

Introduction	3
U.S. Wartime Public Opinion Polls	6
JUSPAO	6
CBS Survey	6
PAAS Surveys.....	7
Duc Hoa Opinion Survey.....	9
The 1992 Results.....	10
Historical Comparisons.....	21
Vietnamese Attitude Study	41
Attitudes Toward the French	46
Attitudes Toward the Chinese	47
Attitudes Toward the Americans	48
Attitudes Toward the Gulf War.....	48
Attitudes Toward Prior U.S. Involvement in Vietnam.....	49
Opinions Toward the American People.....	51
Opinions About Normalization of Relations	51
Opinions About American Culture	52
Chi Square Analysis.....	53
Analysis of the Lie Scale.....	55
Conclusions.....	55
Tables.....	59
Vietnamese Language Questionnaire	71

The Mekong Delta Community Survey.....	74
Introduction	74
U.S. Wartime Activity in the Delta	75
The Mekong Delta Economy	76
The Survey Instrument.....	78
Methodology.....	79
Gender of Respondents.....	80
Occupation of Respondents.....	81
Material Possessions of Respondents.....	81
Rating of Community Service	82
Rating of the Community	84
Conclusions of Mekong Delta Study.....	85
The Presence of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in Vietnamese Veterans	91
What is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.....	91
Symptoms of PTSD	94
Treatment of PTSD.....	96
The Study	98
The Survey Instrument.....	102
Interpreting the Data	106
Frequencies of PTSD Study	108
References.....	119

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Visualize a picture of an American soldier holding the severed head of a Viet Cong high above his head while other American soldiers stand by laughing. Such a photograph, blown up larger than life size, hangs on the wall of the “Museum of American Atrocities” in Saigon, Vietnam. The museum features a collection of photographs showing American soldiers committing violent acts against Vietnamese civilians. One photograph is a 6x8 foot picture of a Vietnamese plunging to earth after apparently being pushed from a U.S. helicopter. Another set of photos are enlargements of scenes presented at the court martial trial of Lt. William Calley depicting the infamous “My Lai Massacre.”

The year was 1989. I was in Ho Chi Minh City, or “Saigon” as the locals still prefer to call it, where I visited the Museum of American Atrocities. The museum was established by the communist government in an attempt to galvanize negative attitudes among the South Vietnamese toward Americans by reminding them how they say American soldiers had treated the Vietnamese people during the war.

Only about one hundred yards from the Museum of American Atrocities is another museum dedicated to depicting “Chinese Atrocities.” On display are hundreds of newspaper clippings describing the many acts of violence and terror reported during the more than 200 years of Chinese occupation of Vietnam. The Chinese occupied Vietnam from 1679 until 1882 when the French defeated the emperor’s forces in Hanoi.

This “Chinese” section was dismantled a few years ago to expand the “American Atrocities” portion of the museum which became immensely popular among foreign tourists. The government, in an effort not to offend Americans changed the name from “American Atrocities Museum” to simply “The War Museum.”

As the Vietnamese strive to show that they are not captives of their past, they are certainly enterprising enough to make a “buck” from those who are. The Vietnam War Veterans Association of Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) has created a tour designed specifically for veterans of the various American military units that served in Vietnam. They provide former Viet Cong officers as guides for visits to various camp sites and battlefields.

At Chu Chi, visitors are permitted to crawl through tunnels used by the Viet Cong during the war. For one dollar a bullet, visitors may fire at balloons using either an American M-16 rifle or a communist AK-47. Newly arriving tourists are provided with crudely written brochures detailing available war related trips and activities.

During 1967 and 1968, I served as a U.S. military advisor to the South Vietnamese Army. My assignment placed me in Duc Hoa, a small village west of Saigon and about five kilometers from Cambodia. While there, I developed close friendships with several village residents. Thus, when I first visited southern Vietnam in 1989, I sensed that many former South Vietnamese and a lot of Viet Cong wished to forget the war and desired to re-establish relations with the United States and the American people. It was my impression that few southern Vietnamese had any strong dislike for Americans. As Americans have reappeared in Vietnam and begun to travel around the country, they often find themselves surrounded by friendly, curious

Vietnamese. Indeed it is difficult to find anyone in that country who does not look up to and admire Americans and their culture.

