

***Vietnam in American Memory:
Competing Lessons of a Contentious War***

Paul S Rykken
Summer Session 2005

History 584: The Vietnam War
Professor Stephen Gosch
UW Eau Claire

NOTE TO THE READER

*We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And to know the place for the first time.*
-- T.S. Eliot, *Little Gidding V* (1943)

History often takes us in a circle. The Vietnam War ended in the spring of my senior year of high school and I suspect that I have been conscious of it on one level or another for over 40 years. Growing up with daily papers and in a home where history and politics were openly discussed prompted me to have many questions about the war from an early age. Such questions persisted and when Paul Tefft, my high school history teacher, suggested I read David Halberstam's newly published book The Best and the Brightest during my junior year, he helped me realize that pursuing history was in my future. In the fall of 1975 I went off to college intent on learning more about my country, its history and role in the world. It was there that I ran into a young International Relations professor named Peter Hovde, himself a Vietnam veteran turned teacher, who opened my eyes to the complexity of war and the powerful need for us to understand the world community, particularly those nations emerging from a colonial past. It was also during my college years that I had the opportunity to work with others in helping two refugee families, one from Vietnam and the other from Cambodia, in the very difficult process of resettling to what must have seemed to them a very strange and foreign land. That experience, more than any other, made me see Vietnam in personal terms and from the perspective of common people who were caught in the sweep of history. Beginning in the fall of 1979 and continuing into the present I have been navigating the complicated waters of history with high school students, the first of which had a living memory of the war. Teaching Vietnam was and remains a difficult challenge and twenty-six years later it is clear to me that we have not settled the questions surrounding the conflict. The great debate, for example, that ensued over the service record of John Kerry during the 2004 campaign, it seems to me, illustrates just how divided we still are over the lessons of Vietnam. And as our nation continues to deal with the challenge of Iraq, contending memories of an earlier war shade our perceptions. We may try to forget Vietnam but until those that were touched by its fire have passed from the scene it will continue to burn.

Introduction

"War has no beginning and no end. It crosses oceans like a splintered boat filled with people singing a sad song."

--Le Thi Diem Thuy

From the vantage point of the early 21st century, the fall of Saigon to Communist forces in April of 1975 seems long ago and far away. Yet, for those who came of age during the American war in Vietnam, indelibly etched memories remain. Such memories are complex and layered, and, just as we vehemently disagreed over the war while it was being fought, so too have we argued over the memory and meaning of the war in the generation beyond. The purpose of this research is to explore one particular aspect of the Vietnam memory: the debate over the lessons of the war that was already raging by the middle 1970s, a debate that continues to be felt thirty years later. The premise for the research comes from the work of foreign policy historian Richard Melanson – that is, that ideas, in this case historical interpretations, have consequences and that history is “not written in a political vacuum: it is both affected by and it affects events in the policy world” (Melanson, 1983, p.5). To explore the premise, I will analyze two specific questions. First of all, how did varying interpretations of the war lead to the development of contending lessons for policymakers in the post-war period? And second, how did the Neoconservative movement effectively challenge the orthodox view of the war by the early 1980s? Beyond the pursuit of those questions, I will briefly trace the evolution of Neoconservatism into the present period, and in a concluding word, provide a brief commentary on the problems inherent in the use of historical analogies by policymakers.

Vietnam in American Memory

Noting the difficulty in identifying what constitutes the national memory of any war, historian, author, and teacher Marilyn Young makes the point that it is unclear what we actually remember about Vietnam (Gettleman, 1995, p. 520). And, while it is true that any historic episode prompts a variety of memories and interpretations, the Vietnam experience, due to its controversial nature, exists as a sort of Rorschach test for unresolved attitudes about the conflict and its impact. In other words, the lessons that people draw from the nation’s involvement in the war tend to reflect “personal political predilections” and vary widely (Winterstein, 2000,

p. 2). Clarifying the colliding memories is made even more difficult perhaps because of how the conflict ended. Fox Butterfield speculates that Americans “went into a trance of collective amnesia” in April of 1975 with the abrupt collapse of Saigon. “The Vietnam War was such an agonizing, divisive, and baffling experience that we somehow resolved simply to forget it.” Experiencing the war firsthand as a correspondent for the New York Times from 1971-73, Butterfield contends that the conflict is “the most misunderstood war” in our history (Butterfield, 1983, p. 2).

