



# HOME of RECORD

The Vietnam War as seen through Primary Sources:  
Letters, Photographs, Documents, and Personal Stories.



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The Vietnam War As Seen through Primary Sources  
Letters, Photographs, Documents, and Personal Stories

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## Introduction

It seems impossible, but soon we will be observing the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War. An official nationwide commemoration is being planned by the United States government and Department of Defense for 2015 through 2018. Special events and projects will be developed to bring awareness of the sacrifices made by veterans and their families and to the contributions made by those on the home front.

Vashon-Maury Island, like many small rural communities in Washington, sent its young men and women off to fight in Vietnam. According to the 1970 Census, the population of Vashon-Maury Island was just over 6,000. Twelve young men from the area lost their lives as a result of their participation in the Vietnam War – an exceptionally high ratio for any community. Their names are inscribed on two obelisks in Ober Park on Vashon, but are rarely spoken aloud or remembered. Christopher Gaynor, a Vietnam War veteran who has lived on Vashon Island since 1991, has taken informal custodial responsibility for the monument, as well as observing special Veterans Day and Memorial Day traditions at the gravesites of six of the men who are interred at the Vashon Cemetery, members of the group he calls the “Vashon 12.”

Gaynor and Patricia Filer, education director at HistoryLink.org, worked together throughout the past year to develop a curriculum for secondary students. This classroom resource provides opportunities to analyze and interpret different viewpoints concerning historical events by examining primary and secondary sources. Looking back at the lives of the Vashon 12 and the Vashon community during the Vietnam War era also provides an avenue to introduce basic research techniques and stimulate discussions about personal rights versus civic rights and responsibilities. The curriculum provides activities, discussion topics, and resources that complement Washington State History, U.S. History, and Civics grade-level learning expectations; Classroom-Based Assessments; and the C3 Framework.

A series of remembrances called People’s Histories were collected to use in this curriculum. Young people will have the opportunity to learn about the Vietnam War through the voices of those who lived during that time and had firsthand experience with the Vietnam War and the Vashon 12. Other activities focus on interpreting unique primary sources – Christopher Gaynor’s photos and letters from the Vietnam War. Each unit’s activities and discussion topics can stand alone – there is no need to commit to the entire curriculum for students to gain insight and knowledge into the Vietnam War by using these valuable primary sources.

*These letters are presented as I wrote them more than 45 years ago. My mother saved those I wrote to my family. Anne Blackwell's daughter, Erin Blackwell, recently returned the letters I wrote to her mother, my friend and mentor for nearly 50 years. At the heart of this archive are my photographs. I took my camera with me everywhere, carefully composing the shot whenever possible. After so many decades, the young man who took these pictures is something of a stranger to me, and I marvel at how so many good images were captured under such harsh conditions.*



*Those who are looking for dramatic battle scenes or epic heroics will be disappointed. Instead, these photographs and letters present portraits of a group of young men, kids, really, who bond deeply through the crucible of war. In our day-to-day lives we laughed, we did a lot of posing to look tough, and we counted the days until we would return to The World. We listened to Jimi Hendrix, drank stale beer, and smoked the occasional joint. Not so different from our civilian peers. But, we pulled the triggers in this war, and now must live with our share of responsibility for that. I invite you to look, read and perhaps feel a little of what we felt and experience a little of what we experienced. This is history; it happened. Perhaps*

*someday we will understand why.*

Christopher Gaynor, 2014

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Photo: Vashon ferry dock. Courtesy Patricia Filer.

## Curriculum Alignment

**Textbooks:** This curriculum contains information that complements the study of how the Vietnam War influenced those living in Washington State. Information on the Vietnam War is presented in the following textbooks commonly used in 7<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms:

- Grades 7-8 Washington State History: *Washington – A State of Contrasts* US History: *History Alive! The US through Industrialism*
- Grades 11-12 American History – *America’s History* (7<sup>th</sup> Edition – AP: 8<sup>th</sup> Edition)

**OSPIGLEs:** The suggested classroom activities in this curriculum align with the following Washington State Grade Level Expectations.

- Civics 1.1.2 Evaluate how well court decisions and government policies have upheld key ideals and principles in the United States.
- Civics 1.3.1 Analyze and evaluate the causes and effects of U.S. foreign policy on people in the United States and the world in the past or present.
- Civics 1.4.1 Analyze and evaluate ways of influencing local, state, and national governments to preserve individual rights and promote the common good.
- History 4.1.2 Understand how specific themes and developments helped define eras in U.S. history (popular movements and domestic issues 1945-1991).
- History 4.2.2 Analyze how cultures and cultural groups have shaped the United States (1890-present).
- History 4.3.1 Analyze differing interpretations of events in U.S. history (1890-present).
- History 4.3.2 Analyze multiple causes of events in U.S. history, distinguishing between proximate and long-term causal factors (1890-present).
- History 4.4.1 Analyze how an understanding of United States history can help us prevent problems today.
- Geography 3.2.2 Analyze cultural interactions.

**Classroom-Based Assessments:** This curriculum suggests classroom activities that fulfill the following Washington State Classroom-Based Assessments:

- **Dig Deep – Analyzing Resources** (8<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup>): A responsible citizen uses historical thinking to develop thoughtful participation in a democratic society. To develop thinking skills, students will develop and support a thesis on a historical question based on analysis of primary sources and historical narration. (Units 1 and 2)
- **Constitutional Issues** (8<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup>): Citizens in a democracy have the right and the responsibility to make informed decisions. Students will make an informed decision on a public issue after researching and discussing different perspectives on the issue. (Unit 3)

**Social Studies Skills:** These suggested classroom activities provide groundwork for the following Washington State Social Studies Skills:

- 5.1.1 Analyze the underlying assumptions of positions on an issue or event.
- 5.1.2 Evaluate the depth of a position on an issue or event.
- 5.2.2 Evaluate validity, reliability, and credibility of sources while researching an issue or event.
- 5.3.1 Create and articulate possible alternative resolutions to public issues and evaluates these resolutions using criteria identified in the context of a discussion.
- 5.4.1 Evaluate and interpret other points of view on an issue within a paper or presentation.

**College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework:** The curriculum suggests activities that complement standards for the C3 Framework:

- Enhances rigor of social-studies disciplines of history and civics and aligns with Common Core Standards for English/Arts and Literacy.
- Builds critical thinking, problem solving, and participatory skills for engaged citizenship.

## Curriculum Objectives

### **Content Objectives:** Student will ...

- Understand that there are multiple perspectives and interpretations of historical events.
- Be provided with a set of primary and secondary sources with which to compare and contrast experiences and viewpoints about how different individuals were affected by the Vietnam War. Be provided with resources by which to begin research and to conduct interviews to support project that they select.
- Be provided with activities to research and support a position considering interaction between individual rights and the common good, using such examples as the draft and the right to assemble guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution.
- Learn the significance of how the Vietnam War affected students who were their own age in that era, and the communities in which they lived.
- Identify and explore lifestyles, trends, or interests that influenced young people in the Vietnam War era.
- Be provided with information about how people during this era publicly objected to the Vietnam War. This will stimulate discussion comparing current demonstrations against government decisions or policies, such as those against police actions in Ferguson, Missouri and in New York City.

### **Performance Objectives:** Student will...

- Develop and research a question that analyzes a historical event. Students will base the thesis on primary and secondary sources.
- State a position on an issue that considers the interaction between individual rights and the common good and analyze how to advocate for that position.
- Compare and contrast what life was like in the 1960s with life today by examining primary and secondary sources related to the Vietnam War.
- Analyze photos, letters, and personal memoirs related to the Vietnam War in order to evaluate the strength of position selected.
- Identify resources that support their position on the issue that they have selected and analyze the credibility of those sources.
- Learn how to prepare for and conduct interviews to find appropriate information through proper research techniques.
- Make explicit references in a paper or presentation to three or more credible sources that provide information that is relevant to their position on the issue.
- Cite sources within a paper, presentation, or bibliography.
- Create strategies that avoid plagiarism and respect individual property rights when developing paper or presentation.
- Present interpretations and research results in a paper, presentation (individual or small group), or audio, video, or website presentation.

### **Essential Questions**

- What can you learn from examining primary sources? Is this a more valuable approach than reviewing books, movies, magazines, or information from websites? Can you make reliable conclusions by examining primary sources? How are interviews or firsthand recollections different from other primary sources?
- What do you think young people your age enjoyed doing during the Vietnam War era? How do they differ from your interests and possessions?
- How do you think people your age were impacted by the Vietnam War – both those who served in the war and those whose friends or family served in the war? Consider classmates who may be of SE Asian descent and how have they or members of their families been impacted by the war.
- Was the draft fair? Do you think the U.S. government had the right to demand that all young men ages 18-25 years be subject to the draft?
- If a draft is found to be necessary now, should the requirements be different? Should women be included in the draft? Should different provisions be made for persons of specific cultures or religions? Are there other choices that would be more appropriate? How would a draft affect you personally? What are your rights and responsibilities? What are your choices? How do you find out?
- Are college or other deferments that exempt one from military service fair? Do they lead to socioeconomic disparities in who must to go into military?
- What types of demonstrations and protests does the Constitution protect? Do demonstrations about governmental decisions or policies solve anything? Why is the right to demonstrate and protest important?
- Does participating in a demonstration that opposes government policy or decision have any lasting effect on one's reputation or right to pursue education or career goals?
- How does the “welcome home” received by Vietnam veterans differ from those for returning soldiers today? What can an individual do to provide support?
- Why is it important for those who serve in the military to receive good medical care for both physical and mental health issues? How can students play a part in supporting this?



## Background Information #1: Vashon Island and the Vietnam War

“The Vietnam War was part of the Cold War (1946 to 1991) between the Western nations led by the United States and the Communist world led by the Soviet Union and China.



“Vietnam became a Cold War battleground when the Viet Minh led by Ho Chi Minh overthrew French colonialism in the 1954 Battle of Dien Bien Phu. Vietnam was divided into the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam), supported by the Soviet Union and China, and the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam), supported by the United States, and the coalition partners South Korea, New Zealand, Australia, and the Philippines. The long conflict that followed became known as the Vietnam War.

“American foreign policy during the Cold War was guided by a policy called ‘containment’ (stopping the spread of Communism beyond its existing borders) and was based in large part on the ‘domino theory’ (which held that if any nation fell to Communism, then the surrounding countries would fall like a row of dominos). These two concepts drove American intervention around the world and in Vietnam.

“As the American counter-insurgency effort stalled in South Vietnam, President Lyndon B. Johnson escalated the war following the Gulf of Tonkin Incident in 1964. The American ground war began in March 1965 when 3,500 American Marines were sent to protect American air bases. By the end of 1965 there were nearly 200,000 American troops in Vietnam and General Westmoreland predicted victory by the end of 1967.

“The war did not go as predicted, and by 1968 there were over 500,000 American troops fighting alongside the Army of the Republic of (South) Vietnam (ARVN) against the National Liberation Front (NLF), popularly known as the Viet Cong (VC), and the Peoples’ Army of Vietnam (PAVN) of North Vietnam. It was an unconventional war that the American military was not well prepared to fight despite superior air and ground weaponry and technology.

“In January 1968, the Tet Offensive caught American and South Vietnamese forces by surprise and although it ended in an American military victory, it was a political victory for North Vietnam and the Viet Cong, and ended the political career of President Lyndon B. Johnson, who declined to run for re-election.

“Richard Nixon was elected President in 1968 and in 1969 began the policy of Vietnamization, which sought to turn the war over to the South Vietnamese and gradually withdraw American troops. Protests against the war peaked in 1969 and 1970. The 1969 Vietnam Moratorium and the 1970 Kent State and Jackson State shooting of student protesters, reflected the deep divisions in American public opinion about the war. By 1971 there were slightly more than 150,000 American troops in Vietnam.

“In January 1973 the Paris Peace Accords ended direct American involvement in the war. Richard Nixon resigned as President in 1974 because of the Watergate Scandal. Saigon fell to North Vietnamese and National Liberation Front forces in April 1975 ending the Vietnam War.

“During these years, Vashon was largely outside the turmoil over the Vietnam War. Initially Vashon-Maury Islanders supported the war, but as many young men fought and died in Vietnam, opinion slowly turned against the war leaving the community deeply divided. The Island was more focused on the issues of: planning, as Operation Jigsaw developed a comprehensive plan; governance, as the new Civic Assembly sought to represent the Island; schools, as record enrollments and the failure of school levies created issues; hippies, as many counter-culture participants began to move to the Island; drugs, as marijuana and other drug use increased among Vashon’s youth; the recession, as the “Boeing Bust” hit the Island hard; the dump, as residents protested King County charging dump fees; the bombing, as the community reacted to the fire-bombing of the County offices; and vandalism, as youthful disaffection increased.”

Text from “Home of Record: Vashon and the Vietnam War” Exhibit at Vashon Maury Island Heritage Museum. Courtesy Bruce Haulman.

AMERICA'S LONGEST WAR TO THAT TIME ENDED ON APRIL 30, 1975. DURING 15 YEARS OF MILITARY INVOLVEMENT, OVER 2.5 MILLION AMERICANS SERVED IN VIETNAM, WITH 500,000 SEEING ACTUAL COMBAT. THE AMERICAN MILITARY SUFFERED 58,272 KILLED IN ACTION OR IN NON-COMBAT DEATHS AND 303,644 WOUNDED. THE NORTH VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT REPORTED THAT IT SUFFERED 1.1 MILLION DEAD AND 600,000 WOUNDED DURING THE WAR. ABOUT 266,000 SOUTH VIETNAMESE SOLDIERS DIED, AND CIVILIAN DEATHS ARE ESTIMATED AT TWO MILLION IN THE NORTH AND SOUTH. ELEVEN VASHON ISLAND MEN LOST THEIR LIVES IN VIETNAM AND ONE DIED LATER OF WAR-RELATED CAUSES.

## VOCABULARY

**Civilian** – a person who is not on active duty with a military, naval, police, or firefighting organization.

**Colonialism** – the control or governing influence of a nation over a dependent country, territory, or people.

**Communism** – a system of social organization in which all economic and social activity is controlled by a totalitarian state dominated by a single and self-perpetuating political party.

**Counterinsurgency** – a program or an act of combating guerrilla warfare and subversion.

**Disaffection** – being dissatisfied with the people in authority and no longer willing to support them.

**Foreign policy** – a policy pursued by a nation in its dealings with other nations, designed to achieve national objectives.

**Liberation** – the act or fact of gaining equal rights or full social or economic opportunities for a particular group.

**Moratorium** – a period of time in which there is a suspension of a specific activity, as in an emergency.

**Republic** – a state in which supreme power rests in the body of citizens entitled to vote and is exercised by representatives chosen directly or indirectly by them.

**Turmoil** – a condition of great commotion, confusion, or disturbance; tumult; agitation; disquiet.

**Unconventional** – not bound by or conforming to convention, rule, or precedent.



## Background Information #2: The Vietnam War Timeline

This Timeline was prepared for “Home of Record: Vashon and the Vietnam War,” a 2012 exhibit of the Vashon-Maury Island Heritage Museum. (Courtesy Bruce Haulman, Exhibit Curator)

**1887** – French colonize Vietnam.

**September 2, 1945** – Ho Chi Minh declares an independent nation called the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

**December 1946** – Franco-Vietnamese War begins.

**July 1950** – The United States pledges \$15 million in military aid to France to help them fight in Vietnam.

**May 7, 1954** – The French suffer a decisive defeat at the Battle of Dien Bien Phu.

**July 24, 1954** – The Geneva Accords provide a temporary boundary between North and South Vietnam at the 17th parallel.

**October 26, 1955** – South Vietnam declares itself the Republic of Vietnam.

**December 20, 1960** – The National Liberation Front (NLF), also called the Viet Cong, is established in South Vietnam.

**January 20, 1961** – John Fitzgerald Kennedy is inaugurated as President.

**November 2, 1963** – South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem is executed during a coup.

**November 22, 1963** – President John F. Kennedy is assassinated in Dallas. Lyndon B. Johnson is sworn in as President.

**August 2 and 4, 1964** – The Gulf of Tonkin incident occurs.

**August 7, 1964** – U.S. Congress passes the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, unanimously in the House and 98-2 in the Senate. The resolution grants President Johnson the power to wage an undeclared war in Vietnam.

**November 3, 1964** – President Johnson is re-elected by a landslide.

**March 2, 1965** – Operation Rolling Thunder begins with the bombing North Vietnam. Scheduled to last eight weeks, Rolling Thunder lasts three years. During the entire war, the U.S. will fly three million sorties and drop nearly eight million tons of bombs on North and South Vietnam, four times the tonnage dropped during all of World War II.

**March 8, 1965** – The first U.S. combat troops arrive in Vietnam when 3,500 Marines join 23,000 American military advisors already there.

**April 17, 1965** – In Washington D.C., 15,000 students gather to protest the U.S. bombing campaign.

**November 14-16, 1965** – The Battle of Ia Drang Valley, the first major battle between U.S. troops and North Vietnamese Army regulars (NVA) inside South Vietnam.

**January 28-March 6, 1966** – Operation Masher marks the beginning of large-scale U.S. “search-and-destroy” operations against Viet Cong and NVA troop encampments.

**March 26, 1966** – Anti-war protests are held in New York, Washington, Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, and San Francisco.

**September 23, 1966** – The U.S. reveals that jungles near the Demilitarized Zone are being defoliated by sprayed chemicals, including Agent Orange.

**May 13, 1967** – In New York City, 70,000 march in support of the war.

**December 4, 1967** – Four days of anti-war protests begin in New York.

**January 31, 1968** – The Tet Offensive is launched when enemy forces attack more than 100 cities and towns throughout South Vietnam.

**March 16, 1968** – The My Lai Massacre occurs.

**April 4, 1968** – Civil-rights leader Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King is assassinated.

**April 27, 1968** – In New York, 200,000 students refuse to attend classes as a protest against the war.

**May 10, 1968** – Paris peace talks begin.

**June 5, 1968** – Robert F. Kennedy is assassinated after winning the California Democratic presidential primary election.

**December 1968** – U.S. troop strength in Vietnam reaches 540,000.

**July 1969** – President Nixon orders the first U.S. troop withdrawals from Vietnam.

**September 3, 1969** – Ho Chi Minh dies.

**September 16, 1969** – President Nixon orders the withdrawal of 35,000 soldiers from Vietnam and a reduction in draft calls.

**November 3, 1969** – President Nixon announces his Vietnamization plan.

**May 2, 1970** – American college campuses erupt in protests against the invasion of Cambodia.

**May 4, 1970** – At Kent State University in Ohio, National Guardsmen shoot and kill four student protesters and wound nine. In response to the killings, over 400 colleges and universities across America shut down.

**June 22, 1970** – American usage of jungle defoliants in Vietnam is halted.

**June 30, 1970** – U.S. troops withdraw from Cambodia.

**June 13, 1971** – The New York Times begins publication of the Pentagon Papers.

**June 30, 1971** – The U.S. Supreme Court rules 6-3 to allow publication of the Pentagon Papers by The New York Times and Washington Post

**December 17, 1971** – U.S. troop levels in Vietnam drop to 156,800.

**April 27, 1972** – Paris peace talks resume.

**April 30, 1972** – U.S. troop levels in Vietnam drop to 69,000.

**June 17, 1972** – Five burglars are arrested inside the Watergate Building in Washington, D.C.

**July 14, 1972** – The Democrats choose Senator George McGovern as their presidential nominee. He advocates "immediate and complete withdrawal" from Vietnam.