Upon my 1989 visit to southern Vietnam, I was impressed with this positive attitude toward Americans in spite of efforts by the Vietnamese government to vilify the U.S. and the American people. Was my positive impression true? I decided to find out.

During the next thirteen years, my interest in that country increased until I was spending all my time reading about Vietnam. I decided to return to that nation for research. This research effort resulted in my arrest and deportation from Vietnam on three occasions. The story of these adventures is chronicled in "Flashback," a book I wrote that could be considered a companion for this book.

This publication presents the four studies I conducted in Vietnam and the results. This information is unique in that it is the results of the only research that has transpired within Vietnam since the American presence in that country. I have also provided the reader with a brief description of the three other studies that took place in Vietnam.

U.S. WARTIME PUBLIC OPINION POLLS

Three distinct types of public opinion polls were conducted during the course of the American presence and military involvement in South Vietnam. The first polling effort consisted of several surveys made by the Joint U.S. Public Affairs Office (JUSPAO) during the period October through December 1965. The second survey was carried out by the Opinion Research Corporation for CBS a year later (November 1966 to February 1967). The third and most extensive polling effort involved a series of surveys identified as the PACIFICATION ATTITUDE ANALYSIS SYSTEM (PAAS), a monthly survey begun during the fourth quarter of 1969 and extending into 1972. Each of these polling efforts provide attitudinal data germane to this study and are discussed.

JUSPAO SURVEY (OCTOBER-DECEMBER 1965)

The JUSPAO survey used personal interviews but made no effort to differentiate respondents according to any specific characteristic such as place of residence, i.e. rural or urban. Sample selection was a nonprobability quota design with interviewers choosing their respondents at will. Respondent distributions for age, sex and religion were distorted and the lower economic classes were over-represented. Interviewers found their respondents in poor sections of the city and poverty stricken villages (U.S. Archives 1965 JUSPAO).

CBS SURVEY (NOVEMBER 1966-FEBRUARY 1967)

The CBS survey was the first to focus on South Vietnamese attitudes toward American involvement in their political struggle with communist North Vietnam. The survey included interviews with three distinct residence groups. Metro residents

included 436 Saigon respondents, urban respondents included 132 residents of small cities, and 745 villagers residing in 11 “secure” rural provinces. (Time Magazine May 1973)

Because males were usually in the army or at work, and not available for the interviews, the survey respondents under-represented males of military age and farmers. This survey was conducted without the approval of American or South Vietnamese officials, a fact that may have removed some of the bias that such a survey might encounter; i.e. the Hawthorne effect (Time Magazine May 1973).

PAAS SURVEYS (1971-1972)

The PAAS survey was begun in 1969, as a means for assessing the impact of the Pacification Program instituted across South Vietnam. The PAAS surveys were developed jointly by the U.S. Pacification Studies group in Saigon, the Central Pacification Studies Council of the Government of South Vietnam (GVN), and in consultation with private social survey contractors. The purpose of these surveys was to identify trends or shifts in public opinion relative to specific events, specifically various pacification efforts. However, as the survey progressed over time, the focus came to center on unique or special questions rather than on the tracking of general public opinion trends (U.S. Archives 1971, 1972 PAAS).

The PAAS surveys used semi-structured interviews conducted by trained Vietnamese who worked for American pacification advisors; not the GVN. The various surveys involved both rural and urban respondents with the rural component consisting of persons living in 30 to 35 provinces. Three-man teams per province conducted the surveys. Each team was responsible for a specific village. Interviewers

memorized the survey questions before entering the village and selected their respondents according to established criteria. Questions were asked in the course of conversation and the replies were later recorded from the interviewer's memory (U.S. Archives 1971, 1972, PAAS).

