwest Universities such as the University of Nebraska and even KSC. Students made posters, signaling when events would take place, and putting out ads or columns in their local newspaper. For Pittsburg State protestors, the University's own newspaper, the *Collegio*, made a perfect avenue for spreading the word about upcoming gatherings. The posters would call individuals to action and let citizens know about upcoming plans for protests and rallies that were to take place (See Appendix).<sup>36</sup> Not only did students organize protests on their individual college campuses, but nationwide as well. Whether it was full participation in one general location or across the Nation, students participated in the movement. The Student Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam created this poster to gain more followers, just as there were other organizations such as the National Peace Action Coalition, and the National Student Mobilization Committee who contributed to the overall movement as well (see appendix).<sup>37</sup> The Student Movement became the forefront of public opinion, especially with the media playing such a significant role. On American University campuses, the plight against the war ran deep and tended to become

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<sup>35</sup> Bruce Dancis, *Resister: A Story of Protest and Prison during the Vietnam War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014), 5.

<sup>36</sup> "Student Mobilization Committee To End the War in Vietnam – Bring The GIs Home Now!" 1969, Street Art Graphics, Richard F. Brush Art Gallery, St. Lawrence University, Canton, NY.

<sup>37</sup> "Student Mobilization Committee To End the War in Vietnam."

a point of violence in some cities. One of the best pieces of evidence for this is the event at Kent State University.

During the antiwar movement, Kent State University in Kent, OH, became the focal point for protestors furious with their government, which worked to quell negative sentiments surrounding the war. On May 4th, 1970, gunshots rang out on that campus during a protest that turned violent; four students died, while nine others were injured at the hands of the National Guard.<sup>38</sup> Sophomore Howard Ruffner was a photographer for his university's newspaper. His photographs detailed every event leading up to the day of the shooting and the protest that took place on campus, and one of his most well-known images became the cover of *Life Magazine* shortly after. In his book, *Moments of Truth: A Photographer's Experience of Kent State 1970*, Ruffner details the days leading up to the infamous protest and his own experience, with photographs, of what happened and overall feeling amongst other University students. As Ruffner describes, the mayor of Kent put a curfew into place days before the large protest, to ensure the safety of students and staff and to have a protest that began and ended peacefully.<sup>39</sup> Students were concerned with the overwhelming number of National Guardsmen on campus and unsure about why there were no administrators to answer questions they had. The curfew and implementation of the National Guardsmen took place over a weekend, when students believed school would begin normally on Monday morning. Ruffner states in his book just how that confusion amongst students led to feelings of uncertainty. He sums up that overwhelming feeling with the quote, "Confusion was the tone on campus. The Guard

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<sup>38</sup> Howard Ruffner, *Moments of Truth: A Photographer's Experience of Kent State 1970* (Ashland: The Kent State University Press, 2019), 1404.

<sup>39</sup> Ruffner, *Moments of Truth*, 905.

was there, but was it in charge? And by whose authority?... Information about a curfew was mostly nothing more than word of mouth. When did the curfew begin and when did it end? Could students go into the city? There were so many unanswered questions about the curfew and the National Guard that it led to more confusion and for some students, anger.<sup>40</sup> Ruffner was not alone in his assessment of the chaos that went on at Kent State University. Citizens around the country quickly received information about the events that took place and the students the National Guard killed and injured.

Across the nation, the media emphasized the protests that led to violence and rioters who defamed property, yet it failed to note how a majority of such were peaceful protestors advocating for change with the current situation of the military in Vietnam. Politics and policies that evolve from political divisiveness have always been an area of skepticism and anger on both sides of the aisle, and Kent State's protest is still one of the most well-known throughout the entirety of the antiwar movement. The confirmation of those killed at Kent State only fueled the fire of the antiwar movement, particularly on college campuses and created more college student activism across the United States. Protests across the nation were peaceful, yet those who opposed the Movement's goals and purpose seemed to believe otherwise, and the media did not help with their involvement either. However, after the Kent State shooting in 1970, the antiwar movement grew stronger, and their participation did not drop across the nation. They continued to ignite more individuals into the movement for the following years until the war's end.

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<sup>40</sup> Ruffner, *Moments of Truth*, 937-38.

For Pres. Johnson and Pres. Nixon, public opinion continued to be at the forefront of their minds during their time in Office while the Vietnam War ensued. Therefore, with thousands of youths protesting across the Nation, public opinion was even more important than ever. The antiwar movement did not entice the older generations, nor were those individuals in complete disagreement with the Vietnam War. However, by 1970, over 50% of those polled felt as though Vietnam was unwinnable and the United States should honorably withdraw.<sup>41</sup> Along with public opinion, attitudes toward the war also had an aspect of self-interest. In his article, “The Draft Lottery and Attitudes towards the Vietnam War,” Daniel E. Bergan suggests that earlier models of surveys from during the Vietnam War were incorrect in concluding that those who opposed the War were not acting within their own self-interest. The results were the same during WWII. However, the enemy was much different during the Second World War and the entirety of the threat was not necessarily comparable to that in Vietnam. Therefore, Bergan finds that those with a lower draft number (being drafted was more likely) had responses such as “immediate withdrawal,” or “gradual withdrawal” when asked what the President should do about military intervention in Vietnam. In contrast, those who had a higher draft number (being drafted was less likely) had responses such as “no withdrawal,” or “no reduction.”<sup>42</sup> Thus, the draft lottery had a significant impact on the opinions of those who were of draft age, versus those who were not - such as the older, Silent Generation. The prime age of those drafted into the Vietnam War were college-aged students, which also made up the majority of those participating in the antiwar

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<sup>41</sup> McAdam and Su, “The War at Home,” 699.

<sup>42</sup> Daniel E. Bergan, “The Draft Lottery and Attitudes towards the Vietnam War,” *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 73, no. 2 (2009): 382-83.

movement. This again goes into the underlying movement of draft resistance with the antiwar movement being the umbrella of such. Politicians are looking toward their next election campaign once elected to office. Therefore, during the Vietnam War, public opinion was of the utmost importance for reelection, especially in Richard Nixon's case. LBJ had decided on his own accord to not run again, yet there was a low probability of him winning because of his handling of the Vietnam situation and the beginnings of the War. Pres. Nixon inherited the war and won his election on the promise that he would end it. Intense focus on public opinion came after a year into Nixon's presidency when troops were still heavily stationed in Vietnam. However, despite public opinion, nothing swayed it more in voting age constituents than the draft lottery itself - thus bringing about the draft resistance movement.

### **THE DRAFT RESISTANCE MOVEMENT**

There were plenty of draft-eligible men that were opposed to the war and being sent to Vietnam even before the draft lottery system was put into place by the Nixon administration with bill HR 14001. The legislation gave him the executive power to institute the draft lottery and draft 19-year-olds first. Passed in November 1969, the first draft using the new system was held on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1969, and the draft resistance movement emerged out of the lottery system. Individuals of draft-eligible age were often at the forefront of the movement. However, citizens that could not afford to protest the draft or even more recklessly - draft dodge are not as frequently discussed. In general, individuals such as Mexican Americans, working-class laborers, and young men who were not involved with earning a college degree, did not actively evade the draft. Students were able to pursue an II-S deferment, which made those earning a college

degree ineligible to be drafted by the US military. However, the chances of being drafted into the war were much higher for those who were not set on the path for college.

Social scientists ran studies on a range of male citizens to conduct research on how the draft lottery affected their political attitudes and their opinions on the Vietnam War. Findings range, but the most concrete of such being Robert S. Erikson and Laura Stoker's analysis of the Political Socialization Panel Study of 1965. Before and after the draft lottery went into effect, high school seniors from the class of 1965 were surveyed.<sup>43</sup> Erikson and Stoker calculate the findings from the study into general acknowledgement of student opinion on the draft lottery and Vietnam War. Televising the draft lottery showed the honorable sacrifice men were making for the well-being of the country in hopes of boosting morale across America. They drew numbers ranging from 1 to 366 categorized with specific birth dates. Those with lower numbers were more likely to be drafted and vice versa - those with higher numbers being less likely to be drafted. However, Erikson and Stoker did not specifically analyze the range of dates, but rather the attitudes that ranged from those who drew low to high lottery numbers. However, before 1969, "these young men were subject to the vagaries of their local draft boards, Then the rules changed, with the possibility of them getting drafted now determined by the random draw of their lottery number."<sup>44</sup> Therefore, focusing on the 1965 high school seniors, who were collegiate students and were twenty-two years old by 1969, Erikson and Stoker reveal how their political leanings changed, and for how long, based on the number they drew. Their conclusions find that those with lower draft numbers were more

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<sup>43</sup> Robert S. Erikson, and Laura Stoker, "Caught in the Draft: The Effects of the Vietnam Draft Lottery Status on Political Attitudes," *The American Political Science Review* 105, no 2 (May 2011): 221.

<sup>44</sup> Erikson and Stoker, "Caught in the Draft," 222.



likely to vote democratic and were left leaning, while those with a higher draft number tended to be more conservative.<sup>45</sup> However, it is important to note that overall, those who were selected by the draft still had to pass physical examinations before officially inducted into the military and basic training was also a requirement before actual military service. Therefore, there were numerous circumstances that could have produced the findings in Erikson and Stoker's article. These factors included extenuating life circumstances, overall anti-war sentiment leading anti-war crowds and leftist ideals, family affiliations with military service, and the background of the individual. Therefore, it is important to note that their findings were a wide array of data, while outliers did occur, and other factors could have prompted certain responses. Although, with that said, other factors produced the draft resistance movement.

There were over four thousand draft boards across the United States that were subject to some federal oversight. However, the war waging on and the federal government's concern for American well-being, gave the draft boards more leeway in their deferment policies and overall selections into service. People, especially college-age students became unsettled with the lack of commonality between draft boards and their policies and began advocating against them entirely. They also protested for draft reform, which Richard Nixon put on his party platform during his election campaign. Once in office, Nixon vowed to reform the draft service, and thus the draft lottery was the ultimate outcome of such. Therefore, overall conviction for or against the draft came from a period of years between 1966-1968 with many individuals escaping military service due to wavering technicalities between policies in their local draft boards.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Erikson and Stoker, "Caught in the Draft," 226.

<sup>46</sup> Erikson and Stoker, "Caught in the Draft," 222.

However, Nixon's reforms allowed fewer deferments, which made more students join the antiwar movement out of defiance against a lottery system as well as sentiments against the Vietnam War itself. Charles F. Longino backs up Erikson and Stoker's findings in his article, "Draft Lottery Numbers and Student Opposition to War." He takes a different approach to analyzing the data studied from University of Virginia students who were draft-eligible males. Longino states "there is no support at all in the present data for the assumption that the introduction of a draft lottery system would dampen opposition to the Vietnam War among draft eligible college students, as some administration officials apparently had hoped."<sup>47</sup> Meaning, the Nixon administration and its officials championed the idea of reforming the draft system to gain support for the draft and less opposition to the war. Therefore, that is what Longino analyzes in his article and how the new draft lottery system under Nixon shaped college males' attitudes toward the war. Even when the new system was set in place, those who were already participating in the antiwar movement did not change their minds based on a fairer recruitment of male individuals for military service. However, unlike Erikson and Stoker, Longino makes his assessment that the draft lottery did not sway opinions towards the war or political attitudes one way or another. Simply, the draft lottery system had no bearing on the opinions of those in favor of the war and those who were against did not change their opinions to be more "stable in their position on the war."<sup>48</sup>

In the KSC newspaper, the *Collegio*, students would write opinion columns focusing on their sentiments against the Vietnam War to make light of a serious situation,

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<sup>47</sup> Charles F. Longino, "Draft Lottery Numbers and Student Opposition to War," *Sociology of Education* 46, no 4 (Autumn 1973): 506.

<sup>48</sup> Longino, "Draft Lottery Numbers," 504.

or to advocate against something they believed to be unjust. Either way, they used the newspaper to make their voices heard voices throughout campus and read by anyone who pondered through the newspaper. Arthur Hoppe drafts a satirical article shedding light on how those who felt heavy-handed in their gumption toward protesting, yet the everyday necessities of life kept them from doing so. In it, he writes of how he would burn his draft card if he could find it - "Carried away by a rising tide of protest, I searched upstairs, grim-lipped and fiery-eyed, to burn my draft card. And I cannot find it anywhere." He goes on to elucidate the idea of burning his social security card as well as his driver's license, but having lost it or needed it, he could bring himself to do so. At the end he states, "Before it is too late, I must cast aside my musty, middle-class, middle-age conventions and march youthfully forth for freedom, justice, or what-have-you. I must do it tonight! And I would, too, except we are having company for dinner."<sup>49</sup> Hoppe authored his article to advocate against the youths on campus who set their documents ablaze for something others deemed senseless, or he was simply showing how everyday life can impact one's ability to participate in such a cause. Another article from the 1967 edition of the *Collegio* demonstrates how political science majors and activists on campus analyzed the political nature of the United States and public opinion during the Vietnam War. Prior to the 1969 reforms to the draft boards, Mick Kelting drafted his article, "Selective Service System Judged Inadequate Under Present Structure." In it, he voices his concern for the deterioration of the integrity of the draft boards. Citizens such as Muhammad Ali, George Hamilton, and Joe Namath received deferments from military service simply because of their name, yet individuals who were high school teachers (in a

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<sup>49</sup> Arthur Hoppe, "I'd Burn My Draft Card – But I Can't Find It," *Collegio*, April 15, 1966.

time when teachers were needed to fill positions) were not given the same consideration. He raves about the inconsistencies between draft boards and their policies and the overall federal oversight that was supposed to be making sure each board was equipped with the same rules. Kelting even goes on to write in favor of ending the II-S deferment (allowing college males to defer from the draft until completion of a degree or failure to make satisfactory grades). In this section he writes, “Does the II-S deferment mean to imply that college students are too bright to fight?”<sup>50</sup> The draft lottery had not yet been in effect, but he started to advocate for system. College students had a plethora of ideas and opinions about how to fix the Selective Service System, yet many felt they fell victim to it either before or after the invocation of the draft lottery system.

The *New York Times* fueled the fire of those protesting not only the Vietnam War, but the Selective Service System as well. In 1966, an article stated that 75% of the public opposed the newly proposed draft lottery system.<sup>51</sup> For years, there had been criticisms about the Selective Service System and its fairness to people of color and those who were not able to obtain a college education. Criticism also came from citizens who were against the new idea for drafting especially young men into military service. The Department of Defense held meetings to hear all options and ideas towards amending the Selective Service System, many favoring the former over the latter - the draft lottery system.<sup>52</sup> Three years later, in 1969, *The Times* published another article with the title “Criticism and Evasion of Draft Grow With Unpopularity of the Vietnam War.”<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Mick Kelting, “Selective Service System Judged Inadequate Under Present Structure,” *Collegio*, July 21, 1967.

<sup>51</sup> “Hostility Is Found To Draft Lottery,” *New York Times*, November 13, 1966.

<sup>52</sup> “Hostility Is Found To Draft Lottery,” *New York Times*, November 13, 1966.

<sup>53</sup> Wallace Turner, “Criticism and Evasion of Draft Grow With Unpopularity of the Vietnam War,” *New York Times*, May 14, 1969.

Therefore, just as the studies previously mentioned stated, the opposition to the Vietnam War and draft evasion go together. The War itself perpetuated a need for a revised form of drafting men into the armed services, yet because of the unpopularity of the war, the public (and protestors) would simply not be happy with any amendment to the former Selective Service System. Hearing from mothers and family members of fallen soldiers only made public opinion of the War fall deeper into the gutter, a true nightmare for Pres. Nixon and his administration. To make matters worse, in 1970, *The New York Times* published an article of a study indicating that “One-Third of Americans Killed in Vietnam War Are Draftees.” After a briefing from the Pentagon, the *Times* wrote that over 12,000 draftees had died by February 1970. Further in the article, they stated, “This means that about one of every 104 draftees from June, 1965, the beginning of the Vietnam build-up, to June, 1969, was killed in action.”<sup>54</sup> Now, while that number may be low compared to the overall casualties and men sent to war, draftees made up an estimated 40 percent of Army forces in Vietnam. Even though 60 percent of Army men were enlisted soldiers on their own accord, the Army soldiers made up the majority of those doing the actual ground fighting work. Therefore, draftees into the Army were more likely to see combat than other soldiers in different sectors of the American military.<sup>55</sup> These studies only added more unwanted, negative opinions not only towards the War, but also towards the draft lottery system; thus, pushing more individuals into the antiwar movement while doing all they could to resist the draft. An even bigger glooming problem to the federal government was not just the college student activism, or

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<sup>54</sup> “One-Third of Americans Killed in Vietnam War Are Draftees,” *New York Times*, February 12, 1970.

<sup>55</sup> “One-Third of Americans Killed in Vietnam War Are Draftees,” *New York Times*, February 12, 1970.

collateral public opinion, but also an entirely different group of individuals participating in protest - those who knew war firsthand, better than most - veterans of the United States armed forces.

### **THE VETERAN ANTIWAR MOVEMENT**

One of the more shocking groups to be involved with the antiwar movement in America was veterans themselves, many of them serving in Vietnam prior to their activism against the War. The veterans that participated in protests had created their own league of advocates for ending the war with quite different qualifications than others. The media, government, and public looked at them in an altered point of view than what they previously held to college-aged student activists. Because they were veterans of the US military, they had a unique point of view on not only war, but especially what was happening in Vietnam. They felt it their duty to help in the antiwar movement for their brothers-in-arms that were still fighting across the world. There were not millions of Vets flooding the streets in protest the Government's policies toward Vietnam, yet significant numbers or not, their words cut deeper than any others and the respect they held from the public was far greater than anything seen up to that point. According to John Prados in his chapter of *A Companion to the Vietnam War*, titled "The Veterans Antiwar Movement in Fact and Memory," veterans found themselves in the middle of rallies and protests, specifically beginning in 1967. They called themselves "Veterans for Peace," and a mass demonstration took place in what would culminate into their own movement in Central Park, New York City.<sup>56</sup> Prados sums up the veteran antiwar movement perfectly by stating, "The veterans had significant advantages in mobilization

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<sup>56</sup> John Prados, "The Veterans Antiwar Movement," in *A Companion to the Vietnam War*, eds. Marilyn B. Young and Robert Buzzanco (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 404.

and raising consciousness because the former military men had a common experience in their training and service, thus a precise knowledge of the institution they intended to oppose. Where America's students, parents, workers, and women had to start by finding out something about Vietnam, the veterans already knew that place intimately."<sup>57</sup>

Veterans had a distinct experience that only themselves could claim upon protest and use that to their advantage when inciting others to rally around the cause. While the first protest that took place in New York City in 1967 only gathered about 2,000 veterans, the newly formed VVAW (Vietnam Veterans Against the War) founded chapters across the country. For some, they felt as though they were going against their morals by protesting an institution in which they held so valuable to themselves and fought gallantly for. For others, like Jan Barry, who attended West Point after his service in Vietnam and founded the VVAW, felt completely opposed to the American stance on war in general.<sup>58</sup> By 1968, they had set their eyes upon political affiliation, much like the student movement section of the antiwar movement. For any social movement to gain steam, political advocacy is a large proponent within it. The VVAW aligned themselves towards the New Left and began to rally for political candidates in the 1968 election. However, all candidates within that election ran on the campaign of ending the war, even Richard Nixon. Thus, according to Prados, it was not until mid-1969 when Nixon had still failed to end the War and bring troops home did the entire antiwar movement, including the veterans, pick up significant steam once again.<sup>59</sup> Jan Barry would later go on in 2017 to recount his position in the VVAW in an article in *The New York Times* titled, "When

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<sup>57</sup> Prados, "The Veterans Antiwar Movement," 405.

<sup>58</sup> Prados, "The Veterans Antiwar Movement," 405.

<sup>59</sup> Prados, 407.

Veterans Protested the Vietnam War.” In his article, Barry writes first-hand accounts of what, from a soldier’s perspective, took place in Vietnam. What the media was feeding the public and what was happening were two vastly different ideas of international involvement in a foreign country. Barry states that slogans that lit up American minds with positive opinions of American involvement in Vietnam were simply false. The actual reality of the scene was American pilots spraying chemical warfare herbicides across rice fields and jungles to weed out insurgents (Viet Cong) from the areas.<sup>60</sup> Not fond of his service details in Vietnam, he wanted to draft a paper describing the real events that took place during his time there, but the beginnings of the veteran antiwar movement sidetracked him.