While the public may have been trying to forget the war, scholars and political commentators began the process of interpreting Vietnam for later generations. The subject of Vietnam scholarship is far too broad for this research, but it is safe to say that two sharply differentiated views of the war emerged in the politically charged first drafts of history. One view, liberal realism, portrayed the war as an avoidable tragedy. In this version of the war, American policymakers had foolishly exaggerated the importance of Vietnam to the United States and made serious misjudgments about where Vietnam fit into the bigger picture of Cold War history. American leaders had wrongly concluded that Ho Chi Minh’s nationalist movement was part of a broader quest for world dominion by the monolithic forces of communism. A contending and even more radical view that reflected the impulses of the New Left and historians like William Appleman Williams argued that Vietnam was really about the US drive for power and the ongoing story of America’s elite class attempting to exert control over the global capitalist system. Both views were clearly critical of US policy in Vietnam and sprang from the zeitgeist of the post-war period. And, while both interpretations were part of the more general and pervasive Cold War revisionism of the time, historian Robert McMahon asserts that the liberal realist view became the mainstream or orthodox interpretation of the war by the middle to late 70s. Stanley Karnow, for example, promoted this perspective in one of the first comprehensive histories of the war in 1983 (McMahon, 2002, p. 2). McMahon further argues that the orthodox interpretation remains powerful thirty years beyond the war and was evidenced most recently in Robert McNamara’s In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lesson of Vietnam, published in 1995.

That the Vietnam War produced contending scholarship is no surprise. One obvious task of scholars is to debate the causes and consequences of historical events and developments. For policymakers and those surrounding them, however, interpreting the war was never merely an academic exercise. As historian Walter McDougall has asserted, drawing lessons from the Vietnam War was (and remains)

“a political exercise” that tends to be “deeply psychological” for people who designed the war, who fought there, or who resisted it (McDougall, 2000, p. 2). What lessons or analogies should be drawn from the complicated experience of the US in Southeast Asia? Had the military been derelict in its duty when it promised and then pretended to win the war? Did arrogant civilians order the military into battle with one hand tied and no clear goals? Was the war a colossal blunder or a just cause? Should the war stand as a clear warning against nation-building projects in strange and violent settings? Or, was it a noble attempt to spread freedom and democracy to people of the Third World? These were the challenging questions that required serious reflection by those on the frontlines of power in 1975 and beyond (McDougall, 2000, p. 2).

The Carter administration (1977-1981) was the first to grapple with these difficult questions. Though certainly versed in the dangers of appeasement (the Munich analogy) and the basic premises of the Cold War, the foreign policy elite of the Carter years inherited the more complex Nixon-Kissinger vision of détente and co-existence with the Communists.¹ Many in the administration had no adult memory of Munich (1938) or the Second World War (1939-1945) and shared the Vietnam-induced questions about America’s role in the world being felt by the public (Melanson, 1983, p. 56). In short, the Carter foreign policy team confronted a neo-isolationist public that saw America’s role on the world stage as limited at best. As with any administration, they were grappling with the ongoing challenge of formulating US foreign policy amidst the nascent debates of prior years.

Challenging Orthodoxy: The Rising Tide of Neoconservatism

What went wrong in Vietnam and what lessons should policymakers glean from the war? Perhaps the central lesson of the orthodox view of American failure in southeast Asia was this: US military power must be used sparingly and only when genuine national interests are at stake. Avoidable quagmires that end up costing thousands of American lives, particularly if there is little public support for the enterprise, are bad policy. A successful defense of the corrupt Saigon regime against a “dedicated national revolutionary movement” would have ultimately required unacceptable losses by the United States (Melanson, 1983, p. 193). As Marilyn Young asserts, the quagmire analogy confronted every post-war

¹ The Munich Analogy referred to the West’s 1938 accession to Hitler’s demands concerning the Sudetenland that paved the way for the invasion of Poland in the following year. The lesson of Munich hung like a cloud over policymakers for well over a generation.

administration and led to something called the “Vietnam Syndrome” – an aversion to sending American troops overseas to kill other people “for reasons that seemed less than compelling to the citizenry” (Gettleman, 1995, page 520).²

Though widely accepted by scholars and commentators in the immediate post-war period, the orthodox view of the War was challenged from the start, primarily by a group of journalists and academics dubbed “Neoconservatives” by their opponents. Led by intellectuals such as Norman Podhoretz and Irving Kristol, they argued that America, in essence, had defeated itself in Vietnam. Domestic opposition to the war including Congress, the media, and those that protested the war in American universities and on the streets had “snatched defeat from the jaws of victory” (Melanson, 1983, p. 193). These conservative revisionists were deeply critical of US policy and asserted that military and civilian leaders failed to develop realistic plans for achieving American political and military objectives (McMahon, 2002, p. 2).