The PAAS surveys revealed that rural residents held Americans in higher regard than did urban residents. Only 18 percent of rural compared to 33 percent of urban respondents believed there was anti-American feeling within their communities. When anti-American feeling was believed to exist, most thought it represented only a few people. From a positive perspective, the vast majority of both rural and urban respondents reported no anti-American feeling existed in their villages.

In Spring 1971, the PAAS conducted a special survey focusing on the South Vietnamese view of Americans and relations between Vietnam and the U.S. Again, rural respondents had the more favorable views of Americans. Sixty percent of rural respondents felt the American presence had been beneficial to the people of South Vietnam compared to 46 percent of urban respondents. Again, the majority of both residence types felt no anti-American feeling existed in their villages.

Among rural respondents, 37 percent said they liked Americans but only 12 percent of the urban respondents said they did. Conversely, more than half of all respondents said they did not like Americans but only a few reported hating them. The proportion of South Vietnamese who liked Americans corresponded closely to the proportion who thought the American presence was greatly beneficial to their country.

Another question asked about harmony between the American and South Vietnamese personalities. Only a few rural respondents thought good harmony existed

between them. Most thought American-South Vietnamese relations were strained and disharmonious.

The surveys also asked whether dislike or hostility existed between Americans and South Vietnamese. Responses were similar to those regarding anti-American feelings. When respondents were asked on which side the hostility lay, both rural and urban residents tended to believe it was on both sides. More than half felt this dislike was mutual while another 35 percent felt that “Americans did not like Vietnamese” (PAAS, U.S. Archives).

Because of the state of war existing inside South Vietnam, PAAS interviewers may have been seen as representatives of the South Vietnamese government. Moreover the interviewers may have been viewed with suspicion, thus limiting the truthfulness of the responses to the PAAS survey.

Two additional limitations of the PAAS should be noted. These stem from the way in which the sample was selected and the data were collected. (U.S. Archives, 1971, 1972). Questions were asked indirectly in the course of a personal conversation and the replies were recorded. The PAAS did not record clear-cut answers to precise questions. The technique may have introduced question bias. PAAS responses may actually represent what the interviewers thought the respondent meant instead of what he actually meant.

1992 DUC HOA VILLAGE SURVEY

Because of the adversarial relationship that once existed between the United States and Vietnam since the communist government assumed control of South Vietnam in 1975, much confusion and many questions existed about how the people of

southern Vietnam felt toward Americans. Most, if not all, existing impressions regarding Vietnamese attitudes toward the U.S. were obtained from former South Vietnamese who fled the country after the end of the war. There was little or no information available about the attitudes of those who remained in the country to experience life under the communist North Vietnamese regime. This study focuses on the attitude of rural southern Vietnamese citizens residing in the small village of Duc Hoa.

Former U.S. soldiers and other American citizens will assuredly visit Vietnam in increasing numbers. Understanding the attitudes of the southern Vietnamese people toward the U.S. and Americans will greatly enhance one's ability to anticipate the reception these and other Americans will receive. American companies and firms are already considering business ventures in Vietnam. Information from this study may aid these people in assessing the feelings of the southern Vietnamese towards such American businesses.

This section presents the results of the village survey conducted during my visit to Duc Hoa in 1992. The presentation is structured into three parts. First, the sex and age characteristics of the Duc Hoa village sample are presented along with indication of how they obtain most of their news. Second, the villager's opinions about the U.S. and Americans and about current Vietnamese affairs is conducted. Third, each of these latter sets of opinions are analyzed in relationship to the sex and age of the villagers and to selected opinions within the two sets.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

The village of Duc Hoa is small. The 1992 population was estimated population

to be about 600 residents. Of this number, 238 persons 12 years of age or older accepted the invitation to complete survey questionnaires distributed by the author.

Participating respondents included 141 males and 97 females, representing 59 and 41 percent of the sample, respectively. The age distribution of the survey participants included 25 percent who were less than 30 years of age with the youngest twelve years old. Another one fourth (24%) of the study participants were 50 years old or older. The remaining 51 percent were middle aged between 30 and 50 years old, Table 1.