Even though Jan Barry became the face of the VVAW, he is just one out of hundreds of thousands of soldiers that spent countless days in Vietnam. Therefore, that is to note, not all veterans had the same opinions about their service in the military during the Vietnam War, and many were against soldiers joining as advocates against the war itself. However, for those who stood up to a cause they believed to be something that could save the lives of their fellow American soldiers, it was everything. Citizens themselves had varying opinions of Vietnam veterans once they returned home because of the images in the media. War is an ugly institution with casualties that American citizens were seeing within their homes. The concept of the American military using war tactics that were deemed barbaric by some was unimaginable to those who grew up during the WWII era, where the American soldiers were the “good guys.” To see American military men painted in a light that was anything, but positive was

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<sup>60</sup> Jan Barry, “When Veterans Protested the Vietnam War,” *New York Times*, April 18, 2017.



disheartening to many. No matter the opinion, young and old men alike laid down their lives for their country in Vietnam only to come home to chaos once discharged from service. The Veterans for Peace felt as though they had a unique ability to bring light to those issues, while also advocating to bring soldiers home from Vietnam. In an article titled, “50 Years later, Mexican American Vietnam War vets recall protests that conflict inspired,” by Brittny Mejia, thoroughly discusses the differences between people of color and white Americans through the eyes of Mexican American Vietnam War veterans. For them, either enlistment or draftee, they felt they had to prove themselves to their white counterparts by fighting and dying for the country they called home. What is less discussed is the rallies for “Chicano Soldiers” in East Los Angeles, California, which brought thousands of Mexican Americans together to protest the Vietnam War. They did so because of the inequalities within the draft, even before the draft lottery had taken place. Mejia points out in her article stating, “Twice as many people with Spanish surnames were dying in the war in proportion to their population in the Southwest, according to studies by academic Ralph C. Guzman, a future deputy assistant secretary of State.”<sup>61</sup> The veteran that was interviewed for the article was Tomás Sandoval who read about the protests while serving in Vietnam, ridiculed by others for his ethnicity and “his people” destroying the cities. At first, he was enraged by the protests taking place, many ending with violence, but by 2020 when the article was published, Sandoval changed his tone to say he understood why citizens were protesting something they believed to be unjust to not just the soldiers that were sent to Vietnam, but also because of the inequalities that still ran deep within the draft. Even though Sandoval and his older

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<sup>61</sup> Brittny Mejia, “50 Years Later, Mexican American Vietnam War Vets Recall Protests that Conflict Inspired,” *Los Angeles Times (Online)*, August, 2020.

brother did not participate in the veteran antiwar movement, they still came to understand why so many people believed in it, and why their fellow soldiers who came home from Vietnam tried to end the fighting as well. Sandoval's family came from a military background with his uncle's serving in WWII and he stated, "It was still a patriotic thing to fight (in Vietnam) ... The older generation, the Second World War people, were behind it all ... I found that it was because you were Chicano, you had to prove yourself a little more than a *gabacho*."<sup>62</sup> Thus, it shows the sentiment from older generations that fought in WWII, those who saw honor in sacrifice. The differences between the concept of the draft in World War II and the acceptance of sending soldiers to Europe and Asia to fight the enemy were uncanny. Therefore, it is important to note how soldiers were viewed fondly when returning home from WWII, versus returning home from Vietnam from 1963-1975.

## **WORLD WAR II AND BEYOND**

The differences between World War II and Vietnam were staggering, especially for the citizens back home. From the type of war, the draft system, and the public acceptance of war, World War II and Vietnam became two separate monsters. Not to leave out the Korean War, but in terms of the public and how they felt about sending soldiers to Vietnam versus Europe or Asia in World War II, it is interesting to compare the two. For example, during World War II, the Selective Service System was used for the first time. However, the kickback from the public was close to none. The rhetoric around Hitler's plans for "world domination" and the idea that Americans needed to fight for freedom and democracy throughout the world rang true for soldiers fighting the

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<sup>62</sup> Brittny Mejia, "50 Years Later, Mexican American Vietnam War Vets Recall Protests that Conflict Inspired," *Los Angeles Times (Online)*, August, 2020.

battles and the entirety of the nation supporting those soldiers back home. However, when it came to the Vietnam War, the Selective Service System received significantly more backlash from not only those who were drafted, but also from the public as well. For the first time in American military history, the thought of sending soldiers to defend the free world was unacceptable and having the Selective Service System decide who would be the ones to do it was even more so. Many called for draft reform, which Richard Nixon proposed in 1969 after he became President. Even after Nixon's reforms, citizens were still protesting the newfound draft lottery system that replaced what had been in action since World War II. To understand why those sentiments played such a pivotal role in the Vietnam War, it is important to look at the key differences between the two time periods.

Tom Hayden wrote about what it was like growing up with a father who fought in World War II. The baby boom that came out of the Second World War had seen violence inflicted on humankind unlike any other in their lifetime. Which is why for many of them, they grew up having different ideas about war and how governments should use their militaries. Once WWII had ended, citizens, not just of the United States but other Allied countries as well, wanted to make sure such cruelties were never again to take place. With the assurance of peace within the world, people felt more compelled to begin having more children, especially with the booming economy in the United States. Hence the term, "baby boomers," otherwise known as the Silent Generation, 1928-1945. Tom Hayden recalls his father was not being fond of the antiwar movement during the Vietnam War and was not happy with his involvement in it. The tension between the two put irreparable strain on their relationship as father and son, and for so many, his story is

common. The thought of protesting against war, in the older generations' minds, was protesting the US military, something that was unthinkable during World War II. The media was heavily involved in the Vietnam War, unlike in World War II, which brought the realities abroad that much closer to home. Another significant difference between the two eras was that of "total war." In World War II, the entirety of the Nation took up arms to help the soldiers that went across seas to fight the Nazi's and the Japanese. Women were in positions they had never been in because they answered the call to action with open arms; working in factories, as nurses, and other pivotal jobs that could not have gone on without the help of all citizens across the United States. To be a part of the US was to help those fighting abroad bring justice and freedom back to the people and to allow their soldiers the necessities they needed to continue to fight for their loved ones back home.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, the US entered World War II. It was a nearly unanimous decision by Congress to declare war, and the public was massively supportive in efforts to get troops quickly prepared to fight, which meant using the Selective Service System. In World War II, the overwhelming majority of young men across the country wanted the opportunity to fight for their nation, which was vastly different from the Vietnam War. The beginning of the US involvement in Vietnam was already shaky, from Eisenhower to Kennedy to Johnson, and Americans were unsure of the reasons behind wanting to put their hand in the mess that was Southeast Asia. Other than the threat of Communism, citizens had no real understanding as to what was going on across the world and why the United States needed to be the ones to stop it. President Johnson stated he would be sending troops over to Vietnam in 1965 after the Gulf of Tonkin

incident, which was not anywhere as significant as the attack on Pearl Harbor and was not on American soil. However, for many Americans the thought of a foreign country launching an attack on American soldiers was enough to justify war. Even at this point there were those who were doubtful of the American government's intentions but supported the cause until otherwise proven differently. However, once American soldiers finally set foot in South Vietnam and their mission began, the public realized it was a completely different task than they previously thought. The social climate in the United States was rocky from the Civil Rights Movement, the Second Wave of Feminism, and then adding a war on top of that did not do any favors to public opinion. Pres. Johnson had already declared he would not be sending American soldiers to Vietnam, and then went back on his word - never a "good look" for an American politician, let alone the man who was running the country. Therefore, the differences between World War II and the Vietnam War could not have been more drastic. Even during the Great Depression, citizens were wary of their government, but trusted those in power would find a way out of the horrible situation they were in. For that period, World War II ended up being the ultimate cure to their problem. It boosted the economy in a way that the American people had not seen for decades. Americans were able to afford to raise children and soldiers returning home obtained jobs. With the passage of the G.I. bill, a comfortable, middle-class America was born. Before the Vietnam War, those situations were not necessarily different, but what was happening within society was, which made support for the war that much harder to obtain.

Nancy Biberman illuminates what it was like growing up post-WWII and entering her adult years during the Vietnam War. She writes, "I was born when the fight against

the Nazis was barely in the rear-view mirror, and never out of memory. Kids my age were schooled in violence: a war that included mass genocide and the atomic bomb. Every day we were reminded that another could start any day.”<sup>63</sup> Thus, after WWII, the new generation of children came into a new society where at any moment, another worldly tragedy could strike. Parents raised their children to understand the meaning of war, and what it meant to fight for their homeland and against an enemy. Children of this era grew up throughout the Cold War and fear of atomic weaponry, which meant they learned to be wary of communism. She goes on to write how during her days at Columbia, she and her classmates locked themselves into their school to protest the senseless racism of the University and their contribution to military experiments regarding the Vietnam War. Arrested in 1968 for criminal trespassing, Nancy Biberman continued to protest the War in a way she felt justified in. Results of this magnitude were common for those who chose to protest the Vietnam War with their fellow classmates on campus or outside of it. Sentiments from students such as Biberman were common across college-age individuals in America. And the events on college campuses in America and those protesting's experiences were common. Youths everywhere had comparable stories to share about what they went through during their time advocating against a war they found to be unjust. Yet, during the WWII era, those stories are not in history books.

Multiple pivotal events occurred in the 1960s such as, the Civil Rights Movement and backlash from it, Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination, John F. Kennedy's assassination, and then the massacre on Kent State's campus. Throughout America

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<sup>63</sup> Nancy Biberman, “My Vietnam War,” *New York Times*, March 27, 2018.

people were hurting. Not from the economy or a Supreme Court decision, but from the unrest and chaos in the streets. People were confused, angry, uncertain with how their lives would play out, and upset that their loved ones were being sent to a war that after 1970, many thoughts was unwinnable. When asked what it was like fighting in World War II and why the United States decided to include themselves in it, many individuals have similar answers to Nancy Biberman's father - "Because we were attacked; the Japanese bombed our ships in Pearl Harbor... we didn't start the fight... They were fascists. Dictators, tyrants." However, if those who participated in protests and rallies across the Nation during the Vietnam War era were asked the same question, their answers would be similar to Nancy Biberman, but much different than the previous generation - "We were young and idealistic; we said 'enough' to the slaughtering of innocents in our name, and raged against the politicians who were too timid or too corrupt, to stand up for what was right. Who refused to learn. Our country was awash in uncontrollable violence, and unable to change."<sup>64</sup> For years after WWII, people spoke of "never again" shall violence come to such a level, nor shall the entire world be inflicted by it. Yet, the threat of war was always there, creeping up at every turn, every political spat between countries, and with nuclear weapons involved, the entire world was afraid of what could come. With those sentiments across the world and the United States, there was bound to be a conflict that created such chaos within both countries and the Vietnam War did just that. Not only did the United States see the carnage that war brought, but the Vietnamese citizens did as well. That is what the antiwar movement was fighting against and what the memory of their protests and rallies shall remain.

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<sup>64</sup> Nancy Biberman, "My Vietnam War," *New York Times*, March 27, 2018.

## CONCLUSION

The antiwar movement was comprised of multiple different factions that culminated in a nationwide effort to end the Vietnam War and bring the American troops home. The draft resistance movement as well as the veteran antiwar movement proved to be the most influential in their goals. For draft resisters, their primary goal was to not go to war, but by burning their draft cards and draft evasion, they proved their seriousness to their cause. In that, they succeeded. However, the public deemed them anti-American and unpatriotic. The veterans that came back from Vietnam who decided to protest the war were headstrong in their position to end the war and the killing happening overseas. For them, they did not come home to a parade or welcoming attitudes, but rather to hostility from Americans because of what they had seen on their television screens. Therefore, they felt even more compelled to join the movement against the war. However, not *all* Vietnam veterans opposed the war, but a majority of those who did were drafted into service. While the war still waged on in Vietnam, at home, citizens across the nation used their first amendment right to openly reject the war and demand the government bring the troops home.



## CHAPTER III

### MAN UP SOLDIER, THIS IS WAR

There are multiple topics within the Vietnam War that have not been fully researched by historians. Each of these gaps in the historiography creates a problematic narrative. For instance, the pro-war movement is not mentioned as often as the antiwar movement, even though they essentially developed at the same time. The pro-war movement became the antithesis of the antiwar, and they protested one another for their own cause. Average American citizens were largely pro-war up until 1968, when public opinion took a hard turn. Another underrepresented area in the historiography is the Vietnamese youth who also opposed the war. Their activities, in comparison to the antiwar movement in the US, it shows how their goals were very similar yet the reasons behind their creation were different. Women in the United States and in Vietnam played their part in their respective causes as well, creating a diversity within their respective countries.

#### **THE PRO-WAR MOVEMENT**

The pro-war movement is less debated within historiography in comparison to the antiwar movement, which historians have thoroughly covered. There was, in fact, a large number of people who supported the use of the American military and resources in Vietnam. However, overshadowed by media coverage of those who heavily protested the

war, their focus and goals lost stamina. By acknowledging that the pro-war movement was a factor in the chaos that plagued the U.S. during the 1960s and 70s, it is easier to understand the effect the antiwar movement truly had on government decisions regarding prosecuting the war, but also on decisions that would eventually bring troops home.

Pro-war activism on American campuses was prominent, yet not quite at the scale of those they proposed as the “New Left.” Young conservative activists opposed university faculty and their lack in efforts to disband anti-war rhetoric on campus because they believed it to be against what was best for America.<sup>65</sup> Anti-communism was the backbone of their movement, and they used the fear of American citizens with that ideology to gain support for their cause. In the early stages of the pro-war movement, students participating were more concerned with retaliating against those who opposed the war and made their voices heard on campus. Post-1967, their ideals changed towards political aspirations and helping conservatism thrive.<sup>66</sup> Sandra Scanlon details the entirety of student pro-war activism in her book, *The Pro-War Movement: Domestic Support for the Vietnam War and the Making of Modern American Conservatism*. Historical documentation of the pro-war movement is lacking, yet Scanlon thoroughly examines not only student pro-war activism, but also the rise of conservatism and the goals of those who were in favor of the war in Vietnam. She provides a timeline from the early stages of the war to the end when Saigon fell to the North Vietnamese and the US pulled all American troops out of Vietnam.

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<sup>65</sup> Sandra Scanlon, *The Pro-War Movement: Domestic Support for the Vietnam War and the Making of Modern American Conservatism* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013), 242.

<sup>66</sup> Scanlon, *The Pro-War Movement*, 243.

The controversial Vietnam War formed several pro-war groups. According to Scanlon, each had their own differentiated political identities as well as belief systems on what the war in Vietnam meant or what it *could* mean. Even though pushback from pro-war activism essentially began because of anti-war protests on campus and throughout America, they were more focused on patriotism rather than the actual war itself.<sup>67</sup> The most prominent group that persevered through the anti-war rhetoric on American campuses was the Youth Americans for Freedom. Their goal was to promote American patriotism while using the dangers of communism to gain support for their cause. While difficult, it proved generally successful for their focus group of individuals that were pro-war. However, most of their audience were of the older generation who did not find themselves openly protesting like young Americans did at the time. The older generation did not face opposition to their beliefs through personal means, rather through media. Scanlon also suggests that many young conservatives went to fight in the war. For example, John McCain was one of the most prominent young conservatives who fought in the war, possibly out of a history of military service within his family.<sup>68</sup> While John McCain and other young conservatives like him signed up voluntarily to serve in the Vietnam War, others remained on the home front to establish their presence within the antiwar movement. Through the eyes of media, seeing soldiers coming back home and the backlash from the war, young conservatives saw themselves as catalysts to a new patriotic movement in support of the Vietnam War. They wanted to show those who supported the war they were not alone in their efforts to defeat communism at home and abroad.

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<sup>67</sup> Scanlon, *The Pro-War Movement*, 245.

<sup>68</sup> Scanlon, *The Pro-War Movement*, 244.

Political aspirations of the Johnson administration influenced the escalation of American troops in Vietnam. Pres. Johnson believed his Republican adversaries would be unhappy with any other course of action. Therefore, he proceeded to escalate warfare and provide more military support to the South Vietnamese army. However, conservative Democrats were the most outspoken on their disagreement with Johnson's foreign policy plan within Vietnam. They were critical of his handling of the intensified relations in Southeast Asia as well as how the government was going to gain support for the war domestically.<sup>69</sup> Politics played a crucial role in helping the pro-war movement, specifically with student involvement because of the influence on Pres. Johnson for full-scale bombing of North Vietnam, as well as escalation into war.

Even though the pro-war movement created a significant presence within the antiwar movement itself, it did not gain overwhelming support from young Americans, but rather those who were either too old to join the military, or had previously fought in other wars America had been involved in. In 1964 and '65, citizens believed in the war and supported it in their own ways. The pro-war movement was rather successful during the early stages of the war because of the overall support within the public. Although, establishing themselves on college campuses became more difficult because of who their following consisted of. Particularly, the Silent Generation, was one of the biggest advocates for the Vietnam War and looked down upon those who protested it. For them, military service was a means to an end. The American military was *supposed* to get involved internationally to create democracy throughout the world, even when the countries did not necessarily want it. World War II garnered national support because

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<sup>69</sup> Scanlon, *The Pro-War Movement*, 47.

those in the military were the “the good guys.” They were fighting fascism and freeing citizens persecuted by Hitler and the Nazis. However, Vietnam was inherently different from WWII, yet those who served felt the same as those who served before. Familial obligation to military service was one of the leading causes for those to join the ranks during the Vietnam War, which extended from WWII and the Korean War. However, even with the pro-war movement and their presence across American Universities, the public focused more closely on what the media followed, which were those actively protesting the war.

After 1968, American support for the war was at a record low and even with the pro-war movement trying to keep morale high, the events of the Tet Offensive were detrimental to their cause. Their movement became more about discrediting their counterparts rather than continuing to keep support for the war going. By doing that, they believed people would see through those demonstrating against the war and see them as anti-military, which was fundamentality against the American status quo. However, the pro-war movement did accomplish their goal of portraying those who protested as un-American, yet it did not hinder their response to the war. With the use of media, it was easier for citizens to see the demonstrations on television, especially when they turned violent. 1968 was a chaotic year with multiple assassinations and the demonstration at the Democratic National Convention. Because of this, it was easier for those who were pro-war on American campuses to discredit the other side by pointing the finger in the direction of those causing the violence. While the American public did not necessarily side themselves with one movement or the other, many did consider themselves to be pro-war until after 1968. In December of 1967 when General

Westmoreland and Pres. Johnson went on their nationwide campaign to rally American support, those who were pro-war fell in line behind them. However, two months later when the first of the Tet Offensive hit, the public felt disillusioned. The pro-war movement became overshadowed with the decrease in public support of the war and even if those individuals who were on the opposite side on American campuses of those who opposed the war, they did not have enough stamina to keep their movement going after 1968. It was difficult for even Richard Nixon to gain that support back with his 'peace with honor' and 'Vietnamization' policies. After the fall of Richard Nixon, American citizens wanted out of the war as it was too costly for the American economy and American casualties were too high.

While the pro-war movement was trying to create and keep support for the war in Vietnam, the antiwar movement also had their counterparts protesting the war in the battlegrounds. Vietnamese citizens, specifically affected youth, made their voices heard to protest the war because they wanted American intervention to end. They felt the American military was only making matters worse and costing thousands of citizens their lives. Therefore, while youth activists in support of the war at home were trying to grow their movement, they had a strong feat against them with multiple groups on the opposite side. The Vietnamese youth that were protesting American occupation had different tactics than that of the youth in America being that they had resentment for the American troops invading their homeland. Yet, the two movements coincided with one another with their end goal to end the war, which meant getting American military out of Vietnam and back to the United States.

## **YOUTH ACTIVISTS IN VIETNAM VS AMERICA**

As the pro-war and antiwar movements battled against one another for their overall goals in the United States, simultaneously, Vietnamese youth were also making their voices heard for their disdain with the Vietnam War. Like the United States, there were of course, some outliers in the overall mission of the youth activists. However, they differed from the US in how they went about protesting and organizing their groups. In Vietnam, youths ranging from high school age to college created coalitions to allow for their protests to take place. Students protesting in the US had a much different experience because they were not in the middle of a warzone, unlike those protesting in Vietnam. They had more to lose and more brutal consequences if they were to get arrested, become someone suspected of communism, or even just facing the police brutality during their protests.