Though it is impossible to thoroughly chronicle the Neoconservative profile and worldview here, the broader political and cultural context of their rise was critical to the development of their ideas. The impact of the Vietnam War on the American political landscape can hardly be overestimated. Debates about the war polarized the nation more than at any time since the Civil War – a polarization that particularly affected the Democratic Party. The old Roosevelt New Deal coalition of the 1930s began to crack in the face of the strong anti-war neo-isolationism of Eugene McCarthy and George McGovern (Annual Faculty Lecture, 2002, p. 3). The mantra of “No More Vietnams” hovered over the party like a cloud as early as 1968 and was still being felt in the 1980 election. As mentioned previously, this sentiment was driving the orthodox interpretation of the war during this period – the war had truly been a serious mistake from the start.

But, while those on the left worked through their own set of debates, a powerful conservative challenge was taking shape. Historian and author Andrew Bacevich in his 2005 book The New Militarism: How Americans Are Seduced by War, asserts that the US experience in Vietnam had been an “unmitigated disaster” for “politically engaged intellectuals who had supported the doomed effort to save South

²That the orthodox interpretation of the war remained strong is evidenced by American attitudes during the early years of the Reagan administration. When dealing with unrest and a perceived Communist threat in El Salvador in 1982, for example, 89% of those polled by the Gallup organization opposed sending troops and 74% believed that US involvement there would “fairly likely” turn into a “Vietnam-like quagmire” demanding more and more American resources (Melanson, 1983, p. 207).

Vietnam." For conservatives in America the left's skepticism toward authority and wariness about the use of American power was simply wrong. In their view Vietnam signified a "wholesale collapse of American nerve" (Bacevich, 2005, pp. 69-70). Kristol and Podhoretz, leading lights of the movement, were quick to lambaste the Carter administration for its perceived weaknesses in confronting the yet-to-be-defeated Communist threat, particularly in Central America and Africa. Especially active in the world of journalism and Washington think tanks, their goal was to set the historical record straight concerning the Vietnam War thereby setting the stage for the "reassertion of American power in the 1980s" (Melanson, 1983, p. 196).

Podhoretz, New York intellectual and long-time editor of Commentary was clearly the lead voice during the first incarnation of Neoconservatism and, while it is difficult to fully explore the essence of Neoconservatism in a paper of this length, the following set of propositions seem central to the Neocon persuasion. First, the context for understanding contemporary politics (circa 1979) started in the 1930s, and the major lesson from that period was that evil is real and must be confronted. The Munich episode had been a critical mistake and had opened the door to the second great war of the century. Second, the possession of power and the willingness to use it was the key to the US role in the world. Third, the US had a unique role in history as the vanguard of freedom and democracy around the globe, a vision eloquently articulated by Woodrow Wilson in 1917 and seemingly accepted by every President since that time. Fourth, the assault on traditional values that stemmed from the leftist "nonsense" of the 1960s (multiculturalism, affirmative action, radical feminism, and the gay rights movement, for example) had undermined an appreciation for authority and needed to be discredited. Fifth, in the post-Vietnam period, the nation confronted a dire crisis in foreign policy and a loss of confidence in American power and authority. And finally, the antidote to the crisis would have to come through strong leadership (Bacevich, 2005, p. 75-77).