Villagers were asked how they obtained information about national, international, and local affairs. The majority (64%) got this type information via radio. Only 4 and 3 percent, respectively got information from television and newspaper sources. The remaining 29 percent obtained information from their friends, local officials, and other informed sources (See Appendix C).

View of U.S. and Americans

The survey contained five questions pertaining to the U.S., Table 2. The first question asked if there existed any anti-American feeling within the community? Almost half (45%) of the respondents answered that none existed or that they did not know of any. Among the remaining respondents who reported that such feeling existed, only 11 percent were of the opinion that such feelings might be widespread rather than involving "only a few people." Considering the fact that Duc Hoa was the site of a military base and an American advisory team during the war years and had been heavily destroyed during the Tet offensive of 1968, events and experiences that might have generated bad feelings there appeared to be little anti-American hostility among most villagers.

The second opinion question asked the extent to which the presence of Americans in Vietnam effected the Vietnamese people. Four response categories ranging from greatly beneficial to no benefit were provided. Again only a minority of villager (26%) offered the opinion that past American presence in the country had been of little or no benefit to Vietnam. Twenty years after the Americans departed from Duc Hoa and Vietnam, lacking any further contact, almost one third (31%) rated the American presence “greatly beneficial” and an additional 44 percent rated it “some benefit.”

Question three asked very specifically villagers’ their feelings about the American people rather than the U.S. government. With the qualification disassociating the question from whether or not they believed the U.S. had helped Vietnam, this question focused on their personal feelings about Americans. Only 21 percent “disliked” Americans and only a few indicated feelings of “hate”. Considering my presence in the village conspicuously touring the streets distributing and collecting questionnaires, this finding was a little surprising. I had been concerned that my presence might bias responses and that villagers with anti-American feelings might boycott the survey. Bias still may have occurred, but these results provide some encouragement that a full range of opinions was obtained. Most encouraging for future contact of Americans with rural people in the former South Vietnam territory was the fact that 79 percent indicated they “liked” Americans.

The final two questions of the set involving the villagers’ view of Americans and the U.S. dealt with the cultural characters of the two countries and who is responsible for the hostility marking relations between them in 1992. First, the villagers were asked

how well the American and Vietnamese characters harmonize. More than half (56%) believed that a “good” harmony existed and only 13 percent thought the match was one of “disharmony”. The remaining one third (32%) of villagers thought only fair or little harmony existed. Considering the lack of information about the U.S. reaching Duc Hoa and the complete absence of contact with Americans for 20 years, this relatively positive view is encouraging for future political and social relations.

Ethnocentrism was observed too among the Duc Hoa villagers. When asked who was to blame for the existing hostility between the two nations, only 10 percent attributed it to Vietnam while 42 percent believed the U.S. was responsible. The fact that in 1991, following the U.S. loss of its Subic Bay military installation in the Philippines, Vietnam offered the former U.S. Navy facilities at Cam Rahn Bay to the United States at no charge and that this offer was rejected lends credence to the villagers’ belief. Whether this is a correct assessment or not of the current stalemate in political realities; it is important to note that almost half (48%) saw fault on both sides.

In this section the relationship between the study participants’ opinions about the U.S. and Americans are analyzed by their sex, age and opinions about the U.S. and Americans, Table 2. The research question explored is whether villagers’ views of the U.S. and Americans are associated with sex and age differences in wartime experience and contacts with Americans. Women may view the U.S. and American experienced differently from men because the nature of their contact with the war, the American military, and U.S. civilians was not the same. Women lost husbands, children, and parents to the war with little contact with Americans; whereas many of the men may have served in battle with Americans and knew their American advisors in a personal

way.

Another research question raised was whether villagers' opinions of the U.S. and Americans were age related. Middle aged persons were most directly involved in the war and experienced its repercussions. Both the youth and older adults were impacted less as civilians with limited opportunity for contact with Americans.

