

06 DEC 87

Dear Walter:

You may not recall me, but I was a student in your Religious Studies 155 - Vietnam course in Winter '87. I was one of the students who went to Washington D.C. and was interviewed for the 60 Minutes piece.

I wanted to contact you and let you know that the experiences relayed and lessons learned in the course still are with me and I am finding that they take on more significance as time goes by.

I am currently at Naval Officer Candidate School in Newport, R.I. We are subjected to an enormous amount of information and ~~pressure~~ of all constantly under high levels of stress. At times the atmosphere takes on a character similar to that at Marine OCS which Caputo described in his book. The other week I was able to take a few hours of liberty, so I drove up to my sister's place in Boston. She had a copy of the 60 Minutes piece on video for me. (I was unable to see it because I arrived at OCS on 03 OCT and we were not allowed to see television for the first eight weeks). She also gave me a copy of the 10 NOV 87 Christian Science Monitor which refers to your course in a discussion of

the popularity of such courses.

What struck me in looking over this material was how easily I had been drawn into much of the pro-Reagan, pro-military rhetoric to the exclusion or suppression of many of my own beliefs.

I still have every desire to be a Naval Officer, but a little dose of reality has helped realign me to the proper balance of personal loyalties.

I just wanted to ~~know~~ let you know that your class has been important to me, and it will be just as important to students in the future. It provides a certain depth of knowledge that too many have been unfortunate enough to obtain through first-hand combat experience.

Thanks again, and if possible please let Barbara Meisenheimer and Dan Geisel know that I'm doing well. Their advice was invaluable.

I should be at Norfolk, VA in early February, so if possible I'm going to try to swing by the Vietnam War Memorial and meet up with your group.

Take care and good luck -

Steve Vincent