Guided by this set of principles, Podhoretz and his adherents believed that the "struggle for freedom against Communism" was the central fact of modern history and by 1980 he detected the first stirrings of a "repressed strain of internationalist idealism" that could launch the nation on a new Wilsonian crusade to make the 1980s safe for democracy (Melanson, 1983, pp. 196-97). In a first-hand analysis of the changing politics of the late 1970s, political scientist Robert Casier contended that what bothered the new conservatives most was the "neo-isolationist spirit" that followed the war and they insisted that the US must "stand fast with those nations

committed to Western democratic values” (Annual Faculty Lecture, 2002, p. 7). Accordingly, the Neocons argued that revising the memory of Vietnam was the necessary first step to a “truly resurgent American foreign policy.” Once again, history shaped their worldview. The bitter legacy of World War I foiled FDR’s collective security and rearmament efforts in the 1930s and the Neocons feared that the memory of Vietnam would have the same debilitating effect (Melanson, 1983, p. 199). If 1980 was a time of crisis for the Neocons, it was also the moment that the nation could be “decisively turned around” by the leadership of America’s newly elected President, Ronald Reagan (Bacevich, 2005, p. 78).

Postscript: Neoconservatism Triumphant

Though beyond the scope of this research, the ongoing development of Neoconservatism throughout the 1980s and 1990s illustrates the power that historical interpretation plays in the formulation of American foreign policy. While Vietnam gave rise to a “mood of pervasive and seemingly permanent anti-militarism,” it also “induced a powerful reaction from Americans who refused to accept the war’s apparent verdict” (Bacevich, 2005, p. 34). Throughout the Reagan-Bush years (1981-1993) neoconservative rhetoric was frequently heard coming from the Oval Office – indeed, it was Reagan who resurrected an image of Vietnam as a noble cause and it was the elder George Bush who exclaimed, “By God, we’ve kicked the Vietnam syndrome once and for all” at the conclusion of the Gulf War in 1991 (Gettleman, 1995, p. 521).

On the other hand, it was during the 80s and 90s that the so-called Weinberger-Powell Doctrine of military strategy evolved, a set of tests or preconditions that must be followed to determine whether or not American troops should be committed to regional conflicts. Among other things, the doctrine suggested that before American forces were engaged there must be assurances of popular and Congressional support for the effort and a clearly established exit strategy, ideas that appeared to reflect post-Vietnam liberal-realist thinking (Bacevich, 2005, pp. 48-51). In addition, with the sudden passing of the Cold War in 1991 and the removal of the Soviet threat, there was a sense among many in the Neoconservative camp that their movement was fading from view (Bacevich, 2005, pp. 79-80).

Far from being lost in the wilderness, however, it was during the Clinton years (1993-2001) that the Neocons in phoenix-like fashion emerged with an ambitious and retooled agenda preparing for the moment when Republicans would retake the

White House. A second generation of Neoconservative enthusiasts led by William Kristol (Irving's son) began promoting their ideas. In 1995 the Weekly Standard, with the financial backing of media mogul Rupert Murdoch, replaced Commentary as the most significant mouthpiece for the movement, while columnists Max Boot (LA Times), David Brooks (NY Times), and Charles Krauthammer and Robert Kagan (Washington Post) promoted the Neocon message to consumers of more mainstream news outlets. Another important development for the resurgent Neocon movement came in 1997 with the founding of the Project for the New American Century. By the spring of 1997, PNAC was lobbying vigorously for "democratic internationalism" and the remaking of the Middle East including aggression against Iraq (Bacevich, 2005, pp. 88-90). Commenting on the role of PNAC, author and historian Chalmers Johnson asserts that a group of influential people sought to "go back and finish what they started" in 1991 – that is, the removal of the Hussein regime from power. Indeed, in a January 26, 1998 letter to President Clinton, PNAC members boldly called for such action (Johnson, 2004, p. 228).³ As an indication of the influence that PNAC was having, Clinton signed and Congress overwhelmingly passed the Iraq Liberation Act nine months after receiving the letter, signaling that the removal of the Hussein regime was now official policy for the US government (Bacevich, 2005, p. 90).

With greater tenacity than the earlier Neocons, the second generation group made no apologies about their desire to have a direct impact on US foreign policy. As indicated by the Clinton letter, for example, they talked openly about ideas and options that might have seemed reckless and irresponsible only a few years earlier. In true Wilsonian fashion, they viewed the end of the Cold War as the grand opportunity for the "final triumph of American ideals" in the world, a triumph that required enhanced military strength, a willingness to actively use it, and the pursuit of a world order resting upon "American hegemony" (Bacevich, 2005, 82-87).⁴

Finally, the election of George W. Bush in 2000 signaled a clear victory for the Neoconservative agenda. Though critical of the idea of nation-building during the campaign, the younger Bush was certainly more open to their arguments than

³ Signatures on the famous letter to the President included Donald Rumsfeld, William Kristol, Elliot Abrams, Paul Wolfowitz, John Bolton, Richard Perle, William Bennett, Richard Armitage, Zalmay Khalilzad, and others. Ultimately, ten of the eighteen signers would go on to serve in the administration of George W. Bush (Johnson, 2004, pp. 228-229).