Different groups became a part of the overall Vietnamese antiwar movement because of what their desired end goal was, and how they wanted to go about achieving it. For some, they helped with the resettlement of refugees who were fleeing warzones and areas of conflict as well as areas that the US had bombed. For example, during the 1968 Tet Offensive alone, 560,000 people fled their area of the country and became refugees further south.<sup>70</sup> Therefore, the youth in Vietnam had much more at stake than those in the United States. Even though their end goal was comparable, youth activists in America never truly saw the sight of war unless they had gone to Vietnam themselves. For a large majority of them, that was a feared reality, but not a realistic one. Veterans coming home from the war and the media participated in alerting those in the United States of the grave circumstances across the world, but unless they had been in it

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<sup>70</sup> Van Nguyen-Marshall, "Student Activism in Time of War: Youth in the Republic of Vietnam, 1960s–1970s," *Journal of Vietnamese Studies* 10, no. 2 (Spring 2015): 43.

themselves, it was difficult for them to understand in its full capacity. The fear of being drafted was the driving force for American citizens to protest, while those in Vietnam were protesting because of the reality of living it.

Other notable groups include the Saigon Confederation of High School Students, the Saigon Student Union, and the Hue Student Union. However, it is important to point out that not all activism in Vietnam was anti-war. The three groups mentioned above were the most notable in protesting the war, specifically American intervention, and the destruction of their nation. For many young activists, they simply wanted the violence to end, and in that perspective, they were like those protesting in the United States.<sup>71</sup> A different sector of activists chose to pursue social and civil work to help keep their city functioning during wartime, especially while other young men went off to fight in the war, leaving their families to fend for themselves. However, for a small minority, their goals were completely different than the majority protesting against the violence.

The President of the Saigon Student Union in 1967 became an underground communist as a teenager and was secretly working for the National Liberation Front.<sup>72</sup> Those who chose to protest the war with communist affiliations had to keep their political beliefs quiet to blend in with the overall movement. It was difficult to tell who was secretly working for the North Vietnamese while others wanted the war to come to a halt entirely. The communist youth in Vietnam resented the Saigon regime and more specifically, the American involvement in Vietnam. Not only did those who followed the communist route have to be careful of their affiliation to not alert their peers, but they could not alert the authorities either. If protestors became suspected communists, arrests

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<sup>71</sup> Nguyen-Marshall, "Student Activism," 43.

<sup>72</sup> Nguyen-Marshall, "Student Activism," 44.



were inevitable, and the Saigon prison system often used torture tactics to infiltrate the communist regime and gain information.<sup>73</sup> Years after the war, leaders emphasized that it was a very small number of individuals that were communists in the youth protests, yet it was still a notable number of activists, and they were subsequently arrested.

The police met wide-ranging protests in Vietnam with brutality which included water cannons, pepper spray, and clubs. Enough protests became a point of police aggression, but not all turned violent.<sup>74</sup> Students were often afraid to participate in rallies and protests because of the aggression against them, yet thousands still gathered to make their voices heard through the war. Even though there were multiple factions with differing goals, they still worked together to try and create peace within their country and to help those who were suffering because of the constant violence raging within their borders. They created their coalition of groups to put their country back together, yet it became a foundation for their disdain of the war itself and the thousands of people displaced from the fighting. Van Marshall details this sentiment in his article by stating, “It [the war] impinged upon what should have been their carefree years and, for many, destroyed their future. It is no wonder that in both the United States and South Vietnam, youth became socially and politically engaged.”<sup>75</sup>

In the United States and in Vietnam, political engagement was widespread among the youth, yet in Vietnam their consequences for doing so were more life-altering. However, imprisonment for American youth participation in rallies and protests was not exceptional. For example, Tom Hayden and Bruce Dancis both spent time in prison for

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<sup>73</sup> Nguyen Marshall, “Student Activism,” 44.

<sup>74</sup> Nguyen Marshall, “Student Activism,” 44.

<sup>75</sup> Nguyen-Marshall, “Student Activism,” 44.

their involvement in high stakes protests but were not tortured for information as suspected communists were in Vietnam. Americans did not have to endure the atrocities like those protesting in Vietnam, and the label of communist did not have as harsh of punishments in the United States. While protests in the US could range from hundreds to thousands, protests in Vietnam did not quite reach that scale. Therefore, their effect on ending the war or creating government awareness was not on the same scale as in the US. Overall, those against the war in America and in Vietnam were fighting the same battle, just in two separate areas of the world and with different ideas of how to effect change in their country. Regardless of how the youth in Vietnam felt, it is no secret that there were thousands of others that felt differently. Many citizens in Vietnam did not want American intervention in their country because of the chaos and casualties it brought to their doorsteps. However, there was a line between wanting the war to end and retaliation against American intervention. While the American military believed they were doing what was best for South Vietnam and keeping themselves safe, the citizens of Vietnam were also dying due to the raging war. Therefore, an unexpected group stepped in to counteract those deaths and do what they felt was meaningful for themselves, their families, and their country.

## **WOMEN IN VIETNAM**

Historian Karen Turner argues that any “accurate history of the war the Vietnamese call the ‘American War’ must recognize Vietnamese women’s contributions to Hanoi’s victory in 1975.”<sup>76</sup> Women in Vietnam were the unlikely devotees to the

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<sup>76</sup> Karen G. Turner, “‘Vietnam’ as a Women’s War,” in *A Companion to the Vietnam War*, eds. Marilyn B. Young and Robert Buzzanco (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 93.

cause and showed how forceful they could be when called upon to act. The effects on the people of Vietnam were detrimental to their livelihoods. The youth recruited for the North and South Vietnamese armies lost their young adult years to war and their country expected their participation no matter the cost. Like in the United States. However, a similar side effect of war was the women also losing their livelihoods, family members, their health, and even their own lives.<sup>77</sup> Throughout history, women have generally been behind the scenes when it comes to war and those who are fighting it. Usually, women are fighting on the home front while the men are the ones who are fighting in battle elsewhere. Therefore, the Vietnam War was unique in the aspect of women contributing and laying down their lives for a cause. The women who were affected by the war felt it was their responsibility to take it upon themselves and do their part.

Americans and the military made the mistake of not accounting for women when configuring the numbers of their enemy in Vietnam.<sup>78</sup> In the US, women had traditionally been factory workers and nurse aids at home and abroad for previous wars, yet women were not actually involved in the fighting as soldiers until much later. Even within the antiwar movement, inclusion of women did not necessarily happen on the same basis as their male counterparts. Therefore, because of this mistake, the numbers of the North Vietnamese military were much higher than previously expected. Women in Vietnam were actively engaged in the military and unlike in the US, their male counterparts were generally supportive, and it helped raise the morale of local troops.<sup>79</sup> Historians are still investigating and disputing among themselves the full extent of female and youth

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<sup>77</sup> Turner, "Vietnam' as a Women's War," 93.

<sup>78</sup> Turner, "Vietnam' as a Women's War," 94.

<sup>79</sup> Turner, "Vietnam' as a Women's War," 94.

involvement in the Vietnamese troops. In Vietnam, they estimate that 70% of the youth that created strongholds along the Ho Chi Minh Trail were women. Those strongholds were imperative to North Vietnamese success against the South Vietnamese and American militaries.<sup>80</sup> Another important area to note is that while the American military were burning through towns and segregating civilians to infiltrate the Viet Cong, citizens were dying throughout the entire war. Women joined the militias and guerilla groups for various reasons, but one of the main causes seemed to be the devastation to their homes and their families.<sup>81</sup> Thus, the war in Vietnam waged on for ten full years because of miscalculations and improperly attacking an enemy that was difficult to see.

Female soldiers in guerilla and militia groups made up about 1 million in the National Liberation Front.<sup>82</sup> They were a pivotal component of the Viet Cong and NLF forces in the North Vietnamese Army. It was simply a longstanding tradition that when the war came close to home, women must also take up arms and fight for their land.<sup>83</sup> However, this sentiment only rang true when there was no other option except but to have women join the fight. Vietnamese historians have pointed out that one of the biggest factors of the outcome of the Vietnam War was not that of American technology, but Vietnamese morale.<sup>84</sup> The North Vietnamese Army, even with heavy casualties, remained steadfast in its plight to reunify Vietnam into one country under communist rule. The combatants knew they did not necessarily have to win the war militarily but simply outlast the enemy, and the women were valuable in this effort. Those who were

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<sup>80</sup> Turner, "Vietnam' as a Women's War," 94.

<sup>81</sup> Turner, "Vietnam' as a Women's War," 94.

<sup>82</sup> Turner, "Vietnam' as a Women's War," 94.

<sup>83</sup> Turner, "Vietnam' as a Women's War," 95.

<sup>84</sup> Turner, "Vietnam' as a Women's War," 95.

fighting against the American military in Vietnam were enthusiastic about the antiwar movement in America. They wanted chaos to disrupt their priorities and thus create an opening for the North Vietnamese to take over.

Not accounting for female involvement also led to disillusion within the American public. For example, the media portrayed the Tet Offensive as a large failure for the United States, yet the North Vietnamese Army sustained the greater number of casualties. However, even with that, they were still able to push forward and were prepared to fight continuous battles. With that, the American military pleaded with the public to understand that Tet was a military victory for the US, but when the war continued to wage on with no end in sight, that victory did not have much sway with public support for the war. Even though women were important to the success North Vietnam had during the war, there were still standards in their patriarchal society. Women were the caregivers and were supposed to birth and raise the children; it was particularly important for them to produce a son.<sup>85</sup> However, for many women who took up arms against the American military, the war forced them out of their homes and ripped their families apart. Women often joined the French-resistance movement at a young age and those sentiments ran deep into American occupation as well.<sup>86</sup> For the men and women of Vietnam, occupation of foreign entities was not new and the resentment for such spread through generations. Women who participated in the French-resistance movement and even led rebellions against French and Japanese armies, instilled those sentiments within their children and raised strong sons and daughters who were loyal to their country of Vietnam. “Twenty years of continuous struggle against French

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<sup>85</sup> Turner, “‘Vietnam’ as a Women’s War,” 97.

<sup>86</sup> Turner, “‘Vietnam’ as a Women’s War,” 97.

colonialists and now the American imperialists have hardened the arms of our women who are certain of final victory.”<sup>87</sup> Perhaps another mistake made by the American government was underestimating how far the North Vietnamese would be willing to go to gain full control over their country again after decades of fighting to retain it.

Operation Rolling Thunder was one of the most destructive bombing campaigns of the war. The bombing of North Vietnam was the first stint in a long, ten-year battle for the “hearts and minds” of the citizens and for establishing a democracy in South Vietnam. However, the area the bombing campaigns affected was not considered by the United States. Therefore, Rolling Thunder moved close to urban areas, populated with youth in North Vietnam. The bombing of their homes and families propelled young Vietnamese into the resistance by the thousands. In 1965, an estimated 50,000 youths joined the fight, and by 1966 during the bombing campaign, thousands more became involved as well, including both men and women.<sup>88</sup> While some many women decided to stray away from their homes and include themselves in the fighting, other women weighed their options very carefully. For example, educated women were unsure if they should leave their schooling to join the fight or if they should stay and use their skills for other means. Of those educated women, the French educated some and they did not participate in the French-resistance movement, nor did they join forces with the North Vietnamese because they enjoyed their status gained from such education.<sup>89</sup> It was difficult to pinpoint the specific reasons behind women joining guerilla forces because every individual had varying factors to think about before making their decision. Some

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<sup>87</sup> Turner, “Vietnam’ as a Women’s War,” 98.

<sup>88</sup> Turner, “Vietnam’ as a Women’s War,” 100.

<sup>89</sup> Turner, “Vietnam’ as a Women’s War,” 100.

women simply wanted to be just that, *women*. They wanted a husband and children and to live out their matron duties to their families. Others did not have that sense of fulfilment with their childhood upbringings and felt that leaving home would allow them freedom and adventure. Regardless of their reasoning, Operation Rolling Thunder was one of the most prominent events that led individuals – both men and women – into the forces of the North Vietnamese Army.

Men and women fought alongside one another with ease, historians noted little about ill relations between the two sets of soldiers. Some historians have tried to slant Vietnamese women by describing them as helpless victims of the war who had to take care of their families under bombardment from bombs and gunfire. However, that could not be further from the truth as described by Karen Turner. Vietnamese women were at the center of the war just as the men were. Relations between the two were considerably professional considering the adolescents of both groups. Women were particularly young when joining the guerilla groups, as young as ten years old. The youth groups that grew up during the war dedicated and involved themselves in the fighting with the help of their male counterparts. Women often were healthier than men and required less food and nutrients but had the men do more of the heavy lifting. There were no sexual tensions between the two groups described, yet some did partake in sexual relations, but with different operating beliefs, there were also consequences for such deviations as well.<sup>90</sup> Even with working so closely together for year-long periods, sexual harassment was little to none as each group respected one another and their individual skillsets that complimented one another. When bombs were dropped by the Americans, soldiers were

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<sup>90</sup> Turner, “Vietnam’ as a Women’s War,” 105.

told not to recede into cover because everyone had a specific job to do. They were to stand up and shoot at the planes flying above them.<sup>91</sup> Through the fog of war, however, women tried to keep their lives as normal as possible under the circumstances. Female soldiers told stories of their time spent in the service and states that they would read books, sing songs, and try to dress themselves up to feel feminine and pretty for a time. Although difficult under such conditions, women wanted to retain control of their own destiny even if it meant laying down their lives for the cause.<sup>92</sup>

An interesting effect that came out of women fighting against the Americans in Vietnam was their want for equal rights of their male counterparts. They no longer had interest in male authority figures, and it did not scare them like it had once before. The patriarchal society ran off female obedience to men. But for the young females that grew up fighting alongside men, doing the same jobs, and being brave soldiers, they saw through that dichotomy of society. “When women discovered that they could do men’s work, they began to believe they should enjoy men’s rights and responsibilities.”<sup>93</sup> They retained a completely new skillset, ones usually enjoyed by men. Therefore, it was only natural for them to start wanting those sentiments outside of military life. “The war temporarily altered traditional gender roles.”<sup>94</sup> Even with their hopes for equality in the domestic sphere, women in the ranks still made sure to obtain the necessary skills that society valued in relation to womanhood. They wanted to prepare themselves to be good mothers and wives, even if they were still serving in the war. Classes held for female

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<sup>91</sup> Turner, “Vietnam’ as a Women’s War,” 103.

<sup>92</sup> Turner, “Vietnam’ as a Women’s War,” 104.

<sup>93</sup> Turner, “Vietnam’ as a Women’s War,” 106.

<sup>94</sup> Turner, “Vietnam’ as a Women’s War,” 107.



soldiers helped them obtain those skills for life after the war.<sup>95</sup> Therefore, assimilating back into civilian life after 1975 was not quite as difficult for female soldiers.

Women helped to repopulate the nation after 1975 and were a vision of heroism and strength within their communities.<sup>96</sup> After the war, women wanted to enjoy familial life in peacetime, something that so many of them fought incredibly hard for – their futures. Unfortunately, many of the young females who joined the ranks during their adolescents lost most of their prime childbearing years to the war. Female veterans struggled with infertility after the war and were not a valuable citizen in the eyes of men because of the inability to repopulate their gene pool. However, women of this time did not let being unmarried or a childless widow deter them from having a family. Stepping outside of gender norms of what made the “perfect woman,” they would have men impregnate them to become single mothers.<sup>97</sup> Women who fought gallantly alongside men did not let the critiques of how they should be living their life post-war take away from how *they* wanted to live their own lives. After all, for many of them, they gave away their best years to the cause and to winning a decade long fight for the reunification of their country. As for all soldiers, assimilating back into civilian life was difficult, yet woman handled it with strength as they felt lucky enough to remain living and have an opportunity to become mothers and wives unlike so many that they saw perish in the war. For them, they fought for the chance at having a life such as that in peace time and protecting their homeland from destruction for that purpose. By no doubt did women have a pivotal role in the development of the Ho Chi Minh Trail, the maintaining of that

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<sup>95</sup> Turner, “Vietnam’ as a Women’s War,” 107.

<sup>96</sup> Turner, “Vietnam’ as a Women’s War,” 107.

<sup>97</sup> Turner, “Vietnam’ as a Women’s War,” 108.

trail and supply lines, and helping North Vietnam regain control over the entire country. Even with their changed gender roles after the war was over, they felt grateful to have helped so passionately for a cause they believed would be peace and justice to their homeland.

## **CONCLUSION**

In Vietnam and the United States, there were multiple groups that made the war their own and used it to throttle their agendas forward. For the United States, the Anti and pro-war movements fought against one another for support, both trying to discredit the other. The pro-war movement sought to dismantle their counterpart for what they saw as good for the country. Those on the opposing believed if they could silence antiwar movement, they could gain more support for the war could and thus boost American morale. In any war, it is important to keep the public's support for the sake of government decision-making and the troops overseas. Historically, Americans have supported the use of the military in international affairs, up until the Vietnam War. Therefore, analyzing what changed during Vietnam is incredibly important for the sake of future relations with other countries and foreign policy. In Vietnam, there were pro and anti-war groups as well. However, they used their protests in different circumstances than in the United States. Those in Vietnam had significantly more to lose, including their own lives by protesting or joining forces with the North Vietnamese military.

The Vietnamese who protested the war in their own country were not just rallying against the carnage taking place in their homeland, but also against the American military and their occupation as well. They felt if Americans were on their land, there would not and could not be peace within their country. After fighting against the French

colonialists, they again had to fight against (or with) the American military. For some, they wanted to keep their country in-tact, but with democratic rule. However, that became extremely difficult to obtain and citizens felt they would be better off under a communist government regime. Others, protested with the hopes of dispelling the American troops to help the North Vietnamese take over. In total, each group of the Vietnamese antiwar movement had their own goals and initiated their causes differently, but all wanted the American military out of their country. Historians do not commonly discuss Vietnamese citizens that protested the war within American history because of how it distorts the image of American intervention in the country to 'help' them create democracy within their borders. However, South Vietnam was not putting in the effort necessary to win the war, even with American help. Therefore, the Vietnamese and the antiwar movement considered the American soldiers the aggressors especially with the images of them burning down entire villages in hopes of finding their enemy. Along with the antiwar movement in Vietnam, the other side of that would be those who fought endlessly to help the North Vietnamese regain control of the entire country under their communist regime.

Women in Vietnam were pivotal in the victory of the North Vietnamese Military and their communist government. Female youth propelled themselves into the conflict with unprecedented numbers and incredible strength. Those who joined the ranks felt as though it was their duty to their country to fight for their homeland and their families. They fought tirelessly against the French and then again against the Americans as foreign militaries occupied their country for decades. They simply wanted a country at peace in which they could raise a family and live out their lives without the threat of invasion,

occupation, or government disturbance. Ho Chi Minh himself called women to war to end it swiftly with their help.

In America, youths joined the antiwar movement for multiple reasons, but most notably being the threat of having to go fight in the war and possibly lose their lives. For Vietnamese youth, they were thrust into war because of the threat of losing their homes, their culture, and their families. As the United States incessantly bombed their territories in urban populated areas, they felt they had no other choice but to fight back for the sake of their country. Both sides had strong youth presence within their military and their opposition to the war. Women made their presence known within the North Vietnamese military, laying down their lives for the cause. While in the United States, women joined the antiwar movement and used it to create a presence within the social and political spheres outside of the home – both sides dismantling dominant gender roles within their respective countries. For the time, Vietnamese women were figures of heroism and strength as they were true veterans of a war that took so much from them. In the US, the war also took away from the livelihoods and the youth of those at home and abroad as well.

The Vietnam War was extremely unpopular with the American public after the 1968 Tet Offensive, but in Vietnam they were unrelenting in their pressure and resilience to their cause. Therefore, with a public that did not support the war because of the cost in human lives and economic means and an opposing side dominated by foreign nations for decades, it made for a ten-year bloody battle for the “hearts and minds” of every individual. It was a tiring war for those in Vietnam fighting and those rallying in the streets in the United States. However, the uncommon topics of the Vietnam War were

some of the most prominent within the US and Vietnam. Women soldiers in Vietnam, the Vietnamese antiwar movement, and United States pro-war movement are all under-discussed within the historiography of the Vietnam War, but all had significant impact to the war itself. Women were the most effective in creating strongholds for the North Vietnamese military, while the American pro-war movement eventually fell off after 1968 when the American public was no longer on board with the war. Regardless of what country they were in, youths made their voices and their impact known throughout both countries while fighting on opposite sides of the war. They all wanted to what they felt was best for their livelihoods and their home country and using any means necessary to show how important the war was in the long term. Even though American and Vietnamese youth were on opposite sides of the fight, they felt their significance in both countries and should be noted in the overall discussion of the Vietnam War and the successes and failures made by both sides. The North Vietnamese were able to secure the entirety of the country, but it would not have been possible without the help of the younger generations seeing how the war could affect them in the future and what they wanted for their own lives within that future.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE WHOLE WORLD IS WATCHING

The media played an overwhelming role in the decline of public opinion, specifically in 1968. Through their portrayal of the antiwar movement, unrest within the presidential election, and the fighting in Vietnam – particularly the Tet Offensive – citizens in the United States were constantly intaking information from journalists and newscasters regarding the chaos at home and abroad. It is imperative to discuss the media and how it drove public opinion. Without the media and journalists in Vietnam, Americans would not have had access to all the information they did but rather would have only focused on what was happening on the home front. The media portrayed the antiwar movement rebellious youths who were defying their government and wreaking havoc in the name of peace. As a result, the public was largely on board with the war from the beginning in 1965 up until 1968. Historians have consistently investigated why that drastic turn took place in 1968 and where to put the blame. Overall, the media's portrayal of the Tet Offensive in combination with the antiwar movement led to the turn of public opinion, resulting in a broad-scale outcry demanding the withdrawal of all American troops from Vietnam.

