

NEW RIGHT

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FINALLY, ON VIETNAM:

- start out with Art Blank -- Vietnam combines:
- (1) tremendous grief
 - (2) psychic disorientation
 - (3) walled-off history

- Big questions:
- (1) why did it take so long for the homecoming to occur,....?
 - (2) why is the event discussed so frequently in secret,....?

- ~~(3)~~ why aren't institutions within the land doing anything...?
 - (3) why has the United States maintained the attitude of unfriendliness toward the Vietnamese, now, for more than forty years....?
- why the hostile stance toward Vietnamese...
- (4) not until pain and trouble of veteran was made ~~into~~ into a disease was it legitimated, ... WHY?

Only through a therapeutic movement could the country deal with Vietnam...instead of through churches, other institutions,....

NOTE: Vietnam - the only war in recent memory for which the society had to establish cleansing centers to which the combatants could come to be cleansed,....

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS: repeating: a normal reaction to a traumatic event,.... everyone must go through it,.... very normal,....

disorder = an interruption within the healthy process....

why interrupted? Judy Coburn's point: because the thing don't mean nothing,....and when it don't mean nothing, you really can't come to terms with it

NOW, it don't mean nothing,...doesn't just mean that it takes a long time to figure it out.

"don't mean nothing,...," means that it means nothing,...
nihilism,...
nothingness,...
the awareness of the pervasiveness of nothing.....
nothing means anything.....

Translated: the experience of death within the context of nothingness....

no way to noblitize death...

thus: the linkage with others who were there.....bonds are created
by recognition that all of us experienced death....

OTHER REASONS post-traumatic stress is interrupted.....

moral conflict can interrupt the process...

Combatants killed people...and feel remorse...some of the
time.....

Nurses allowed people to die, and feel the remorse....

THE NURSES who continue to see the eyes of the
people they allowed to die.....

Post-traumatic stress -- part of the story is that
the situation was indeed stressful....

Can Vietnam ever be a positive event....?

in light of Robert Muller's notion that there is hope because the Russians and the Americans are so deliberate in their dealings with each other...

If Vietnam hadn't happened.....(explain)

-- Well, if Vietnam hadn't happened, perhaps El Salvador right now, or (1) Nicaragua might have been the United States' "VIETNAM?"

Because we did it before, perhaps we can avoid it....

Everyone says, let's not have another Vietnam....

IS THERE ANYONE WHO WANTS A VIETNAM?

-- The Bad news in Vietnam is that we allowed the military venture to bring (2) the country down....disappointment-...frustration.... all of that....

BUT THE Good News is that the interior struggle became such a powerful force that it frustrated the war effort....

-- the war effort was frustrated.....

THAT IS, that so many found what was happening there so repugnant... that we didn't let it get out of bounds....

SURE, the years of agony were prolonged....and it went on for a long time...

and it nearly did us in....

BUT IT DIDN'T DO US IN.

There was something within the American soul that said, "Enough is enough.... This violates how we see ourselves as Americans....

note: as in a kidney transplant.... there is a rejection..... of the transplant....

THE COLLECTIVE ORGANISM rejected this one.....

-- (3) It took a long, long time for the national homecoming to occur.... (give details)....

and when did it take place,...?

not until November 1982,,nearly a decade afterwards.....

THE BAD NEWS: no recognition of the Vietnam vet....

~~kkkk~~ rejection...isolation....cynicism....

THE GOOD NEWS: what kind of country would it be that could stage a patriotic march as soon as the war was over.....

Certainly, the veterans would take all of this personally....

that it focused on rejection of them...

that they weren't being welcomed back appropriately.....

And that is one side of the story....

BUT THE OTHER SIDE IS THAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE COULD FIND NOTHING TO CELEBRATE.....

No REASON TO HAVE A PARADE....

NO REASON TO CELEBRATE.....

(I was present in Washington during the march down the street....
the funeral procession.Kennedy funeral (dirge...black horse...)
that's what the Vietnam Veterans parade would have been
had it occurred in 1975.....

~~XXXXXXXX~~

The National Homecoming couldn't occur until the country had sufficient
perspective on the event.....
to know how to acknowledge it aright.....

WHAT I'M SAYING: It probably ~~XXXXXXXX~~ takes about as long as it did
for an event like this to settle in....
to be accommodated by the individual and collective psyche....

~~xx~~ No one can accommodate it immediately....?

THIS IS CERTAINLY TRUE OF THE COMBAT VETERANS....

~~SHXXXXXXXX~~ SHAD MESHAD -- long, long time.

Buzz Conklin....told us about ~~14~~ 14 years
and 12 years....

Art Blank --

Linda VandeVanter....

WHY not also the country? could the event have been
accommodated any earlier ?

I think not.....

After Auschwitz, it took awhile for the shrines to be established.....
and they were established -- I'm thinking of Buchenwald -- by the
German gogovernment

AND THE SHRINES are testimonies to death.....

the Vietnam War memorial -- about death.....
black, granite...cold, with the names of the dead inscribed
thereon....

