

"Since R.S. 155 has the largest enrollment for all University of California classes, it is obvious that this generation wants to learn all about the war and its impact on the nation. Through this desire to learn, America is healing herself by bringing the past out in the open and discussing it. The religious implications are clear for most of those in the class. A lecturer does not speak without referring to faith in God or to values that are cherished. Such times are always felt with great emotion by those in the class. During the course, I have consistently found myself questioning and re-evaluating my own morals and faith. If this were just a course in history, such self-evaluation would not occur.... It is a learning experience that involves religion, faith and morals, for this is the nature of its subject." Deanne Francis

"A class entitled "The Impact of the Vietnam War upon American Values" could be offered by no other department except Religious Studies without losing much of what is really important: the questions about our national faith, ideology and patriotism, and the role of religion in shaping our values in a cultural or civic sense. Indeed, the study of the impact of the Vietnam War upon American values is truly the study of religion."

Michael Atkins

"Did we lose the war? In the combat zone, yes, perhaps we did. But maybe the human spirit was able to survive this one intact, and actually emerge triumphant. Perhaps as a nation, and eventually as a world, we finally learned what war really is. Vietnam taught us about the atrocities of the war, the cruelties of war, and the hopelessness of it. This class was not just about the facts of the Vietnam War. So much of it was about each one of us in that lecture hall. If we may be able to learn from this, communicate it, personalize it and make it ours, then this Religious Studies class on "Religion and the Impact of the Vietnam War" will have succeeded in its objectives."

Debbie Arthur

"Our generation is the Vietnam generation. We grew up with this war. We grew up with the loss of patriotism. And now we must strive to bring it back to the way it used to be. The class taught more than any other class could because of the way it was taught -- through compassion, commitment and contemplation. These should shape our world in the years to come."

Dana Autenrieb

"I have so much enjoyed this class. It has been a Memorial for me. I knew nothing of the war. The speakers were all so touching, so sincere, and I have learned much from them. I had often wondered how they survived it all, and now I know -- for us, for the love of their country, for the love of mankind. I'll never forget the experiences I've learned in this class, and I'll always remember the healing that has begun, just by being here."

Lori Witz

"Those who make the pilgrimage to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, trace the letters of the name of a loved one with their fingertips, see their reflection in the long black granite panels, can find the solace of reconciliation and feel the healing power of Maya Lin's design, where people complete the circle. But closer to all of us is the contribution of Religious Studies 155 -- an open forum of ideas that helps my generation come to terms with the events that affected the generation before me. As veteran Denver Mills said in class 'Post Traumatic Stress is contagious, but in the contagion lies the cure.'"

Scott Hampton

"Walter Capps writes in his book The Unfinished War that the Vet Center counselors function much like unordained priests: they hear the confessions of veterans in need of healing. This thought make me see that, in one sense, the whole Vietnam class acts like an unordained priest. It too hears the confessions of veterans in need of healing. For me, it was a religious experience to be present in a class of