**October 8, 1972** – The longstanding diplomatic stalemate finally ends as both sides agree to major concessions. The U.S. allows North Vietnamese troops already in South Vietnam to remain, while North Vietnam drops its demand for the dissolution of the South Vietnam government.

**November 7, 1972** – Richard M. Nixon re-elected President.

**January 27, 1973** – The Paris Peace Accords are signed.

**January 27, 1973** – The last American soldier dies in combat in Vietnam.

**February 12, 1973** – Hanoi releases 591 American POWs.

**March 29, 1973** – The last U.S. troops withdraw from Vietnam.

**November 7, 1973** – Congress passes the War Powers Resolution requiring the President to obtain the support of Congress within 90 days after sending American troops abroad.

**August 9, 1974** – President Richard Nixon resigns.

**September 16, 1974** – President Gerald R. Ford announces a clemency program for draft evaders and military deserters.

**April 30, 1975** – At 8:35 a.m. the last Americans depart Saigon, concluding the U.S. presence in Vietnam. North Vietnamese troops pour into Saigon and encounter little resistance. By 11 a.m., the red and blue Viet Cong flag flies from the presidential palace. President Minh broadcasts a message of unconditional surrender.



## VOCABULARY

**Clemency** – an act or deed showing mercy or leniency.

**Colonize** – leave one's native country to form in a new land a settlement subject to, or connected with, the parent nation.

**Demilitarized Zone** – an area in which it is forbidden to station military forces or maintain military installations.

**Defoliant** – compound used to destroy or cause widespread loss of leaves, used widely in Vietnam to deprive enemy troops and guerrilla forces of concealment.

**Deserters** – individuals who leave or run away from military service with the intention of not returning.

**Diplomatic stalemate** – a situation between governments in which no agreed action can be taken or progress made; a deadlock.

**Inaugurate** – to induct into office with formal ceremonies; install.

**Independent** – not subject to another's authority or jurisdiction; autonomous; free.

**Resistance** – an underground organization in a conquered country that works to overthrow the occupying power.

**Unconditional** – not limited by conditions.

**Undeclared** – not publicly avowed or professed.

Photos: Captions and Credit: Left: Think Green. My team: me leaning on rig, next George Calvert and then "Mummy." (Pig Pen" snapped the shot with Gaynor's Asahi Pentax.) Courtesy Christopher Gaynor. Middle: Vashon Heritage Museum 2011-2012 Exhibit "Home of Record." Courtesy Holly Tuttle. Right: Gaynor at The Wall in Washington DC. Courtesy Paul Chen.

## Background Information #2: The Draft and the Lottery

“The modern draft had its origins in the Civil War, when both the Union and the Confederate States instituted a draft. Before that time, the primary sources of military might in the United States were the militias, which were maintained by the individual states. The rebelling colonies raised a small paid force to fight the Revolutionary War, but could not muster enough troops. In the end, they relied heavily on the state militias to prosecute the war. Efforts by President George Washington and his successors to have Congress authorize a draft went unheeded, as there was a general fear of maintaining a standing army of any size.

“At the outbreak of the War of 1812, Congress offered incentives to men to join federal forces, but the enrollment was inadequate and again the state militias were tapped. In the Mexican-American War, the United States had better success recruiting troops, but General Winfield Scott's advance on Mexico City was stalled as troops with a one-year enlistment period did not re-enlist. The general had to wait for fresh troops to arrive.

“At the outbreak of the Civil War, each side started by offering enlistment incentives, but because of large early peaks in enlistment and subsequent expiration of the enlistment periods, both sides suffered from a loss of men when reenlistment efforts failed. Desperate for men, the Confederacy started a draft in April 1862. Three years of service were required of all white men aged 18 to 35. The law had several exceptions written into it, including a buy-out option, which led to disgruntled soldiers angry that rich people able to buy their way out. Later the enlistment age was expanded to 17 to 50, and by the last year of the war even slaves were being conscripted.

“In the North, where the supply of men was greater, the draft was delayed a little longer, but by March 1863 it was necessary. The North's system was as maligned as that of the South, because substitutes could be "hired" for \$300, and exemptions from conscription could be bought. The ages of conscriptees was set at 20 to 45. In New York, Governor Horatio Seymour unilaterally declared the draft unconstitutional. Opposition led to draft riots in New York City, and New York regiments had to be recalled from the field to quell the unrest. The governor, seeing the result of his opposition, finally urged New Yorkers to participate in the draft.

“For World War I, Congress first created the Selective Service Act, which established the system of local draft boards. All men aged 21 to 30 were eligible for the draft. A similar system was created in 1940 for all men aged 21 to 35. All were required to register for the draft, and draftees are sent to induction centers. All of this was prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor, and amounted to the United States' first peacetime draft. Another draft for the Korean War called up men aged 18 1/2 to 35, but exempted World War II veterans. Though widely protested and unpopular, the Vietnam War prompted the last draft in American history, beginning in 1962. This draft ended in 1973. Since then, all personnel entering the military have done so voluntarily.”

**Text credit:** U.S. Constitution/Constitution OnLine/Constitutional Topic: The Draft ([http://www.usconstitution.net/constop\\_drft.html](http://www.usconstitution.net/constop_drft.html)) accessed February 8, 2015.

## The Vietnam Draft Lottery

On December 1, 1969, the Selective Service System (SSS) of the United States held a lottery to determine the order in which men would be inducted into the U.S. Army. This was the first time in 27 years that the U.S. had reinstated a draft lottery.



A large chart with all days of the year – starting with January 1 and ending with December 31 – was used to record the numbers selected. February 29 was included. Three hundred and sixty-six blue plastic capsules, each containing a number, were placed in a large glass drum and selected randomly, one at a time. The first number drawn was 257 and that matched September 14. All registrants (males aged 19-26) with that birthday were assigned lottery number 1 and called to report for induction in 1970. The date on the second capsule selected was assigned lottery number 2, and so on. A broadcast of the event was carried live over the radio and CBS TV.

Today the draft in the United States is still administered by the Selective Service System, although at the time of this writing the draft is not active. But the SSS remains in operation and actively campaigns to get young men to register to ensure that, should a draft ever be needed in the future, it has ready lists of who is eligible. According to the SSS, registration for the draft is required of all men ages 18 through 25. Forms to register are available at all U.S. post offices, as well as online. Failure to register can result in a fine of up to \$250,000 and disqualification from many federal programs, such as student aid. This system has been in place since 1980.



WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT CLASSIFICATIONS FOR DRAFT STATUS? WHAT DOES 1-A MEAN? WHAT DOES 4-A MEAN? WHERE DID YOU FIND THIS INFORMATION?

See: Selective Service/History and Records/Vietnam Lotteries (<http://www.sss.gov/lotter1.htm>) accessed on February 8, 2015.

Photo Caption and Credit: Rep. Alexander Pimie, R-NY, draws the first capsule in the lottery drawing held on December 1, 1969. The capsule contained the number 257, representing September 14. Selective Service/History and Records/Vietnam Lotteries ( <http://www.sss.gov/lotter1.htm>) accessed on February 8, 2015.

Draft Card: Courtesy Christopher Gaynor

## February 24, 1966: Hell No!



Along with growing protests against the Vietnam War, resistance to involuntary conscription for U.S. military service gradually became a hot topic nationwide as combat operations began to escalate in Southeast Asia in the mid-1960s. At first a brave few draft-age American males risked jail time and/or ostracism by openly refusing induction. By the end of the decade, many were brazenly burning their draft cards and seeking refuge in Canada, among other popular draft-resistance strategies.

Seattle's formal introduction to the draft-resistance movement occurred on February 24, 1966, when Russel Wills, a University of Washington philosophy graduate student, became the first Seattle citizen to refuse induction in protest against the war. The consequences of his actions would become apparent the following autumn when the U.S. government began to legally crack down on draft resisters in earnest. In Wills's case, he would be sentenced to five years in prison that September.

Wills's draft resistance actually began on October 16, 1965, when he wrote a letter to his draft board stating that he was so opposed to U.S. involvement in Vietnam, on both legal and moral grounds, that he had destroyed his draft card. One week later, he was given a 1-A draft classification (i.e., first choice for induction, thus canceling his student deferment), with no explanation. He did not receive a notice explaining the grounds for reclassification until January, after the date of possible legal appeal had expired. With conscientious-objector status not available to him, he had no course but to refuse induction – a very bold decision to make at the time.

Eventually, Wills's sentence would be reduced to two years. Meanwhile, the draft-resistance movement grew to the point where, in 1969, the student-body presidents of 253 U.S. universities wrote to the White House to say that they personally planned to refuse induction. By the war's end, a half-million Americans had refused induction, along with many more who had evaded the draft by various means.

In Seattle, the draft resistance movement was represented by Draft Resistance-Seattle, the local chapter of a larger national network. DR-Seattle worked in tandem with the UW chapter of Students for a Democratic Society to create antiwar organizations at the UW and Seattle Central Community College, as well as in many area high schools, including Queen Anne, Lincoln, Roosevelt, Rainier Beach, Ingraham, West Seattle, Shorecrest, Bellevue, Sammamish, and Sealth. DR-Seattle also organized support campaigns for draft resisters, solidarity protests at the Canadian border, and marches to Selective Service System offices throughout the course of the war.

–Jeff Stevens. Sources: Trudy Capell, "Grad Student To Fight Court Draft Ruling," *University of Washington Daily*, November 8, 1967, p. 1; Melvin Rader, "No Anarchy" (letter to the editor), *University of Washington Daily*, November 16, 1967, p. 2; Melvin Rader, "Russel Wills Defense Fund" (letter to the editor), *The New York Review of Books*, December 7, 1967; Walt Crowley, "Rites of Passage: A Memoir of the Sixties in Seattle" (University of Washington Press, 1995); Jessie Kindig, "Draft Resistance in the Vietnam Era," *Pacific Northwest Antiwar and Radical History Project* (<http://depts.washington.edu/antiwar>)

Photo caption and credit: Demonstrators burning draft cards outside the Selective Service office in Seattle, circa 1969. Copyright (c) Fred Lonidier. PNW Antiwar and Radical History Project ([http://depts.washington.edu/antiwar/vietnam\\_draft.shtml](http://depts.washington.edu/antiwar/vietnam_draft.shtml)) accessed February 8, 2015.

## Draft Dodgers

An estimated 70,000 American men fled to Canada to evade the draft or as deserters from the military. Overall, an estimated 60 percent of potentially eligible men escaped the draft during the Vietnam years, mostly by qualifying for one of the many different kinds of exemptions. An estimated 500 American draft dodgers who moved to Canada rather than fight in the Vietnam War were believed to be living in Edmonton in 1969. Half of them stayed after the war, even though they had been given a Presidential pardon. Several interesting articles on draft dodgers living in Canada can be found on the Edmonton Journal website.

## Anti-War Protests



Tens of thousands who were opposed to the war in Vietnam took to the streets to demonstrate their disapproval. On May 4, 1970, four students at Kent State University were killed by National Guardsmen during a demonstration. In response, the following day thousands of protesters blocked I-5, the main freeway through Seattle. Read about this demonstration from two points of view: UW police officer David Wilma (History Link Essay 2271) and James Knisley (HistoryLink Essay 9781), who was present during the demonstration. Photo: Courtesy James Knisley

## VOCABULARY

**Brazenly** – with open boldness.

**Conscientious objector** – a person who refuses to do something because it goes against his or her beliefs.

**Conscripted** – drafted.

**Deferment** – a temporary exemption from induction into military service.

**Eligible** – meeting the necessary requirements.

**Enlistment** – the period of time for which one is committed to military service.

**Escalate** – increase in intensity.

**Exempt** – free from an obligation that others are subject to.

**Evade** – avoid.

**Incentive** – something that encourages greater action or effort.

**Induction** – formal installation or entrance, as into military service.

**Malign** – to speak harmful untruths about.

**Militia** – a military force that is raised from the civil population to supplement a regular army in an emergency.

**Ostracism** – exclusion, by general consent, from social acceptance, privileges, friendship, etc.

**Pardon** – a release from the penalty of an offense.

**Randomly** – occurring without definite aim, reason, or pattern.

**Resistance** – opposition.

**Solidarity** - union or fellowship arising from common responsibilities and interests.

**Voluntarily** – undertaken by free choice.



## Is the Draft Constitutional?

“Several questions concerning the draft arise each time the United States is threatened with military action, or the United States threatens military action. The first, and most basic, is: "Is the draft constitutional?" The plain answer to this, noted in the introductory paragraph, is that it is. Conscriptio is clearly anticipated by the Constitution. The Constitution did impose one small but key restriction on a conscripted army - any allocation of funds to support the army can only have a life of two years. Any allocation thereafter must be reauthorized by Congress. Since the House of Representatives is elected every two years, this is a safeguard against runaway armies. If the people are not satisfied with the way a draft is being run, they can elect a House that will not authorize further funding.

“In recent years, the question, "Why do only men have to register for the draft?" has arisen. The answer is basically historical, where men fought the wars while women stayed home to tend to the nation's domestic needs. The acceptance of women into the military in the late 20th century had largely dispelled any myth that women cannot serve as effective combat troops, though women are still restricted from holding some positions in the military. In addition, other militaries, such as that of Israel, where women serve in all roles, further dispel this myth. The change to add women to the draft will, however, only come about with a sea change in American perception and law.

“The restriction of the draft to just men was challenged in the Supreme Court in *Rostker v Goldberg* (453 U.S. 57 [1981]). In this case, men brought suit against the SSS, because women were not included in the draft. The Supreme Court ruled against the men, stating that the sole purpose of draft registration is the accumulation of a pool of names of eligible men to serve in combat. Because women were excluded from combat by the armed services, the draft registration as it stood met the need. The Court also said that since the Congress is given exclusive constitutional authority to raise armies, it was disinclined to overrule Congress on this point. The last time the SSS notes that the issue was taken up was in 1994. It concluded that though women, at that time, made up 16 percent of the armed force personnel, and the combat roles for women were expanding, the need to register women for the draft was still not sufficient. It noted that such expansion might be prudent in the future.

“Another popular question is, "What if I'm religiously opposed to military service? Doesn't the 1st Amendment protect me?" In a way, the 1st Amendment does protect you from the draft. However, it would not protect you from service. In the event of a draft, you must appear before a draft board when called. At that point, a person can declare that military service is counter to his religious or moral beliefs. He can also declare that combat service is counter to his religious or moral beliefs. In the former case, the draft board can defer the person to serve in a non-military role. The person will likely still be drafted, but may serve in a domestic service unit. In the latter case, the person can be deferred to a non-combat role in the military, such as a cook or secretary. This form of objection to service is called conscientious objection. People with a conscientious objection to service must be able to show the local draft board that the objection is long-lasting and sincere. Witnesses may have to be called to prove the impetus for the objection is not simply fear of serving in combat.”

Text Credit: U.S. Constitution/Constitution On Line' Constitution Topic: The Draft ([http://www.usconstitution.net/consttop\\_drft.html](http://www.usconstitution.net/consttop_drft.html)) accessed February 8, 2015.

Lottery Numbers, by Brith Date, for Selective Service  
 Lottery Held February 2, 1972

This determined the order in which men born in 1953  
 were called to report for induction into the military

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	156	112	203	012	058	015	039	323	219	215	107	170
2	328	278	322	108	275	360	297	027	017	128	214	090
3	043	054	220	104	166	245	109	003	226	103	232	056
4	028	068	047	280	172	207	092	313	356	079	339	250
5	338	096	266	254	292	230	139	063	354	086	223	031
6	036	271	001	088	337	087	132	208	173	041	211	336
7	111	154	002	163	145	251	285	057	144	129	299	267
8	206	347	153	050	201	282	355	131	097	157	312	210
9	197	136	321	234	276	083	179	007	369	116	151	120
10	037	361	331	272	100	178	089	249	217	342	257	073
11	174	026	239	350	307	064	202	125	334	319	159	082
12	126	195	044	023	115	190	340	198	043	171	066	085
13	298	263	244	169	049	318	306	329	229	269	124	335
14	341	348	117	081	224	095	305	205	353	014	237	038
15	221	308	152	343	165	016	359	241	235	277	176	137
16	309	227	094	119	101	032	074	019	225	059	209	187
17	231	046	363	183	273	091	199	008	189	177	284	294
18	072	011	357	242	098	238	121	113	289	192	160	013
19	303	127	358	158	148	052	332	105	228	167	270	168
20	161	106	262	314	274	077	033	162	141	352	301	149
21	099	316	300	004	310	315	005	030	123	288	287	080
22	289	020	317	264	333	146	286	140	268	191	102	188
23	258	247	022	279	216	212	365	302	296	193	320	252
24	062	261	071	362	246	061	324	138	226	256	180	155
25	243	260	065	255	122	143	035	290	291	009	025	006
26	311	051	024	233	118	345	204	076	029	078	344	351
27	110	186	181	265	293	330	060	034	248	325	135	194
28	364	295	045	055	018	053	185	040	070	327	130	156
29	283	---	021	093	133	075	222	084	196	349	147	175
30	111	---	213	069	048	142	200	182	184	346	134	281
31	240	---	326	---	067	---	253	218	---	010	---	164

## Background Information #4: Christopher Gaynor – His Photographs and Letters



“Former Sergeant Christopher Gaynor, a Vashon Island resident and Vietnam veteran had spent the last 40 years trying to forget the trauma of the Vietnam War, trying instead to manage the Parkinson’s Disease that he had developed from exposure to Agent Orange. But Gaynor had an extraordinary collection of reminders – one that he kept sealed in a small plain box.

“From January of 1967 through February of 1968, Gaynor had documented his tour of duty in Vietnam through the lens of his Asahi Pentax camera and through his letters home. His collection of over 350 remarkable pictures captured the faces of South Vietnamese children, parents, grandparents, their villages, the soldier’s hardship of separation, and the hell of war. Photograph after photograph showed young men standing next to barbed wired and sand bag barricades, jumping out of helicopters, laying in Evac hospitals, braving the jungles, the heat, and facing their own mortality. Yet the photos also beautifully portrayed the brightness of youth, hope in a future, and the bonds of brotherly love.

“And then one day, in 2007, a young Boy Scout named Tanner Means contacted him and asked, ‘*Can I scan your pictures for my Eagle Scout project?*’ Gaynor thought long and hard and finally said ‘yes.’

“In addition to his photographs, Gaynor’s mother and friend had saved all of the letters he had sent to them from his combat tour of duty in Vietnam. He realized that together – his photographs and letters – created a unique record of one soldier’s experience in Vietnam. Boys like Tanner needed to understand the sacrifices that young men before them had made – and Gaynor was finally ready to share his story.” *Vashon-Maury Island Beachcomber*, October 7, 2011

The primary sources found in this curriculum include a selection of photos that were taken by Gaynor during his tours in Vietnam and transcriptions of a selection of letters that he wrote to friends and family. Gaynor’s letters and photographs were featured in “Home of Record: Vashon and the Vietnam War,” an exhibit at the Vashon-Maury Island Heritage Museum in 2011-2012.