### **THE MEDIA AND VIETNAM**

Prior to the Vietnam War, the United States media was reaching breakthrough technological advancements. At the beginning of the war, news outlets sent journalists abroad to capture the fighting in real time on video, which led the media to broadcast Vietnam which became the first war in American history across citizens' televisions. There were positives and negatives to the technological advancements of news media and journalists. For example, it kept those fighting across the world honest in their intentions, war aims, and conduct with international law. It also allowed for journalists to seek out answers from the United States government and infiltrate the behind-the-scenes dealings that the American public did not hear about. The best example of this being the release of the Pentagon Papers written in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, originally published by Neil Sheehan. While the government's disillusionment of the American public was on full display in 1971, so was the war American soldiers were fighting thousands of miles away. Each night before citizens would go to bed, the news would scroll through the death toll from the day with each soldiers' names across the screen. Parents and loved ones anxiously awaited to see if their family member in battle would be one of the fallen. While excruciating for those watching, it provided more insight into how many people were dying and what the US military was doing during their time in Vietnam. However, the cons of the media's involvement were also significant because of how it conflicted with public opinion, as well as the viewpoints of the journalists themselves. Those who were strongly against the Vietnam War intended to write pieces discussing those sentiments and vice versa. Therefore, while citizens awaited the daily reports from their local news outlets, journalists were doing the real

digging into how the American government was handling the war and the carnage overseas.

For the most part, the media condemned those who were actively participating in the antiwar movement as well as those who made their opinions against the war known. In the FCC's guidelines, "it is not the Commission's intention to make time available to Communists or to the Communist viewpoint," thus when older generations labeled anti-war protestors as communist sympathizers, their portrayal on American news channels was as such.<sup>98</sup> From the beginning to the end of the war, the stages of journalism varied greatly. Through 1965-68, journalism regarded political consensus and patriotism, while post-1968 and into the "polarization period" of the Vietnam War, journalists became "an independent investigator who serves to check the abuse of power."<sup>99</sup> With this being held true throughout the war, it would make sense why the *Pentagon Papers*, one of the most controversial pieces published in modern American history, were given to the public in 1971. On the other side of that, the Trial of the Chicago 7 in 1968 – one of the most televised national trials to date – drew the media's attention toward a different light. The public looked down upon those who were on trial for their participation in the protest taking place at the same time as the Democratic National Convention to rally support against Richard Nixon's campaign. Understanding the various stages of Vietnam War media and journalism sheds light on how and why journalists and news outlets changed their tone from 1965 to 1970.

Hallin notes that towards the beginning of the war, coverage in the news focused primarily on the military in Vietnam and their portrayal of the "bad guys," i.e., the North

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<sup>98</sup> Hallin, *The Uncensored War*, 117.

<sup>99</sup> Hallin, *The Uncensored War*, 117.



Vietnamese Army. “In the Spring of 1967 the war over Vietnam escalated on two very different “fronts.””<sup>100</sup> The news showed little about politics or political relations between other countries and Washington. However, post-1967 politics became a part of the forefront of media coverage because of the upcoming election in 1968. As an election year and heavily controversial time in America, citizens wanted to know about candidates and their approach to governing the US, and most importantly – how they would handle the ongoing war. Along with covering the political aspirations of future government officials, the news as well as the politicians were arguing about the state of Vietnam and the direction America should take in the Spring of 1967. For some, they wanted to continue with the heavy bombing in North Vietnam and for others they felt that ramping up the number of American soldiers there would be the only way to gain North Vietnam’s submission.<sup>101</sup> Citizens, of course had their own ideas of how the war should continue, most of them wanting an immediate withdrawal of American troops and peace between the countries.

The government became thoroughly concerned with keeping the public opinion positive while aligning their war aims. Robert McNamara was adamant that further escalation would be detrimental to public opinion and the economy in the US and South Vietnam.<sup>102</sup> The media continued to cover all those factors with continued coverage of military operations in South Vietnam against the Viet Cong assailants. Changes in the media’s coverage of the war came throughout 1968 with dramatic political events, including the election, as well as the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert

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<sup>100</sup> Hallin, *The Uncensored War*, 159.

<sup>101</sup> Hallin, *The Uncensored War*, 160.

<sup>102</sup> Hallin, *The Uncensored War*, 160.

Kennedy. With the Tet Offensive beginning in 1968 as well, the media was in full overload of military operations, deaths in the field, returning soldiers from war, and of course, the antiwar movement ramping up throughout the United States. Throughout 1968 with the chaos and the Tet Offensive, public opinion began to decline and Americans, as well as Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, believed that there was no correct way to end the war without more casualties and continued American military presence in the region. Hallin describes this change in percentage in media coverage of American victories versus losses. For example, before the Tet Offensive, journalists described 62% of battles as victories for the American military. After Tet, only 44% of battles were then reignited as victories for America.<sup>103</sup> Thus, showing the American people that continued military presence and more soldiers in Vietnam were not the appropriate answer to creating peace and ending the war swiftly. “Two sets of statistics illustrate its magnitude. Before Tet, editorial comments by television journalists ran nearly four to one in favor of administration policy; after Tet, two to one against.”<sup>104</sup> Therefore, it could be stated that dramatic media turn in coverage and editorials helped to increase the number of individuals very much against the war and open the eyes of others that were on the fence about it to begin with.

The American commander in charge of troops in South Vietnam, General William Westmoreland emphasized the media’s role in military operations abroad as well as how it affected public opinion back home. He, and others, felt as though it was not the key cause of military defeat in Vietnam, but still had some significance to the conflict.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Hallin, *The Uncensored War*, 163.

<sup>104</sup> Hallin, *The Uncensored War*, 162.

<sup>105</sup> William M. Hammond, “The Press in Vietnam as Agent of Defeat: A Critical Examination,” *Reviews in American History* 17, no. 2 (June 1989): 312.

Keeping public opinion at bay and positive was crucial for allowing the military to continue successful missions in Vietnam. Rallying people behind the cause was good for morale and thus boosted the confidence of those doing the actual fighting abroad. However, with public opinion so important, when news casters such as Walter Cronkite changed their opinion in 1968 during the Tet Offensive and deemed the conflict “no longer winnable,” public opinion received a major blow and so did the morale that those in charged were trying so hard to build.<sup>106</sup> The Tet Offensive, in particular, more than any other part of the war allowed for media interpretation and journalists relied on their findings of casualties to portray what was happening in Vietnam. Thus, producing negative media and an increase in controversy over the war.

Citizens generally intake information through a bias previously formed through political affiliations, family, education, and life experience. Americans who already had a positive view of the war and the American military involvement in Vietnam did not pay much attention to the newscasters that criticized or proved it to not be worthwhile. On the other hand, those who were seemingly against the war, found those same newscasters to be champions of American media and working on the forefront of modern American journalism.<sup>107</sup> Just as it is today, citizens rarely watch or listen to media that conflicts with their previously formed opinions and when they do, there is not much, if any, reasoning or listening with or to those who are from the opposing side. Hence, in 1968 when the Tet Offensive changed the aura of media and how they portrayed the war, there was more patriotism derived from that while also more discontent from those who opposed it as well. However, while news reporters shared stories of American military

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<sup>106</sup> Hammond, “The Press in Vietnam,” 312.

<sup>107</sup> Hammond, “The Press in Vietnam,” 315.

and their plight to win the hearts and minds of the South Vietnamese, rarely did they ever discuss the *situation* of the South Vietnamese. After all, the American military was simply there to help them establish a working government within their country to sustain the viability of their own nation.<sup>108</sup> However, for those journalists and newscasters, it was an American war and citizens were more interested in what was happening to Americans versus South Vietnamese military and citizens. Possibly, rightfully so being that they were concerned for the lives of their own people. Although, from the global perspective of what the war truly meant and how it was to be conducted, not advertising those sentiments and actualities only filled more American minds with the idea that the South Vietnam simply did not want to do the work for themselves, but rather have the Americans do it all for them.<sup>109</sup> In some cases, this could be considered true, in others, it was a detrimental theory that plagued those in support of the war and even those against it.

Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey visited South Vietnam in 1967 and came back with grave reports. It is untold whether he passed this information to Pres. Johnson, but he was quoted saying, "I'm damn sure we're not doing the Vietnamese or ourselves any good. We're murdering civilians by the thousands and our boys are dying in rotten jungles for what? A corrupt, selfish government that has no feeling and no morality."<sup>110</sup> When those in government started to turn against Johnson's policies in Vietnam, public opinion was already falling steadily against the war. However, it was the American casualties that were piling up that were the main proponent of those downturn in

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<sup>108</sup> Hammond, "The Press in Vietnam," 318.

<sup>109</sup> Hammond, "The Press in Vietnam," 318.

<sup>110</sup> William M. Hammond, "The Tet Offensive and the News Media: Some Thoughts on the Effects of News Reporting," *Army History*, no. 70 (Winter 2009): 13.

opinions. Because of this, Johnson wanted to “accelerate” turning over the responsibilities to the South Vietnamese Government and to their soldiers to fight the war for themselves.<sup>111</sup> However, the GVN (Government of South Vietnam) had a reputation for being corrupt and infiltrated with suspected communists that were in support of North Vietnam. Therefore, figuring out how to turn the war over to them and to have a positive outcome was a difficult position for Pres. Johnson to be in. When Walter Cronkite visited Vietnam to gain his own opinions of the war, generals informed him of their successes militarily and their losses as well. For Cronkite, he spent time in Hue (a major battle site) concluding that he must do everything in his power to help the war end, preferably a peaceful one. However, General Weyand, even with his own reservations for the war, stated that he felt Cronkite did not give a full accounting of what Weyand told him and the information that was given to him.<sup>112</sup> Thus, he came to his *own* conclusions versus the conclusions of those who were waging the war. When Johnson got wind of Cronkite’s reporting, he stated, “If I have lost Walter Cronkite, I have lost Middle America.”<sup>113</sup> While military officials gave reporters leeway to observe military operations in Vietnam, their reporting was their own and generally given to them by public officials or from those fighting in the field. Even with their own conclusions, they had resources for information as well.

The reporting on the Tet Offensive was damaging to the United States propaganda front and turned citizens against the war. Arthur Herman stated in the *Wall Street Journal* that the Tet Offensive was the most decisive battle of the Vietnam War, and “the

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<sup>111</sup> Hammond, “The Tet Offensive,” 13.

<sup>112</sup> Hammond, “The Tet Offensive,” 12.

<sup>113</sup> Hammond, “The Tet Offensive,” 11.

public didn't hear about who had won until much too late."<sup>114</sup> Therefore, it makes sense as to the profound change in the media in 1968, simply because of the reporting on Tet. Even though it was a clear victory for the United States, citizens were concerned with the number of casualties caused by the North Vietnamese offensive. Unfortunately, the reporting on such did not do justice to that victory and put Pres. Johnson and General Westmoreland in a predicament. Johnson wanted to pursue negotiations afterwards and the American people saw Westmoreland as the commander in charge that allowed all those casualties to take place.<sup>115</sup> However, a second historian, Robert Bateman, did not blame the media for the loss of the Vietnam War, but rather he shed light on the fact that Westmoreland and Johnson both gave a false positive to the public about the end of the war being in sight. They did this at the end of 1967, shortly after, the Tet Offensive occurred. Therefore, citizens did not realize how many Viet Cong and North Vietnamese soldiers were still at the expense of the other side, being able to mount an offensive of that magnitude. Bateman states that it was that disillusionment of the public, rather than the media's reporting, that was at fault for the change in public opinion and overall downturn in wartime propaganda.<sup>116</sup> With the Tet Offensive, the news media reporting, and Americans now understanding that war was not close to over, Johnson's administration took a major hit, and he decided reelection was not in the cards for him. Just as the media played a role in the reporting on military operations and the war itself, it also contributed to the political sphere as well.

## **PRESIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATIONS AND THE MEDIA**

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<sup>114</sup> Hammond, "The Tet Offensive," 7.

<sup>115</sup> Hammond, "The Tet Offensive," 6.

<sup>116</sup> Hammond, "The Tet Offensive," 8.

Even though television increased their negative rhetoric over the war, they simply followed the direction of the public, yet while still influencing others to think the same way. “For the most part, television was a follower, rather than a leader.”<sup>117</sup> Their role in the decrease for support of the war and decline in public opinion was not necessarily significant but was still a factor within the United States. However, Richard Nixon kept support for his foreign policy through his administration but retained considerable control of media interpretation and journalism of such.<sup>118</sup> Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard Nixon both were cautious of the media and journalists covering Vietnam, particularly because of public opinion and what it could do to their overall voter support. However, Johnson was much more critical at the end of his administration, especially before the 1968 election. September of 1967 was a significantly bad month for the Johnson administration, so much so that he decided running for President again was not in his best interest. Johnson stated that NBC and the *New York Times* were the worst of the groups of media in their Vietnam coverage, particularly because they would not allow Johnson to put out what he felt was necessary for the American people to see. “I can prove that Ho [Chi Minh] is a son-of-a-bitch if you let me put it on the screen – but they want me to be the son-of-a-bitch.”<sup>119</sup> Pres. Johnson felt that the media was negatively portraying him because he is the President who first sent troops over to Vietnam, fully involving America in an overseas war. He believed news outlets were trying to cover only the negative to corner the United States into surrendering to the North Vietnamese and ending the war.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Hallin, *The Uncensored War*, 163.

<sup>118</sup> Hallin, *The Uncensored War*, 164.

<sup>119</sup> Chester J. Pach Jr., “The War on Television,” in *A Companion to the Vietnam War*, eds. Marilyn B. Young and Robert Buzzanco (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 450.

<sup>120</sup> Pach, Jr., “The War on Television,” 450.

Not only was the Vietnam War the first ever televised war in American history, but it was also extremely open with the media's communication and coverage of the war and to the public. Presidential administrations before Johnson felt that using transparency in news coverage helped to prevent extreme backlash and scrutiny from the public. Even with Johnson's discontent of the media, he too, still pursued the route of transparency with the media, even when he felt they were considerably one-sided. White House aids and press secretary of Johnson concluded that it was his frustration of the growing unpopularity of the war rather than the actual media coverage that pursued throughout the war.<sup>121</sup> Prior to full-scale war, Americans were already relying on television as their primary source of news outlets, while continuing to read printed versions of newspapers such as the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*. Pres. Johnson, Richard Nixon, and public affairs officials such as Arthur Sylvester believed that the news media was completely one-sided, even with their hope for full pellucidity with the American people. On the other hand, that transparency was the exact reason for their outbursts. Sylvester was a strong advocate against showing everything to the American people, even going as far as suggesting lying to citizens about relations in South Vietnam.<sup>122</sup> However, news outlets would openly use footage taken in Vietnam for their nightly coverage and in some instances, it was not always graceful regarding the American military. For example, when military officials ordered American troops to take out the entirety of the city of Cam Ne, it was heavily televised in America, showing marines using high-powered weapons demolishing huts. Even though a marine bullet

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<sup>121</sup> Pach, Jr., "The War on Television," 451.

<sup>122</sup> Pach, Jr., "The War on Television," 451.



only killed one child, it did not sit well with those who already opposed the war, nor for those trying to continue to support it.<sup>123</sup>

In 1965, lead analyst for CBS news, Walter Cronkite, visited Vietnam and reported that he was “impressed” with American military efforts and was not fond of younger reporters and their journalism regarding the war.<sup>124</sup> For the most part, TV stations and new outlets supported the military efforts and the war, but also tried to remain objective in their journalism of the fighting and relations between Vietnam and the United States. For Pres. Johnson, he brought up crucial points about the media concerning previous wars. He stated that if there had been media coverage in wars such as Korea or WWII, the United States would not have been able to garner the support needed to do what was necessary to win the war.<sup>125</sup> There was another interesting change in media during the 1960s. Television became American citizen’s prime source of news intake, which meant more citizens were aware of what was happening in Vietnam, versus previous wars when news was spread by paper or word of mouth. Soldiers and media were not feeding live footage into American homes of Hitler’s concentration camps or Imperial Japan’s conquering of islands around the Pacific. Therefore, with television becoming extremely popular, the FCC cut down time on “quiz shows” more time was made for national and local news. Thus, media services and newspapers hired an influx of reporters and journalists to create more stories mainly due to the news going from fifteen minutes daily to thirty minutes.<sup>126</sup> The idea that television played a role in the

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<sup>123</sup> Pach, Jr., “The War on Television,” 452.

<sup>124</sup> Pach, Jr., “The War on Television,” 453.

<sup>125</sup> Michael Mandelbaum, “Vietnam: The Television War,” *Daedalus* 111, no. 4 (Fall 1982): 157.

<sup>126</sup> Mandelbaum, “Vietnam,” 159.

downturn of public opinion with the Vietnam War is plausible, but generally because of how many Americans became truly aware of the conflict overseas.

Even with television's impact on the American view of the war, it was not enough to completely alter public opinion to the point of absolute upheaval in the United States. Journalists shot scenes of combat multiple days before they were aired, particularly because news outlets felt the high-intensity combat was what Americans wanted to see, rather than other footage of soldiers. Therefore, when television networks streamed military operations, there was an optimistic overcast on how America was "winning" the war. Americans became disillusioned by news reporting and government speeches to the point where they felt they understood what was happening in Vietnam and that it was entirely positive on part of the American military.<sup>127</sup> Even with American casualties, North Vietnamese casualties were high, thus producing a victorious outcome of the war. However, when military and government reports differed from those shown on the television networks, Americans became confused with the contrast in information. When reports between multiple sources differed, especially in print journalism versus televised media, citizens felt they had a side to choose. In the wake of the antiwar movement, the disillusionment of the public did not help matters. 1968 became a turning point because of political squabbles, assassinations, and an influx in anti-war protests.

Even though there were newspapers and journalists prior to the Vietnam War, as stated, it was the first ever war on television. "An image is thought to be many times more powerful than words."<sup>128</sup> With that, it was not as though they were simply just discussing the wins and losses on live television and scrolling through the names of the

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<sup>127</sup> Mandelbaum, "Vietnam," 160.

<sup>128</sup> Mandelbaum, "Vietnam," 161.

soldiers who lost their lives. Real, raw footage of fighting, combat, and dead bodies flashed upon citizens screens in their living rooms. Therefore, because images can be more powerful than simple descriptive words, citizens had a chance to react to what they saw, even if the military considered it a victory for the United States. The carnage they were seeing did not necessarily equate to a “win” in some peoples’ minds, thus turning them against the war or at least the want to end American participation in it.<sup>129</sup> On the other side, historians could also conclude that it created more support for the war by citizens feeling patriotic because of the military casualties. Seeing others have disdain for a war in which Americans were dying was not sympathetic in some eyes, but rather not patriotic to the cause. Thus, there became more indifference with one another over what they believed to be best for America – end the war and end the carnage (on both sides) or stay in the war until they reached a successful conclusion to “give meaning to the sacrifices” that the American soldiers made.<sup>130</sup>

Richard Nixon, while in office, was a strong proponent of limiting how the media was able to portray the war. After the Tet Offensive, public opinion changed so swiftly that the media coverage did as well. However, it is important to note that opposition to the war became more respectable within the government and thus, most of the news being shared against the war, came from public officials into the news media.<sup>131</sup> Therefore, while public officials in and outside of office were contributing to the news not only their professional consensus, but their personal opinions as well, citizens came to realize that even their own government was aware of the mistake they had made in

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<sup>129</sup> Mandelbaum, “Vietnam,” 161.

<sup>130</sup> Mandelbaum, “Vietnam,” 161.