⁴ To get a sense of the guiding principles of PNAC, I would suggest going to their website located at <http://www.newamericancentury.org>. In addition, PNAC's September 2000 report entitled "Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources For a New Century" provides an excellent overview of their military philosophy. It is available at PNAC's website.

Clinton had been. The first eight months of his presidency did not seem to change the environment dramatically, but the events of September 11, 2001 provided a tailor-made opportunity to break free from restrictions on the use of American power (Johnson, 2004, pp. 228-29). Operation Enduring Freedom, the invasion of Afghanistan in the fall of 2001, was the nation's initial response to the attacks of 9/11. Speaking of a broader war on terror in his State of the Union message of January 2002 President Bush named Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as the "axis of evil" in the modern world and began articulating what has come to be known as the Bush Doctrine of preventive war. Later that spring he more clearly articulated the administration's post-9/11 military strategy in a speech at West Point indicating that, if necessary, preemptive attacks would be used against terrorists and nations who harbored them (Sifrey, 2003, pp. 250-252, 268-271). Operation Iraqi Freedom, launched in March of 2003, clearly illustrated the evolving Doctrine in practice. For those of the Neoconservative persuasion, the moment of truth had arrived and America was on the march.

CONCLUDING COMMENTARY: HISTORY AND FOREIGN POLICY

"Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past."

--George Orwell

In the introduction to his groundbreaking work, Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory, historian David Blight quotes Robert Penn Warren who made the following observation about another hotly contested war in our history: "Somewhere in their bones, most Americans have a storehouse of lessons drawn from the Civil War. Exactly what those lessons should be, and who should determine them, has been the most contested question in American historical memory since 1863" (Blight, 2001, p. 1). Throughout the process of doing this research it became clear to me that Warren's commentary was equally applicable to the Vietnam War. The contending memories of the conflict are still being "felt in our bones" and will remain until the generation that experienced it fades into history.

As I explored the rise and evolution of the neoconservative movement, however, I was struck by how central their interpretation of why the US failed in Vietnam was to their worldview and how determined they were to "set the record straight" by challenging the orthodox view of the war, thereby providing justification for a

particular set of policies. Using analogies, of course, is a relevant and useful activity for historians. Lessons from past situations of a similar nature can help us define a current problem, assess what is actually at stake, and prompt appropriate prescriptions for action (Goodnight, 2004, p. 8). At the same time, however, professional historians should worry about the ways in which those wielding influence over policy-makers use and misuse history to promote a particular agenda. Historical “lessons” often can trap them in misleading, simplistic, or wholly false analogies” (Melanson, 1983, p. 6). While it is up to the reader to decide if the lessons that the Neocons chose to emphasize from Vietnam were misleading or simplistic, it is clear that at some point the lessons passed into the realm of dogma and were therefore not to be questioned.

To complicate matters further, I’m yet unclear as to how much influence the Neocons actually have had on those that are in power. That they were determined to change the debate about the war in the late 1970s and apply particular lessons to the evolving foreign policy of the country is beyond dispute. Their influence in the world of journalism and think tanks is well documented. Further, that many in the movement hold influential positions in the administration of George W. Bush is clear even to the most casual observer. But we remain too close to the events of our time to sort this all out. As has been suggested, the issue of influence is “maddeningly complex” and the sources of policy and opinion are hard to identify and impossible to precisely measure (Melanson, 1983, p. 217). Perhaps fifty years from now historians will be able to more accurately evaluate the influence that Neoconservatism is having on the early years of the new century. The lessons of Iraq, no less than the lessons of Vietnam, will be analyzed far beyond our time.