*“These letters are presented as I wrote them more than 45 years ago. My mother saved those I wrote to my family. Anne Blackwell’s daughter, Erin Blackwell, recently returned the letters I wrote to her mother, my friend and mentor for nearly 50 years. At the heart of the Archives are my photographs. I took my camera with me everywhere, carefully composing the shot whenever possible. After so many decades, the young man who took these pictures is something of a stranger to me, and I marvel at how so many good images were captured under such harsh conditions.*

*“Those who are looking for dramatic battle scenes or epic heroics will be disappointed. Instead, these photographs and letters present a portrait of a group of young men, kids, really, who bond deeply through the crucible of war. In our day-to-day lives we laughed, we did a lot of posing to look tough and we counted the days until we would return to The World. We listened to Jimi Hendrix, drank stale beer and smoked the occasional joint. Not so different from our civilian peers. But, we pulled the triggers in this war, and now must live with our share of responsibility for that. I invite you to look, read and perhaps feel a little of what we felt and experience a little of what we experienced. This is history; it happened. Perhaps someday we will understand why.”*

Christopher Gaynor

## VOCABULARY

**Extraordinary** – beyond what is usual, ordinary, regular, or established.

**Sacrifice** – the surrender or destruction of something prized or desirable for the sake of something considered as having a higher or more pressing claim.

**Transition** – movement, passage, or change from one position, state, stage, subject, concept, etc., to another.

### We Laugh

We always find shit  
to laugh about, anything  
to stuff down the fear.

This dance with death means  
We will never laugh so much  
Once back in the world.

What's so damn funny?  
Pranks we play on each other  
black humor, fart jokes

You had to be there.

Christopher Gaynor



DISCUSSION TOPIC: EACH SOLDIER APPEARS TO BE DEEP IN THOUGHT...  
WHAT DO YOU THINK EACH INDIVIDUAL MIGHT BE THINKING ABOUT?

Photo Credits: Courtesy Christopher Gaynor



## Background Information #5: Agent Orange

“From 1961 to 1972, the U.S. military conducted a large-scale defoliation program aimed at destroying the forest and jungle cover used by enemy North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops fighting against U.S. and South Vietnamese forces in the Vietnam War. U.S. aircraft were deployed to spray powerful mixtures of herbicides around roads, rivers, canals, and military bases, as well as on crops that might be used to supply enemy troops. During this process, crops and water sources used by the non-combatant peasant population of South Vietnam could also be hit. In all, Operation Ranch Hand deployed more than 19 million gallons of herbicides over 4.5 million acres of land.



The most commonly used, and most effective, mixture of herbicides used was Agent Orange, named for the orange stripe painted on the 55-gallon drums in which the mixture was stored. It was one of several ‘Rainbow Herbicides’ used, along with Agents White, Purple, Pink, Green, and Blue. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Agent Orange contained ‘minute traces’ of tetrachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin, more commonly known as dioxin. Through studies done on laboratory animals, dioxin has been shown to be highly toxic even in minute doses; human exposure to the chemical could be associated with serious health issues such as muscular dysfunction, inflammation, birth defects, nervous system disorders and even the development of various cancers.

“Questions regarding Agent Orange arose in the United States after an increasing number of returning Vietnam veterans and their families began to report a range of afflictions, including rashes and other skin irritations, miscarriages, psychological symptoms, Type-2 diabetes, birth defects in children, and cancers such as Hodgkin’s disease, prostate cancer, and leukemia.

“In 1979, a class-action lawsuit was filed on behalf of 2.4 million veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange during their service in Vietnam. Five years later, in an out-of-court-settlement, seven large chemical companies that manufactured the herbicide agreed to pay \$180 million in compensation to the veterans or their next of kin. Various challenges to the settlement followed, including lawsuits filed by some 300 veterans, before the U.S. Supreme Court confirmed it in 1988. By that time, the settlement had risen to some \$240 million, including interest. In 1991, President George H.W. Bush signed into law the Agent Orange Act, which mandated that some diseases associated with defoliants (including non-Hodgkin’s lymphomas, soft tissue sarcomas, and chloracne) be treated as the result of wartime service and helped codify the VA’s response to veterans with conditions related to their exposure to Agent Orange.

“In addition to the massive environmental impact of the U.S. defoliation program in Vietnam, that nation has reported that some 400,000 people were killed or maimed as a result of exposure to herbicides like Agent Orange. In addition, Vietnam claims half a million children have been born with serious birth defects, while as many two million people are suffering from cancer or other illness caused by Agent Orange. In 2004, a group of Vietnamese citizens filed a class-action lawsuit against more than 30 chemical companies, including the same ones that settled with the U.S. veterans in 1984. The suit, which sought billions of dollars worth of damages, claimed that Agent Orange and its poisonous effects left a legacy of health problems and that its use constituted a violation of international law. In March 2005, a federal judge in Brooklyn, New York, dismissed the suit; another U.S. court rejected a final appeal in 2008.”

Content Credit: History/Agent Orange ([www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war/agent-orange](http://www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war/agent-orange)) accessed February 8, 2015.

Photo Credit: Spraying Agent Orange over Vietnam, Associated Press

## VOCABULARY

**Ambush** – an act or instance of attacking unexpectedly from a concealed position.

**Compound** – something consisting of two or more parts.

**Contaminate** – make impure by contact with something unclean or bad.

**Defoliant** – a chemical that causes the leaves to fall off plants.

**Deformity** – an abnormally formed part of the body.

**Devastating** – rendering desolate.

**Herbicides** – chemicals that kill plants.

**Impact** – influence; effect.

**Ingest** – to take, as food, into the body.

**Persistent** – constantly repeated.

**Resistant** – able to withstand; striving against, opposing.

**Terrain** – a tract of land, especially as referring to its natural features, military advantages, etc.

**Undetected** – unseen, undiscovered.



Photo Credit: [http://www.agentorangerecord.com/agent\\_orange\\_history/](http://www.agentorangerecord.com/agent_orange_history/)

Excerpt from one of Christopher Gaynor’s letter to his family, dated March 15, 1967.

“The 9<sup>th</sup> Division headquarters is a medium-sized encampment occupying a couple of square miles carved out of the jungle. They went about this in the most direct manner: that is by spraying to kill the vegetation, leveling everything and leaving a flat constantly dust choked wilderness surrounded by a low perimeter wall which divides jungle from desert. The name of our desert is Bearcat.”

\*\*\*For more resources about Agent Orange, see “Resources: Online Resources” found at the end of this curriculum.\*\*\*

## Background Information #6: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

“Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a serious condition that can develop after a person has experienced or witnessed a traumatic or terrifying event in which serious physical harm occurred or was threatened. PTSD is a lasting consequence of traumatic ordeals that cause intense fear, helplessness, or horror, such as a sexual or physical assault, the unexpected death of a loved one, an accident, war, or natural disaster. Families of victims can also develop PTSD, as can emergency personnel and rescue workers.

“Most people who experience a traumatic event will have reactions that may include shock, anger, nervousness, fear, and even guilt. These reactions are common; and for most people, they go away over time. For a person with PTSD, however, these feelings continue and even increase, becoming so strong that they keep the person from living a normal life. People with PTSD have [symptoms](#) for longer than one month and cannot function as well as before the event occurred.” (Text Credit: Web MD/Anxiety and Panic Disorder/Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. [www.webmd.com/anxiety-panic/guide/post-traumatic-stress-disorder](http://www.webmd.com/anxiety-panic/guide/post-traumatic-stress-disorder) accessed on 3/22/15)

According to the Department of Veteran Affairs website (<http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/PTSD-overview/basics/how-common-is-ptsd.asp> accessed on 3/22/15), “30 % of vets who served in Vietnam have had PTSD in their lifetime and 11-20 % of those returning from current military deployments suffer from some degree of PTSD.”

THIS TRAUMA HAS BEEN CALLED BY OTHER NAMES IN DIFFERENT WARS.

IN THE CIVIL WAR, IT WAS KNOWN AS “SOLDIER’S HEART.” WORLD WAR I VETERANS WERE SAID TO HAVE “SHELL SHOCK, AND WORLD WAR II VETS WERE SAID TO SUFFER FROM “COMBAT FATIGUE.”

**What Are the Symptoms of PTSD?** Symptoms of PTSD most often begin within three months of the event. In some cases, however, they do not begin until years later. The severity and duration of the illness vary. Some people recover within six months, while others suffer much longer. Symptoms of PTSD often are grouped into three main categories, including:

**Reliving:** People with PTSD repeatedly relive the ordeal through thoughts and memories of the trauma. These may include flashbacks, hallucinations, and nightmares. They also may feel great distress when certain things remind them of the trauma, such as the anniversary date of the event.

**Avoiding:** The person may avoid people, places, thoughts, or situations that may remind him or her of the trauma. This can lead to feelings of detachment and isolation from family and friends, as well as a loss of interest in activities that the person once enjoyed.

**Increased arousal:** These include excessive emotions; problems relating to others, including feeling or showing affection; difficulty falling or staying asleep; irritability; outbursts of anger; difficulty concentrating; and being "jumpy" or easily startled. The person may also suffer physical symptoms, such as increased blood pressure and heart rate, rapid breathing, muscle tension, nausea, and diarrhea.”

(Text Credit: Web MD/Anxiety and Panic disorder/Post Traumatic Stress Disorder ([www.webmd.com/anxiety-panic/guide/post-traumatic-stress-disorder](http://www.webmd.com/anxiety-panic/guide/post-traumatic-stress-disorder)) accessed February 8, 2015.





DISCUSSION TOPIC: PHOTOS OF MANY YOUNG MEN ARE DESCRIBED HAVING A “THOUSAND-YARD STARE.”  
WHAT DO YOU THINK THIS PHRASE MEANS?

## VOCABULARY

**Flashback** – a recurring and abnormally vivid recollection of a traumatic experience, as a battle, sometimes accompanied by hallucinations.

**Personnel** – the people employed in an organization or place of work.

**Severity** – harshness, sternness, or rigor.

**Situation** – the state of affairs; combination of circumstances.

**Stress** – a specific response by the body to a stimulus, such as fear or pain, that disturbs or interferes with the normal physiological equilibrium of an organism.

**Symptom** – a sign or indication of something.

**Traumatic** – psychologically or physically painful.

**Uncontrollable** – incapable of being restrained.

Photo credit: Larry Filer 1967. Courtesy Patricia Filer.

\*\*\*For more resources about Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder,  
see “Resources: Online Resources” found at the end of this curriculum.\*\*\*

## Background Information #7: Welcome Home

Vietnam veterans returned home from war to varying responses. While World War II vets were welcomed home as heroes, Vietnam veterans were sometimes scorned or ignored. Most young men who served in Vietnam did not enter the military of their own choice, and returning to their regular lives with the memories and stigma of having served there was difficult. By the late 1960s, the war was very unpopular and reminders were everywhere. People were protesting the war in large numbers, and much of the art and music of the time provided constant reminders of anti-war sentiment. Many returning vets suffered physical and mental health conditions that were constant reminders of their experiences in the war.



In HistoryLink essay No. 10184, read about a “Welcome Home” barbeque and parade for returning Vietnam veterans on July 10, 1969. ([http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file\\_id=10184](http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=10184))

In HistoryLink essay No. 3413, read a People’s History about two women who encountered a Vietnam vet fishing at Green Lake. ([http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file\\_id=3413](http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=3413))

In Vietnam Curriculum People’s Histories Nos. 1, 3, and 4, read the recollections of Vietnam veterans Christopher Gaynor, George Nelson, and Rick Skillman about their treatment by families, friends, and their communities upon returning to the U.S. (See other related HistoryLink essays in Online Resources: Secondary Resources)

*“I am a Vietnam veteran. I say this again because just a few years ago I would not have acknowledged this fact. My generation’s dance with death was the main event at the epicenter of the turbulent 1960s, an era that changed America forever. The Vietnam War was our elephant in the room. Those of us who went to Vietnam and survived returned home as outcasts. We were called baby killers and faced hostility or indifference. There were no parades, no welcome home, and no respect. This was devastating for the young men and women who did their best in a terrible situation.*

*“Four decades later, Vietnam War veterans are now treated with more respect, are accepted by veterans of earlier wars and have been mostly well cared for by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). But while we are honoring our veterans, we must also acknowledge and honor their families... Now we have a new generation of war veterans. As they return home, they have been treated with more respect and compassion than was my generation. ‘Hate the war, love the warrior’ may be a cliché, but in practice it has made all the difference to the men and women who have given so much and been asked to give more.”*

Excerpt from *Vashon-Maury Island Beachcomber* article published on Veterans Day, November 11, 2014, written by Christopher Gaynor.

### VOCABULARY

**Iconic** – representing or standing for something because of a resemblance or analogy to it.

**Prominently** – standing out so as to be seen easily; conspicuous; particularly noticeable.

**Scorned** – treated or regarded with contempt.

**Stigma** – a mark of disgrace or infamy

Photo Credit: Vietnam War veterans parade in Seattle, July 10, 1969. (*Barry Sweet, Associated Press*)

## Background Information #8: Vashon Vietnam Veterans Memorial



It began as an idea of Vashon Islander Eric Ireland. During the Gulf War, Ireland became interested in what Vashon Island was like in the 1960s and early 1970s during the Vietnam War era. He began doing research in the local library, using old *Beachcomber* (Vashon's newspaper) articles, and in doing so he found photo after photo of fallen soldiers – local men – on the front page. He wondered “Who are these people and why haven't I heard their names before?”

When Ireland first proposed the idea of building a memorial to honor those from the Island who had served in good faith and with honor in SE Asia, he encountered a lack of interest and even some resistance. But he was able to identify a group of people who shared his vision, including members of American Legion Post 159, and Vashon artist Al Bradley. After nearly eight years of preparation, this grassroots group shared their plan in an announcement in the *Beachcomber* in 1998, describing the project and making plans for public meetings to discuss design, location, funding, and community reviews. The announcement said in part:

“We recognize that the American experience in Vietnam remains a sensitive issue for many, with this in mind it is our goal to help create a memorial that is positive and healing – one which veterans and their families will view with pride, and we as a community will always remember those who were once our friends and our neighbors.”

On May 26, 1998, the Vashon Island Park District board approved the placement of a stone sculpture, engraved with the names of the men from Vashon Island who died while in service in SE Asia, in Ober Park next to the King County Library building on Vashon Highway SW. This location was selected because it provided a site that would be accessible to children, the elderly, and those with limited mobility. It was pointed out that many veterans who may want to spend time at the monument may have or are beginning to experience physical disabilities that would make it difficult to access many sites in local parks. The library location provided parking and a paved walkways to the memorial. The site also provided visibility from the main road leading to and from the Vashon ferry.

The Vashon Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVVMF) followed Department of Defense guidelines for inclusion on the memorial. Those individuals listed as fatalities or missing in action in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and certain coastal areas between 1959 and 1975 would be listed. An additional requirement was that the individuals must have had “a direct connection [to Vashon] (between the years 1959 – 1975), year-round or summer residency, immediate family grew up or live on the Island, and/or burial on the Island.”

Based upon the VVVMF criteria, it was first determined that 11 names would be etched on the memorial. Those names are:

- Danny Cleon Barnes 9/3/47-1/7/67 PFC, Army. Buried in Vashon Cemetery.
- David Marshall Davies 4/23/40-4/2/66 Captain, Army.
- William Robert Devore 9/28/47-11/28/66 Private, Marine Corps. Buried in Vashon Cemetery.
- Walter Larry Ferrell 10/21/46-1/27/69 Warrant Officer, Army.
- David Terrance Hake 2/7/45-11/25/66 PFC, Marine Corps. Buried in Vashon Cemetery.
- Donald Steven Holke 3/25/47-11/9/67 SP4, Army. Buried in Vashon Cemetery.
- David Leslie Mace 10/24/49-9/29/68 PFC, Army. Buried in Vashon Cemetery.
- John Vilnis Raaum 6/24/39-7/9/66 SPC5, Army. Buried in Vashon Cemetery.
- Frank William Selden 8/12/46-8/3/66 HM3, Navy Corpsman.
- John Leonard Stewart 2/25/45-2/126/68 PFC, Army.
- J. Athan Theodore 7/26/37-3/13/68 Sgt., Army.

But the memorial ended up with one additional name, for a total of 12. Larry Verlyn Wallace was wounded in Vietnam, but did not die until years after returning home. However, his death was a result of his service in Vietnam, and he deserved to be honored. His name was added after the dedication of the memorial.

Vashon artist Al Bradley was himself a veteran of the Vietnam War. His design for the Vashon Vietnam Memorial was simple. It would be composed of three basalt columns from the Columbia River Basin. Two would be set vertically, with the names of the 12 men etched into polished inset panels, with two or three names on each. No name would appear alone on a panel. This symbolized the connection between these men and the wish that they never be alone. The third basalt column would rest horizontally between them, engraved with the inscription:

*Our Community honors the courage, sacrifice and devotion to duty and country of its Vietnam Veterans.  
November 11, 1998*

The consulting firm for the memorial was ATR Engineering, whose owner, Art Rack, also is a Vietnam veteran. Funds were raised, the site was prepared, and many volunteers and some paid contractors completed work on the columns. Installation was completed on October 17, 1998, and the dedication ceremony was held at Ober Park on November 14 that year.

The ceremony featured a poetry reading and choral and instrumental music. Present were the Vashon VFW Honor Guard; elected state representatives; Emma Amiad, chair of the Vashon Park District (who is also a Vietnam veteran); King County Council member Greg Nickels; and Vashon-Maury Island Community Council President Craig Beles.

As a *Beachcomber* article dated November 9, 1998, reported:

“This Memorial honors those Islanders who died in Vietnam as well as those who served their country and came back,” said Eric Ireland, who eight years ago initiated a community process that led to the creation of this memorial. “It has been a deeply moving experience to witness so many individuals in the community contribute their time and financial resources to make this memorial possible.”

“The striking design of the memorial evokes the sense of loss experienced by the families whose relatives and friends died in the war. One unique element of the design was the opportunity for participation allowed as veterans, family members and neighbors gathered together to complete the polishing of the stones.

“Honoring our fallen soldiers and heroes through public art is an important part of the healing process for families and the community,” said Jason Everett, Director of Vashon Allied Arts. “This sculpture provides a point of remembrance, as well as an opportunity to educate future generations about the real costs of war.”

Also speaking at the Memorial ceremony were John Stewart, whose son, John Leonard Stewart, one of the 11 names on the Memorial, was killed on his 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday, and Richard Skillman, a Navy veteran of the Vietnam War. The U.S. Army’s Ft. Lewis provided a bugler to play Taps and the Seattle Bagpipe Club performed.

After the dedication, Ireland said, “People feel good about it. I am so pleased.” About Bradley’s sculpture, Ireland said, “It is poignant in its simplicity. It reaffirms our commitment to our service people. People should not forget.”

Bradley, a Vietnam Veteran, summed up his involvement, “I didn’t know these [men]. The monument speaks for friends of mine who didn’t make it back. I hope the community will appreciate it and take time to appreciate those young men.”

Christopher Gaynor  
Republic of Vietnam  
1967-1968

Photo: Vashon Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Courtesy Nathan Colello Gilmour.

