

American and north vietnamese perception of war

[Countries](#), [Vietnam](#)



Austin Beeler American and North Vietnamese Perceptions of War To the American Soldiers and the NVA/VC soldiers, the Vietnam War was both very similar and very different. Most of soldiers in Vietnam went into the war with a purpose, and they had a very high morale levels. Both the Americans and the NVA soldiers left with many problems. The war left most soldiers with very severe cases of mental issues. There were also many things about the war that differed to the soldiers. One was the type of patriotism, and the other was the consequences of choosing to not fight.

The American soldiers were fighting with a different type of patriotism than the communist soldiers. The Vietnamese soldiers were fighting for their freedom and to protect their homeland. The Americans were fighting for their government. They went into the war completely trusting their government no matter what they thought about the conflict. The war left both sides with huge wounds that would take a long time to heal. The American soldiers left for Vietnam knowing that they have been the victors in all of the other wars and conflicts they have been in.

The morale among the soldiers was high at the beginning of the war. The Vietnamese soldiers had very high morale after beating the French in 1954. One American soldier wrote a letter to his fiance that was supposed to be given to her in the unfortunate event of his death. He told his fiance that he is proud that he was even able to fight for his country, and even though the war has taken his life, he wishes that she doesn't hate the war because of it. The soldiers that were first sent over seas were proud of what they were doing.

They believed in their country and they believed that the people back home would have their back. The Vietnamese soldiers had been victorious in beating the French empire just years before the American soldiers arrived. They were in high spirits and it gave them a sense of invincibility because they just defeated a huge power. The Vietnamese soldiers were fighting for their homeland. They saw the Americans as another colonial power that was trying to move in and take control again. The soldiers knew that they could navigate the land much better than the Americans and they carefully planned their attacks.

Both of the sides were patriotic, but they were patriotic in different ways. The American soldiers were patriotic in the sense of they were serving for their government and their country. They were fighting because the government told them that they need to be over there stopping the spread of communism. For the Americans it was about making their country proud. The North Vietnamese soldiers were patriotic in a completely different sense. They were fighting for their freedom. They thought that if they didn't fight, then they would be put back down to a lower level than the Americans.

Just like the French had done to them when they were in control. The soldiers were fighting to protect their families back north and to save their land. They had an obvious purpose to fight, while the Americans couldn't see how the war affected them back home. Both the Americans and the North Vietnamese soldiers left the war affected deeply. Many soldiers returned to their homes and they were severely affected by PTSD. In the book, Keim has nightmares every night that he tries to sleep. That includes the nights he was in the military, and the nights after the war was over.

Kein was talking to one of this soldiers and he said " their chaotic minds, their troubled speech, revealed how cruelly they were twisted and tortured by the war"(20). The NVA soldiers watched thousands of their fellow soldiers die right beside them. Throughout the war, the NVA/VC lost over a million soldiers. Seeing that many people die affected the soldiers greatly. One of the soldiers in Keins battalion is severely depressed and is thinking about deserting the rest of the soldiers and heading home. Kein tells him its suicidal and shameful. Can saying " Suicidal? Killing myself?

I've killed so often it wont mean a thing if I kill myself. As for the shame... In all my time as a soldier, I've never seen anything honorable", shows how desensitized the soldiers are. They don't care about death anymore. Many of them embrace it because they know its coming. The American soldiers were just as scarred by the war. One of the soldiers that reflected on the war in1984basically said thatdepressionkills you faster than a bullet to the head. It " eats away at you inner being. It eats away at everything that you ever learned (5). " The soldiers with depression didn't get help from anyone.

The only people they got help from were the psychiatrists they paid to go see. Both sides used drugs to help cope with the sorrows of war. The Vietnamese soldiers smoked the Rosa Canina flower, and the American soldiers smokedmarijuanaand used heroin. The drugs helped the soldiers deal with the depression of war. The war was a very tough place for both sides. Both countries had a very hard time recovering from the war, but the people who had to overcome the most were the soldiers. They went through so many things in war that they left Vietnam with " young shoulders that bore rather old heads (2). "