WHAT KIND OF A ~~XXXXXXXX~~ PEOPLE WOULD IT BE WHO COULD ACCOMMODATE ALL
OF THIS IMMEDIATELY....

PROCESS IT RIGHT AWAY AND GET ON WITH OTHER THINGS.....?

people wonder why there is so much Vietnam talk occurring right now?

My answer: because it takes a while for the event to settle....

analogy: I've been with people who've just lost dear loved ones....
and they seem to do beautifully at the ~~funeral~~ funeral.....
everyone is amazed....

BUT LATER, THEY GO THROUGH IT.....

not immediate.....

SUMMARY: in some ways, Vietnam is a symbol of the triumph of
the human spirit,....

it shows the human spirit locked in battle....

locked in battle with itself.....

Was the war won or lost....?

From all outward appearances, ~~xxx~~ it was lost...because
it surely wasn't won....

BUT, when we are dealing with the deeper metaphysical issues.....

the deeper human struggle....

I don't think we can say that the human spirit lost.....

NO, I think what we say is that the character of humanity was
deepened.....

We reached a certain depth in our collective experience
that we hadn't known before....

Two final points: first, about Vietnam as myth.....

Lyman Lundeen at our house last night: we refer to Vietnam as "it"

Myth -- not a story that isn't true...

characteristics of myth: a way of shaping the social reality...
an instrument by ~~which~~ means of which
the history of the race is retained...
(S) the story which explains the identity
of a group
the story which explains the action of a
people
(J) either stems from or is related to man's
collective unconsciousness....

VIETNAM = a myth (explain, using details above)

Another characteristic of myth: time factor -- it has ~~axxxxxxxx~~
a timeless quality.

~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ and it teaches a fundamental truth,

in this sense, CIVIL WAR is a myth....

about slavery....

about civil rights.....

it is that without which one ~~xx~~ could not understand
the meaning or the genius of the American people....

Vietnam is a myth

Someday, keen analysts will be able to "read it off" American society....

We behave the way we do because Vietnam is riddled in our consciousnesses.....

Its timeless quality -- refers to an event whose meaning cannot be reduced or restricted to the specific time in which the event occurred.....

e.g. events about which one says, "boy, I'm going to think about that...."

Queen Elizabeth visits the Old Mission.
talk afterward.....lots to say...
the next day...people remember even more...
(elaborate)

WHAT A MYTH DOES: you don't simply read the myths....
or study myths.... or behold a myth.....
BUT, BECAUSE MYTHS SHAPE CONSCIOUSNESS AND
and, indeed, are reflections of the shaping of consciousness...

What does one do? -- one participates in myth/////....

one participates in the myth.....

(e.g. a myth is operating when everyone sings the star spangled banner before a Dodger baseball game, for example...)

one participates in the myth.....

it is a symbolic event.....

like a Hannukah feast for Jews....
like Christmas for Christians....

NOW, the myth is being passed on from generation to generation....
and now the myth is yours....

and you are participating in it....
and when you participate in it, you are shaping it to your intentions....
you are shaping it in accordance to what you wish it to say....
you are forming it so that it will say what you want it to say...
and mean what you want it to mean.....

THAT'S WHAT THIS CLASS MEANS: ~~xxxxx~~ it is here that the myth is being transmitting....
as the stories are told....
but the hearer does far more than listen to the story...
the hearer participates in the story -- the reason for the tears -- and in participating the story becomes one's own.....

This is another reason why I am optimistic -- because I think you'll shape the myth to positive purposes....
to redemptive purposes....

you can add some nuances of meaning that those of us who are tarnished by the war can't muster.....

finally: the veterans....

I said ~~two~~^{three} things in my address in San Diego:

fr first, that when a veteran speaks, those of us who hear recognize the voice of authority....

~~xxxxxxx~~ it comes from a certain depth...that is very compelling....

second: I related the experience of the veteran to the religious experience of the dark night of the soul....

(read the passage from Thomas ~~Merton~~ Merton)

third: I coveted for the country that they would le8rn about the war, the way I did, from the ~~xxx~~ veterans themselves.

I mean all of that....

TONIGHT, I'd like to go a bit further....

I'd like to relate ~~two images~~ two images.....

First, is the image of the cave...the myth of the cave....in the writings of Plato.....
(tell the story....)

the light is on the outside...and what we are going through here is merely a dim reflection.....of reality as it is...

I think that this is what the veterans can tell us....

I see them as people of wisdom, who know of the ~~xxx~~ power of life and death firsthand....

Second, is the image of the ~~xxxxxx~~ "the valley of the shadow of death..." you know, from the 23rd Psalm. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death...I will fear no evil, for thou art with me..."

Well, the veterans have walked through the valley of the shadow of death....

and some of them have come back to tell us~~xxx~~about it... as in Plato's myth of the cave...they have seen the reality...and now they are bearing witness to it...

I think they're wise men and women....

I think they've been in places few of us have ever traveled....

And I think they are the ones who tell the truth about the war....

They teach the lessons of the war....

They are the ones from whom we must all learn....

I call them the teachers....

Finally, a few lines from Michael Herr's Dispatches