

VIETNAM COMPARED WITH OTHER WARS

UPDATE ON MINORITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE WAR

The theory: that the Vietnam War was a war fought predominantly by blacks and by the lower classes.....

New Book suggests: Yes, lower classes....
but perhaps racial inequities theory is not so true....

Randy Martin says that the questions must be more specific:

- three factors to be considered: (1) the induction process
 - (2) the specific assignment, the military occupation
 - (3) actual experience in the field....
- (who serves, in what capacity, actual experience of service.)

His starting point: Vietnam is certainly not the first war that was fought primarily by the working class, the poor, and racial minorities....

Revolutionary War was fought this way...
War of 1812, bounties had to be raised to meet the demand for troops...

CIVIL WAR: (1) difficult to get people to fight
(2) strong anti-war resistance movements....
BUT: whites received \$100 for three years' service,
black received \$10.

And both whites and blacks fought on both sides...
and tried to collect bounty from both...

WORLD WAR II: so many persons were needed that class distinctions were eroded, but units were still racially segregated....
widespread discrimination in military assignments...
NON-COMBAT POSITIONS WERE ASSIGNED ON A CLASS BIASED, EDUCATIONALLY BASED SYSTEM...

A popular war, yet 350,000 evaded the draft...

KOREAN WAR: discrimination increased....
LAWYERS could appeal their 1A status, for example
APPEALS rose from 3 in 1,000 in World War II to
47 in 1,000 in Korean War...

In the WAR, Poorest Soldiers were almost four times as likely as the wealthiest to become casualties...

VIETNAM WAR:

483,000 received OCCUPATIONAL DEFERMENTS
Millions got Student Deferments
Whites received twice as many medical deferments as blacks...
Casualty rate of the poor was three times as large as casualty rate of the affluent sectors of the population
Casualty rate among blacks was 33% higher than casualty rate among whites

Let's Talk About Some Other Populations:

BLACK AMERICANS SERVING IN VIETNAM....

for starters: some years: 5 to 2 ratio in proportion to the percentage of Black in the population...

by my figuring: if you are Black, you have approximately 250% chance of serving in Vietnam in comparison with the White population....

In 1965, BLACKS counted for 25% of the combat deaths in Vietnam...

In many rifle companies...50% of the group composed of Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Guamanians, Nisei, and Chicano and Hispanic Americans..

EDUCATION: (1) approximately 8% had less than 8th grade education
(2) 49% had less than high school education
(3) 42% had high school education.

add it up: 56% who served had less than high school education
98% had no formal education beyond the high school level...

bigger numbers: 27 million men came of draft age during the Vietnam War period
less than 1/3 served in the Armed Forces...
(somewhere between 8 and 9 million)

graduating class of 1970 Harvard: 1,200 graduates
56 in the military
all but a few in office,
noncombat jobs, only two
even went to Vietnam...

DRAFT BOARDS OF SOUTHERN STATES: only 2 had nonwhites on the Draft Boards...

STUDY DONE ON ONE COUNTY IN THE STATE OF WISCONSIN:
100 persons drafted....
not one came from a family making more than \$5,000 per year...

THE JAMES FALLOWS story...

PROJECT 100,000 DEFENSE DEPARTMENT program to deal with "the problem of disadvantaged youth."
350,000 people were brought into the Armed Forces...
required an IQ of 62...

4 out of 10 persons brought into the Armed Forces through PROJECT 100,000 were black....
40% of those in PROJECT 100,000 were trained for C combat...

OVERALL 12.5 percent of all persons killed in Vietnam were blacks... BUT POLICY CHANGED: EARLIER 25% were blacks...

DRAFT BOARDS: 16,000 members of draft boards: blacks constituted only 1.3% of the total... no blacks on draft boards in Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi...

Black Fatalities:

Wallace Terry throughout the Vietnam War....
Blacks numbered about 11% of the U.S. population
" " between 14% and 25% of U.S. casualties
in Vietnam....

Hispanics -- as of last spring... no reliable figures on this...

an average rifle company -- 50% negroes, southwestern mexicans,
Puerto Ricans, Guamanians, Nisei, Native Americans...
not a cross-section of American youth.

SCOTT MOMADAY -- NATIVE AMERICANS...