<sup>131</sup> Hammond, “The Press in Vietnam,” 320.

Vietnam. During which, Nixon wanted to limit how much the media could influence public opinion by devising a plan to tax audit major news outlets to essentially silence them. However, before he could do so, the My Lai Massacre occurred and his cabinet members advised him to abandon his plan for fear of making public opinion even worse, especially after the events that played out in My Lai.<sup>132</sup> Pres. Nixon waited until 1971 to institute his plans with tax audits and the media, though not much ever came of that. Few individuals in government were willing to risk what could happen if Americans were to find out of a cover up versus reading or hearing about the mistake firsthand. Therefore, open, and reliable communication from the news to the American people was prominent throughout the Vietnam War.<sup>133</sup>

The media along with the antiwar movement contributed heavily to the obsession over public opinion that plagued the Johnson and Nixon administrations. They both became so captivated with the thought of controlling the media in their favor and discrediting the movement, that it eventually took over their thoughts and lead to their fall from office. Nixon was able to discredit the movement and align with those who thought it to be unpopular that it helped him win his elections in 1968 and 1972. Yet, just winning the election and bringing troops back from Vietnam on his own time was not enough. He needed for those who were relentlessly protesting and contributing in the rallies to understand that they would not make him do anything he did not want to do. While the Vietnam War was unpopular with the American people, the antiwar movement was equally, if not more, unpopular with the public as well.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Hammond, "The Press in Vietnam," 320.

<sup>133</sup> Hammond, "The Press in Vietnam," 320.

<sup>134</sup> Mandelbaum, "Vietnam," 166.

## THE ANTIWAR MOVEMENT AND THE MEDIA

History is not black and white when it comes to the media's role in the Vietnam War. Citizens watched the antiwar movement particularly closely from televisions across the country when large rallies and violence would break out. Specifically, during the Trial of the Chicago 7 when the government arrested seven protestors for inciting a riot across state lines. The media televised their trial and citizens across the country watched in anticipation. However, television did not directly impact the antiwar movement, nor did it create a mass opposition to the war. It did, however, change the way people took part in the movement and how they received communications about it. "It served as a network of communication through which people in one part of the country discovered that others elsewhere shared their feelings about the war and saw how they could demonstrate those feelings publicly."<sup>135</sup> The people participating in the antiwar movement knew they would not be able to single-handedly bring home the troops themselves, but rather wanted to show American that through public opinion and open opposition to the war, the government would be forced to end it. Persuading more people to join the movement became the lead focus, and using television, that goal became much more achievable.<sup>136</sup> Those who were a prominent part of the movement were generally college-age students, thus did not necessarily have an overload of funds. To get television time, companies had to pay for those times slots for advertisements and shows. Therefore, with college students being at the forefront of the movement, they were not able to afford airtime to get the word out about their goals. They had to make their rallies

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<sup>135</sup> Mandelbaum, "Vietnam," 164.

<sup>136</sup> Mandelbaum, "Vietnam," 164.

and protests “newsworthy” to make their voices heard. The louder they were, the more people they had, and event location all contributed to that goal of getting on television.<sup>137</sup>

Those who rallied and marched were not the majority that opposed the war. There were others who remained silent in their opposition or simply responded when polled on surveys. Therefore, the risk people were willing to take to make their voices heard usually depended on how strongly they believed in their cause. Some activists even went to jail for their beliefs and their participation in the rallies.<sup>138</sup> When protests would turn violent, unfortunately, they received more airtime on the news. “The movement disrupted American life and divided American society, thereby raising the cost of the war, and perhaps helping to persuade the public that the price of waging it successfully was too high.”<sup>139</sup> The antiwar movement was at the forefront of Pres. Johnson and Nixon minds’ while trying to persuade the public that the war was still winnable and to keep public opinion and morale strong regarding the war. However, because of their obsession with the opposition to the war, it also contributed it to their downfall. The movement’s goal was to end the war, and in their demonstrations, they had a hand in *shortening* the war.<sup>140</sup> Pres. Johnson decided to not seek reelection in 1968 and Pres. Nixon became so preoccupied with public opinion that he eventually persuaded others to break into the Democratic National Committee building, thus producing the Watergate Scandal, and leading to Nixon’s resignation. While the media was at the forefront of these events, they perpetuated the Presidents’ concerns with the antiwar movement by painting them as youth activists who were out to destroy America in their

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<sup>137</sup> Mandelbaum, “Vietnam,” 164.

<sup>138</sup> Mandelbaum, “Vietnam,” 165.

<sup>139</sup> Mandelbaum, “Vietnam,” 165.

<sup>140</sup> Mandelbaum, “Vietnam,” 165.

rioting. The movement became widespread through media attention, which put their faces on televisions across the nation as well. “The antiwar movement became caught up in the symbolic conflict and associated in the public mind with disorder and revolt.”<sup>141</sup> Even if most people were still in strong support of the war, they were consistently seeing those who opposed it on their televisions.

The antiwar movement was unpopular with the American people and the media helped in that concept. However, it was not because the public inherently disagreed with the activists’ beliefs or their opposition to the war. In fact, most Americans believed the war was a mistake, as did Pres. Nixon. The difference between the two being that those who participated in the antiwar movement did not just believe the Vietnam War to be a simple mistake made by the American government, but rather an intrusion into the livelihoods of those in Vietnam and a crime of humanity for the lives lost throughout the war. For a majority of the American public, they too, believed it to be too costly, in American lives particularly, but they did think the US was justified in its position of trying to stop the spread of communism.<sup>142</sup> Therefore, even though the antiwar activists and the overall public agreed that the war needed to end, they were at odds because of their plight in helping end it as well as media portrayal of protests and rallies that were taking place throughout the nation. Americans have consistently been scared or not fond of perpetual change within the United States. For older generations, the thought of changing how culture and society has always been not one of popularity. That became different for the younger generation participating in the antiwar movement. They were everything new and different within societal and cultural change which increased their

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<sup>141</sup> Mandelbaum, “Vietnam,” 166.

<sup>142</sup> Mandelbaum, “Vietnam,” 167.

unpopularity with the older generations in the US Without the media attention, especially during the Nixon administration, most Americans would not have thought of them as such a significant force in America, but rather just as a group of youths that did not fully understand what they were getting themselves into.

While the media changed in 1968 after the Tet Offensive, they still did not change in direction of support for the antiwar movement. They had clear and open communication with the American public about the situation in Vietnam but did not give official opinions in favor of those participating in the movement itself. If rallies and protests were to make it on the news, it was usually because of violence breaking out or thousands of individuals marching through streets, halting traffic, and disrupting daily life of those around. All those situations combined did not make for a “we’re the good guys” kind of picture. Instead, it left Americans with a bad taste in their mouth regarding young activists and how they perceived the war in Vietnam. The violence that plagued the antiwar protests were satisfactory for the Johnson and Nixon administrations because it allowed for citizens to see in real time what they had been trying to discredit.<sup>143</sup> It was also difficult for those at the forefront of the movement to appeal to both sides of the aisle at the same time. For those participating in the movement, they wanted lively speeches of “American imperialism” at their protests and how that mindset had plagued America since its creation. For those watching on their televisions, it was hard for them to comprehend how America could be or has ever been an imperialist country.<sup>144</sup> It posed a very real problem for the antiwar movement to overcome but was almost impossible to

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<sup>143</sup> Melvin Small, *Covering Dissent: The Media and the Anti-Vietnam War Movement* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994), 25.

<sup>144</sup> Small, *Covering Dissent*, 67.



do so. They needed for people to truly listen to them and hear their plea and political reasonings and not just *hear* them, but also *agree* with them. As consistently stated, they could not please everyone, but being able to gain more support for their movement was pivotal to their cause.

American citizens had widely varied opinions about Vietnam, and while many agreed that war was a mistake or that the American government should withdraw troops, the disconnect lay in the *how* to do so. Those in the movement felt their position was the only humane one and the only one that would end the thousands of people dying in Vietnam – Americans and Vietnamese. This could have been part of the reason they felt so strongly in their position and their decisions to continue to protest vehemently even when they knew the media was not portraying them as champions of human rights, but as violent activists rebelling against their government and their military. However, Melvin Small’s article states it that “even though media coverage was often negative, the fact that such stories appeared on the front pages energized those who participated in mass demonstrations.”<sup>145</sup> With every protest that appeared on the front lines of newspapers and television news stations, participants in the movement wanted to continue to be newsworthy in their plight to end the Vietnam War. They felt if they were consistently on the news, it would show the American public that the antiwar movement was an important matter.<sup>146</sup> If the media never televised the antiwar movement, that would simply give the message that their movement was not important and thus not worthy of news coverage. Therefore, even though the mainstream media outlets felt they were aligning themselves with presidential attitudes by discrediting the movement, it had the opposite effect on the

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<sup>145</sup> Small, *Covering Dissent*, 164.

<sup>146</sup> Small, *Covering Dissent*, 164.

morale of those involved, but rather boosted their means to continue for the sake of their cause.

1968 was a particularly hard year for American citizens, especially with the events that played out on national television. For the most part, the media did not generally depict direct violence or catch it on camera, but rather the aftermath was what was portrayed on national news. Even though the military allowed journalists and cameramen in the battlefields of Vietnam, there was never any live footage of actual killing happening. Of course, there was footage of firefights or helicopters flying overhead, but nothing in comparison to what happened in 1968. At the start of the Tet Offensive in February, the media captured and aired footage of the South Vietnamese military shooting down a Viet Cong soldier, killing him instantly. In the same year, in August, the media also aired footage of violence breaking out during the antiwar protests in Chicago at the Democratic National Convention.<sup>147</sup> As stated, violent images can elicit a response from viewers. Those protesting in downtown Chicago believed that the images of police beating them in front of a hotel would create sympathy for their cause. However, the antiwar movement was extremely unpopular and there was not much sympathy to go around from the public. However, historians do not always discuss an important part of television images and still photos or videos. That being, the images show the event, what happened, perhaps where it happened, but lack to note *why* it happened.<sup>148</sup> Reporters relayed an image of a South Vietnamese general shooting and killing a Viet Cong terrorist in civilian clothing in broad daylight. However, the reason

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<sup>147</sup> David Culbert, "Television's Visual Impact on Decision-Making in the USA, 1968: The Tet Offensive and Chicago's Democratic National Convention," *Journal of Contemporary History* 33, no. 3 (July 1998): 419.

<sup>148</sup> Culbert, "Television's Visual Impact," 428.

behind the shooting of the man was not included in the report. The same is the case with the Chicago protest that turned violent with police senselessly beating youths in the downtown streets. Visuals simply do not portray the entire story, which is the job of the reporter to obtain the facts and Americans can intake those facts along with the images and develop a response.

The public read into the images and videos and speculated in their own terms the cause for the actions behind the scenes of the pictures. For people such as Professor Bruce Southard, who in 1968 was a graduate student, the image of the shooting of a man in the middle of the street was enough to influence his active participation in the movement afterwards. He believed no one should be able to be the judge, jury, and executioner in what was supposed to be (or become) a democracy – the reason American soldiers were there fighting in the first place.<sup>149</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Live images of the war, televised nightly, did have an effect on the ‘hearts and minds’ of the American people, and even though the media did not directly influence more Americans to join the antiwar movement itself, it did *indirectly* help show that the war in Vietnam was not being won and limited Johnson and Nixon’s credibility while in office. “Tet was a military disaster for the North Vietnamese, though it ended up as a psychological victory in terms of its effect on public opinion in the USA.”<sup>150</sup>

The United States was at a crossroads with antiwar activism, public opinion, the media, and the Vietnam War. There were missing details to every piece of news, all while Americans were creating their own thoughts about what the government should do

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<sup>149</sup> Culbert, “Television’s Visual Impact,” 423.

<sup>150</sup> Culbert, “Television’s Visual Impact,” 434.

with the military in Vietnam. Even with live footage of the war, Johnson's plea to the American people, and Nixon's discrediting of the antiwar movement, most Americans still felt the war to be a mistake – particularly after 1968. The antiwar movement found themselves to be at the forefront of the media's attention as well as capturing the Johnson and Nixon administrations. With Vietnam being the first ever televised war, it created an entirely new realm of problems for the presidents that governed during the war. It led to Lyndon Johnson's decision to not run for reelection as well Richard Nixon's fall from grace. While individually they each had their own issues, the media's attention to detail pre and post 1968 had a hand in their decision-making process. Every failure during the Vietnam War cannot be equated to the fault of the president at the time, but they were the ones to take the blame in the eyes of the American people.

The antiwar movement's entire purpose was to show the world that their movement was important and that the war in Vietnam was an unjust violation of civil and human rights. With the media's help in detailing the events that played out in Cam Ne, My Lai, and the Long shooting, people were able to see firsthand that the American military was not winning the war and their support dwindled. Even though the movement was very unpopular with older generations, they found themselves to be champions of new foundational ideas – cultural and societal. They saw the world differently and wanted to bring change to the United States, which worried and scared those who had lived much longer than the young activists and had been through other wars up to that point. The antiwar movement participants and most Americans who thought the war was a mistake were different in their opinions of *why* the war was a mistake, but ultimately agreed that it was. Even with the discreditation of the movement

by the mainstream news media, presidential administrations, and even the public, they still made their voices heard and created a lasting change within American society.

Historians should not use the antiwar movement or the media as a scapegoat for the loss of the Vietnam War, but rather they should further examine all the culminating factors that will produce an overall answer to what went wrong. The United States was simply not willing to pay the price it was going to take to win the war, and the South Vietnamese were unwilling to produce the necessary manpower and hard work it was going to take for their country to become a democracy. With all those factors having a prominent role in the failure in Vietnam, the North Vietnamese were the headstrong group, willing to do whatever it took to take back the other part of their country, a part they believed rightfully belonged to them. With a mindset such as theirs and an unwavering dedication to their cause, the US and South Vietnam were no match. Therefore, while the antiwar movement and the media were not inherently responsible for the failures in Vietnam, they simply pointed them out on a national stage for the entirety of America to see and create their own opinions about what they believed to be the best way forward.

## CHAPTER V

### GOODNIGHT SAIGON

The Vietnam War created lasting change within the United States and in its foreign policy. The antiwar movement also helped to produce a newfound identity for American youth, who launched themselves into the national spotlight for the entirety of the war. The Tet Offensive, the media, and the antiwar movement created a *zeitgeist* in which citizens felt despondent about the future. When the final American troops left Vietnam and Saigon fell to the North Vietnamese, Americans wondered what the last ten years meant, as it appeared it had been spent fighting a war that essentially concluded as it would have done without their intervention. An overall disillusionment swept through American society, creating a common distrust for the government that would take years to rebuild. For generations after the Vietnam War ended, the topic has still been a point of contention among those who lived at the time.

#### **LASTING CHANGE FROM THE ANTIWAR MOVEMENT**

Children of the post-war Baby Boom generation grew up not knowing the struggles of the Great Depression or World War II. They were born into an affluent society thriving off a post-victory-of-war economy. World War II propelled the United States out of the Depression and into a time of great strength and wealth for all those who lived within its borders. However, even though the economy was thriving, people were

having more children, and scientists were making technological advancements, it did not mean that the entirety of the population was *equal*. Those same children that grew up in the affluence of post-war America saw the inequalities of black Americans and their plight to end racism and racist institutions throughout the country. For most, they grew up knowing they were fortunate for the time they were in because their parents consistently reminded them of how it was for them growing up in such trying times. Even with those constant reminders, children of that generation wanted to create lasting change within the United States. The antiwar movement began as a faction of the “new left” and grew into an overarching force with thousands of individuals determined to end a war they believed was unjust.

The Baby Boom generation became fully entranced with John F. Kennedy’s “ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country” speech and truly believed they would be the generation that could change American society and politics.<sup>151</sup> Kennedy, being the youngest president ever elected to office, appealed to young Americans, especially those who came to be in college at the time of the Vietnam War. What started as a road to equality and justice for all as a section of the Civil Rights Movement turned into the antiwar movement when thousands of young American men were dying in Vietnam, for what they saw as an unnecessary cause.<sup>152</sup> Those who participated in the movement were different in every way than their forebearers and stood up to the status quo, making noise and becoming comfortable in uncomfortable situations. From their hair to the way they dressed, to the music they listened to, they

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<sup>151</sup> Tischler, “The Antiwar Movement,” 385.

<sup>152</sup> Tischler, “The Antiwar Movement,” 387.

were simply just *different* – and they believed in the American government differently as well.

The first area that sectors of the antiwar movement changed was politics itself. The Students for Democratic Society (SDS), particularly wanted to create a large coalition movement in which they became the “New Left” and used their voices against racism, war, and social injustice.<sup>153</sup> They believed in cultural politics versus the ones of traditional liberalism or the “Old Left,” which increased discontent within the democratic party. Even with the different groups forming the large coalition of forces to fight against the war in Vietnam, specific groups had other beliefs about the world, politics, and societal norms. Society coined those individuals with the label of “hippie” in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The New Left as a part of the antiwar movement was not just antiwar, but also worked against other social injustices. Beginning with the Civil Rights Movement, white civil rights activists were prominent on college campuses throughout the United States. They may not have known the plight of black Americans at the time, but they worked alongside them for their goal of equality. Most big-name protestors were men, but the New Left also participated in the fight for women’s equality as well.<sup>154</sup> However, their philosophical views on womanhood and the empowerment of women differed from the strong coalition that had formed the antiwar movement, it allowed for women to have a voice in the protests and propel themselves into the spotlight as well. The antiwar movement spread across gender and race, hoping to appeal to all those who believed in their cause and it did not alienate any particular set of individuals.

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<sup>153</sup> Tischler, “The Antiwar Movement,” 389.

<sup>154</sup> Tischler, “The Antiwar Movement,” 389.



The SDS group as well as Abbie Hoffman's group the "Yippies" were of forward thinking and wanted to allow for personal expression within American society. While Hoffman's views were the most radical out of the different groups involved in the antiwar movement, he still emphasized that young activists should live their lives the way they saw fit and to increase their personal development and existential thinking.<sup>155</sup> As the SDS grew once ground troops were sent to Vietnam, they continued to repudiate government justifications for the war and accentuate their commentary of American imperialism and the need to end the war for the sake of American and Vietnamese lives alike. Tom Hayden, one of the founders of the SDS faction of the antiwar movement was particularly outspoken with his belief in "creating a revolution in American society."<sup>156</sup> Societal norms surrounding gendering activities as well as sexuality also became speaking points for leaders of the movement. "The rigid hierarchal structures and "party line" of the "Old Left" had given way to a theory of human nature that valued multi-dimensionality and the empowerment of the individual in every area of expression from speech to sexuality."<sup>157</sup> While groups of the antiwar movement were protesting American imperialism and the cost of waging a war in Vietnam, they also propelled the idea of individualistic ideas into societal norms and changed the status quo within their generation. Those of the older generations were fearful of that change and firmly disagreed with those who spoke out against everything they grew up believing in.

While those of the Baby Boom generation were not necessarily able to change the minds of those who raised them, their most important goal was to create a new,

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<sup>155</sup> Tischler, "The Antiwar Movement," 392.

<sup>156</sup> Tischler, "The Antiwar Movement," 392.

<sup>157</sup> Tischler, "The Antiwar Movement," 391.

enlightened society. One of equality, justice, individualistic ideas, and theories. A true revolution to the status quo in America. However, it was difficult in the early days to stand up to what they had known growing up, especially to their own family members.<sup>158</sup> Although, just because it was difficult does not mean it did not happen. Once the ball was rolling on American campuses and institutions were holding moratoriums as well as teach-ins, it became a watering hole for idealistic thinking and a new way of looking at problems within the United States. While for the most part teach-ins were professor led, the eventually turned into panels for discussion and education on dissenting opinions regarding the war; they created a space for students and faculty to safely express their opinions to anyone who would listen. This form of protest was not necessarily “new” to American society, but the inclusion within them was. For the SDS, they believed that they should fight against social injustices just as hard as they were fighting against the war in Vietnam. They understood the racial inequality that was prominent within the American military as well as those the government sent to Vietnam to fight.<sup>159</sup> While it was difficult to wrap a culmination of ideas into one overall movement, they made their purpose clear with each statement they made at every rally, protest, and convention held throughout the United States.

The antiwar movement disrupted every faceted compartment of American society. Those who were a prominent part of the movement were on television, in newspapers, and out in the streets of major cities or college campuses. They wanted to show that they would not be silenced simply by the discreditation of the Presidency or by the possible disappointment by their family members or those of the older generations. For those who

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<sup>158</sup> Tischler, “The Antiwar Movement,” 385.