## “VASHON 12”

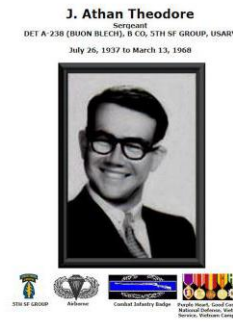
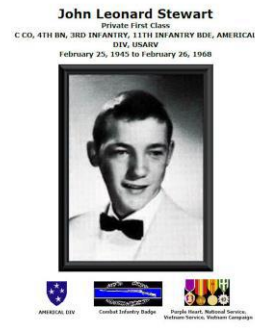
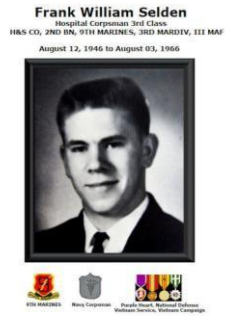
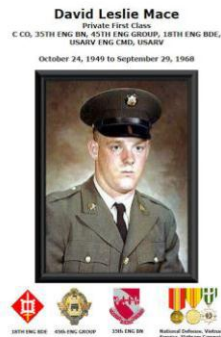
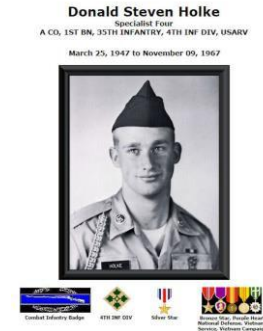
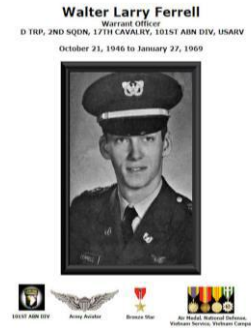
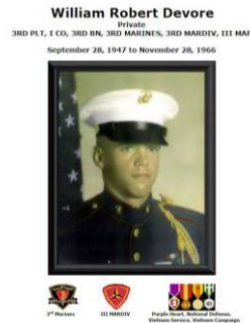
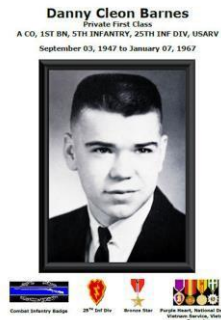


Photo captions and credits: “Vashon 12” Memorials: Courtesy Christopher Gaynor

## VOCABULARY

**Acclaim** – public and enthusiastic praise.

**Basalt** – the dense igneous rock formed by a lava flow.

**Evoke** – to produce or suggest through artistry and imagination a vivid impression of reality.

**Grassroots** – made up of common people, particularly a movement or organization originating with common people.

**Symbolize** – stand for or represent something.

**Unique** - having no like or equal; unparalleled; incomparable.

**Vertical** - being in a position or direction perpendicular to the plane of the horizon; upright; plumb.



## Unit 1: Interpret Primary Sources

### **Content Objectives:** Student will...

- Understand there are multiple perspectives and interpretations of historical events.
- Be provided with a set of primary and secondary sources with which to compare and contrast experiences and viewpoints about how different individuals were affected by the Vietnam War.
- Be provided with activities to research and support a position related to the U.S. Constitution and the draft,
- Learn the significance of how the Vietnam War affected students their own age and the communities in which they live.
- Identify and explore lifestyles, trends, or interests that influenced young people in the Vietnam War era.

### **Performance Objectives:** Student will...

- Develop and research a question that analyzes a historic event (the Vietnam War, an anti-war demonstrations, the draft) or a position on an issue that considers the interaction between individual rights and the common good. Students will base the thesis on primary and secondary sources and will analyze how to advocate for their thesis or position..
- Compare and contrast what life was like in the 1960s and now by examining primary and secondary sources related to the Vietnam War.
- Analyze photos, letters, and personal memoirs related to the Vietnam War in order to evaluate the strength of the selected issue.
- Identify resources that support their position on the issue that they have selected and analyze the credibility of the sources.
- Make explicit references in a paper or presentation to three or more credible sources that provide information that is relevant to their position on the issue.
- Cite sources within a paper, presentation, or bibliography.
- Create strategies to avoid plagiarism and respect individual property when developing a paper or presentation.
- Present interpretations and research results in a paper; live presentation (individual or small group); or audio, video, or website presentation.

### **Essential Questions**

- What can you learn from examining primary sources? Is this a more valuable approach than reviewing books, movies, magazines, or information from websites? Can you make reliable conclusions by examining primary sources? How are interviews or firsthand recollections different from other primary sources?
- What do you think young people your age enjoyed doing during the Vietnam War era? How do those differ from your interests?
- How do you think people your age were impacted by the Vietnam War – those who served in the war and those whose friends or family served in the war? Consider classmates who are of SE Asian descent – how have they or members of their families been impacted by this war?
- Was the draft fair? Do you think the U.S. government had the right to demand that all young men aged 18-25 years be subject to the draft? If a draft was found to be necessary now, should the requirements be different? Should the law be amended to include women in the draft? Should different provisions be made for persons of specific cultures or religions? Are there alternatives that would be more acceptable than the draft?
- Are college or other deferments exempting one from military service fair? Do they lead to socioeconomic disparities in who must go into the military?
- What types of demonstrations does the Constitution allow? Do demonstrations about governmental decisions or policies solve anything? Why is the right to demonstrate important?
- Did the “welcome home” received by Vietnam veterans differ from that of returning soldiers today? If so, how did it differ?
- Why is it important that those who serve in the military receive good medical care for both physical and mental health issues? How can students play a part in supporting this?



## INTERPRETING PRIMARY SOURCES ACTIVITY #1: Letters

The primary sources that will be used in this activity are transcriptions of some of the original letters that were written by Christopher Gaynor during his combat tour in Vietnam. These letters were written to friends and family back in the United States and represent three time periods: boot camp; arrival and early days in Vietnam; and his war experiences before his return home.



*These letters are presented as I wrote them more than 45 years ago. My mother saved those I wrote to my family. Anne Blackwell's daughter, Erin Blackwell, recently returned the letters I wrote to her mother, my friend and mentor for nearly 50 years.*

*I invite you to look, read, and perhaps feel a little of what we felt and experience a little of what we experienced. This is history; it happened. Perhaps someday we will understand why.*

*I wrote the following in a letter to my father dated March 5<sup>th</sup>, 1967:*

*"SINCE I HAVE BEEN HERE, MY VIEWS ON THIS WAR HAVE CLARIFIED SOMEWHAT. I CAN'T BE FOR IT IN ANY WAY REALLY, AND YET, HERE I AM INVOLVED IN IT AND SUPPORTING IT TO A CERTAIN EXTENT. THIS WAR WAS DOOMED TO AN INDECISIVE CONCLUSION AT ITS INCEPTION. I ONLY HOPE WE CAN REACH SOME SORT OF SETTLEMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.*

*"AN ALARMING NUMBER OF THE GUYS I WENT THROUGH BASIC WITH IN THE 39TH INFANTRY HAVE BEEN KILLED AFTER ONLY TWO MONTHS OVER HERE. I JUST CAN'T SEE ANY REASON OR JUSTIFICATION FOR OUR LETTING THIS HAPPEN. I DON'T MIND PERSONALLY BEING OVER HERE. I HAVE A MUCH BETTER SITUATION THAN MANY UNITS, AND I AM AT LEAST FINDING CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE OPERATION INTERESTING."*

*I believe there are no good wars, no real winners, and no genuine victories. When we go to war, we have already lost, and what is lost is gone forever. George Washington once said, "My first wish is to see this plague of mankind, war, banished from the earth." Perhaps someday we can make his wish come true.*

Christopher Gaynor

## Discussion Topics:

- What do you think Gaynor meant in this letter, dated Feb. 2 1967? Read the following excerpt aloud to class or make copies and distribute.

Dear Anne,

We sighted land early this morning. The wet hot greenness of Vietnam breaks the monotony of the ocean which I have lived with for three interminable months. We are creeping up the coast to make our debarkation point tomorrow morning. I think I hear heavy artillery, or perhaps I am imagining it, it looks too lonely and peaceful for the ugliness of Howitzers.

It's darkening now and the Officer of the Watch is signaling our escort ship with his lamp. A squadron of jets has just passed very close over us headed for the mainland, for what task I do not want to think on. The air is so rich I feel I could swim through it. There are only a few lights visible on the coast and I still hear the repeated boom of not so distant guns. Tomorrow we land and meet what is waiting for us. I think I feel fear in myself and see it in others too. I pray you are all well.

Love, Chris

For more support for your interpretations, refer to Christopher Gaynor's People's History #1, his 2014 Veterans Day article from the *Vashon-Maury Island Beachcomber*, and his recollection of the day he left for induction found in his *Autobiography: A Kind of Life* (Draft).

- Overall, do Chris's letters reflect what you are seeing in his photos?
- Can you identify differences in the tone and content of the letters he wrote to his father and the letters he wrote to his mother, his sister, or friends?
- Can you identify differences in Christopher's attitude about the draft, the war, his life as a soldier in Vietnam, and his political views from the time he was in boot camp until he was nearing the end of his tour of duty in Vietnam? Give examples and explain.

**Writing Activity:** Using photos from Christopher's folder as a guide, write a letter home from Vietnam. Students should use Worksheet #1 to help compile ideas. Incorporate the following into your letter.

1. Determine who you are writing to and why.
2. Describe what you are feeling about being in Vietnam and away from home.

Have your feelings changed since you enlisted or were drafted?

Who and what do you miss most from home and why? What is your favorite possession that you carry with you, and why?

Who do you miss most from the United States and why?

What do you and other fellow soldiers do for entertainment? What is your favorite music?

What is the hardest part of being a soldier?

3. Select one of the men in the photos and describe him to the person receiving the letter,

What does he look like? What are his physical characteristics?

What is his personality?

Is he loyal, trustworthy, brave, risk-taking, fearful? How did you come to this conclusion?

Why is he your friend or not your friend? Would he be your friend back in the *States*?

How are you different from him? (culture, age, where you are from [big city or small town], what country). How are you the same?

4. Talk about how you feel about anti-war sentiment back home.
5. Talk about what you want to do upon your return to the States and what are you concerned about.

## INTERPRETING PRIMARY SOURCES ACTIVITY #2: Photographs

The primary sources that will be used in this activity are original photographs that were taken by Christopher Gaynor during his combat tour in Vietnam. There are portraits of his fellow soldiers and of Vietnamese people. There also are studies of the machinery and equipment of war. Because of his position as a radio-teletype team chief, Gaynor's gear, including his camera, was able to be transported via jeep or helicopter – not carried in a backpack, where it could have been subjected to dirt, rain, and impact. He was able to use special PX (Post Exchange) services to have the film sent away for processing.



*“These pictures communicate poignant and powerful memories that all of those of our generation have – those who were in Vietnam can almost sense and taste it all again, and those who were not, remember less-stark and less personal photographs from magazines and television. It is as if all of us were and are one family and this is an aching part of our family photo album. The images, the photos, are so good, so moving, and the colors so rich, I expect that at any moment they may come to life – as still photos do sometimes in the beginning of films or on commercials on television. In other words the color and the shadowing of the photos, the candid nature of each of the shots, the colors of the earth and of the World of Vietnam, raises up vivid memories in me and my friends and my generation. This is a central part of our growing up, our coming of age, our dreams and nightmares. Time has been standing still in these photos, as it does often in memory. Beautiful, innocent and deeply troubling they are, and each is a reminder of what we try to avoid thinking about – mortality and the preciousness of youth, of beauty, and of justice in the world. This shows the world as it is, and does not show the world as we wish it would be or was. Two or three of these shots together have more power than all of the slick and over-commentated network news videos from the 60s. Those remain merely tape – the TV productions. These are fragments of real time and real life.*

*Sometimes a photograph – or a collection of photographs – is so powerful that it defies description or comment, and all that one hears from the viewer is, “Oh!” That is all. That pretty much says it all.”*

Larry Engelmann

Review of Gaynor's book: *A Soldier Boy Hears the Distant Guns*. Courtesy Christopher Gaynor. Larry Engelmann is the author of six books, including *Tears Before the Rain: An Oral History of the Fall of South Vietnam* (1991); His books have been published in translation in 14 languages, including Vietnamese and Chinese.

Photo Captions and Credit: Left: Pvt. Gaynor sits on the steps of the barracks at Fort Riley, Kansas toward the end of his 10 weeks Basic Training, June 1966. Middle: Mama San. Right: Carpenters take their lunch break at Tay Ninh City, 1967. Courtesy Christopher Gaynor.

**Discussion Activity:** Class views Gaynor's photos (found in the primary sources folder named *HistoryLink Vietnam/Christopher Gaynor Photos/Republic of Vietnam 1967-1968/Portraits of Soldiers* and takes notes. Afterwards, students discuss interpretations with their classmates. Students should use Worksheet #2 to respond to the following questions:

- What do you see in this photo?
- What made you notice these details?
- Why do you think this photo was taken?

**Writing Activity:** There are 64 photos in this folder, and each student will select (or be assigned) three of them. Student also will select and read People's Histories (#1- 5), Background Information (#1-7) about the Vietnam war, and three letters from the primary sources folder named *HistoryLink Vietnam/Christopher Gaynor's Letters*. Students will write a two- or three-sentence caption for each of their photographs. The captions should be concise but complete. Use worksheet 2. At the end of the assignment, photos will be projected and each student who has written a caption for that photo will read their caption. Students will have an opportunity to present reasoning for their caption interpretation. Class discussion follows. Photos and captions can be compiled into a booklet or an exhibit. Compare and contrast interpretations with original captions found in the primary sources folder named *HistoryLink Vietnam/Christopher Gaynor's Captions for Photographs/Portraits of a Soldier*.

**Reader's Theater Activity:** Students read the letters (written in the Interpret Letters #1 writing activity) with a photo projected behind them on screen. Students can also read selected People's Histories that have been gathered for the curriculum. There are other relevant Vietnam-related People's Histories that can be rewritten to fit the format of those prepared for the curriculum, to include those points of view. Students may select specific music that evokes the theme, feelings, and emotions of the letter.

### INTERPRETING PRIMARY SOURCES ACTIVITY #3: Firsthand Accounts

Students will read Vietnam Curriculum People's Histories #1-6 and Gaynor's recollection of the day he left for induction into the army in his *Autobiography: A Kind of Life* (Draft). Teacher will lead class in the following discussion topics:

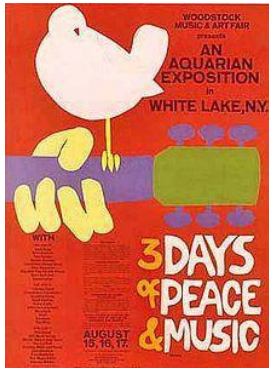
#### Discussion Topics:

- What was important to young people during the Vietnam War years?
- If you had one single possession that you would have wanted to have with you if you had been drafted and were far away from family and friends, what would that have been? Would it be realistic to have that with you? What would have been comparable to this possession in the 1960-70s? How do advancements in technology change how you communicate, live, study, or enjoy yourselves?
- What else would you liked to have asked each of the people who wrote a People's History for this project? What did they write that you wish they had said more about or been more specific about?
- If this curriculum included a People's History from a veteran who served in the Army of the Republic of South Vietnam, or a Vietnamese citizen, what types of information would you liked to have learned from the recollections that they shared?

**Writing Activity:** Using Worksheet 3, students will select one specific Vietnam Curriculum People's History and make a list of six questions that they would have asked if they had been talking to the writer, or if the writer had come to class for a presentation. Write a two-paragraph paper that expresses their opinion on the selected story. Student should analyze their own feelings – would they have felt the same (or different) if they were in the same situation? Students will compare and contrast their opinions with those of the writer.

For extra credit, or if teacher wants more People's Histories used by students, students may choose one of the other HistoryLink People's Histories related to Vietnam (see Secondary Sources: Online Resources/HistoryLink Essays). Students should follow the same guidelines as above.

## INTERPRETING PRIMARY SOURCES ACTIVITY #4: Music Lyrics



People have sung protest songs throughout human history. Wherever people are oppressed or in a common struggle, someone will voice strong feelings in song. The 1960s came to be known as the decade for protest with the twin causes of the Vietnam War and the lack of civil rights for African Americans. Some of these songs became anthems and still resonate today. Anti-war songs were the inspiration and rallying cry for countless demonstrations and marches and were featured predominantly at the 1969 Woodstock festival.

The following are examples of well-known anti-war songs from the Vietnam era. There are many others on the About Entertainment.com website. (<http://classicrock.about.com/od/toppickslists/tp/Anti-War-Protest-Songs-Of-The-60s-And-70s.htm> accessed on 3/22/15)

**FIXIN' TO DIE RAG - Country Joe and the Fish:** This protest song written by Joe McDonald was the biggest hit for his San Francisco band, Country Joe and the Fish, and received worldwide attention when it was played at Woodstock. Country Joe remembers, "I wrote 'Fixin' To Die Rag' in summer of 1965 after I had been discharged from the US Nav. It just popped into my head one day and I finished it in about 30 minutes ... The song attempts to put blame for the war upon the politicians and leaders of the US military and upon the industry that makes its money from war but not upon those who had to fight the war – the soldiers. It expresses the thoughts of a person trapped in the military system and forced to go to war by something called 'conscription'. Conscription or the 'draft' as it was called then was a system which picked young people and forced them into the military and into the war with the only other choice being jail or an attempt to 'dodge the draft' for religious reasons or physical or mental reasons. It was very hard to get out of the draft because so many people were being killed in the war that they would take just about any one. The song attempts to address the horror of going to war with a dark sarcastic form of humor called 'GI humor.' GI humor is a way people have of complaining about their situation so it will not get them in trouble and keep them from going insane in an insane environment: war." (Text credit: Country Joe's Place/How I Wrote the Rag (<http://www.countryjoe.com/howrag.htm> accessed on March 22, 2015). There are several slide shows on You Tube that pair Vietnam War images with Country Joe and the Fish singing "Fixing to Die Rag."

