

Cultural effects of the vietnam war essay

[War](#), [Vietnam War](#)



Madison Krause M. Sherman AP English February 6th, 2013 Effects of the Vietnam War When people are asked what they think of when they hear the words “ Vietnam War”, they may envision Rambo on a bloody, barbaric, and yet heroic killing spree or Forrest Gump getting shot in the buttock. Others may think of a grandparent or parent who fought in the grizzly guerilla warfare. Many can still recall their direct experience with the war, whether as a soldier or a civilian. The war in Vietnam does not seem like such distant past to many people, and because of the very personal and possibly tragic memories people have of the war, they are not able to see the big picture: the Vietnamese war affected more than individuals.

It affected the economy, social order, and culture of all the nations involved. Planet Earth was far from world peace when the war in Vietnam erupted. Infact, the Cold War, which was an antagonist for the war in Vietnam, had been going on for seven years prior to the conflict in Southeast Asia. Many countries were negatively affected by communist Southeast Asia’s closed economy. When the communist countries in Southeast Asia, adapted their “ closed economy” system (Source F), the pre-existing economic woes of the Cold War were layered with new conflict.

The closed economy cut off economic opportunities to capitalist countries as well as underdeveloped non-communist nations which surrounded communist Southeast Asia. America’s ally, Britain, was suffering economically without the colony of Malaya, which the nation used for major tin and rubber manufacturing. The French, who were suffering from the communist takeover of their colonies and still rebuilding their economy from

the effects of the Cold War, requested American aid in stopping the communists from destroying the global economy.

So in result, in May 1950, President Harry S Truman granted the request of the French by authorizing economic and military aid to France so they could continue to rebuild their economy while fighting to regain Indochina (Source F). These events all were influential to America's decision to become allies with South Korea, and fight communist forces. The concept of communism was to make all property public and regulate social and economic activities and therefore create a seemingly utopian society. People who favored the idea of communism creating a society where peace was guaranteed, including Buddhists, students, and intellectuals, became angered by the intent that South Korea and its allies had to take down communist Southeast Asia. This anger sparked many anti-war protests throughout North America.

When more troops were needed for deployment, The United States Military issued drafts for enlistment. People who had been drafted but were unwilling to serve in the military frequently escaped to Canada from The States to avoid the draft. These people were called Draft Dodgers. In Toronto, Canada;; at City Hall some of the Draft Dodgers participated in multiple anti-war protests. Protests were known to get extreme in other countries.

In Vietnam, Ngo Dinh Diem's brother ordered for Buddhist pagodas to be raided on grounds that they suspected the monks to be hiding communist fugitives. Monks and all Buddhists were outraged. In the streets of Saigon during the summer of 1963, monks burned themselves alive in protest of

Diem's brother's heinous acts. (Source E) Because of the deep impact the monk's suicide protests had on the world's negative view of the war, caused the Kennedy administration to support a general's coup (Source E).

The coup of Diem's own generals and men captured and assassinated Diem and his brother on November 1, 1963. Coincidentally, 3 weeks later, Kennedy was shot in the head in an assassination that caused ongoing conspiracies. After Kennedy's death, Lyndon B. Johnson took office. Opposite of Kennedy who had approached the Vietnam war with a sense of respect to the culture of Vietnam, Johnson wanted to fight the war in cold blood. Johnson initiated "limited war", which disrupted American life less, but destroyed the culture of Vietnam.

Public outrage ensued and a police riot erupted in Chicago at the 1968 National Democratic Convention. The war in Vietnam did not only affect those in combat, but also civilians and police forces alike. In representation of the United States of America, Dr. Henry Kissinger was the man responsible for ending the war. On Tuesday, January 23, 1973, the Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam received the initials of Kissinger, bringing a sigh of relief to the nations at war.

On January 27th 1973, peace was official, as the cease fire began at 7 pm Washington time (Source D). Now that peace was restored, the nations had to be restored back to normal. Healing had to take place.

The Vietnam Memorial is America's symbol of healing from the war. People go to the memorial to pay their respects to those who fought or to visit and

honor a loved one who was in the war. The wall is a symbol of the sacrifice and service that all the men and women honored on the memorial provided to our country. (Source A) It is evident that the war in Vietnam affected all the countries involved economically, socially, and culturally, but the Vietnam Memorial proves that while a nation's social and economic status may fully heal, the nation's culture will forever be engraved with the ridges of war.