<sup>159</sup> Tischler, “The Antiwar Movement,” 385.

believed in the movement's abilities, they were all in and used every part of their lifestyle to contribute to the end goal – bringing troops home from war and stopping the injustices happening overseas. Members of SDS believed once that happened, they would be able to implement their other goals into American society. However, their section of the antiwar movement split up over differing beliefs before they had a chance to do so.<sup>160</sup> While the movement was able to bring multiple facets of different sectors of society together to push toward one common goal, those individual pieces were still their own with their own ideas of how American society should be moving forward. Therefore, as the upcoming American generation, those new founded beliefs were able to have a lasting effect on American culture and society. With new ways of thinking, reformed societal expectations, and the roles of multiple genders and races within America, the antiwar movement gave way to much more than just the end of an unpopular war in Vietnam.

### **THE EFFECT OF THE ANTIWAR MOVEMENT**

There are two ways to measure the potential effect the antiwar movement had on foreign policy and public opinion. First, historians must analyze the goals of the movement and how they believed through protest and rallies they could create that change. The overall goal of the movement was simple – end the war and bring American troops home. However, upon further research, it is not that cut and dry. The movement was also purposeful in the *education* of other Americans on the anti-war perspective.<sup>161</sup> While they wanted to end the war and save American and Vietnamese lives, they also wanted to have a foreign policy centered on concerted peace efforts and not full-scale

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<sup>160</sup> Tischler, "The Antiwar Movement," 393.

<sup>161</sup> E. M. Schreiber, "Anti-War Demonstrations and American Public Opinion on the War in Vietnam," *The British Journal of Sociology* 27, no. 2 (June 1976): 225.

war. They were not only for the peace in Vietnam, but also for the foreseeable future of American international relations. Thus, society still stereotypes the “hippies” of the movement today with themes of ‘peace,’ flowers, and ‘love.’ While those who participated in the movement held their beliefs strongly, they still understood they were up against the popular opinion in the United States; citizens that believed the American military *should* oversee problems with foreign entities for the sake of democracy in the world. The antiwar movement found this to be imperialistic and inhumane and they consistently repeated those themes throughout their protests and unification of the movement itself. Therefore, when measuring the movement’s effectiveness, historians must discuss their cause in terms of ending the war and the education and addition to their movement.

Historians generally agree that while the antiwar movement spanned widely across the United States with college students, veterans, and families of soldiers, it did not necessarily “end” the war on their own accords. Public opinion was dwindling considerably during the movement, but it had more to do with their view of the presidency and government itself. The media had a small, but still significant, hand in showing the American public the handlings of the Vietnam War. By 1973, when the Watergate Scandal broke, public opinion was virtually zero, but again, had little to do with the movement, but more to do that Americans were tired of the cost of what they felt to be a war that was a mistake to have gotten involved with.<sup>162</sup> Even though public opinion did not necessarily respond to the anti-war protests and rallies, the opinions of the people were still prominent in ending the war. Infatuation with approval ratings of

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<sup>162</sup> Herring, *America’s Longest War*, 334.

their Vietnam handlings infected both the Johnson and Nixon administrations. Thus, after one of the biggest changes in public opinion – post- Tet Offensive in 1968 – Johnson announced he would not be running for reelection. Therefore, it is possible to deduce that while those in the streets protesting did not culminate into a nationwide disapproval for the war, that disapproval still came with time and was essential in bringing American troops home. Thus, the effect of the antiwar movement on public opinion was not satisfactory to their goals, but the continued escalation of war made their point for them. General support for presidential foreign policies increased relatively with talks of negotiations or bombing, but lowered with talks of ground troops, or a heavier American presence in the region.<sup>163</sup> Those who participated in the movement were more radical in their mindset and ideas about how and *why* to end the war, but collectively, especially post 1968, more than half of Americans wanted to get out of Vietnam.

American casualties in Vietnam became a significant factor in the public's declining support for the war. They came to believe the cost of waging the war became too high and thus, was not worth the fight.<sup>164</sup> However, even with the anti-war demonstrations emphasizing this message, citizens had to come to that conclusion on their own, which for many was after the Tet Offensive. The public did not respond well to anti-war demonstrations, possibly because of media portrayal, generational differences, or lack in understanding their cause, but regardless of that, most of them still wanted the war to end. While casualties and cost of war became a primary reason for declining support, it is possible for anti-war demonstrations to have had a hand in communicating

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<sup>163</sup> Schreiber, "Anti-War Demonstrations," 227.

<sup>164</sup> Schreiber, "Anti-War Demonstrations," 228.

those downfalls to the American people.<sup>165</sup> Media attention to the anti-war protestors could also make up a considerable chunk of reasoning behind the communication aspect as well. With increased media presence, more Americans were witnessing citizens every day, making their voices heard and even enduring violence and imprisonment for their beliefs. While plenty of citizens considered that to be completely radical and rebellious, whether they realized it or not, it was still showing them the negative side to war. It is difficult to pinpoint the effect the movement had on public opinion because of certain underlying factors, but media attention and historical documentations proves that citizens who supported the war looked down upon the antiwar movement.<sup>166</sup> Thus, citizens of that demographic were not likely to change their opinions based on the demonstrations of anti-war activists.

From 1964 to 1968, public support for the war declined rapidly, specifically after 1968. While citizens redacted their support on grounds of costliness or casualties, those who were a part of the antiwar movement never gave their support based on moral justifications.<sup>167</sup> They believed the war to a direct attack on humanity and to be morally wrong. This could be part of the explanation for why citizens in favor of American military use looked down upon their movement. Therefore, it is difficult to definitively state that the antiwar movement influenced national public opinion. However, even though older citizens were not keen to their motivation for or way of protesting, they were still able to get their point across and attract other like-minded individuals into the movement. Historians cannot measure the effectiveness of the antiwar movement by just

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<sup>165</sup> Schreiber, "Anti-War Demonstrations," 229.

<sup>166</sup> Schreiber, "Anti-War Demonstrations," 229.

<sup>167</sup> Schreiber, "Anti-War Demonstrations," 230.

how the older generations perceived the authenticity of their movement, but more specifically how many people they incorporated into it. Veterans, mothers, and college/high school students were the most prominent voices of the antiwar movement, and even though the media portrayed their demonstrations and radicals clamoring through the streets, they had legitimate cause for concern and those who sided with them took note of their willingness to make change within America.

The real question when evaluating the antiwar movement's effectiveness is, did they accomplish their goals? Those goals being, ending the war and recruiting/education new participants into their movement – essentially raising public awareness of the hostilities that were happening overseas. The simple answer to the question is yes. However, the correct answer is more nuanced as research and historical perspectives have pointed out. Overall, the movement was able to move across generational and class lines to bring multiple sectors of communities across the United States into one nationwide movement to bring the troops home and end the Vietnam War.<sup>168</sup> With the cost of war being too high and too many people having dissenting opinions, the government was forced to change their policies regarding Vietnam, just as Richard Nixon did with his 'Vietnamization' plan. When that policy was still taking too long to bring any valued change in the eyes of those protesting, he once again had to find a new way to get America out of the war without looking like they had lost. The Vietnam War was a huge loss for the United States and if the government had been willing to admit that sooner, it was possible to avoid the casualties abroad and the chaos at home to some extent. Therefore, even though there plenty of citizens that disagreed with the antiwar movement

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<sup>168</sup> Tischler, "The Antiwar Movement," 400.

and their tactics, they essentially all wanted the same result. It is plausible to say that the antiwar movement did not change public opinion on a national scale, but rather they added to the extensive pressure already put on the United States' government to the end war swiftly and efficiently.

The antiwar movement put themselves in the national spotlight, usually with negative press on them, to show the price of waging war and how neither nation benefitted from fighting abroad. Those sentiments had a lasting effect on their generation who would grow up to start being the ones making the difficult decisions within government and society. After Vietnam, the US was not keen to become involved in other international conflicts because of a recovering economy as well as skepticism from the public. Therefore, the antiwar movement created a negative sentiment surrounding war and an urgency with public opinion. While negativity towards the war overcame Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard Nixon, their main concern became keeping public opinion positive. Even though those participating in the movement did not necessarily change the hearts and minds of every individual in the United States regarding the war, they still displayed their distrust in the government and their dislike of the foreign policy through the media and in the streets. Thus, creating an overcast of negative public opinion while the rest of the country watched and continued to further themselves from supporting the war because of how the American government handled it.

For those living in the United States after Vietnam, and for the up-and-coming generation that gallantly participated in the antiwar movement, the fundamental society in America had shifted. "We were told that our armies were always invincible, and our causes were always just, only to suffer the agony of Vietnam." – Jimmy Carter, 1979



television address to the nation.<sup>169</sup> Historians of the Vietnam War have written in-depth of how the Vietnam War impacted American values and society but noted that the full effect would not be able to be evaluated until many years after it had ended.<sup>170</sup> Just as with significant evaluations of presidencies, it is difficult to understand how an historical event created change or none within society until years after it happened. For the Vietnam War, it created a great deal of mistrust within the government, a problem that those who came after Richard Nixon would have to bear and begin to fix. People became more aware of the world around them and became less inclined with objectivity to issues that were put into black and white terms. There became a grey area for circumstances and conflicts involving the United States, an area that required significant evaluation before being handled. The antiwar movement may not have single-handedly created this change within American conscientiousness, but they did play a pivotal part in doing so. The young men and women who participated considered themselves to be foreword thinkers who wanted to expand the ideals on which Americans prided themselves of having dealt with international conflicts. Their significant shift in the thought process of Americans came as a shock at first, but decades later, their values are being upheld in several ways.

One of the pitfalls of the Vietnam War and the antiwar movement together was the creation of an “us versus them” mentality, which can still be seen in American politics today.<sup>171</sup> Both sides of the aisle were clearly divided down the middle on each person’s stance on the war. People felt as though it told the entirety of someone’s

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<sup>169</sup> Benjamin T. Harrison, “The Vietnam War – A Decade Later: Impact on American Values,” *Peace Research* 16, no. 2 (May 1984): 31.

<sup>170</sup> Harrison, “The Vietnam War,” 30.

<sup>171</sup> Harrison, “The Vietnam War,” 31.

personality based on their opinion of the war. The lines are certainly not as distinct today on those issues, but more so with others in the United States. Racism, equality, gun control, and how the government should respond to those issues are all incorporated into that mentality of today. Yet, after the Vietnam War those same issues were relevant, but putting the nation back together after a decade long battle seemed to be at the forefront of the government and American citizen's minds. Out of the antiwar movement, a new culture was formed that reversed all of what had been previously believed in based on American values by the elder generation in the United States. The antiwar movement was "pro love, peace, and brotherhood," while the opposite side of the aisle was more focused on bureaucracy and materialism.<sup>172</sup> This "new culture" fought against racism not only because of the Civil Rights movement in America, but also because of how aggressively the US attacked those in Vietnam, killing thousands of their citizens. They believed that materialism, greed, and racism were the backings of those attacks and without such the conflict would not have happened.<sup>173</sup> While this "new culture" was formed out of the Vietnam War era as well as within the antiwar movement, the draft lottery was also a large part of those outcomes as well. The draft lottery affected male citizens across the United States and left an entire generation with differing values of their older counterparts.

### **THE EFFECT OF THE DRAFT LOTTERY ON FUTURE GENERATIONS**

Those who were called up to serve in Vietnam were either enlisted through the Selective Service System, which then turned into the Draft Lottery, or through voluntary means. For many young men, they were drafted into the conflict and those who

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<sup>172</sup> Harrison, "The Vietnam War," 32.

<sup>173</sup> Harrison, "The Vietnam War," 32.

voluntarily enlisted, they generally had military background within their families or felt some sort of familial obligation to service. College students at the time were able to use the educational deferments to keep themselves from being drafted, yet those of the working class who were not able to afford higher education were unlucky in that aspect. However, an interesting part of the draft lottery became how people viewed the war as well as the effect it had on generations afterwards. The draft lottery did not just affect young people, however, but also those who fathered their own children that would be sent off to war. Having a parent involved in an overseas conflict can have detrimental effects on the children and those effects can be analyzed years after the conflict has concluded. For Vietnam, the effect of draft-eligible fathers on their children has been investigated and proven that fathers who were eligible for the draft and/or drafted had a higher chance of having delinquent behaviors within their children.

An investigation published by Harvard University and the Cato Institute found that the percentage of youth who engaged in delinquent behaviors such as consumption of drugs and alcohol or law breaking was higher in those who had a father in Vietnam who was drafted or was draft-eligible.<sup>174</sup> While the draft lottery was put into place as a more fair assessment of selection for those who would be enlisted into the armed forces for the Vietnam War, individuals who did not want to participate were at higher odds of draft-dodging – a crime punishable by years in prison. Therefore, if father figures were to engage in those behaviors, the example set for their children was that of the same moral code. Thousands of individuals dodged the draft and rioted against the possibility of

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<sup>174</sup> Monica Deza and Alvaro Mezza, “The Intergenerational Effects of the Vietnam Draft on Risky Behaviors” (working paper, National Bureau of Economic Research, 2021), 2, [https://www.nber.org/system/files/working\\_papers/w27830/w27830.pdf](https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w27830/w27830.pdf).

being enlisted into a war against their will. However, it is not discussed as frequently how that might affect the next generation of individuals after the Vietnam War. Those who were drafted into the war were generally of a lower socioeconomic status being that they did not get the collegiate deferments, which meant their children would more than likely grow up in that same category. With a system based on volunteering, it eliminates the need for those behaviors and thus helps to produce a healthy environment for their children.<sup>175</sup> Children with absent fathers due to the war were more likely to become involved with marijuana use, cigarette use, and underage alcohol consumption as well as hard drugs. While youth in the 1970s partook in those areas, those with draft-eligible or drafted fathers were said to have started those behaviors as a younger age than those whose fathers volunteered or were not in the war at all.<sup>176</sup> Therefore it could be stated that the draft lottery was detrimental to American society and those of the younger generation and the children that would be produced out of that generation as well.

There is some correlation between a rise in college enrollments and draft-eligible men. The analysis of those findings brings the conclusion that men used college enrollment as a means of draft avoidance to collect deferments throughout the war. From 1963 to 1969 college enrollment increased significantly and dropped off after 1969 when the number of men being drafted began to decrease. By 1971, it had leveled out to pre-war enrollment numbers. Those who were able to stay in college through the war were able to essentially avoid military service altogether. However, if men were to graduate and not go to graduate schools or have other means for deferment opportunities, their

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<sup>175</sup> Deza and Mezza, 3.

<sup>176</sup> Deza and Mezza, 2.

chances of being drafted were still significant.<sup>177</sup> It is important to note that more men who served in the Vietnam War were volunteers and not draftees, yet they had shorter enlistments and were able to pick which branch they wanted to volunteer for. Those who were drafted generally served three-year terms and were almost always sent into the Army, which was fighting on the frontlines – hence the *New York Times* reported that about one third of those who were dying in Vietnam were draftees. Therefore, some men felt they had a better opportunity if they were to volunteer for the war versus waiting to be drafted. Overall, the draft lottery increased enrollment numbers for colleges, but had no real impact on the amount or finishing of that education.<sup>178</sup>

The draft lottery helped to simplify the way men were inducted into the armed forces with it being cohesive across all fifty states. However, those who were more likely to be drafted were generally against the war. With those who were more likely to be drafted being against the war, it could be stated that they made up many of the men that enrolled in college to avoid the draft altogether. Therefore, with them enrolling in college with the attitude of draft avoidance and essential anti-war, they may have participated in the antiwar movement on their campuses or even nationally at higher numbers than those who had no chance of being drafted at all. The antiwar movement was primarily made up of young college-age students who were against the war on moral grounds, yet also consisted of men who did not want to go fight in war they did not believe in. Especially when they witnessed individuals being drafted into war and not returning home. Therefore, with the draft lottery creating attitudes of anti-war and draft

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<sup>177</sup> David Card and Thomas Lemieux, “Going to College to Avoid the Draft: The Unintended Legacy of the Vietnam War,” *The American Economic Review* 91, no. 2 (May 2001): 97.

<sup>178</sup> Card and Lemieux, 98.

avoidance, it could conclude that it did in fact push more individuals into the antiwar movement and was detrimental to the overall public opinion of the war. Those sentiments of antiwar and uneasiness towards the draft did not go away after the Vietnam War was over. Those feelings of resentment for the government and for the US becoming involved in a war they were bound to lose resonated with individuals from the upcoming generation. Future generations that were raised post-Vietnam were produced by the same generation that so strongly opposed the war to begin with. They instilled in their children their beliefs of peace, morality, and freedom throughout the world and in their own nation, which led to future historical analysis and interpretation of the Vietnam War altogether.

## **CONCLUSION**

The antiwar movement changed every aspect of society from music to media to styles of dress and hair as well as the way people believed in their country and their government. The Vietnam War and the movement both created lasting change within the United States that future generations would carry with them and pass onto their children. It also changed the way individuals grew up in Vietnam and the way the war was discussed in both countries. For many years after the war ended, people did not speak of it. One's stance on the war became very divisive and created a mentality of "us versus them" which polarized both sides of the nation. There was not an individual political party that categorized with the New Left that was formed out of the antiwar movement, and thus the radicalization became incorporated into multiple different parties. The rise of conservatism that came with the election of Ronald Reagan dismantled the New Left, but the sentiments that were created from within it lived on within their people.

Public opinion was at the forefront of the war on the home front in the United States from beginning to end. Many people supported the war up until 1968 when that support took a drastic hit during the Tet Offensive. The draft lottery added to the stress of public opinion as well as those participating in the antiwar movement. The media became heavily involved with new technological advancements happening pre-Vietnam and thus brought the war to Americans' television screens. All those factors combined produced a conflict unlike anything the United States had seen up to that point. The opinion of the American military was always righteous, and the country could do no wrong. After Vietnam, that opinion changed drastically. Soldiers were spat on and cursed at when returning home from war by radicals who thought they were murdering innocent civilians in Vietnam. Morality became a large part of the reasoning behind the antiwar movement's opposition to the war, while the public grew tired of it for economic reasons and American casualties. Even though the antiwar movement had little effect on creating a dissenting opinion to the Vietnam War, they were still able to gain enough media attention to educate those who were disillusioned with the events taking place across the world. In fact, media was one of the biggest contributors to the change in opinion as well as government leadership and the handling of the war in Washington, DC.

Student activism made up the largest part of the antiwar movement across the United States, bringing the movement into the streets of cities for all the population to see. They were radical in their approach, but felt they proved their point and accomplished their goals by the end of the war when the troops were being brought home. Most Americans wanted the war to end and for individuals to quit being drafted to

a war they deemed no longer “winnable,” and when those sentiments became a reality, they were more satisfied. As the war ended, citizens were left trying to piece together what had happened over the last ten years in American society, within the government, and within the military. In 1975 and the Fall of Saigon, the North Vietnamese marched through Saigon in South Vietnam, effectively taking back the southern half of the country. Thus, creating one country under one rule which was to be a communist regime. Therefore, citizens in the United States were left wondering what their presence in the country did if anything at all. Those who participated in the antiwar movement were infuriated by the fact that so many American and Vietnamese lives had been lost ultimately for the same outcome that would have happened without American interference. And even the Vietnam veterans felt disillusioned with their service and were used as scapegoats for acts committed while at war. The entirety of the American population was unsure of how the conflict got to the point it did, and it would take many years for political scientists, sociologists, and historians to piece together the events and effectively analyze them.

Overall, the Vietnam War is still being studied today for the lasting effect it had on the American military, American foreign policy, the functionality and transparency of the government, and American society and their acceptance of war and military usage. It was the one of the most divisive times in American history and remains highly debated by American and Vietnamese historians. The Vietnam War created a very broad range for topics of discussion within the historical field and allowed for many areas of investigation and analysis by political scientist and sociologists as well as those who study international relations and foreign policy. When discussing any part of the history



of American foreign policy or military uses, Vietnam is always an area used as an example of time where individuals could not agree on a specific tactic or plan of action to alter the outcome of what happened. Thus, with historians still partaking in discussion and research over the topic even sixty years later, there is no doubt that the Vietnam War was one of the most influential and impactful events in American history.

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Bruce Dancis' book is an excellent primary source to use for research regarding how students protested the Vietnam War and what their activism fully entailed. For many, it included brief jail time, possibly overnight, and encounters with the police. At times, students were convicted of larger crimes that were perhaps committed on behalf of the antiwar movement, but consequences tended to vary. In his book, Bruce gives firsthand accounts of everything he went through during the era on the home front - including his participation in the draft resistance movement.