*Well come on all of you big strong men, Uncle Sam needs your help again.  
He got himself in a terrible jam, way down yonder in Vietnam.  
Put down your books and pick up a gun,  
We're gonna have a whole lotta fun.*

### CHORUS

*And it's 1,2,3 - what are we fighting for?  
Don't ask me, I don't give a damn  
Next stop is Vietnam.  
And it's 5,6,7 - open up the pearly gates.  
Well there ain't no time to wonder why...  
WHOOPEE! We're all gonna die.*

*Come on mothers throughout the land, pack your boys off to Vietnam.  
Come on fathers, and don't hesitate to send your sons off before it's too late  
And you can be the first ones in your block to have your boy come home in a box.*



**EVE of DESTRUCTION - Barry McGuire:** “This protest song is about political issues of the ‘60s and many radio stations refused to play it because of its antigovernment lyrics. There was an upside to this controversy, however, as it piqued interest in the song, sending it to #1 in the US. The song takes on racism, hypocrisy, and injustice at a volatile time in American history. The assassination of US President John F. Kennedy in 1963 was a big influence on the song.” Nineteen-year-old [P.F. Sloan](#), was a staff songwriter at McGuire’s label and went on to form The Grass Roots. Sloan wrote on his website: “The song “Eve of Destruction” was written in the early morning hours between midnight and dawn in mid-1964. The most outstanding experience I had in writing this song was hearing an inner voice inside of myself for only the second time. It seemed to have information no one else could’ve had. This inner voice that is inside of each and every one of us but is drowned out by the roar of our minds! The song contained a number of issues that were unbearable for me at the time. I wrote it as a prayer to God for an answer.” (Text: Song Facts/Eve of Destruction by Barry McGuire (<http://www.songfacts.com/detail.php?id=799> accessed on March 22, 2015)

*You're old enough to kill but not for votin'  
You don't believe in war, but what's that gun you're totin'  
And even the Jordan river has bodies floatin'  
But you tell me over and over and over again my friend  
Ah, you don't believe we're on the eve of destruction*

**FORTUNATE SON - Creedence Clearwater Revival (CCR):** “This is an antiestablishment song of defiance and blue-collar pride, both anti-Washington and against the Vietnam War. John Fogerty and Doug Clifford were both drafted in 1966 and discharged from the army in 1967. ‘The song speaks more to the unfairness of class than war itself,’ Fogerty said, ‘It’s the old saying about rich men making war and poor men having to fight them.’ Richard Nixon was president of the US when group leader John Fogerty wrote this song. Fogerty was not a fan of Nixon and felt that people close to the president were receiving preferential treatment. This spoke out against the war in Vietnam, but was supportive of the soldiers fighting there. Like many CCR fans, most of the soldiers came from the working class, and were there because they didn’t have connections who could get them out. The song is sung from the perspective of one of these men, who ends up fighting because he is not a ‘Senator’s son.’” (Text: Song Facts/ Fortunate Son (<http://www.songfacts.com/detail.php?id=1916> accessed on March 22, 2015)

*Some folks are born made to wave the flag  
They're red, white and blue  
And when the band plays "Hail To The Chief"  
They point the cannon at you*

**"I Ain't Marching Anymore" - Phil Ochs:** “This is an anti-war anthem. Ochs is making the statement that after having killed so much, and after having lost so much in generations past, he, as a human, is done marching to war and hopes that others will join him.” Song Facts/I Ain’t Marchin’ Anymore (<http://www.songfacts.com/detail.php?id=8244> accessed on March 22, 2015)

*It's always the old to lead us to the war  
It's always the young to fall  
Now look at all we've won with the saber and the gun  
Tell me is it worth it all.*



**Photo Credits:** Country Joe McDonald at Woodstock - Woodstock 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary/Country Joe and the Fish. Photographer unknown. ([www.cjfishlegacy.com/woodstockfestival.html](http://www.cjfishlegacy.com/woodstockfestival.html)); Credence Clearwater Revival at Woodstock - Woodstock 40 Years On (<http://classicrock.about.com/od/tourschedules/ig/woodstockpix/HenryDiltzWSCCR02.htm>) Photo Credit: © Henry Diltz, courtesy of Rhino Entertainment

### Discussion Topics:

- How does music, film, and culture form your life?
- Do you think that the music and lyrics of the Vietnam War era time period represented the feelings of the majority of young people? What audience did the musicians hope to reach? How do you think that these musicians were able to avoid having to go to Vietnam?
- How were the lyrics meant to incite feelings about the government and the draft? How do you think this form of protest was viewed by those not of draft age?
- Why do you think that this music and these song lyrics are still popular and relevant today? How did musical styles change with the themes and lyrics of the music throughout the years?
- Compare the lyrics of the Vietnam era protest songs to the songs that are written today that are supportive of military and civil servants such as firefighters or soldiers
- How do you think your classmates ( or young people) who are of SE Asian descent view these lyrics? How would they be different from yours?

### Writing Activity:

Review the lyrics of the songs identified in this document (others can be found <http://classicrock.about.com/od/toppicklists/tp/Anti-War-Protest-Songs-Of-The-60s-And-70s.htm>). Think about how military and civil service is presented in current music, especially country music. Compare the lyrics of this music with the sentiments found in the lyrics of the music that dominated the airwaves during the Vietnam War. What audiences is (was) this music intended for and what emotion or response is/was sought by the songwriters? Students should use specific examples and lyrics in their analysis. They should also give proper credit to each songwriter, using the song title and musician/band.



“The bus pulled into the Santa Ana station on W. 8th St. at 6 a.m. We boarded slowly and silently, filling the seats from back to front as directed. At 6:30 sharp, the driver closed the door, pushed the shifter into gear, and pulled onto the empty, dark street. Soon we were headed north on the Santa Ana Freeway for the hour long ride to the Armed Forces Induction Station in downtown Los Angeles. It was April 1966 and traffic was light. The order to Report for Induction, from The President of The United States, instructed me to bring enough clean clothes for three days, enough money to last one month for personal purchases, and if I had life insurance, a record of the insurance company’s address and the policy number. Just in case I got my ass blown away. I had volunteered for the draft knowing the odds were on my going to Vietnam. I had been a college student opposed to the war and marching in anti-war demonstrations and now I was a Citizen Soldier ready and willing to fight in the very conflict I was so opposed to. I no longer had any interest in being a college student and had dropped out. My mother said because I was doing nothing with my life I should go into the military. If I didn’t go and present myself to the draft board, she would call them. Was she serious? Mostly. But a year later, when I got my orders for Vietnam, she cried and worried and fussed over me. In the end, I agreed. It didn’t seem right for others to go to war while I hung out and smoked dope with my hippie friends. Once I made my decision, life became simple. I had already had my physical and was classified 1A. Now it was just a matter of showing up when and where ordered.

The April air was cool and the open windows brought a chill to some of those who had not worn jackets. I zipped up my windbreaker, leaned back in the seat and closed my eyes. The drone of the engine and the rhythmic thump of the tires on the freeway expansion joints made me feel sleepy, but nervous energy and fear kept me awake. Behind me a kid had his transistor radio turned down low, but I could still hear The Mamas and The Papas “Monday Monday.” In my 21 years I had never been far from home. The Encino house on its acre had been my world until I was 10. My best friend Tim and I had played war with plastic rifles that were more cowboy than soldier, but our imaginations filled in the details. Hours of outdoor play seemed like the most fun any of us would ever have. We would jump on our bikes and ride to the reservoir, lie on the grassy berm, and lose ourselves in the open fields, blue sky and white clouds in which we thought we could recognize the outlines of animals and people. In 1954, my family moved to Balboa Island where we had had a summer home since The War. The house was just steps from the water on Newport Harbor. It was an idyllic life. Many notable Hollywood actors, directors and studio technical people lived in our community. All the neighbors knew each other, all of us kids went to the same school and nobody locked their doors. In fact our house had a Dutch door, the top half of which was always open so that any of our friends could walk in and get a Coca Cola from the ice box. I sailed and swam all summer and my girlfriend Jo-Ann and I met our school friends at the Jolly Roger for hamburgers and ice cream specials. The drug store next door sold my favorite comic books and I always had the latest number of Superman. It was a life that would never end for us, or so we thought.”

Excerpt from Christopher Gaynor’s Autobiography: A Kind of Life (Draft)

Photo Credit: Christopher Gaynor. *Courtesy Christopher Gaynor*

## INTERPRETING PRIMARY SOURCES ACTIVITY #5: Posters

Posters are a popular art form and a creative and fairly inexpensive way to promote events and publicize political views. During the Vietnam War era, posters expressing anti-war sentiments were prominently displayed in college dorm rooms and gathering places for young people at the same time that others in the same age group were fighting the war in SE Asia.



In 1967, a group of California friends got together to celebrate the birthday of one-year-old Josh Avedon. His mother, Barbara, told her friends that she was worried that she could be raising her boy only to send him off to war. The women decided that they should take a stand against the Vietnam War and make their voices be heard. They formed a group called Another Mother for Peace. One of their first acts was to send Mother's Day cards to President Lyndon B. Johnson and members of Congress expressing their feelings about the war. The card featured an illustration (left) by Los Angeles artist Lorraine Art Schneider. Almost instantly, this message was reproduced on posters, jewelry, and bumper stickers. It became one of the most iconic expressions of anti-war sentiment during the 1960s.



The slogan for this popular anti-Vietnam War poster, “What if they gave a war and nobody came ...” originated from a line in Carl Sandburg’s poem *The People, Yes*, first published in 1936.

### Discussion Topics:

- How do you think returning veterans felt when they saw posters such as these that promoted anti-war feelings?
- Was this an effective way of communicating ideals and promoting activism?
- How do you think this same effort would be duplicated in this era, with its easy access to the Internet and social media?

**Art Activity:** Students will create a poster that expresses individual beliefs (anti-war, support of soldiers, opinion on the draft) about current American military involvement. Encourage them to use photographs, color, interesting fonts, quotes from leaders or influential people, etc.

**Photo captions and credits:** Poster: “War is not healthy for children and other living things” designed by Lorraine Schneider, 1966, for Another Mother for Peace. Courtesy Patricia Filer. Poster: “What if they gave a war and nobody came ...” designed by Beshi, 1969. Courtesy Patricia Filer.

## INTERPRETING SECONDARY SOURCES ACTIVITY: HistoryLink Timeline Essays

Most of the “Home of Record” curriculum is built upon analyzing the unique primary sources related to the Vietnam War that have been collected and compiled. Secondary sources are extremely important too, but students should be vigilant about selecting ones that are credible and reliable. **HistoryLink.org**, the online encyclopedia of Washington state history, has 94 essays that are associated with the keyword “Vietnam.” (See page 66 of this curriculum.) With a few noted exceptions, all essays and features on the site are original works prepared exclusively for HistoryLink.org by staff historians, contract writers, volunteers, and consulting experts. All essays and features are vetted by professional staff. Students should use these essays as resources for the activities in this curriculum. They should also take advantage of the sources listed at the end of each essay to access additional or more detailed information,

HistoryLink Timeline essays are date-driven and appear in chronological order. They are located in the center column of the website’s search-results page. After opening a Timeline essay, one can move forward or backward in time by clicking “Browse to Previous Essay” or “Browse to Next Essay.” You can “time-travel!”

The screenshot shows the HistoryLink.org website homepage. At the top left is a banner with the text "HistoryLink.org" and "The Free Online Encyclopedia of Washington State History" next to a logo. Below the banner is a navigation bar with links: [Home](#), [About Us](#), [Contact Us](#), [Education](#), [Bookstore](#), [Tourism](#), and [Advanced Search](#). On the right side, there is a search box labeled "Search Encyclopedia" with a "Go" button and social media icons for RSS, Facebook, and Twitter. Below the search box is a link for "Advanced Search". Further down, there are several promotional boxes: "Our books" with a book icon, "If you ❤️ HistoryLink.org" with a "Donate Now" button, "The Wreck of the Valencia" with a shipwreck image, and "Sponsor of the Week" with the MOHAI logo.

**Activity:** Students select one of the HistoryLink.org Timeline essays related to the Vietnam War. Next, click the “Browse to Previous Essay” or “Browse to Next Essay.” at the top or bottom of the essay text. Starting with the specific event that was selected, they will analyze and identify what events led up to or caused the selected Timeline essay event and what events resulted from it. Use Worksheet #8 to compile research and write a two or three paragraph analysis of what led to or resulted from the selected Timeline essay.

## Unit 2: Conducting Research and Interviews

### **Content Objectives:** Student will ...

- Understand there are multiple perspectives and interpretations of historical events.
- Be provided with a set of primary and secondary sources with which to compare and contrast experiences and viewpoints about how different individuals were affected by the Vietnam War based on research techniques. Be provided with resources by which to begin research and to conduct interviews to support project that they select.
- Be provided with activities to research and support a position considering interaction between individual rights and the common good, such as the relationship between the U.S. Constitution and the draft or the right to assemble.
- Learn the significance of how the Vietnam War affected students their own age and the communities in which they live.
- Identify and explore lifestyles, trends, or interests that influenced young people in the Vietnam War era.
- Be provided with information about how people during this era publicly objected to the Vietnam War that will stimulate discussion comparing current demonstrations against government decisions or policies, such as those against police actions in Ferguson, Missouri and in New York City.

### **Performance Objectives:** Student will...

- Learn how to prepare for and conduct interviews to find appropriate information using proper research techniques.
- Develop and research a question that analyzes a historic event (the Vietnam War, anti-war demonstrations, the draft) or a position on an issue that considers the interaction between individual rights and the common good. Students will base the thesis on primary and secondary sources and will analyze how to advocate for their thesis or position.
- State a position on an issue that considers the interaction between individual rights and the common good, and use research principles to identify credible resources and analyze how to advocate for that position.
- Compare and contrast what life was like in the 1960s versus now by examining primary and secondary sources related to the Vietnam War.
- Analyze photos, letters, and personal memoirs related to the Vietnam War in order to evaluate strength of position selected.
- Identify resources supporting the position on the issue that they have selected and analyze the credibility of the sources.
- Make explicit references in a paper or presentation to three or more credible sources that provide information that is relevant to their position on the issue.
- Cite sources within paper, presentation, or bibliography.
- Create strategies to avoid plagiarism and respect individual property when developing paper or presentation.
- Present interpretations and research results in a paper, presentation (individual or small group), or audio, video, or website presentations.

### **Essential Questions**

- What can you learn from examining primary sources in your research process? Is this a more valuable approach than reviewing books, movies, magazines, or information from websites? Can you make reliable conclusions by examining primary sources? How are interviews or firsthand recollections different from other primary sources? How can you take advantage of having your interview subject in person when researching your specific thesis or position?
- What do you think young people your age enjoyed during the Vietnam War era? How do they differ from your interests and possessions?
- How do you think your peers were impacted by the Vietnam War – those who served in this war and those with friends or family who served in the war? Consider classmates who may be of SE Asian descent – how have they or members of their families been impacted by this war? What could be learned from interviews with veterans who served as soldiers for the Republic of North Vietnam?
- Was the draft fair? Do you think the U.S. government had the right to demand that all young men aged 18-25 years be subject to the draft? If a draft was found to be necessary now, should the requirements be different? Should the law be amended to include women in the draft? Should different provisions be made for persons of specific cultures or religion? Are there other choices that would be more appropriate?
- Are college or other deferments exempting one from military service fair? Does this lead to socioeconomic disparities in who must serve in the military?
- What types of demonstrations does the Constitution allow? Do demonstrations about governmental decisions or policies solve anything? Why is this right important?



## RESEARCH ACTIVITY #1: How to find out about veterans who served in Vietnam or other wars

Students identify Vietnam veterans who live in their community. As a class, they determine what their goals are in identifying and interviewing these veterans. They prepare a universal email that asks veterans if they would like to participate in their class project. Using Worksheet 6, compile information about each veteran using online resources and personal interviews. Compare their insights, opinions, and experiences with those in People's Histories Nos. 1-5.

### LIVING VETERANS

- Personal interview or answers gained from questionnaire via email or letter
- Military websites (See Resources: Online Resources found at the end of this curriculum.)
- Local military organizations (VFW etc.)
- History websites
- HistoryLink.org – Essay 10128 (Medal of Honor – there are 12 men listed who served in Vietnam)
- Local newspaper archives
- High-school yearbooks
- Alumni organizations, church groups
- Parents, grandparents

### DECEASED VETERANS

- Military websites (See Resources: Online Resources found at the end of this curriculum.)
- High-school yearbooks
- Find a grave.com
- Virtual Wall.org
- Ancestry.com
- Local military organizations (VFW etc.)
- HistoryLink.org – Essay No. 10128 (Medal of Honor – there are 12 men listed who served in Vietnam)
- Local newspaper archives
- Ask parents, grandparents

### Writing Activities:

- 1) Using information that you learned about a living veteran, write a three-paragraph paper that details his or her life before, during, and after military service. Use Worksheet 4. How do his or her experiences, attitudes, and remembrances differ from those in People's Histories Nos. 1-5?
- 2) Write an obituary based on what you have learned about a deceased veteran. Include such things as how he was known in his school or community and also something personal that you learned about him from your sources. Use Worksheet 5 to record your information,

## RESEARCH ACTIVITY #2: How to conduct an interview

Use the “Oral Histories in the Classroom” curriculum (<http://www.historylink.org/content/education/downloads/Oral%20History%20Curriculum.pdf>) to review how to prepare for and conduct interviews for a classroom project. This curriculum is free to anyone with access to a computer and the Internet. It includes suggestions on how to conduct and use information from oral-history interviews in classroom projects.

- Identify potential interview subjects – see pp. 29, 33-35
- Preparing questions for the interview/ learning to ask “open-ended questions” – see p. 40
- Preparing for persons with special needs or challenges pp. 46-7
- Researching for an interview p. 48
- Interview etiquette pp. 50-53
- Interview techniques pp. 50-51, 53

Students should learn to prepare “open-ended” questions to ask their interview subject. These are questions that an interview subject cannot answer with a “yes” or “no” response. They should think about how old their subject would have been when he or she was involved in the Vietnam War and structure their questions as someone who is now near the age that their subject was when he or she left for Southeast Asia. They should discuss what types of problems they might encounter during an interview with a veteran, such as age, memory loss, unwillingness to discuss, sadness, or anger. Use Worksheet #7 to prepare and record the questions they wish to ask their interview subject.

### **Sample Questions for Interviewing Vietnam War Veterans:**

- What do you think students my age should know about the Vietnam War?
- Have you ever visited the Wall? (If subject seems comfortable, ask “Is there a special name you look for?” This might open up a story about someone, perhaps a friend or a comrade, who was lost in Vietnam.)
- What was the reaction of your friends, family, and those in your community when you enlisted or were drafted for service in Vietnam?
- Did other young men or women from your hometown serve in Vietnam? Can you tell me about them?
- Can you describe the differences in culture, race, education, values, political views among the people you served with.
- How do you mark Memorial Day?
- Did your family save any letters that you wrote to them from Vietnam? Have your views changed from those that you expressed in your letters?
- Have you stayed in contact with any of the people who you served with in Vietnam? How?
- Can you describe an average day in Vietnam? Can you describe the lowest point that you had during your service or since you came home?
- Tell me about returning home, either when you were on leave or returning upon completion of your service. Did you experience any negative reactions from family, friends, or community members?
- As a veteran, how did you feel about the music that was popular during the Vietnam War era?
- Do you regret having served in Vietnam? Can you explain your answer?
- What would you tell your son (or other relative or friend) if they were leaving for a term of military service where they may be in danger?

### RESEARCH ACTIVITY #3: Compare your town/city to Vashon Island during the Vietnam War era

- What is the population of your town or city? Where do you find this information?
- What was the population of your town or city? Where did you get this information?
- How many students were in high school there from 1962-1977? How many males were in the school during these years? How many went to Vietnam? How many lost their lives in Vietnam? Where do you find this information? Calculate the ratio of draft-age men to those who actually went to Vietnam. Calculate the ratio of draft-age men to those from the community who died in the war effort. Hint: use government websites, census websites, and the alumni associations of local high schools.
- How are the war dead remembered? What about war survivors?

#### Classroom Discussion Topics

- How is my city similar or different from Vashon Island? Consider size, nearness to major cities, war sentiment, number of students in high school etc. Use Worksheet #4 to record facts and resources.
- Where will I find this information?

**Writing Activity: COMPARE AND CONTRAST** – Read Background Information 1 to get basic background about Vashon Island during the Vietnam War era. Write a paper that compares and contrasts your city or town with Vashon Island – the focus of the curriculum study. Use Worksheet 5 to organize and record information for paper.

**Theater Activities:** Teachers in the Seattle/Vashon Island schools may request a copy of “IEP on the Yellow Brick Road” from Christopher Gaynor at [cbgaynor2@yahoo.com](mailto:cbgaynor2@yahoo.com). Students will read an excerpt from “IEP on the Yellow Brick Road” and discuss the differences between how the veterans from each of these wars feels about military involvement and life after wartime experience.

## Unit 3: Civics – The Constitution and the Draft

### **Content Objectives:** Student will ...

- Understand there are multiple perspectives and interpretations of historical events.
- Be provided with a set of primary and secondary sources with which to compare and contrast experiences and viewpoints about how different individuals were affected by the Vietnam War and the draft.
- Be provided with activities to research and support a position related to the U.S. Constitution and the draft.
- Learn the significance of how the Vietnam War affected students their own age and the communities in which they live.
- Identify and explore lifestyles, trends, or interests that influenced young people in the Vietnam War era.

