

# Psychedelia and vietnam

[Art & Culture](#), [Music](#)



Psychedelia and Vietnam Tom Paxton's ' Lyndon Johnson Told the Nation' creates a powerful message about the Vietnam War. This specific song criticizes President Johnson's involvement in the Vietnam War directly, as it indicates that Johnson originally indicated there would be no worry of the conflict escalating. As the song continues, however, it explores actual events in the Vietnam War. In this way, the song makes an ironic comment on Johnson's statement that the Vietnam War would not escalate. In addition to these elements the ways that the song lyrically details the Vietnam War create a powerful demonstration of the atrocities of this conflict. In this way one considers that the narrator in the song speaks about having to avoid mortar shells. In great part the specific musical components contribute to this song's message. In this way the guitar is low-key and thoroughly allows the vocals to shine through. Another prominent recognition is that Paxton's voice is subdued, yet contains a significant degree of ethos, leading the listener to empathize with his message.

Another prominent song with a war message is Johnny Wright's ' Hello Vietnam'. This song is less explicit in its criticism of the Vietnam War. While the song alludes to the arbitrary nature of the war, it is more concerned with articulating a story about a lost love going abroad to fight in the war. This seems to be the song's most effective part. To an extent the song can even be interpreted as embracing the war. In this way the song speaks of American's mission abroad and the importance of stopping communism before it becomes a larger problem. Specifically, the song implements a lyrical metaphor in comparing communism to a fire that must be put out or risk a larger problem. In terms of the specific musical components, to an

extent one can argue that they interfere with the song's message. The song adopts a lackadaisical country western musical approach that seems more concerned with the love story than conveying any sort of meaningful political message.

Finally, Sgt. Barry Sadler's 'Ballad of the Green Berets' presents another perspective on war. While the first two songs made specific comments on the Vietnam War, this song instead constitutes a firm embracement of American military values. In this way, as the title suggests, the song functions as a ballad for the Green Berets. To a large extent the Green Berets are presented as heroic and brave individuals. While the song lacks a political message, this may actually be its strongest part; namely, the song allows the listener to appreciate the American military forces without being forced to support the Vietnam War. In terms of musical elements the song is successful in conveying its message. Namely, the song implements a military drum beat at different intervals. Additionally, the vocals are well-recorded; this vocal clarity speaks to a corresponding clarity with the song's message. Additionally, these musical elements give the song a timeless quality that is not evident in the two previous songs examined.