Hayden, Tom. *Rebel: A Personal History of the 1960s*. Los Angeles: Red Hen Press, 2003.

Tom Hayden was one of the most prominent figures in the antiwar movement, but also was a member of other student activist groups, specifically the Students for a Democratic Society - or SDS - which he started on his college campus. Throughout *Rebel*, Hayden goes through the years of his life during the 60s that were significant to himself, as well as the mark he left on his college campus and his activist group. Hayden was a defendant in the infamous Trial of the Chicago 7, with which he was to be charged with intent to incite a riot across state lines. From there, he gained public fame and used that to propel his future political career. His autobiography does justice to the antiwar movement and a descriptive overview of how the 60s played out for him.

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The Trial of the Chicago 7 became a well-known court case during 1968 as it was televised nationally for the entire country to see. Individuals protesting the Vietnam War during the Democratic National Convention were arrested and charged after a riot broke out with police. They were charged with the intent to incite a riot across state lines, and members of multiple activist groups such as Students for a Democratic Society (SDS)

and the Youth International Party (Yippies) were included on the defendants list. Mark Levine lays out the entire trial transcript along with court drawings from the proceedings as well as other first-hand account material, which makes this court case a foundational primary source for research.

Ruffner, Howard. *Moments of Truth: A Photographer's Experience of Kent State 1970*. Ashland: The Kent State University Press, 2019.

Howard Ruffner tells his story of his experience during the protest at Kent State in 1970, which became deadly when officers fired into a crowd of college students. Photographs can tell stories within themselves, which is exactly what Ruffner does in his book, which can be pivotal to the research of how college students participated in political activism, and particularly the antiwar movement.

Sheehan, Neil. *The Pentagon Papers as Published by the New York Times*. New York: Quadrangle Books, 1971.

The infamous *Pentagon Papers* were published in the New York Times towards the end of the Vietnam War, during Pres. Nixon's administration. Neil Sheehan worked behind the scenes to uncover thousands of documents written by administrations all the way back to John F. Kennedy regarding communist relations and involvement in southeast Asia. He revealed to the American public what current and former administrations did not want the people knowing about Vietnam, which drastically changed support and morale, as well as the trust citizens had within their government.

Wentling, Steven. *Coincidence*. Meadville, PA: Christian Faith Publishing, 2018.

Steven Wentling describes his experience during the Vietnam War in his book, as well as the aftermath upon returning home to the US. He speaks highly of his religious values and states that it was a mere "coincidence" that he survived his time in Vietnam.

## **Manuscript Collections**

Street Art Graphics. Richard F. Brush Art Gallery. St. Lawrence University, Canton, NY.

The Richard F. Brush Art Gallery allows researchers to look through pieces of art pertaining to historical events. For research on the antiwar movement, they have a plethora of rally posters made by college students across the United States as well as campaign organizations that helped within the movement.

Grand Valley State University Photographs. Special Collections & University Archives, 1965. Grand Valley State University, Allendale, MI.

The Special Collections of Grand Valley State University shows insight into what the antiwar movement was like on their own campus. With pictures of posters and protestors who participated in the movement, it allows researchers to get a better understanding of the overall movement.

## **Media**

*Collegio*. Kansas State College of Pittsburg. Pittsburg State University Special Collections, Pittsburg, Kansas, 1963-1975.

The *Collegio* shows just how deeply this college was involved in the antiwar movement and the opinions of students. Authors discussed their own opinions and events on campus, and even faculty led antiwar teach-ins.

*New York Times*. New York, NY, 1966-1970.

The *New York Times* was one of the biggest reporting newspapers on the Vietnam War throughout the entire duration of the conflict. From beginning to end, there are thousands of articles that allow researchers to analyze how the media presented government actions and influenced public opinion.

## **Secondary Sources**

### **Books**

Barker, A.J. *Pearl Harbor*. New York: Ballantine Books Inc., 1969.

A.J. Barker dedicated an entire book to the events that happened at Pearl Harbor, 1941. Understanding how America became involved in WWII and the mentality behind common Americans regarding their support for the war is important to understand how that quickly changed in the 20-year span until the Vietnam War. America has only been attacked on American territory three times in history, each leading to war. Vietnam was different, yet similar with military tactics and overall military engagement.

Bloch, Marc. *The Historian's Craft: Reflections on the Nature and Uses of History and the Techniques and Methods of Those Who Write It*. New York: Vintage, 1953.

Marc Bloch was one of the first researchers to author an entire book dedicated to how historians process information and put it into writing. Bloch's book teaches historians how history should be understood and written effectively, with the goal of producing compelling historical narratives.

Blood, Jake. *The Tet Effect: Intelligence and the Public Perception of War*. New York: Taylor & Francis Group, 2005.

Jake Blood discusses how Vietnam changed people's perception of war and just how difficult it was for soldiers that were coming home from the battlefield. He labels it the "Tet Effect" and goes into detail about what that entails as well as how the perception has changed since Vietnam. This book could be of use when discussing public opinion and how this "Tet Effect" led to a disproportionate number of individuals having an unrealistic expectation for war post- Vietnam.

Boucher, Diane. *The 1950s American Home*. Oxford, UK: Shire Publications, 2013.

Diane Boucher describes the ideal American home in the 1950s and what it looked like from the set-up of the home down to the appliances in the kitchen. Her book creates a perspective for readers of the role of women in the household and men in the workforce. This mold was broken open in the 1960s and 70s as Second Wave feminism rose. Women and men alike took to the streets to protest not only for their own rights but also against the Vietnam War.

Bowen, Paul. *Air to Air Warbirds*. Wichita, KS: North Shore Press, 2002.

In his book, Paul Bowen captures the aircraft used in WWII and what their purpose was during the war. He also uses his own photography to show the details of all the types of planes and how they were unique to one another. The style of military warfare between WWII and the Vietnam War evolved slowly; bombing campaigns during the Vietnam War frequently used similar aircraft.

Brigham, Robert K. *Reckless: Henry Kissinger and the Tragedy of Vietnam*. New York: Hachette Book Group, 2018.

Robert K. Brigham is a renowned scholar on the Vietnam War, and a Professor of Foreign Policy at Vassar College in New York. Dr. Brigham began to write his own books as well, with *Reckless: Henry Kissinger and the Tragedy of Vietnam*, being his area of expertise. The book itself tells the story of Henry Kissinger and what his role in the White House truly amounted to, as Dr. Brigham points out, mainly disaster. Kissinger was a Harvard Professor of Foreign Policy and desperately wanted to be inside the White House working on operations, especially after the beginning of the Vietnam War. He was determined to do whatever he deemed necessary to make sure his goals were met with persistence. Richard Nixon was President at the time of Henry Kissinger's arrival in the White House and was even appointed as Nixon's National Security Advisor. Kissinger served all four years with Nixon, up until he was forced to resign in the wake of the Watergate Scandal. However, it was not Kissinger's political prowess that would create the image of him in public eyes, but his mismanagement of the events that took place during the Vietnam War. Unfortunately for Kissinger, he would not make a name for himself quite as he imagined, but one stained with the blood of American soldiers who lost their lives fighting a war that was declared unwinnable by many.

Burns, James MacGregor. *Roosevelt: The Lion and the Fox*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1956.

Pres. Roosevelt led the United States through the Great Depression and four years of WWII. Liberals who had been the driving force of the New Deal were aging out of active government service in the 1960s and 1970s, when conservatism began to experience a resurgence. Burns' book highlights those New Deal liberals as well as Roosevelt's leadership.

Cohen, Lizabeth. *A Consumer's Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America*. New York: Vintage Books, 2003.

After the Second World War, America was boosted out of the Great Depression and into a new age of mass consumption unlike any other. Lizabeth Cohen portrays how American consumerism after WWII and its effects on the economy and job growth. Into the 60s and 70s, America's economy was still booming and job security was intact, but that came to a halt during the Vietnam War.

Foner, Eric., and Lisa McGirr, eds. *American History Now*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011.

Lisa McGirr and Eric Foner edited their book compiled of other prominent historians based on different historical periods. Their work came together as a comprehensive piece of text for other historians to consult when researching writing about American history and the nuances within it. Up to date and new perspectives on generalized topics and heavily debated subjects are at the heart of their work with historians doing the writing within it.

Foster, Anne. "Before the War: Legacies from the Early Twentieth Century in United States-Vietnam Relations." In *A Companion to the Vietnam War*, edited by Marilyn B. Young and Robert Buzzanco, 115-19. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2002.

Leading up to the Vietnam War, multiple countries had their hands in Southeast Asia. To understand the entirety of the conflict between America and Vietnam, historians must go back further to the occupation of Vietnam by the French.

Gall, Carlotta. *The Wrong Enemy: America in Afghanistan 2001-20014*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing, 2014.

The Vietnam War and the War with Iraq and Afghanistan were two remarkably similar conflicts within America history. For those who protested the Vietnam War, they felt as though it was not winnable and useless to be using military intervention in a country where the enemy was unknown. Similar opinions arose as the United States entered Afghanistan, not understanding the territory nor the culture and religion and how their presence affected it. Carlotta Gall points out major mistakes made by the American military in the War with Afghanistan that can be deemed comparable to the Vietnam War.

Gilbert, Marc Jason. *Vietnam War on Campus: Other Voices, More Distant Drums*. Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc., 2000.

The Vietnam War was fought not only on the battlefields but also on the home front, and particularly on college campuses. Marc Gilbert gives his historical perspective and uses case studies from different universities to show how students participated in their democracy by advocating against the Vietnam War.

Hackett, John. *The Third World War: August 1985*. New York: Berkley Publishing Corporation, 1985.

This book discusses what is considered to be the “Third World War,” written during the time, specifically at the end of the Cold War. America and the CIA was involved in a plethora of political disputes and diplomacy issues with other countries around the world, while also trying to dispel communism.

Hall, Simon. *Rethinking the American Antiwar Movement: American Social and Political Movements of the Twentieth Century*. New York: Routledge, 2012.

Simon Hall “rethinks” the antiwar movement from a different perspective than the common historian. He provides his interpretation of the Movement’s goals, failures, and successes. He also gives insight into how public opinion sculpted the war on the home front and how that was affected by student activism.

Hallin, Daniel C., *The Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

There is no denying the media played a crucial role in the development of the antiwar movement, which is exactly what Daniel Hallin analyzes with his work. Vietnam became the first major American war televised into American citizens’ homes. Therefore, there was no escaping the atrocities that took place on both sides, only propelling more individuals towards a bias for or against the war, as well as with the draft lottery.

Heller, Charles E., and William A. Stofft. *America’s First Battles, 1776-1965*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1986.

William Stofft and Charles Heller put together a comprehensive history of American military in their book, sections of it being written by other prominent military historians. From the founding of the Nation to the beginning of the Vietnam War, they highlight every instance in which the American military played a significant role in domestic and foreign conflicts. Focusing on the type of military tactics and weaponry used, their book serves as a textbook for military historians researching topics ranging from 1776 to 1965.

Heller, Francis H. *The Presidency: A Modern Perspective*. New York: Random House, Inc., 1960.

This book, as the title suggests, claims to be a “modern” perspective on the American presidency and what a president’s role is within the United States. However, fittingly, it was written in 1960, which considered the presidents being discussed within this thesis. Mostly discussing Pres. Roosevelt and his New Deal, the book goes into detail about what the President can do while in office and what effect that can have on the United States as a whole.

Herring, George C. *America’s Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2013.

George Herring’s book is one of the most prominent pieces of writing within the Vietnam War subject. His book serves as an overall textbook for classes learning about the Vietnam War and how the United States came to be involved. He discusses every aspect of the war from the antiwar movement to the military intervention in South Vietnam and how the conflict affected American and Vietnamese citizens.

Jeffreys-Jones, Rhodri. *Peace Now! American Society and the Ending of the Vietnam War*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.

Just as the title suggests, Americans wanted to peace in Vietnam throughout the entirety of the war, especially when they began to lose faith in the idea of America being deemed as the ‘winners.’ Because of WWII era rhetoric and confidence, it was difficult for those who held the American Military at such high value to allow for anything other than what they viewed as a win, yet the common American simply wanted peace and for the soldiers to be brought home safely. Jeffreys-Jones, highlights those beliefs within his writing based on general American attitudes.

Levin, Kevin. *Searching for Black Confederates: The Civil War’s Most Persistent Myth*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019.

History is riddled with myths and misunderstandings, as pointed out by Levin in his book discussing the Civil War. Even during the Vietnam War, there were persistent inconsistencies with how people viewed protestors as well as veterans themselves. Therefore, even though this book pertains to the Civil War, it allows the reader to understand that some historical interpretations should be further investigated for a deeper knowledge of the subject at more than just face value.

Lewis, Penny. *Hardhats, Hippies, and Hawks: The Vietnam Antiwar Movement as Myth and Memory*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013.

Penny Lewis comes from a different viewpoint than most historians when writing about the antiwar movement in America. Instead of studying the overall movement, she provides research and analyzation of class boundaries within the movement.



Specifically, how members of the working-class were prominent in the advocacy against the war. Myth has been made into common historical memory among some, which Lewis tries to combat within her work, and does so with pois.

Loeb, Paul Rogat. *Generation at the Crossroads: Apathy and Action on the American Campus*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1994.

Student activism, specifically on college campuses, is the backbone of this thesis, which is adequately discussed within Loeb's book. How college students began to protest and continued to do so well after the Vietnam War was over makes for an interesting read, while also understanding the effect individuals can have on politics when they work together towards a common goal.

Macedo, Stephen. *The New Right v. The Constitution*. Washington D.C.: Cato Institute, 1987.

This book dissects how the New Right, or the Rise of Conservatism took over after Lyndon B. Johnson left office. Primarily during the Vietnam War era, Conservatism began to take over from New Deal Liberalism.

MacPherson, C.B. *The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1977.

Democracy is woven in throughout every piece of the United States' governmental system. MacPherson uses historical knowledge to discuss how that democracy came to be, as well as how it has held up throughout the course of American history.

May, Elaine Tyler. *Homeward Bound*, 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. ed. New York: Basic Books, 2008.

This book details the classic American household down to the structure of the building of a typical home. The different appliances, food, clothing, are all used as talking points in the book to help the reader understand how Americans lived during the Cold War, including the Vietnam era.

Metalious, Grace. *Peyton Place*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1999.

Grace Metalious' book was set during the time of the Vietnam War yet discusses completely different ideas. It is essentially her own story writing with fictional names and characters but based off the events that played out in her own life. Read together with *Homeward Bound*, can be useful to understand society and life during the 1960s.

Miller, Jim. *Democracy is in the Streets: From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988.

This book gives an overall view of the antiwar movement, but specifically all the actual protests that took place throughout the years. Students and others alike were involved in the demonstrations, but each of them was held in differing areas, with common goals. Therefore, Jim Miller is able to bring to life his research discussing each of the events individually to add to the overall history of the Movement itself.

Millett, Allan R., and Peter Maslowski. *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States from 1607 to 2012*. New York: Free Press, 2012.

Millett and Maslowski highlight all the important battles and use of the American Military from the time of its founding to the War on Terror and troops being sent to Iraq and Afghanistan. Changing over time, the American Military has been used at home and abroad and will continue to change throughout the course of history, past and present.

Pach, Chester J., Jr. "The War on Television: TV News, the Johnson administration, and Vietnam." In *A Companion to the Vietnam War*, edited by Marilyn B. Young and Robert Buzzanco, 450-69. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2002.

The news media heavily impacted public opinion in the United States regarding the Vietnam War. Chester Pach goes into detail of how the news media also affected the Johnson administration and its handling of the military in Vietnam.

Prados, John. "The Veterans Antiwar Movement in Fact and Memory." In *A Companion to the Vietnam War*, edited by Marilyn B. Young and Robert Buzzanco, 403-15. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2002.

Veterans were heavily involved in the antiwar movement and made sure citizens realized that they were not happy with their participation in the war either. By joining the antiwar movement, the veterans strengthened their argument about bringing the troops home from war.

Roberts, Randy, and Shannon Phillips. *Pittsburg State University: A Photographic History of the First 100 Years*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2009.

Photos speak volumes to history. Using Roberts and Phillips book to analyze the first 100 years of Pittsburg State University intertwines with the primary sources used from the college's newspaper, the *Collegio*.

Scanlon, Sandra. *The Pro-War Movement: Domestic Support for the Vietnam War and the Making of Modern American Conservatism*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013.

Sandra Scanlon does an excellent job of examining the pro-war movement in her book, which is unique and original to the historiography because there are few historians who do so. By analyzing Scanlon's research and argument, it can provide insight to

those who *did* believe in the war, and how their opinions were affected by the opposition and the draft lottery.

Scruggs, Jan C. *Voices From The Wall*. D.C.: Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Inc., 1998.

The Vietnam War Memorial is one of the most notorious in the United States. Every name scrolled into the stone were men who fought and lost their lives in battle. The Memorial was created to give appreciation to their sacrifice. Scruggs uses first-hand testimony from the family members and survivors of the Vietnam War to put together stories of the lives and actions of those who were so greatly affected by the war.

-----. *Why Vietnam Still Matters: The War and The Wall*. D.C.: Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Inc., 1996.

Scruggs, once again, in a second book details the seriousness of the Vietnam War and why it still matters today. She goes into detail of how today's youth know little of the war and why it was so significant in American history. Thus, by using testimony from survivors and those who survived the deceased, she hopes those who read her work will understand the importance of the war and how it felt for those individuals.

Small, Melvin. *Covering Dissent: The Media and the Anti-Vietnam War Movement*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994.

Melvin Small uses his research of the media and the antiwar movement to make conclusions about the media's effect of the movement. He deduces that the media did in fact influence the movement by being at the forefront of television news programs and thus showing the movements' importance.

Stokesbury, James L. *A Short History of World War II*. New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1980.

Stokesbury goes through the entirety of WWII and the events that happened during it, with respect to American History. America's involvement in World War II drove deep emotions about the country, war, and what service and sacrifice meant into the hearts and minds of those living during the time. Those who went on to have children during the Baby Boom, had intrinsic values that they instilled within their children who would themselves face decisions about service and sacrifice during the Vietnam War less than 30 years later.

Tischler, Barbara. "The Antiwar Movement." In *A Companion to the Vietnam War*, edited by Marilyn B. Young and Robert Buzzanco, 384-402. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2002.

The antiwar movement is the main area of this thesis, with Barbara Tischler's information giving a basis for the information within it.

Turner, Karen G. "Vietnam' as a Women's War." In *A Companion to the Vietnam War*, edited by Marilyn B. Young and Robert Buzzanco, 93-111. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2002.

A surprising piece to the Vietnam War was how heavily women were involved in the fighting in Vietnam. Female Vietnamese soldiers formed the backbone of the strongholds along the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Vietnamese women took the war to heart because it was destroying their homes as well as their hopes of raising a family in peace.

Vearella, Tony. *New Voices: Student Activism in the 80s and 90s*. Boston: South End Press, 1988.

Some may believe activism by college and high school students peaked in the 1960s and 70s and then rapidly declined, yet Vearella states just the opposite in his book. Although different circumstances and events, students were still very much involved in the political atmosphere during the 80s and 90s.

Wells, Tom. *The War Within: America's Battle Over Vietnam*. New York: Open Road Integrated Media, Inc., 2016.

Tom Wells discusses not only the actual battles that took place in Vietnam, but also the battle for the hearts and minds of the American public as well. Throughout the war, the struggle for a positive public opinion was constantly weighing over the heads of presidential administrations. Therefore, it is pivotal to the general argument of the thesis.

Wineburg, Sam S. *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001.

Wineburg details strategies and mechanisms to use while teaching history as he highlights the setbacks and challenges of the profession itself.

Young, Marilyn B., and Robert Buzzanco, eds. *A Companion to the Vietnam War*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2002.

Overall, this book is one of the most important to the thesis being that it covers the entirety of the Vietnam War in textbook form. Historians can use this book as an undergraduate or graduate level reading material for a class on the Vietnam War, therefore incredibly useful to the thesis.

### **Journal Articles**

Anchondo, Augustus. "Apathy and Activism in the Heartland: The Antiwar Movement at University of Nebraska, 1965-1970." *Peace & Change* 42, no. 3 (July 2017): 383-409.

The antiwar movement spanned from the East Coast to the West, and even throughout the Midwest as well. The University of Nebraska had prominent activism within their campus regarding the Vietnam War and student involvement. Augustus's article shares evidence of students' reactions to their classmates and family members being sent to the conflict.