### **Performance Objectives:** Student will...

- State a position on an issue that considers the interaction between individual rights and the common good, and will analyze how to advocate for that position.
- Compare and contrast what life was like in the 1960s and now by examining primary and secondary sources related to the Vietnam War.
- Analyze photos, letters, and personal memoirs related to the Vietnam War and the draft in order to evaluate how individuals and communities were impacted.
- Participate in discussions of competing viewpoints related to the Constitution, the draft, or right to assemble and prepare individual conclusion in paper or presentation.
- Identify resources that support their position on the issue that they have selected and analyze the credibility of the sources.
- Make explicit references in a paper or presentation to three or more credible sources that provide information that is relevant to their position on the issue. Analyze credibility of sources before using them.
- Cite sources within paper, presentation, or bibliography.
- Create strategies to avoid plagiarism and respect individual property when developing paper or presentation.
- Present interpretations and research results in a paper, presentation (individual or small group), or audio, video, or website presentations.
- Learn what their rights and responsibilities are as citizens of the United States and how these apply to the Selective Service and a potential draft. Learn how they can support or object to government's policies and decisions following appropriate and effective methods..

### **Essential Questions**

- Was the draft fair? Do you think the U.S. government had the right to demand that all young men aged 18-25 years be subject to the draft? Are college or other deferments exempting one from military service fair? Do they lead to socioeconomic disparities in who must go into the military?
- If a draft was found to be necessary now, should the requirements be different?
- Should the law be amended to include women in the draft? Should different provisions be made for persons of specific cultures or religion?
- Are there other choices that would be more appropriate? How would a draft affect me personally? What are my rights and responsibilities? What are my choices? How do I find out?
- Should persons who are living in the United States but are not American citizens be expected to be a part of a draft if one should be reinstated?
- What rights do citizens have to demonstrate against government policies, actions, or decisions? Are protests from the 1960s different from protests that are taking place in current days? How? Are they effective?
- What types of demonstrations does the Constitution allow? Do demonstrations about governmental decisions or policies solve anything? Why is this right important? Does participating in a demonstration opposing government decisions or positions have a lasting effect on one's reputation or right to pursue education or career goals?
- How does the "welcome home" received by Vietnam veterans differ from those of returning soldiers today? What can I do to provide support?
- Why is it important for those who serve in the military to receive good mental and physical medical care? How can students play a part in supporting this?
- How do you think people in your age group were impacted by the Vietnam War – those who served in the war and those whose friends or family served in the war? Consider classmates who may be of SE Asian descent – how have they or members of their families been impacted by this war?

## Curriculum Activities

- Students read Background Information 2: The Draft and the Draft Lottery, included in this curriculum. With this limited information, have students discuss if they think that it was fair for the U.S. government to enforce a mandatory military draft of its citizens during the Vietnam War. Use worksheet 8 to record opinions and ideas for further research.
- Students now discuss if the draft law should be amended to include women and others who currently are sheltered from the draft (including those who are living here but are not American citizens).
- Students research the steps that are necessary to amend the Constitution or change a law. How do citizens of the U.S. go about contacting their government officials to request action be taken on political issues that affect them, their families, and their communities?
- Students read Vietnam Curriculum People's Histories Nos. 1-5 and use these stories to analyze how the draft impacted the lives of each author and those of the men ("Vashon 12") who lost their lives in the Vietnam War.
- Students research how people could object to the draft and request an alternative to military service.
- Students use Vietnam Lottery birthday chart to determine where they would have fallen in the draft list, then are presented with several scenarios:
  1. You have just found out where you rank in the draft lottery based on your birthday. Write a letter, diary entry, etc. that describes how you found out your placement, where you were, who you were with, how you feel (lucky, scared, angry, etc.) They should include what they plan to do. Use worksheet 9.
  2. Students assume that a lottery has been reinstated. They have just found out where they rank in the lottery based on their birthday – using the Vietnam lottery birthdate chart. Each writes a letter, diary entry, etc. that describes how you found out about their placement, where they were, who they were with, how they feel (lucky, scared, angry, etc.) They should include what they plan to do. Is this action approved by government? Use worksheet 9.
- Students participate in a Town Hall-type discussion about including women and others not eligible to be drafted. Students choose a position and conduct research using credible resources to make your point.
- Student makes an oral presentation to draft board explaining why he or she does not want to go into active military service, and ask for other assignment. They should be prepared to explain why this is appropriate for them. For the Vietnam era, girls in the class can be supporters or advocates who accompany the male student to his hearing. Read Gaynor's document that explains how to request an appeal to the draft board.
- Student should write a paper (minimum of three paragraphs) that states and supports their position on what persons a U.S. draft in this generation should include – or exclude.
- Students will identify websites, governmental agencies, or other resources that will assist them in making appropriate decisions about their rights and responsibilities as citizens of the United States.

## Classroom Discussion Topics

- Was the draft fair? Do you think the U.S. government had the right to demand that all young men aged 18-25 years be subject to the draft?
- If a draft was found to be necessary now, should the requirements be different?
- Should the law be amended to include women in the draft? Should different provisions be made for persons of specific cultures, religions, or sexual orientations?
- Are there other choices or processes that would be more appropriate?
- Should persons who are living in the United States but are not American citizens be expected to be a part of a draft if one should be reinstated?
- Why should I not have to serve in military conflict?
- How have opinions on how to object to military or governmental decisions changed through the years? Who participated in Vietnam War protests? Were they effective? Compare to the protests against police actions in Ferguson, Missouri and in New York City. Are protests (peaceful or not) viewed in a positive manner by most of the population? Why is the right to assemble and protest important?
- Look online and find examples of testimonials from veterans who are returning from military service and do not feel that they have been treated appropriately by the government. Are their concerns justified? Why is it important that those who serve in the military receive good medical care for both physical and mental health issues? How can students play a part in supporting this?

## Materials: Primary Sources

The following definitions were provided by Michael Saunders, Puget Sound Regional Archivist, for the 4Culture *New Directions in Heritage Education* workshop resource notebook. The workshop was held in December 2006.

### **Primary Sources**

- Are left behind by participants or observers.
- Make connections to the past.
- Are evidence used by historians to support their interpretation of the past.

### **Primary Sources Include**

- Artifacts: buildings, tombstones, clothing.
- Audio: oral histories, interviews, recordings, speakers.
- Images: photographs, film, art and posters, advertisements, maps.
- Records: government documents, census data, birth/wedding/death certificates, organizational minutes, business reports.
- Unpublished Materials: diaries, letters, manuscripts.
- Published Materials: books (including memoirs), magazines, newspapers.

### **Secondary Sources**

- Are accounts of the past created by people writing about events after they have happened.
- Are what historians and History Day participants create.
- Provide hints on where to find primary sources.
- Show how a topic has been interpreted by other historians.
- Provide information which enables historians to make sense of primary sources.

### **Secondary Sources Include**

- Books
- Encyclopedias
- Articles
- Websites



## Primary Sources included in this Curriculum

- **Photos:** Primary sources used in this curriculum include original photographs that were taken by Christopher Gaynor during his combat tour in Vietnam. There are portraits of his fellow soldiers and of the Vietnamese people. There are studies of the machinery and equipment of war. Because of his position as a radio teletype team chief, Gaynor’s camera was able to be transported via jeep or helicopter – not carried in a backpack where it could have been subject to dirt, rain, and impact. He was able to use special PX (Post Exchange) services to get the film sent away for processing.
- **Letters:** Primary sources used in this curriculum include transcriptions of some of the original letters that were written by Christopher Gaynor during his tours in Vietnam. These letters were written to friends and family back in the United States and represent three time periods from his time in Vietnam: Boot Camp; arrival and early time in Vietnam; and later, his war experiences before coming home.
- **Documents:** Primary sources used in this curriculum include scanned copies of original military documents of Christopher Gaynor related to his draft and service in the Vietnam War.
- **Anti-War Song Lyrics:** Primary sources used in this curriculum include samples of lyrics of anti-war protest music. This information was found at this link: <http://classicrock.about.com/od/toppicklists/tp/Anti-War-Protest-Songs-Of-The-60s-And-70s.htm>.
- **People’s Histories:** Primary sources used in this curriculum include recollections written by Vashon Island residents who are related to the men who lost their lives in Vietnam or the Vashon Vietnam Veterans Memorial. (There are other People’s Histories related to the Vietnam War that can be found on the HistoryLink website – find a list in the curriculum section called “Sources: Secondary Resources/HistoryLink”).
  - Christopher Gaynor
  - Clare Holke
  - George Nelson
  - Rick Skillman
  - Barbara Steen
  - Leigh Sheridan
- **Speakers:** Speakers can provide firsthand recollections of historical events. Having a speaker in class allows the opportunity for students to ask follow-up or clarifying questions.

## Materials: Primary Sources – Photographs, Letters, and Documents of Christopher Gaynor

*“Here are mostly ‘portraits’ of soldiers recovering from the last combat operation or trying not to think about the next one. Some really terrifying experiences often alternated with an almost ‘so what?’ show of calm discipline. But we had so much fun at times. We were very young, inexperienced, scared, and also at some deep level, very proud of stepping forward to serve our country.”*

Christopher Gaynor

Download file of 64 photos found in the primary sources folder named *HistoryLink Vietnam/Christopher Gaynor’s Photographs*.

Download file of captions for the photos found in the primary sources folder named *HistoryLink Vietnam/Christopher Gaynor’s Photograph Captions*.

Download file of 26 letters found in the primary sources folder named *HistoryLink Vietnam/Christopher Gaynor’s Letters*.  
(Seven letters from entering Army through Boot Camp, 14 from Vietnam to family, and five from Vietnam to friends)

Download file of 38 documents found in the primary sources folder named *HistoryLink Vietnam/Christopher Gaynor’s Army Documents*.

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**It is important to give APPROPRIATE CREDIT when using resources, photographs, letters, documents, text, videos, websites, etc.:**

When using Christopher Gaynor’s photographs, letters, or documents as a resource for your paper, website, exhibit, or presentation, please be sure to give him appropriate credit:

Photograph: title, Courtesy Christopher Gaynor

When using HistoryLink as a resource:

For most purposes, HistoryLink recommends using the following format (shown with a sample essay) to cite HistoryLink.org: *Formal name of the encyclopedia*, “Name of the essay” (author’s name), link to encyclopedia (date accessed).

Example: *HistoryLink.org Online Encyclopedia of Washington State History*, "President Franklin Roosevelt tours the Olympic Peninsula on October 1, 1937" (by Kit Oldham), <http://www.historylink.org/> (accessed November 3, 2004)

## Materials: Primary Sources/Personal Stories

### Christopher Gaynor: Vietnam Curriculum People's History #1

My name is Christopher Gaynor and I am a veteran of the Vietnam War. I served with the United States Army in the Republic of Vietnam in 1967 and 1968. I am 69 years old, and 50 years ago I lived in Newport Beach, California. In 1991, my partner, Paul Chen, and I moved from Los Angeles, California, to Vashon Island, Washington. Soon after moving to our small farm I was recruited by Maj. John Croan (USAF Ret.) into VFW Post 2826.

During my Vietnam combat tour, I carried my camera with me everywhere and more than 350 of the photos I took and many of the letters I wrote home have survived. I carried the pictures and letters in a small sealed box for more than 40 years but had not looked at them since returning home from Vietnam on February 6, 1968.

Then one evening in 2007, as my VFW comrades and I were talking after our monthly Veterans of Foreign Wars meeting, I suggested that we get our war-related photos together and put on a show at the post so we might share the stories they told. I knew that like me, my VFW buddies had boxes of pictures sitting in closets or garage lofts, some from WWII, others from Korea and the Viet Nam War. They sounded interested in the idea and I planned to work out the details sometime in the future. I was busy with work and other projects and hadn't given it much thought until one day after our meeting Tanner Means, one of the Boy Scouts from the troop sponsored by our VFW post, came to me with an idea. Tanner would take my pictures and scan them to a disk as part of his Eagle Scout project. I agreed and a week later I handed him the old box containing all my slides and negatives.



My pictures had somehow survived countless moves, upheavals, and crises in my chaotic life of the past four decades. Would they survive in the hands of a teenager? Sometimes you just have to trust! Again, I was busy with other things and didn't give much thought to the fate of my photos. Then one day I got a call from Tanner to say he had completed his project. I expected to get my box of pictures back along with a data disk and would have been extremely happy with that. What I did get was much more. When Tanner arrived at my house with the promised data disk, he also brought a brilliantly produced DVD slide show accompanied by music from the 60's and a dozen beautiful framed prints of his favorite images. I was overwhelmed. Transported back four decades, I saw my comrades and buddies just as I remembered them when we were young and full of life. It was time to revisit my Viet Nam experience and I started talking about the war for the first time since 1968 and shared the slideshow and prints with friends and family. I set up a studio in my living room and started organizing the images and printing them on a large format photo printer. I hired a young intern for the summer (Vashon native Nathan Collelo Gilmour) who taught me how to properly scan and print from old slides and negatives.

The results were so good that I decided I wanted to share them with my fellow Vashon Islanders. I took some of the largest framed prints around to several galleries (the VFW post had been sold by this time, so that was no longer an option). Although everyone said they loved the photos, none of the galleries had the space for them, since I had no plans to sell any of my prints. Finally I was referred to Dr. Bruce Haulman, exhibits director at the Vashon-Maury Island Heritage Museum. Bruce was also a college history teacher who taught courses on the Vietnam War. He immediately suggested a special exhibit at the museum. But there was no obvious connection between my pictures and Vashon, other than my having been a resident for nearly 20 years.

I knew of the Vashon-Maury Island Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Vashon's Ober Park. I visited it again and had the beginnings of an idea for a truly Vashon tribute to these veterans. There are 12 names on the two granite pillars that comprise the memorial. These 12 Vashon sons, lost in the Vietnam War, had not been honored publicly since the 1998 dedication of the memorial. What if I built my exhibit around them and the history of Vashon during the war years? Bruce loved the idea, and we went to work on gathering information about these young men and photos of each, which proved to be incredibly challenging. The museum had most of the Vashon High School yearbooks and we were able to scan several photos from these, but some of the 12 had gone to school off-island. In the end, we got pictures of all 12 and I designed a display around each, using the information about their service from the Virtual Wall (Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC), along with each man's picture.

Dr. Haulman found articles from the *Beachcomber* newspaper of the 60's. We had a map of Vietnam, a timeline of the war, and some stories about the "Vashon 12" and other residents of the Island. I was also referred to Eric Ireland, who along with Islander Al Bradley had accomplished the difficult task of working with the Park District for approval of a site, raised the funds, and built the memorial. I met with Eric and he loaned me all the photos and other material related to the memorial. By now, we had an ambitious agenda for our exhibit. With the help of museum trustees Royce Wall, who did much of the design work; Verna Everett, who wrote a feature article about the upcoming exhibit for the *Beachcomber*; and many museum volunteers, we had constructed seven sections: 1) the map of Vietnam in 1967, with a summary and timeline of the war along with photos and stories about the Island during the VN War Era; 2) the display of the "Vashon 12" and a notebook for visitors to write remembrances;

3) a “Then and Now” wall of photos from the war years contrasted with current photos of Vietnam; 4) an interactive map where visitors could select a colored pin to indicate where they had been in Vietnam, whether in the U.S. or Vietnam military, civilian travelers, or Vietnamese who had relocated to the U.S.; 5) an alcove with seating to view a continuous slide show on a large-screen TV of all my photos; 6) a digital frame with a slide show of the making of the Vashon Vietnam Memorial; and 7) a recreation of a bunker (with sandbags and barbed wire) that visitors could enter to view my photos and read my letters while a specially prepared CD played the music of the late ‘60s and sounds of the war played in the background.



“Home of Record: Vashon and the Vietnam War” opened the evening of October 7, 2011, with well over 200 attending the opening reception. The exhibit ran for four months, had more visitors than any previous museum exhibit, was recognized with a special plaque by the Association of Washington Generals, and won the Association of King County Historical Organizations’ 2012 Exhibit Award. We organized related activities for the “Home of Record” exhibit, including guest speakers such as Army Nurse Col. Grethe Cammermeyer (USA Ret.) and special programs for Veterans Day.

One outcome for me was that I met family members of the Vashon 12 and have stayed connected. On the first Veterans Day after the “Home of Record” exhibit opened, my partner Paul and I found the graves of the six who are buried in the Vashon Cemetery. We discovered that three of these graves were so overgrown that they were completely obscured. We spent the day cutting back shrubs and cleaning up the graves. I decided that I would take custodial responsibility for these six graves, and every Veterans Day and Memorial Day we clean the graves and place flags and laminated photos of each of the interred at their grave site.

Photo Captions and Credits:

Portraits courtesy Christopher Gaynor.

“Home of Record” exhibit, Vashon-Maury Island Heritage Museum. Courtesy Christopher Gaynor.

Materials: Primary Sources/Personal Stories  
Clare Holke: Vietnam Curriculum People's History #2

EXCUSE ME ... WHERE IS VIETNAM?

I come from a middle-class family home and as some families had vacations, we went to a small beach house on Vashon Island for the summer. A rustic house, salvaged from a logging camp, built of plywood and transported to Vashon Island to be set on posts for the price of what an iPhone would cost today. The Island would be home to many multi-generational families choosing to raise their families in a mostly rural area with limited “big city” attractions. In the 60’s it was still pretty much the same close-knit Island family.

I attended elementary school in a city of over 100,000 people, graduating on to middle school that combined three elementary schools. In the fall of 1962, I entered high school, which combined three middle schools in a city of almost 148,000 people. I mention this because school was about getting to class through a maze of people that I mostly would not ever know, sitting in a room with maybe a few familiar faces, and learning lessons from teachers who perhaps would try to remember who I was. I had one friend who struggled with school, signing up for what his parents urged was the responsible choice of a delinquent student, the Navy. I never heard about a war. I was just barely digesting the unthinkable loss of a President of the United States of America.

In the spring of 1964, I was a new student at Vashon High School. I believe that the entire high-school student body was smaller than my previous junior class was. I was sitting at a desk, last row of my new English class, trying to act unnoticeable, when I see that the *niciest guy* is looking in my direction. I was sitting in his seat. Now, my first day at this school was so unlike what the big city school was. Everyone seemed to know each other, talking, joking, and enjoying the day. The teachers were part of this intimacy and seemed to genuinely care about the daily success of each student. I still did not know what Vietnam was.

As my junior year came to an end, some of my new friends went off to the waters of Alaska on local commercial fishing boats. These young high-school boys had been doing so since their early teen years, earning money not heard of from those who picked strawberries or worked the gas stations. Now, for me, Alaska was very, very far away. It was at this time the first of the “Vashon 12” was lost. I still did not know what or where this Vietnam was.

What I did know was that these young boys would register for the draft. Was the reason for this draft taught in any of those government history classes? Did I ever learn why many of these young boys/men would be going off to service within a year of graduating from high school? It was anticipated, accepted, and at times negotiated that the draft took them. For some, it was not the draft, but the fear of the draft that prompted the “signing up” for the service, perhaps offering a chance at future schooling. So it was that the *niciest guy* whose seat I took that first day back in March of 1964 set off for the Army in September of 1966. Now Vashon had lost another two in the place called Vietnam. It had our attention.



Something else had our attention, not so much on Vashon Island, but in the larger cities. The growing population of college students, the free-speech movement, the civil-rights movement, women's rights, all speak unrest. Magazines show pictures, the news broadcasts are speaking of war and numbers, protests are popping up. After all, the sixties had much unrest - a protest was an acceptable means of drawing attention to concerns.