These survey results revealed no significant statistical relationship between either sex or age of the villagers' opinions about the U.S. or Americans.

Belief About Anti-American Sentiment

Villagers were classified according to their belief about the existence of anti-American sentiment in Duc Hoa. The research question was whether villagers who believed anti-American sentiment existed also held other opinions about the U.S. and Americans that distinguished them from their neighbors who believed little or no such sentiment existed.

Findings revealed that villagers who believed anti-American sentiment existed were much less likely to view the presence of Americans as beneficial to the Vietnamese, less likely to like Americans personally, and less likely to believe "good" harmony exists between the Vietnamese and American characters compared to villagers who believed anti-American sentiment existed. Although not statistically significant, villagers believing anti-American sentiment existed were somewhat less likely to place responsibility for hostility between the two nations solely on the Americans (38% versus 47%) and more likely to attribute the hostility to both sides (53% versus 44%).

Opinions about whether Vietnam benefited from the presence in their country were dichotomized into the categories of "beneficial" and "not beneficial." The

research question explored was whether villagers who perceived benefit from the American presence held more positive attitudes toward the U.S. and Americans than those who were negative toward the American presence.

Villagers who believed the American presence in Vietnam had been beneficial were more likely to like Americans personally (94% versus 72%) and to believe good harmony existed between the two cultural characters (78% versus 45%). Both relationships were statistically significant. Conversely, attribution of blame for which side, the Vietnamese or the American, was responsible for the existing hostility between the two countries was found unrelated to one's opinion about the American presence being beneficial.

This dichotomized attitude toward Americans was significantly related to all three of the opinions considered. Villagers who like Americans personally were more likely to view the American presence in Vietnam as beneficial, to believe that good harmony exists between the two characters, and to consider the hostility between the two countries to be more on the American than the Vietnamese side. One should note, however, that only 50 villagers disliked Americans. Clearly, a personal dislike strongly influences villagers' view of the U.S. and Americans. Additional information probing the background for disliking Americans is needed to interpret this feeling.

Opinions About Current Vietnamese Affairs

In this section attention centers on Duc Hoa villagers' opinions about their nation, government, and themselves in 1992. A set of five questions, similar to those asked in several 1968-1970 polls concerning the South Vietnamese during the war years were asked, Table 6. The purpose of asking the same questions was to obtain insights

not only about how rural people perceived their country and quality of life in 1992 but also to assess how these perceptions compared with those of 20 years before. This latter comparison is explored in the next chapter.

The lead question was: "How well does the Vietnamese government perform?" Fewer than half the villagers (42%) gave the national government a positive rating and the majority of those who did so qualified their rating by adding "as well as can be expected under the circumstances." The majority were critical of the government performance.

Three questions relating specifically to current Vietnamese affairs provide insight into possible reasons for the poor ratings given the government. When asked, "whose responsibility is it to improve community life" two thirds (65%) placed the responsibility in part (38%) or wholly (27%) with the government. The remaining one-third (35%) indicated the "people" were solely responsible. Clearly there exist different philosophies among the villagers that range from an entrepreneurial self-sufficiency to a heavy dependency on government with a large segment (38%) desiring a cooperative involvement of the people and the government working together.

Another question asked each villager what their "one wish is?" The three options presented were chosen about equally. "Peace and unity among the Vietnamese and with the world" was selected by 36 percent, followed by "greater government responsiveness to needs" by 34 percent. Concern for economic conditions was emphasized by 30 percent who desired "better working conditions and a lower cost of living." The lack of any widespread discontent with the economy was further indicated by the finding that only 30 percent identified the economy as the most important

problem facing Vietnam. The majority (58%) noted “relations with the United States” as the major problem. This was not unexpected considering the fact that at the time of the survey the U.S. was still spending considerable effort to isolate Vietnam within the world community. It is possible that improving relations with the U.S. may have been seen by some villagers as a requirement for improving Vietnam’s economy.

