

SAMPLE QUESTIONS -- FINAL EXAM

The following questions are typical of those that will be placed on the final examination:

- (1) The causes of the war in Vietnam are linked to the interests of the United States in Southeast Asia. Identify one such cause and explain its relationship to American interests.
- (2) Describe ways in which the Vietnam War was typical and/or atypical of the nature of war. For example, how does it compare with World War II? with other wars? Discuss the issue.
- (3) Why was "Vietnam" a traumatic event in the history of the nation?
- (4) If you were present for Senator McGovern's lecture, what did you glean from his assessment of the struggle over Vietnam? List one or two main points and discuss them.
- (5) List several of the key ingredients in "post traumatic stress" (as in Post Traumatic Stress Disorders), and explain their interrelationships.
- (6) Why was "homecoming" of special consequence in the experience of the combatants in the Vietnam War? Explain.
- (7) The experience of combatants in Vietnam, at times, resembles that described in the literature of the world's religious traditions, as for example, in the descriptions of "the dark night of the soul." How do you understand the resemblance? Discuss the interconnections.
- (8) Some have suggested that one of the ways in which Americans have responded to Vietnam is by cultivating individual survival strategies in the absence of confidence in government, institutions, and collective effort. Discuss Christopher Lasch's contentions.
- (9) There has been a marked increase in military talk among certain segments of the American religious community, in the aftermath of the Vietnam War. Some commentators believe that there are connections. Explain their contentions, and provide illustration.
- (10) If wars "mean" something, what does Vietnam "mean?" Does it have any lasting message? Are there significant lessons to be drawn from it?

Please note that all of these questions are fairly general. But they provide opportunity for you to tell what you know and give evidence of what you have read. The best answers are ones that are specific and give evidence of having come to terms with the reading materials, the viewpoints of others, etc.