A letter home from the *niciest guy* describing boot camp did not seem like more than a rude awakening to serious structure, overwork, lack of sleep, cultural change, and of course, homesickness. After all, many boys/young men joined a branch of the service to "see the world" and get a job. The *niciest guy* was not afraid of work, could easily learn a task, but was eager to "get this over with" and get back to the small island where he was raised. He had family, friends, and a desire to be a fisherman when he returned. His first 72-hour field problem, followed by two hours of movies (Vietnam), was described as "not too pretty of a picture." News reached him of his childhood buddy aboard a Navy ship that had a fire, losing 40-plus sailors. His family had no word of his status for days, even though he survived. As the *niciest guy* was looking forward to leaving boot camp and returning to his island for the Christmas holidays, word of another Vashon soldier lost in Vietnam came down. This one was known to him, being only a few years older. Shudder.

That Christmas break, the *niciest guy* spent time with his family and friends, visiting and talking about anything but where he may be going. A map said Vietnam was "over there." No one we knew ever left the USA, much less went half-way around the world. Then another Vashon youth was lost. This gentle young man was known to us. This news would send fear among us. As the *niciest guy* left for pre-overseas camp, another young Vashon man was lost in Vietnam. This was the third in three months. The *niciest guy* said, "I don't want to sound like a chicken, but they are shooting real bullets over there." He left in February 1967.

As the months passed the letters were homey, with only an occasional gripe about food, heat, and rain. At the end of each letter was a "days left count." On one occasion, the *niciest guy* said, "Today we lost (number of) guys." Another letter stated, "We lost our CO." Again, "We are seriously shorthanded here." Another letter, "Among those in the attack against us today were two young boys, dead, it was disgusting." In October 1967 an ambush killed 11, wounded 17 - and the *niciest guy* wrote "Believe me, I never want to experience anything like that again. It was like a nightmare, the worst thing was we were in a position where we couldn't get any support from artillery or air strikes. We just had to do some old-fashioned fighting. So much of that junk."

It was in November that the *niciest guy* would be added to the Vashon list of lost. Five more would be gone before long.

What I failed to learn during this was: Where was Vietnam and why were we there? What I did know was history class taught me that conflict happens, results happen, and perhaps peace is proclaimed. What we are taught is the democracy of our nation, leaving choices to us with the voting process; free speech and peaceful protests, and ultimately our freedoms, do come with a price. What I saw in my youth was a conflict that belched fury, spit it back in our faces, and set in motion the protests. It was sad. The *niciest guy* was drafted, given a gun, sent to war, and died doing what he was trained to do and told to do. At the time, it was just hard to find understanding in the loss of so many that seemed not to have any impact on the good of our country or the benefit of another country. But such is loss ... .

Here is another reflective quote from another gentle man, my father: (6/23/1970)

“To me the basic problem is not that there are troops in Vietnam, or in Cambodia, or the Mediterranean, or Europe. The problem is that for many years Congress has authorized funds to send children (draftees of non-voting age) into situations of great danger.”

It was many, many years later that I learned a new lesson from that chapter called Vietnam. It was in the story(Vietnam Curriculum People’s History # 3) written by classmate George Nelson, for the *Home of Record* curriculum. George was a childhood friend of the *niciest guy* and most likely the really nicest guy. So for me, past the loss of so many, past the angry protests, past the questions, and past the buried memories, came the story of a life saved. It is a grateful and good lesson.



In all of these years, I have never felt that the death of Don (Holke) was my loss. I always felt the loss was his, I have my life, he does not. It has always been the anger I have felt that he did not get a chance to live. They were such young boys really. The majority would not have chosen that path to Vietnam, A place that had little meaning to many of us at that age. It is why George's (Nelson) story was so important to me. (this story can be found in this curriculum; Vietnam Curriculum People’s History # 3) Something good came out of all that.

Clare Holke

Scan of Vashon-Maury Island Beachcomber article (February 21, 1968) courtesy of Clare Holke.

## Materials: Primary Sources/Personal Stories

### George Nelson: Vietnam Curriculum People's History #3

“The Vashon 12” by George A. Nelson, QM2 USN, Vietnam 1968, 1969, & 1970

I went to school with six of the group from Vashon. I can remember where I was when the word came of the loss of Terry (David Terrance Hake), Don (Donald Steven Holke), and Dave (David Leslie Mace). We were of a different generation who were more related to our parents, who mostly had been in World War II, and fought for their country. We believed in our country and our Presidents, who mostly had also been in the military and given of themselves for their country. President Kennedy said what we understood to be our obligations as Americans.

I personally enlisted in the Navy to go to Vietnam. I was on an aircraft carrier for two and a half years for just one tour to Yankee Station. My most remembered experience there was when we had the SAR (Swift Boats Search and Rescue) team aboard and saw firsthand what it was like to be involved with real combat.

When I heard that we were not to go back to Vietnam, I started sending requests for transfer to a unit that would be going to Vietnam. It seems Don's death was always on my mind. The orders finally came for PCF (Patrol Craft Fast) School. I didn't really know what a PCF was, but I was soon taught. I went over to Vietnam with 80-plus men of whom at least 80 percent had volunteered. We were all doing what we had enlisted for. We all believed in the job we were sent to do. Killing all the bad individuals was on the list, but not of top priority. Helping the oppressed was of top priority (an example: Special Ops Cambodia).

We were told that it would not be fun. After a couple of false starts we were off. Scary yes, no live individuals for days; then here comes a small guy waving a small chalk board. “Please help me,” it said. After we made sure it was not a trap, I asked him to come to us. He did, which showed he was serious. We pulled him aboard and I asked how we could help him. He was very cold so I gave him one of my shirts, and he said he wanted to speak with Naval Intelligence and inform them of where the VC were located who were killing his people. We took him there and I thought that was the last time I would see him.

It took only 40 years, but due to the Internet, we met again. Now we are best of friends, as well as his wife and beautiful daughters. His wife is the only living member of her family due to the “Killing Fields.” We helped him in Cambodia for only about an hour, and he has been teaching American kids algebra here for 38 years. I have told my side of the Vietnam War to my relatives and children of friends. I want them to understand what really happened there and not what the protesters thought happened. We who were there only say one thing: “The only people who really understand are the people ‘who were there.’” I have some trouble relating to those who were not there.

We wrote letters home quite often. We never went into the scary specifics – just family matters and good things. My mother never knew I had a Purple Heart until my little brother asked what the ribbons meant when I was going to Seattle to get my separation papers. We never had much trouble with being accepted coming home to Vashon. Probably because we knew most everyone and a lot of us had been in the military.

## Materials: Primary Sources/Personal Stories

### Rick Skillman: Vietnam Curriculum People's History #4

My name is Rick Skillman and I am almost 73 years old.

I grew up outside Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in what is known as the “Main Line” along the Pennsylvania Railroad. We lived in a nice section but were on the “wrong” side of the tracks. I grew up in the Presbyterian/Calvinist church. We were solidly a middle-class family.

After college, I joined the Navy and went through the Officer Candidate School in Newport, RI. I am a veteran of three tours of duty in the Navy in Vietnam. I spent a total of 15 months in the war zone. We did shore fire in support of the Marines and frequently took small arms fire from the beach.

I flew out of a firefight and 18 hours later was by myself in my fatigues in San Francisco's Union Square. There was no parade or welcoming back by anyone, including my family. Within a week I was back outside Philadelphia with a wife I didn't know (I got married between the second and third tour) and a family that wanted me to fit back into the person I was before I left for the Navy.

I was never spit upon, just ignored. No one wanted to hear anything about my experiences or what I was feeling, not even my father, who had been in the Navy during the Second World War. The term PTSD hadn't been created yet, so not knowing why I was feeling the way I did, I just stuffed it into a box and pretended to be the person everyone seemed to want me to be.

I was filled with rage about the things that happened in Vietnam. A large part was due to losing men we were supporting because of bullshit crap in inter-service rivalries. We were not allowed to do our jobs and lost men because of that. Another part was the growing realization that we'd been lied to about why we were there. I

went there thinking we were doing something in defense of our country, and pretty quickly realized there was no way to “win” the war, and we were just puppets on the strings being pulled back in Washington DC. A real waste of time, money, and more importantly, lives. Just think about the entire BS about “body counts.”

When I got back in late 1966, there was no way I could express my opinion of the war. I had so much rage tucked away in a box. I was petrified of letting even one feeling out for fear of letting all the crap out too.

I think the universal draft was a good thing. Unless you were super rich and could buy your way out of the draft, everyone was obligated to participate. I think we should have it today. You see, few if any of the people in Congress or the Pentagon have sons or daughters in the military going over to the Middle East. You shouldn't have the power to send people into harm's way if you have no “skin in the game.” I felt the people



who chose to avoid or evade the draft had good reason to do so. It was a crappy war that couldn't be won, and had nothing to do with defending our country.

I am so proud of our little community on Vashon for putting up the Vashon Vietnam Veterans Memorial. It not only recognizes in the public eye that young men from Vashon made the ultimate sacrifice, but for those of us who came back, it is one of the few overt, "out there" acknowledgments that the damn war happened and many men and women went into harm's way. To pretend that it did not happen is the greatest disservice our country can do. So way to go, Vashon!

When it seemed appropriate, I have talked to my children about my experiences both during the war and coming home.

Back when the White House lied to us and somehow rammed this current series of wars on us, I was outraged. Here we were sending men and women into harm's way, for what???? Now we have a generation of people who has survived four, five, six and more tours over in battle conditions. Now tell me, how in God's name do we expect these people to rejoin society??? So I am really pissed off about the current wars. It took years and lots of therapy and a loving women and great kids to get me to really come home. I finally learned how to deal with all my feelings about the war and how to safely express anger without hurting others or myself.

I don't regret any experiences of my life, including the Vietnam War and its aftermath. Frankly, I wouldn't be the person I am today without any of those experiences. I wouldn't have the compassion I do for veterans, or for anyone else who experiences deep trauma. So there you have it.

## Materials: Primary Sources/Personal Stories

### Barbara Steen: Vietnam Curriculum People's History #5:

My name is Barbara Steen, of Vashon Island, where I have lived most of my life. My maternal grandparents came from Norway to Vashon in 1903 and lived the rest of their lives in the Colvos area. One of their sons served in the U.S. Army during World War I, and their daughter married my Dad, who was in the U.S. Navy and served in WWII as a pilot. So, I grew up learning the tragedy of wars.

The people of Vashon Island had not recovered from their WWII losses of the 40's and were not prepared to face that terrible sadness again. The Vietnam War had begun years before the U.S. became involved in the 1960's. It was during this time that everyone learned more about the country of Vietnam.

Vashon High School was graduating seniors who joined or were drafted into the military. Others were a little older and felt it was their duty to join up and help. However, there were those who opposed the war, some demonstrating and some who fled to Canada to avoid serving. Several of our Vashon young men who did join were sent overseas to Vietnam.

I felt strongly that the U.S. should NOT have participated in the Vietnam problems. I now feel the same way about the current wars. The U.S. should not have drafted our boys. However, once the draft procedure was put in place, I didn't agree that it was right for the boys to avoid the draft by going to Canada, or for the public to have demonstrations.

In 1966, we became more aware again of the tragedy of war. Vashon-Maury Island began losing some of their boys, just as they had during the two previous wars. Once our country was definitely involved, with draft and volunteering in place, I felt compassion for the participants and grateful for their service ... but then very saddened when they lost their lives. Five died in 1966, two in 1967, three in 1968, one in 1969, and another one, years later, from injuries received during the time he served in Vietnam.

It was a very kind thing for Eric Ireland to be responsible for the placement and the dedication of the Vashon Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Ober Park. I did briefly question "why there instead of at the Vashon Cemetery," but considering the life of John Ober and the VFW's previous participation at that location, it made sense.

I did not know all of the boys personally who died due to the Vietnam War. I did know most of the families, however, except for Davies, Selden, and Theodore. I still have memories of Terry Hake when he worked part-time at the Vashon Pharmacy, Dave Mace in sports, and rocking Larry Wallace as a baby, then in later years watching him play football in high school.



Much can be said about all of them, but I am choosing one who was part of our family. William Robert (Robbie) Devore. He served his country while in the U.S. Marine Corps. He was born September 28, 1947 and was killed in Vietnam on November 28, 1966.

As was the custom of the military, his body was escorted home to Vashon by another Marine. The tragedy of losing her only son was so difficult for Robbie's mother. She could not face having the Marine in their home, so we were then asked to have him in ours. Through the sadness of it all, we were honored to have been asked. The young Marine slept and ate in our home. The rest of the hours and days he faithfully spent at the Island Funeral Home with Robbie. After the day of the final memorial service, our house guest left to return to duty with the United States Marine Corps.



"ON 28 Nov. 1966, LCPL. WILLIAM ROBERT "KID" DEVORE WAS HIT BY ENEMY FIRE WHILE ON A SWEEP OF THE CUA VALLEY, QUANG TRI PROVINCE, VIETNAM. HE DIED INSTANTLY. HIS BEST FRIEND, CPL. RICHARD CARL BRANDT, BERLIN, MA, RAN TO HIS SIDE AND WAS WOUNDED ... A FATAL STOMACH WOUND. HE DIED NINE PAINFUL DAYS LATER.

"I WAS IN A DIFFERENT SQUAD ... SEVERAL METERS TO THEIR LEFT FLANK. I DIDN'T SEE IT HAPPEN, BUT I HAVE FELT IT ALMOST EVERY DAY SINCE. WHEN YOU VISIT VASHON ISLAND CEMETERY, PLEASE SPEND A FEW MOMENTS WITH 'KID' FOR ALL OF US WHO KNEW HIM IN VIETNAM. PLEASE TELL HIM THAT WE LOVE HIM, WE MISS HIM, AND WE WILL NEVER STOP THINKING ABOUT HIM."

A FELLOW SOLDIER

Devore Text and Photo:

<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSln=hake&GSfn=david&GSmn=terrance&GSby=1945&GSbyrel=in&GSdy=1966&GSdyrel=in&GSst=50&GScntry=4&GSob=n&GRid=35501382&df=all&>

## Materials: Primary Sources/Personal Stories

### Leigh Sheridan: Vietnam Curriculum People's History #6

“Hidden in plain sight” is a term often used to describe something one passes by many times without recognizing what it really is. My hometown of Vashon Island had myriad artifacts that were “hidden in plain sight” and I passed by – they were in the periphery of my vision and therefore the periphery of my consciousness.

I feel I should explain a bit more why I'm beginning this way: I'm embarrassed to say that I crawled all over the Vashon Veteran's Memorial as a child and never knew what it was until this year. The Vashon Vietnam Veterans Memorial sits just behind the main park on Vashon island – a place I frequented often as a child, and possibly even more often as a young, bored teen who was desperate for something to do and somewhere to go.

The concept of the giant stone slabs situated behind the park had completely escaped me in my 21 years on earth. Each slab is emblazoned with the names of fallen soldiers from our island – many more than I expected to see for such a small island.

My boss at HistoryLink.org, Patricia Filer, first brought the Vashon Vietnam Memorial to my attention in the summer of 2014. We had taken on a project to connect with Christopher Gaynor, organizer of the retrospective on the Vietnam War at Cafe Luna on Vashon and, who was also heavily involved in the Vietnam War Veteran's network on both Vashon and in the rest of the state.

I spent a lot of time compiling information with Pat and reaching out to veterans and other contacts in our area, including a former teacher of mine from high school. More important, however, it was a revisitation with history that I hadn't spent much time on since high school.



Strictly speaking, I am a history major in college with an interest and focus on Eastern European history and less on American history. Local history, however, has always been a major interest of mine. As a younger kid, my mother inundated us with American history in the form of short trips to local museums and longer road trips to nearby cities. Attending Cafe Luna's exhibition of photos of the Vietnam War, as well as meeting the photographer, Christopher Gaynor, in person, actualized the war in a way I had not experienced before. I am consciously aware of historic events and their impact, but I've never viewed my hometown as a place where things *happen*. Vashon is an island of peace and isolation at the least, and small-town drama at most; our paramount squabbles were often over whose tree had fallen on whose property.

And while Vashon radiated implicit liberality, I never really jumped on board with the strong anti-war sentiment associated with people my age. Even my own mother has accused me of being apolitical. Instead, I just tend to pick and choose my causes carefully and speak about them rarely. The consensus of the curriculum I was taught in high school was that the military draft for Vietnam was a major focus of the counter-culture movement in the U.S. and was reviled by young people in the country. But we rarely focused on the lives of the soldiers, beyond the bare-bones details. That curriculum left me frustrated with the idea of war in general, though outside research kept me far away from hating the soldiers themselves.

Christopher's exhibit absolutely personalized the Vietnam War and took my outside protester's viewpoint and turned it on its head. In class, we barely touched on the concept of PTSD and the psychological toll taken on soldiers by killing, and never on the effects on towns and cities that lost so many lives. The photos Christopher displayed also were unlike any others – highly personal depictions of everyday lives moving through the jungles of Vietnam.

I consider myself a fairly even-keeled person, but looking through Christopher's photos was jarring and deeply moving on many levels. From one photo to another, a friend might disappear out of the frame, victim to gunfire or the pure danger of the jungle. I was finding the draft more and more horrifying as time went on, but I was particularly incensed by the idea that people who returned from the war were ignored or even hated for their participation. The people visible to me in the photographs were at once the most brittle and the strongest people I'd seen in a long time. Chris's use of the camera lens put the Vietnam War in a context of individual suffering and strength I never got in an isolated classroom, and personalized the impact of the "real world" on my home more than I'd experienced before.



Photo of Leigh Sheridan at Christopher Gaynor's photo exhibit, Luna Café on Vashon Island. Courtesy Patricia Filer.  
Photos of Leigh Sheridan at Vashon Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Courtesy Christopher Gaynor.

## Primary Sources: Speakers

There may be teachers or former teachers in your school who served in Vietnam. There also may be family members of those who attend school or work at your school who are Vietnam veterans or know of someone who might be interested in visiting your classroom. Use your school newsletter to seek out those who might be willing to share their experiences with your class. Other avenues are church newsletters, newspaper requests, or word-of-mouth.

Local Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) chapters may be able to help you find someone who would be willing to come to your class to discuss their experience in Vietnam. This is still a painful subject for many veterans, so students should be prepared carefully for a visit and any questions that they might have for their guest. Speakers should also be sensitive to the fact that there will most likely be students of Southeast Asian descent in the classroom audience.

You should work with your students to prepare a list of appropriate and thoughtful questions to ask willing guests. They should learn to ask open-ended questions that prompt answers of more than simply “yes” or “no.” For help with this, use *Oral Histories in the Classroom* – <http://www.historylink.org/content/education/downloads/Oral%20History%20Curriculum.pdf> – pp. 41-42.

### LOCAL RESOURCE:



For those in the King County area, contact *Home of Record* curriculum project partner Christopher Gaynor to schedule a classroom visit.

You can reach Christopher at [cbgaynor2@yahoo.com](mailto:cbgaynor2@yahoo.com).