And while it can be argued that the influence of intellectuals on policy is seldom straightforward, it is certainly a factor that must be taken into account. This proposition has led me to a second difficult question. Since 1945 in at least three notable instances, Presidents have been surrounded by men (and more recently women) who have been or are among the educated elite of the nation: the Cold War liberals of the immediate post-war period, the “best and brightest” of the early 1960s, and the Neoconservatives of the early 21st century. Why do such academically inclined people who should welcome dissenting views instead become captive to something akin to “groupthink” and thereby fixed in their persuasion? The answer to that question begs another round of research.

Finally, does any of this matter? If historical interpretation and policy-making are inexorably linked, can those in power actually make better use of history? Or are lessons of the past impossible to separate from the “politics of collective memory?” (Blight, 2001, p. 19). Once again, Melanson’s work is instructive. In the final chapter of Writing History and Making Policy, he cites the work of Harvard historian Ernest May in this regard. May contended, first of all, that historians ought to be asked by those on the front lines of policy-making to supply perspective on events in foreign countries and to provide accurate information about past policies of our own government. In addition, government officials should rely on historians to analyze and challenge precedents or analogies that are being utilized for their “lessons.” May’s work was being done in the early 1980s, and he also advocated increased funding for scholarly training in non-western history to provide a broader pool of advisors on third world issues. Finally, May argued that studies should be commissioned that would enhance citizen awareness of past policies to help develop a broader understanding of global issues among average citizens (Melanson, 1983, p. 222). Taken together May’s proposals would warm the heart of any historian. Should we expect them to be applied anytime soon? I will leave that speculation to the reader. That they should be applied is beyond question and a challenge worth pursuing.

REFERENCE LIST

My intention with the following listing of sources is to provide the reader with appropriate information related to the parenthetical references. In addition, those that I starred are included because of their value to further reading on the topic, even though I may not have specifically referred to them in the text.

Annual Faculty Lecture. (2002): Robert Casier (1979-80). “Changing Patterns in American Politics.” Retrieved 19 June, 2005, from http://4sbccfaculty.org/lecture/80s/lectures/Robert_Casier_print.html

Bacevich, Andrew J. (2005). The New American Militarism: How Americans Are Seduced by War. New York: Oxford University Press.

Blight, David W. (2001). Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Butterfield, Fox. (1983). “The New Vietnam Scholarship.” New York Times Magazine, 13 February 1983. Retrieved 23 June, 2005, from <http://www.nytimes.com/library/world/asia/021383vietnam-school.html>

- *Donnelly, Thomas (Principal Author). (2000). "Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources For a New Century." Retrieved 19 June, 2005, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project_for_the_New_American_Century
- Gettleman, Marvin E., Franklin, Young, and Franklin (Eds.). (1995). Vietnam and America. New York: Grove Press.
- Goodnight, G. Thomas. (2004). "'Iraq is George Bush's Vietnam': Metaphors in Controversy: On Public Debate and Deliberative Analogy." Retrieved 22 June, 2005, from http://www.usc.edu/dept/LAS/iids/docs/Iraq_and_Vietnam.doc
- *Kristol, Irving. (2003). "The Neoconservative Persuasion: What it was, and What it is." The Weekly Standard, Volume 008, Issue 47. Retrieved 19 June, 2005, from <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/003/00tzmlw.asp>
- Johnson, Chalmers. (2004). The Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic. New York: Henry Holt and Company.
- McDougall, Walter A. (2000). "Who Were We in Vietnam?" The New York Times on the Web. Retrieved 18 June, 2005 from <http://www.nytimes.com/library/opinion/042600oped-vietnam.html>
- McMahon, Robert J. (2002). "Changing Interpretations of the Vietnam War." Modern American Poetry Website. Retrieved 15 June, 2005, from <http://www.english.uiuc.edu/maps/vietnam/interpretations.htm>
- Melanson, Richard A. (1983). Writing History and Making Policy: The Cold War, Vietnam and Revisionism. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- Sifry, Micah L. and Cerf, Christopher (Eds.). (2003). The Iraq War Reader: History, Documents, Opinions. New York: Touchstone.
- Winterstein, Stephen. (2000). "Teaching the Vietnam War: A Conference Report." Foreign Policy Research Institute, Volume 6, Number 4. Retrieved 15 June, 2005 from <http://www.fpri.org/footnotes/064.200007.winterstein.teachingvietnam.html>
- *Young, Marilyn B. (1991). The Vietnam Wars: 1945-1990. New York: HarperCollins.