Bergan, Daniel E. "The Draft Lottery and Attitudes towards the Vietnam War." *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 73, no. 2 (2009): 379-84.

This article greatly emphasizes how the draft lottery and citizen's attitudes towards the war correlated with one another. It is one of the main driving points of this thesis and intertwines with how the antiwar movement used that fact as a selling point for their cause.

Bruno, Thomas A. "The Violent End of Insurgency on Samar, 1901-1902." *Army History*, no. 79 (Spring 2011): 30-46.

From the war in the Philippines to Vietnam and then Iraq and Afghanistan, the American military has had to fight insurgents. However, unlike Vietnam and Iraq/Afghanistan, the military's methods worked quite well in the Philippines. With the advancement of military weapons and the expansion of their usage, the American military would not be facing the same kind of warfare sixty years later in Vietnam as it did in 1901.

Burgin, Say. "Understanding Antiwar Activism as a Gendering Activity: A Look at the U.S.'s Anti-Vietnam War Movement." *Journal of International Women's Studies* 13, no. 6 (December 2012): 18-31.

Women also had their role in the antiwar movement, which is what Say Burgin discusses in this article. Men were the primary target in the draft, but the war also affected women, even if they were not the ones fighting it on the battlefield. Mothers, particularly, were largely involved in the movement and college aged women participated as well to do their part in ending the war and bringing troops home.

Card, David, and Thomas Lemieux. "Going to College to Avoid the Draft: The Unintended Legacy of the Vietnam War." *The American Economic Review* 91, no. 2 (May 2001): 97-102.

Card and Lemieux investigate the correlations between the surges in college enrollment and draft numbers. Draft eligible men who were wary of being sent to Vietnam considered going to college to obtain deferments. However, not all draft eligible men were able to enroll in college. The correlation indicates how the draft affected the opinions of those who were at risk of being sent to Vietnam.

Cuddy, Edward. "Vietnam: Mr. Johnson's War. Or Mr. Eisenhower's?" *The Review of Politics* 65, no. 4 (Autumn 2003): 351-74.

In general, most historians have laid blame on LBJ rather than Pres. Eisenhower for American involvement in Vietnam. Cuddy describes Eisenhower's role in the escalation of that involvement and argues for a reevaluation of his responsibilities.

Culbert, David. "Television's Visual Impact on Decision-Making in the USA, 1968: The Tet Offensive and Chicago's Democratic National Convention." *Journal of Contemporary History* 33, no. 3 (July 1998): 419-49.

Images have a lasting impact on viewers, especially when they are related to an ongoing conflict within the country or the world. Culbert mulls through how the media portrayed the Tet Offensive and the Democratic National Convention in Chicago in 1968. He thoroughly investigates how the reporting on those events affected public opinion and overall American support for the Vietnam War.

Eid, Leroy V. "American Indian Military Leadership: St. Clair's 1791 Defeat." *The Journal of Military history* 57, no. 1 (January 1993): 71-88.

The American Indians had a military of their own, yet vastly different from what is known today as a structured military service. However, they still waged their own wars with and against the American military. They used irregular style warfare to do so, which is exactly what the Vietnamese used against the Americans in the Vietnam War, yet over 100 years later. Even with the advancements in American military, they were unprepared for what was to come when the Vietnam War started, such as with St. Clair's defeat in 1791.

Erikson, Robert S., and Laura Stoker. "Caught in the Draft: The Effects of Vietnam Draft Lottery Status on Political Attitudes." *The American Political Science Review* 105, no. 2 (May 2011): 221-37.

Robert Erikson and Laura Stoker have a peculiar yet intriguing stance on how the draft lottery affected political attitudes in the United States. Those who had a higher draft number (not as likely to be drafted) were usually more in support of the war and did not necessarily involve themselves in any protests or the antiwar movement. However, those who had a lower draft number (more likely to be drafted) were generally more involved with protests and demonstrations.

Fitzpatrick, David J. "Emory Upton and the Army of a Democracy." *The Journal of Military History* 77, no. 2 (April 2013): 463-90.

Fitzpatrick discusses in-depth Emory Upton and how the US military operated under a new-found democracy.

Fountain, Aaron G. "The War in the Schools: San Francisco Bay Area High Schools and the Anti-Vietnam War Movement, 1965-1973." *California History* 92, no. 2 (Summer 2015): 22-41.

Any man from the age of 18 was eligible and legally directed to enter the United States draft lottery during the Vietnam War. Being that many people turn 18 before their high school graduation, high school seniors were also called up to serve in the Vietnam War, which led to protests within public schools as well as Universities. Aaron Fountain highlights those movements within the San Francisco area to show and discuss how those high schools demonstrated against the war and advocated for bringing soldiers home.

Hall, Mitchell K. "The Vietnam Era Antiwar Movement." *OAH Magazine of History* 18, no. 5 (October 2004): 13-17.

Given how broad the antiwar movement can become when researching, Mitchell Hall gives a brief overview of the movement's goals, those involved, and how the movement began. The true question was how impactful the movement was itself, and Hall continues to discuss that research within his article as well.

Hammond, William M. "The Press in Vietnam as Agent of Defeat: A Critical Examination." *Reviews in American History* 17, no. 2 (June 1989): 312-23.

The media's presence in Vietnam became a prominent factor in public opinion and military operations. Being the first televised war in American history, a discussion of the media's effect on public opinion is critical. The media's influence on the antiwar movement's activities is undeniable.

-----, "The Tet Offensive and the News Media: Some Thoughts on the Effects of News Reporting." *Army History*, no. 70 (Winter 2009): 6-16.

The media was pivotal regarding public opinion in Vietnam. Hammond explores how the specific news reporting was ineffective or effective in determining public opinion towards the war and the government's handling of the conflict.

Harrison, Benjamin T. "The Vietnam War – A Decade Later: Impact on American Values." *Peace Research* 16, no. 2 (May 1984): 30-36.

Benjamin Harrison analyzes the Vietnam War and how it impacted American citizens only ten years after the Fall of Saigon. This article is beneficial to research over the antiwar movement because Americans still had not forgotten the mishandling of American troops when finally withdrawing from Vietnam. Even though the United States decided to withdraw - "Peace with Honor" - Americans felt as though there could have been more done, as Harrison describes in his article.

Longino, Charles F. "Draft Lottery Numbers and Student Opposition to War." *Sociology of Education* 46, no. 4 (Autumn 1973): 499-506.

The draft lottery was possibly the most controversial factor to the Vietnam War and completely propelled the antiwar movement and increased student involvement within it. Charles Longino analyzes how the draft lottery and specifically the numbers

given to males over the age of 18 impacted the students' opposition to the War and what they were willing to do to end it.

Lunch, William L., and Peter W. Sperlich. "American Public Opinion and the War in Vietnam." *The Western Political Quarterly* 32, no. 1 (March 1979): 21-44.

Both Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard Nixon cared deeply about the public opinion surrounding the Vietnam War. Nixon even ran on the platform that he would be the president to end the war and enacted his "Peace with Honor" campaign to do so. However, public opinion was running very low with increased protests across the United States and demonstrations that led to physical altercations with the police. Those protests either helped people to see how deeply citizens cared, or they pushed them to defend the war and the troops who gave their lives fighting. Either way, public opinion was part of the overall concern when withdrawing from Vietnam and getting the troops home.

Mandelbaum, Michael. "Vietnam: The Television War." *Daedalus* 111, no. 4 (Fall 1982): 157-69.

The Vietnam War became the first televised war in American history. However, it was very controversial and became a constant cause of concern for Pres. Johnson. Mandelbaum goes into detail regarding Johnson's discontent with the media as well as how it affected American public opinion for the war.

McAdam, Doug, and Yang Su. "The War at Home: Antiwar Protests and Congressional Voting, 1965 to 1973." *American Sociological Review* 67, no. 5 (October 2002): 696-721.

The United States Government and the antiwar movement went hand in hand in the late 60s and early 70s as protestors pushed for Congressional involvement in ending the war. Protestors and those involved in the movement believed there was more the government could have been doing to end the war, just as they were still sending men over to Vietnam to engage in battle. However, some antiwar protests were classified as riots and were not taken seriously by Congress or the presidential administrations. Doug McAdam and Yang Su gave a multi-dimensional point of view in their article discussing this.

McGinnis, Anthony R. "When Courage was Not Enough: Plains Indians at War with the US Army." *The Journal of Military History* 76, no. 2 (April 2012): 455-73.

The American military has encountered numerous vigilante groups over the years since its creations. The Plains Native Americans were labeled "vigilante groups" that caused problems for military units stationed in the Midwest. Understanding how the American military changed its handling of those type of groups from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the 21<sup>st</sup> helps to create a basis for research and historical argument.



Nguyen-Marshall, Van. "Student Activism in Time of War: Youth in the Republic of Vietnam, 1960s–1970s." *Journal of Vietnamese Studies* 10, no. 2 (Spring 2015): 43–81.

This article highlights the ways youth in Vietnam also protested the war. Their protests were not to the level or scale of the antiwar movement in the United States, but they were still using their voices to make it known they were against the fighting happening in their country. This is a good resource to use for consulting counter arguments or portraying another perspective within the writing.

Odom, William O. "Destined for Defeat: An Analysis of the St. Clair Expedition of 1791." *Northwest Ohio Quarterly* 65, no. 2 (Spring 1993): 68-93.

The St. Clair Expedition became well-known because of the slaughter that took place in 1791 by American Indians onto American military. That history alone is incredibly nuanced and a complicated relationship between the Native Americans and the American government sowed deep roots of distrust. However, the military was similarly unaware of what was to await them when they went into Vietnam as well.

Parker, Geoffrey. "The Limits to Revolutions in Military Affairs: Maurice of Nassau, the Battle of Nieuwpoort (1600), and the Legacy." *Journal of Military History* 71, no. 2 (April 2007): 331-71.

How war is conducted and waged has changed significantly throughout the course of history, especially with the advancement of military weapons and affairs throughout American history itself. Changes in military tactics and advancements will continue to forge on, yet foreign policy and diplomatic relationships has helped to deter the fighting at a far greater pace than ever before imagined.

Russell, Peter. "Redcoats in the Wilderness: British Officers and Irregular Warfare in Europe and America." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (October 1978): 629-52.

Americans have used irregular warfare since the late 1700s, while the British military struggled to understand how to react and adapt to it. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the US faced the same type of warfare in the Vietnam conflict and struggled to handle it.

Sahlins, Marshall. "The Teach-Ins: Anti-War Protest in the Old Stoned Age." *Anthropology Today* 25, no. 1 (February 2009): 3–5.

Teach-ins were one of the most prominent ways activists in the antiwar movement could make their voices heard. Faculty on college campuses that joined the movement, put together lectures for students and the public to come listen to individuals speak on the Vietnam War. Marshall Sahlins highlights just how effective those teach-ins were for the entire movement on college campuses across the US

Schreiber, E. M. "Anti-War Demonstrations and American Public Opinion on the War in Vietnam." *The British Journal of Sociology* 27, no. 2 (June 1976): 225-36.

E. M. Schreiber details some of the most notable demonstrations against the Vietnam War in his article, with an overall view of how people felt about the protests and about the war itself. This article specifically covers public opinion - not just student involvement - but those of older generations as well who were privy to how the United States rallied around their troops for other wars, yet Vietnam was inherently different.

----- "Opposition to the Vietnam War among American University Students and Faculty." *The British Journal of Sociology* 24, no. 3 (September 1973): 288-302.

In this article, E.M. Schreiber specifically discusses university students, and even some faculty members who participated in the antiwar movement, and their overall view of the war. His article is exceptionally helpful to the research in giving pertinent examples about how college aged students were among those who gave the most to their cause and would not let the actions of the American government go unnoticed.

Stewart, Richard W. "The Chief Historian's Footnote: Vietnam at 50 Years." *Army History*, no. 92 (Summer 2014): 54-55.

Stewart provides a crash course of information about the start of the Vietnam War, with the escalation of the conflict beginning with the Gulf of Tonkin incident. He describes how Pres. Johnson navigated the political landscape and what he planned to do after the North Vietnamese military attacked the *USS Maddox*.

Tap, Bruce. "Amateurs at War: Abraham Lincoln and the Committee on the Conduct of the War." *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association* 23, no. 2 (2002): 1-18.

The conduct of war has been a traditional topic of discussion for historians, political scientists, and diplomats. Understanding that there is indeed a way to conduct war fairly and humanely is part of the reason individuals are so interested in the Vietnam War itself. This article details how Lincoln used the Committee on the Conduct of War to help the Union gain the upper hand over the Confederacy.

### **Magazine Articles**

Barry, John. "Why the Allies Won." *Newsweek*, May 23, 1994.

John Barry discusses how the Allies won WWII in his article and why their win was so significant to not only for the betterment of the world, but for world history as well.

"Americans Go to War: Voices of the Century." *Newsweek*, March 8, 1999.

Voices from WWII, Korea, and Vietnam speak their peace in this article. The struggles of being a soldier during their respective wars, and how the world changed after they were over.

Gaddis, John Lewis. "Face-Off: Special Report." *U.S. News & World Report*, October 18, 1999.

This article draws from the similarities and differences between America's involvement in WWII and Vietnam. The public support for each war was vastly different, as well as the reaction from the men who were fighting in them. Each generation fought its own conflict, yet the outcomes could not have been more divergent.

Thomas, Evan. "The Vietnam Question." *Newsweek*, April 19, 2004.

Thomas describes in his article how the Iraq and Vietnam Wars were eerily similar in their start and support for the war itself. Comparing Vietnam to Iraq is common with the similarities between the countries and their governments, especially because of the relationship with the American government.

"Vietnam War Combat Chronology: A reprint from the March 1993 issue of VFW Magazine." *Veterans of Foreign Wars*, 1999.

This article provides a timeline of the significant events that took place during the Vietnam War.

### **News Articles**

Biberman, Nancy. "My Vietnam War." *New York Times*. March 27, 2018.

Nancy Biberman describes her experience during her college years protesting while the Vietnam War raged on.

Barry, Jan. "When Veterans Protested the Vietnam War." *New York Times*. April 18, 2017.

The veteran antiwar movement was a faction of the overall antiwar movement and played a critical role. Veterans who had been to Vietnam did not necessarily come back as national heroes, nor did some of them feel they did what was best for their country. Those individuals joined the veteran antiwar movement to try and stop the chaos that was happening overseas.

Dancis, Bruce. "Sing a Song of Protest Anti-War Music Gave Voice to a Generation that Wanted to Give Peace a Chance." *The Sacramento Bee*. May 9, 1999.

Researching the Vietnam War can be done through a plethora of mediums, such as music. During the 1970s, specifically, musicians used the world around them for muse

to their artistry. This article gives insight into how musicians were able to take the events of the Vietnam War, and turn it into music that lived on for generations.

Greenberg, David. "Flower Power at War." *New York Times*. Oct 22, 2017, Late Edition (East Coast).

The common cliché or stereotype from the time of the Vietnam War was that all protestors were “hippies” or rebellious young individuals who were lazy, stoners. This article describes how those young individuals found a way to not only make their voices heard, but unite on a national level.

Mejia, Brittney. "50 Years Later, Mexican American Vietnam War Vets Recall Protests that Conflict Inspired." *Los Angeles Times (Online)*. August 28, 2020.  
<https://www.latimes.com>

Mexican Americans had an interesting point of view during the Vietnam War. Some were very much against the invasion of Vietnam, while others felt it their duty to take up arms for their country. However, unlike white Americans, even if they were against war, they were not able to openly protest the government because of their minority status and their familial pressures. This article proves to be significant in that argument while researching how different ethnicities and socioeconomic classes dealt with the pressures from war.

Ruddy, John. “Voices of Protest at UConn: Exhibit Looks Back at Anti-Vietnam War Upheaval on Campus.” *TCA Regional News*. September 2, 2019.

This news article provides insight into an anti-war protest at the University of Connecticut. Universities across the country allowed protests and teach-ins by their faculty and students in condemnation of the Vietnam War. The protest at UConn, proved to be one of the more significant in the years while students fought against a war they believed to be unjust.

## **Other**

Berner, Thomas F. “Who Won the Cold War?” Accessed December 9, 2023. Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2009.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep11911>.

The Cold War spanned multiple decades with no direct conflict but multiple proxy conflicts, including the actions in Vietnam and Southeast Asia.

Deza, Monica, and Alvaro Mezza. “The Intergenerational Effects of the Vietnam Draft on Risky Behaviors.” Working paper, National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA, 2021.  
[https://www.nber.org/system/files/working\\_papers/w27830/w27830.pdf](https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w27830/w27830.pdf)

Children with parents who were either draft eligible or serving in Vietnam were more likely to indulge in risky behaviors because of the absence of that parent. While

Deza and Mezza present research from the 2010s, they also discuss parallels with families during the Vietnam era. After deferments had ended, there was nothing keeping fathers from being sent overseas and thus affecting their children, possibly leading them into risky behaviors as described in the article.

“Two Days in October.” *The Vietnam War Collection: PBS*. October 17, 2005.

PBS has multiple documentaries and sources over numerous areas in American History, the Vietnam War being on. In their collection of Vietnam War items, they use primary and secondary sources to put together the entirety of what happened during the war, at home and abroad.

## APPENDIX

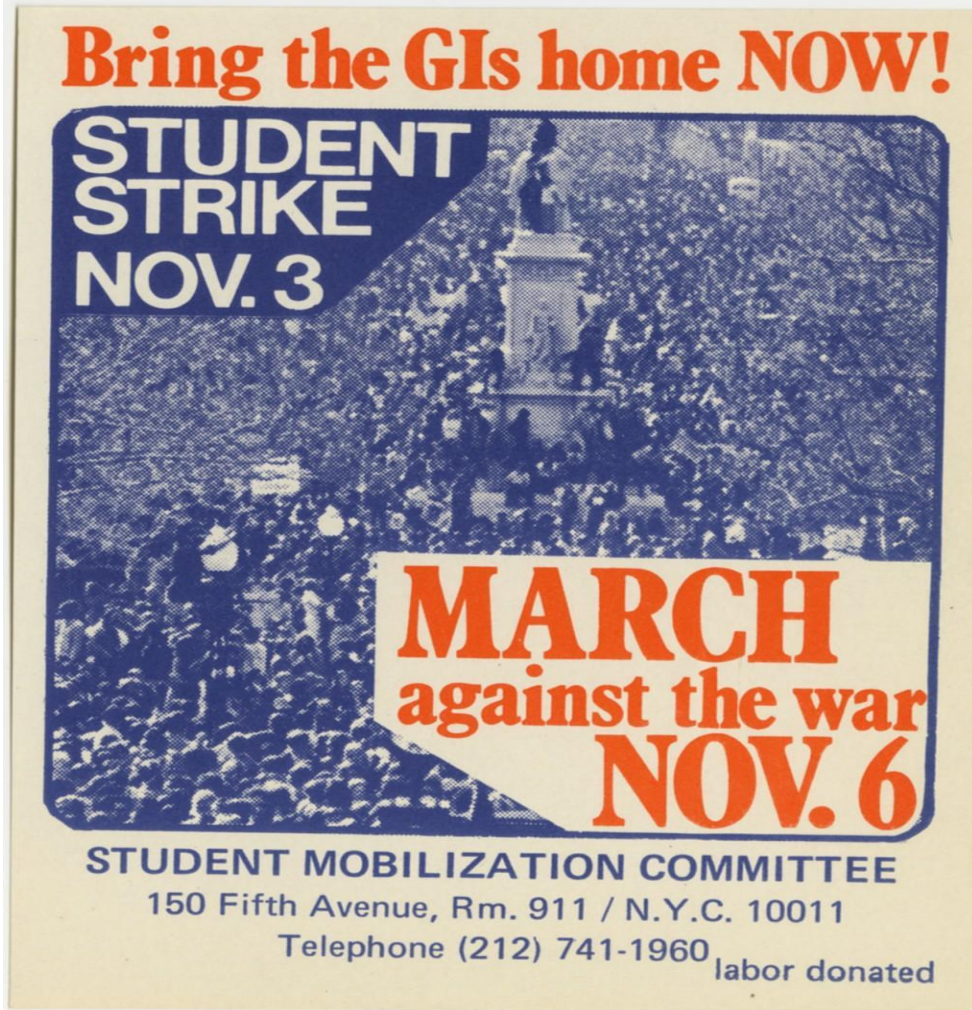


Figure 1 Antiwar movement poster from the Student Mobilization Committee.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Street Art Graphics, Richard F. Brush Art Gallery. St. Lawrence University, Canton, NY.