**“I am a Vietnam veteran, and like millions of other veterans, I will observe Veterans Day next Tuesday. This national holiday pays tribute to all American veterans, but especially to living veterans who served their country honorably during war or during peacetime. Vashon will offer some special programs and activities for veterans and their families. I encourage you to attend an event or plan one of your own.**

**“Vashon has a long tradition of military service, which is commemorated each year by American Legion Post 159 in its Memorial Day service at the Vashon Cemetery. Walk around the cemetery on that day and you will see some 500 flags at the gravesites of Vashon veterans who served from the Civil War to the Afghanistan and Iraq wars.**

**“I am a Vietnam veteran. I say this again because just a few years ago I would not have acknowledged this fact. My generation’s dance with death was the main event at the epicenter of the turbulent 1960s, an era that changed America forever. The Vietnam War was our elephant in the room. Those of us who went to Vietnam and survived, returned home as outcasts. We were called baby killers and faced hostility or indifference. There were no parades, no welcome home and no respect. This was devastating for the young men and women who did their best in a terrible situation.**

**“Four decades later, Vietnam War veterans are now treated with more respect, are accepted by veterans of earlier wars, and have been mostly well cared for by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). But while we are honoring our veterans, we must also acknowledge and honor their families.**

**“Every service member who goes to war leaves family and friends behind on the ‘home front.’ My own husband has been an immense support to me. Even though we didn’t meet until seven years after my return from Vietnam, Paul has been my co-veteran every step of the way for the past 40 years as I have fought the post-traumatic stress disorder and Parkinson’s disease I developed from exposure to Agent Orange. Paul helps me clean the graves of the Vashon sons lost in the Vietnam War. He accompanied me to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. He drove me 1,000 miles to meet with the grieving families of my friends killed in Vietnam. And he has put his 30 years of experience as a social worker to good use by helping veterans apply for VA benefits and health care. He does all this and much more without complaint.**

**“While families support veterans all over the country, more than 58,000 men and women did not survive the Vietnam War and left behind devastated loved ones. There are the two widows I have come to know in recent years whose husbands died in Vietnam. Their two young husbands (I was with one when he died) were the same age, were killed in the same year and month, and never saw their newborn children.**

Then there is the kid brother of one my friends killed in action who has never stopped watching for his big brother to come walking up the lane, and the schoolmates and friends of the 12 Vashon sons lost in the Vietnam war who will never stop grieving for them.

“Now we have a new generation of war veterans. As they return home, they have been treated with more respect and compassion than was my generation. ‘Hate the war, love the warrior’ may be a cliché, but in practice it has made all the difference to the men and women who have given so much and been asked to give more.

“Thousands have also died, including two fine young men from Vashon who are survived by grieving parents, friends, and community. Many more have survived multiple tours, like my friend Charles. Charlie is an Army sergeant and veteran of combat deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. During his service, his wife Vanessa cared for their children, kept track of every aspect of the household, and did all this while under the crushing stress of wondering if she would ever see Charlie again. So, this Veterans Day, as we go about the business of living our complicated lives, why not reach out to the family of an active duty service member or veteran who you know not just to thank them, but to ask how you might help.

“When it comes to war, there are no good wars, no real winners and no genuine victories. When we go to war, we have already lost, and what is lost is gone forever. George Washington once said, ‘My first wish is to see this plague of mankind, war, banished from the earth.’ Perhaps someday we can make his wish come true.

“But for now, let us put aside the controversy surrounding our involvement in unwinnable wars in the Middle East and focus on those who have been thrown into doing the dirty work. Let us embrace them as our neighbors and fellow Americans and lend a helping hand, have a kind word to say to them, and treat them with the respect that they have earned and deserve.”

— Christopher Gaynor is a veteran of the Vietnam War and a member of American Legion Post 159 and VFW Post 2826.

Christopher Gaynor

THE VETERANS CRISIS LINE (800) 273-8255

**HistoryLink.org essays:** There are 94 HistoryLink.org essays that are associated with the keyword “Vietnam.” Listed below are some that students may use for several of the activities in this curriculum.

### People’s Histories

- Walt Crowley, HistoryLink.org co-founder, provides a retrospective on the war (8381)
- Leslie Grace, founder of La Tienda Folk Art Gallery, participated in anti-war demonstrations (9346)
- Bob Ingram, UW policeman, describes demonstrations on UW campus (3966)
- Bill Kennedy, an eyewitness to brutality towards protesters during protest on May 5, 1970 (2292)
- James Knisely, participant in 5/5-5/6/70 protest (9781)
- Dorothea Nordstrand describes her encounter with a Vietnam veteran at Green Lake ( 3413)
- Tamara A. Turner, participant in anti-war demonstrations (9344)
- David Wilma, a University of Washington police officer, describes protest of May 5, 1970 (2271)

### Timelines

- 8/7/64 – Gulf of Tonkin Resolution – active U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War begins (3334)
- 10/16/65 – First anti-war demonstration (4179)
- 10/16/65 – Floyd Turner convicted of flag desecration (2492)
- 9/3/66 – Marion Glenn Shields awarded Medal of Honor posthumously (10928)
- 4/26/68 – Anti-war protests, April 26, 1968 (1386 and 1387)
- 3/26/68 – RFK (Robert F. Kennedy) campaigns in Seattle (1377)
- 3/4/69 - UW scientists protest use of science in warfare (1189)
- 6/69 – Training of medics (7625)
- 7/10/69 – Returning Vietnam vets treated to parade and barbeque (10184)
- 10/9/69 – Major Pat Brady awarded Medal of Honor (1307)
- 1/5/69 – ROTC reinstated at UW (1338)
- 12/8/69 – Plan to aid Vietnam deserters (3650)
- 5/1/70 – Protests against U.S. entry into Cambodia – four killed at Kent State (2308)
- 5/5/70 – Anti-war protests block I-5 (1994)
- 5/9/70 – protesters from Canada invade Blaine (8242)
- 8/24/74 – Vietnam War deserter Ronald Anderson arrested at Peace Arch Park ( 9804)
- 4/30/75 – Fall of Saigon marks end of Vietnam War (3335)

### Cyberpedias

- Joe Jackson (not native to Washington but retired to Kent) – a bridge in Washington state has been named for him (10735)
- John Mitsules – earned Bronze Star in Vietnam and became an influential businessman and activist (7562)
- Medal of Honor Recipients - there are 12 men who served in Vietnam profiled in this cyberpedia (10128)



## Resources: Secondary Sources/Online Resources

Websites related to Vietnam War  
Suggested by Christopher Gaynor

### General

- PBS - Vietnam Online – <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/vietnam/index.html>
- PBS POV Re: Vietnam Stories since the War – <http://www.pbs.org/pov/stories/>
- Vietnam War Index – <http://spartacus-educational.com/vietnam.html>
- Vets With A Mission: focuses on its humanitarian programs and projects in Vietnam – <http://www.vwam.com/index.html>
- History Channel, Statistics about the Vietnam War – <http://www.vhfcn.org/stat.html>
- A companion to the PBS video program, this site features a brief historical introduction, a battlefield timeline, an expose on guerrilla tactics, a look at the siege of Khe Sanh, and other resources – <http://www.pbs.org/battlefieldvietnam/>
- Follow U.S. Ambassador and former P.O. W. Pete Peterson as he returns to the land of his captors on a mission of reconciliation, through interviews, research on Vietnam's history before 1900, and investigation of an ambassador's duties. PBS – <http://www.pbs.org/hanoi/notebook.htm>
- The Vietnam Pictures Archives – <http://www.ibiblio.org/vietnam/vnpic.html>
- PBS Vietnam Online: Teacher's Guide – <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/vietnam/tguide/index.html>
- 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War Commemoration – <http://www.vietnamwar50th.com/>
- Most of the photographs on this site are by British photographer Tim Page, who covered the war in the 1960s. – <http://www.vietnampix.com/>
- List of Vietnam War websites – <http://www.yale.edu/glc/Stratford/vietnam.htm>
- Vietnam Veterans Memorial, District of Columbia – <http://www.nps.gov/vive/index.htm>
- History Learning Site: The Vietnam War – [http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/vietnam\\_war.htm](http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/vietnam_war.htm)
- Vietnam War: Facts, Information, and Articles about The Vietnam War – <http://www.historynet.com/vietnam-war#sthash.xdhDMY02.dpuf>

## **The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall**

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington DC honors those who died in the Vietnam War. The following three links tell more about it:

- <http://www.virtualwall.org/>
- <http://www.vvmf.org/Wall-of-Faces/>
- <http://thewall-usa.com/>

## **Agent Orange**

- Department of Veterans Affairs: Exposure to Agent Orange in Vietnam – <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/locations/vietnam.asp>

## **Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**

- <http://www.vietnow.com/ptsd-post-traumatic-stress-disorder/>
- <http://www.veteranshealth.org/Vietnam/ptsd.html>

## **Draft/Lottery**

- How the lottery would work if reinstated – <http://www.sss.gov/fslottery.htm>
- Who must register for Selective Service – <https://www.sss.gov/FSwho.htm>
- How the draft has changed since Vietnam – <http://www.sss.gov/viet.htm>
- Antiwar and Radical History Project - [http://depts.washington.edu/antiwar/photo\\_lonidier.php](http://depts.washington.edu/antiwar/photo_lonidier.php)

## Resources: Secondary Sources: Vietnam War in Film/Documentaries

Suggested by Christopher Gaynor

\*Parental Guidance is recommended for all films, as they contain strong language and images of extreme violence.

### **Hollywood Movies**

- *We Were Soldiers* – Directed by Randall Wallace
- *Apocalypse Now* and *Apocalypse Now Redux* – Directed by Francis Ford Coppola
- *Heaven & Earth* – Directed by Oliver Stone
- *Full Metal Jacket* – Directed by Stanley Kubrick
- *The Deer Hunter* – Directed by Michael Cimino
- *Coming Home* – Directed by Hal Ashby
- *Good Morning, Vietnam* – Directed by Barry Levinson
- *Forrest Gump* – Directed by Robert Zemeckis
- *Platoon* – Directed by Oliver Stone

### **Documentaries**

- “Vietnam: A Television History” – *American Experience* PBS
- *Regret to Inform* – Barbara Sonneborn
- *Vietnam in HD* (six episodes) – The History Channel
- *Last Days in Vietnam* – Rory Kennedy
- *In Country* (available in 2015) – Mike Attie, Meghan O’Hara, and editor Lindsay Utz
- *Vietnam* (working title, Available in 2016) – Ken Burns/PBS

### **Television Series**

- *China Beach* – Fictional network TV series available on DVD

## Resources: Secondary Sources/ Publications – Books, Magazines

Suggested by Christopher Gaynor

### Background

- *All Quiet on the Western Front*, by Erich Maria Remarque
- *The Last Valley: Dien Bien Phu and the French Defeat in Vietnam*, by Martin Windrow

### North Vietnamese Veterans

- *The Sorrow of War*, by Bao Ninh
- *Novel Without a Name*, by Duong Thu Huong and Phan Huy Duong

### The War in the South

- *A Viet Cong Memoir*, by Truong Nhu Tang
- *Buddha's Child: My Fight to Save Vietnam*, by Nguyen Cao Ky

### Analysis

- *Nixon and Mao: The Week That Changed the World*, by Margaret MacMillan
- *Ending the War in Vietnam*, by Henry Kissinger
- *Hanoi's War: An International History of the War for Peace in Vietnam*, by Lien-Hang T. Nguyen

### Oral Histories

- *Strange Ground: Americans in Vietnam 1945-1975: An Oral History*, Edited by Harry Maurer
- *Tears Before the Rain: An Oral History of the Fall of South Vietnam*, by Larry Engelmann

### The Americans

- *We Were Soldiers Once ... and Young*, by Lt. Gen. Hal Moore and Joseph L. Galloway
- *Steel My Soldiers' Hearts*, by Col. David H. Hackworth
- *The Vietnam Reader*, edited by Stewart O'Nan
- *The Wall of Broken Dreams*, by Duke Barrett
- *The Escapes and My Journey to Freedom*, by Dr. Du Hua
- *Born on the Fourth of July*, by Ron Kovic
- *A Rumor of War*, by Philip Caputo
- *In Pharaoh's Army: Memories of the Lost War*, by Tobias Wolff

## Materials: Worksheets

- Worksheet 1: Interpret Letters
- Worksheet 2: Interpret Photos
- Worksheet 3: Interpret Firsthand Documents
- Worksheet 4: Veteran Research – Interview Subjects/Questions/Details
- Worksheet 5: Veteran Research – Living Veteran’s Biography Guidelines
- Worksheet 6: Veteran Research – Deceased Veteran’s Obituary Guidelines
- Worksheet 7: My town during the Vietnam War
- Worksheet 8: Travel Through Time by Analyzing HistoryLink essays
- Worksheet 8: Civics CBA/ Constitution and the Draft

## Worksheet #1: Interpretation of Letters

Use the following guidelines to write a letter home from Vietnam. You may use this worksheet to compile your thoughts.

Determine who you are writing to and why.

Describe what you are feeling about being in Vietnam and away from home.

Have your feelings changed since you enlisted or were drafted?

Who and what do you miss most from home and why? What is your favorite possession that you can carry with you and why?

Who do you miss most from the United States and why?

What do you and other fellow soldiers do for entertainment? What is your favorite music?

What is the hardest part of being a soldier?

Select one of the men in the photos and describe him to the person receiving the letter,

What does he look like? What are his physical characteristics?

What is his personality?

Is he loyal, trustworthy, brave, risk-taking, fearful? Why do you feel this way?

Why is he your friend or not your friend? Would he be your friend back in the States?

How are you different from him? (culture, age, from a big city or small town). How are you the same?

Talk about how you feel about anti-war sentiment back home.

Talk about what you want to do upon your return to the U.S. What are you worried about when you return to the U.S.?

## Worksheet #2: Interpretation of Photographs

Each response should be at least two to three complete sentences. Make a copy of this worksheet and use one for each photo you select.

Photo # \_\_\_\_\_ from File # \_\_\_\_\_

What do you see in this photo?

What made you notice these details?

Why do you think this photo was taken?

Your caption for this photo:

How is your caption and interpretation of the photo different from that of the caption written by the original photographer, Christopher Gaynor.



### Worksheet #3: Interpretation of Firsthand Accounts

Choose one of the People's Histories included in this curriculum. Make a list of at least six questions that you would like to have asked this subject and why.

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Write a two paragraph paper that expresses your opinion on their story. Would you have felt the same (or different) if you were in the same situation? Compare and contrast your opinions with those of the subject.

Choose from the HistoryLink.org website one of the other People's Histories related to Vietnam (see Secondary Sources: Online Resources/HistoryLink Essays). Make a list of at least six questions that you would like to have asked this subject and why.

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_ Essay # \_\_\_\_\_

Write a two paragraph paper that expresses your opinion on their story. Would you have felt the same (or different) if you were in the same situation? Compare and contrast your opinions with those of the subject.

## Worksheet #4: Veteran Research - Interview Subjects/Questions/Interview

Use this worksheet to prepare a list of 10 “open-ended” questions that you would like to ask a veteran from Vietnam. Would these questions be different if you asked a current veteran from Iraq or Afghanistan? Prepare a list of five questions that you would ask current veterans.

## Worksheet #5: Veteran's Research (Living) - Biography Guidelines

Use this worksheet to compile information that you have gathered about a living veteran. You will write a biography about the veteran you have chosen.

Name of Person/ Nicknames:

Birthdate:

Where and when this person attended school:

Where and when this person lived during his or her lifetime:

Where and when this person worked during his or her lifetime:

Special qualities or talents:

Military service:

Military honors:

Remembrances of experiences in Vietnam:

Readjustment to life after the war? PTSD? Injuries? Sadness? Anger?

What is their opinion about current military activity?

Be sure to record where you found each piece of information so that you can prepare a bibliography of your resources.

## Worksheet #6: Veteran's Research (Deceased) - Obituary Guidelines

An obituary is a notice of the death of a person and is usually found in a newspaper. The obituary often includes personal and professional information, such as when and where the person was born, lived, worked, or went to school. Often obituaries share descriptions of specific qualities or actions that the person will be remembered for. Many times a published obituary is the only reference that can be found online about a person's life.

Use this worksheet to compile information for the obituary that you write. Be sure to record where you found this information so that you can prepare a bibliography of your resources.

Name of Person/ Nicknames:

Birthdate:

Date of Death:

Cause of Death:

Where and when this person attended school:

Where and when this person lived during his or her lifetime:

Where and when this person worked during his or her lifetime:

Special qualities, talents, or reasons that this person will be specifically remembered:

Resources where you found this information. Are they reliable and credible? What do you base this opinion on?

## Worksheet #7: My Town During the Vietnam War

Use this worksheet to compile information about your town. (Hint: use government websites, census websites, and alumni associations of local high schools.) Using this information, write a paper that compares and contrasts your city/town with Vashon Island – the focus of the curriculum study.

What is the current population of your town/city?

Where did you find this information?

What was the population of your town/city during the Vietnam War era (1962-1977)?

Where did you get this information?

How many total students attended your high school from 1962 to 1977?

How many males were in the school during these years?

How many of them went to Vietnam?

How many of them lost their lives in Vietnam?

Where did you find this information?

Calculate the ratio of draft-age men to those who actually went to Vietnam.

Calculate the ratio of draft-age men to those from the community who died in the war effort.

How are the war dead remembered? What about war survivors? What was the reaction to their return?

Where did you find this information?

Worksheet #8: Travel through Time by Analyzing HistoryLink Timeline Essays

HistoryLink Timeline Essay # \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Write a brief summary of this event. State why you chose this specific event.

Which Timeline essay(s) describe event(s) that were a **direct or indirect cause** of the selected Timeline's subject. How?

HistoryLink Timeline Essay: \_\_\_\_\_

HistoryLink Timeline Essay: \_\_\_\_\_

Which Timeline essay(s) describe event(s) that were a **direct or indirect result** of the selected Timeline event. How?

HistoryLink Timeline Essay: \_\_\_\_\_

HistoryLink Timeline Essay: \_\_\_\_\_

## Worksheet #9: Civics CBA/Constitution and the Draft

Use this worksheet to summarize your thoughts for the Civics writing activity:

Using the Vietnam Lottery birthday chart (Background Information #3) determine where you would have fallen in the draft list. Take a position on the draft. Are you supportive of the government requiring you (or your friend) to be subject to a mandatory draft? Write a letter, diary entry, etc. for each of these scenarios:

1. It is **1969** and you have just found out where you rank in the Vietnam lottery based on your birthday. Write a letter, diary entry, etc. that describes how you found out your placement, where you were, who you were with, how you feel (lucky, scared, angry, etc.) What are your feelings about the government being able to draft you into the military service, even if you do not want to go? Is it constitutional? What are your recourses and resources? Remember, this is 50 years ago. What do you plan to do?
2. It is **2015** and a draft lottery has just been reinstated. You just found out where you rank in the lottery based on their birthday – use the Vietnam lottery birth-date chart. Write a letter, diary entry, email, tweet, Facebook entry, etc. that describes how you found your placement, where you were, who you were with, how you feel (lucky, scared, angry, etc.) What are your feelings about the government being able to draft you into the military service even if you do not want to go? Is it constitutional? What do you plan to do? What are your recourses and resources? How will you proceed?

Now write a short analysis that compares and contrasts your letters, diary entry, email, tweet, Facebook entry, etc. from 1969 and 2015. What is different today than in 1969? Do young people have access to more resources to help with action on these issues? Are young people today more involved in the government and knowledgeable about civic and governmental issues? Did your position on the draft change between these two scenarios spanning nearly 50 years? Explain.



# Home of Record:

The place one was living  
when they entered or re-enlisted in the military



Evolution of Christopher Gaynor: Student - Soldier - Veteran

With gratitude to Christopher Gaynor who shared his private letters, photographs, documents, and story for this curriculum honoring those whose lives were affected by the Vietnam War. And a heartfelt thanks to Barbara Steen, Rick Skillman, Clare Holke, George Nelson, and Leigh Sheridan for their insightful and thought-provoking personal recollections of the Vashon 12 and the Vashon Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The “Home of Record” curriculum demonstrates how students can learn from primary sources and from those who experienced history firsthand, and that they should be provided with activities that promote exploration of these type of resources whenever it is possible.