The last question reflecting current Vietnamese affairs focused on individual perception of personal satisfaction. Here a feeling of dissatisfaction with life prevailed among two-thirds of the villagers. The actual progression of the questions had their one wish following their assessment of personal satisfaction, but their wishes shed little light on the reason for their dissatisfaction. Economic conditions that might be pictured at the heart of their dissatisfaction, at best, may account for this dissatisfaction in about half the cases. The following analysis of the interaction among the different opinions and attitudes should provide additional insight.

Sex and Age

To begin the analysis of Duc Hoa villagers’ opinions about current affairs in Vietnam, the analysis first addresses the research question inquiring whether sex and age are associated with the views people hold. Female/male differences in views were not found statistically significant. Women were only slightly less likely than men to rate the government’s performance adequate, more likely to want greater government responsiveness to needs, and more likely to be dissatisfied with life.

Since age is a factor in the amount of personal experience villagers have of the war years and the pre-communist era, opinions about the current Vietnamese government and present affairs were expected to reflect differences associated with

various age groups. However, for the most part, such a relationship did not occur. Only one opinion differed significantly by age. Opinions on whose responsibility it is to improve community life revealed that older persons 50 years of age or older were more polarized between the people (49%) or the government (30%) than younger people. Villagers younger than 50 years of age emphasized the joint responsibility of people and government (45% and 43% respectively). On two of the remaining four options, the survey results revealed no significant statistical relationship between either sex or age of the villagers and their opinions about the U.S. or Americans.

Current Government Performance, Table 7

Opinions about the adequacy of the current Vietnamese government's performance were dichotomized into the categories of adequate or inadequate. The research raised was whether the people believing the government was performing adequately or inadequately had distinct views on other current national and personal affairs.

The analysis found significant differences in opinion between villagers with different perceptions of the government's performance and their views about whose responsibility it is to improve community life, what is the most important problem facing Vietnam, and what their one wish is. Only minor distributional (percentage) differences for each of these opinions were observed between those who rated the government either adequate or inadequate. The one exception was the relationship with life satisfaction (see Table 8). Villagers who rated the government adequate in performance were much more satisfied with life than were those who rated the government inadequate.

Life Satisfaction

Only one-third of these rural villagers were satisfied with their lives. However the villagers' dissatisfaction does reflect itself in their opinions about how the government performs, a point made above, and about the types of things they wish for. Dissatisfied villagers were much more likely than the satisfied to want greater government responsiveness to their needs. On the other hand, people satisfied with their lives were more concerned with a broader view involving "peace and unity" for the country.

No significant differences were noted relative to opinions about whose responsibility it is to improve community life and what are the most important problems facing Vietnam. However, satisfied people appeared to be a little more oriented toward the people controlling their own destiny relative to improving community life and less likely to consider the economy to be the major problem facing the country. All relationships confirmed that opinions about current affairs are, at least in part, associated with individual adjustment to national conditions as they impact the local village.

Life satisfaction may impact also on villagers' opinions about the U.S. and Americans. To test this research question, villagers satisfied and dissatisfied with their life were compared for three such views. All three relationships were statistically significant.

First satisfied persons were more likely than dissatisfied persons to believe anti-American feeling existed in the community (23% versus 5%). Second, satisfied persons were more likely to perceive no benefit from past association with the United States.

Third, satisfied persons were more prone to dislike Americans than were dissatisfied persons. One interpretation of these findings might be that satisfied villagers are those who have fared well under the communist system, whereas the dissatisfied are those who were more involved with the war effort and associated with the U.S. presence in the area during the war.

Respondents who felt that anti-American feeling did not exist in their community were more likely to feel that their government was inadequate. There was no such correlation between anti-American feeling and a respondent's opinion of whose responsibility it is to improve life or their opinion of Vietnam's worst problem. See table nine.

Perceived Anti-American Feeling, Table 10

Again using a dichotomous classification of villagers according to their perceptions of anti-American feeling existing in Duc Hoa, the research question is whether such a perception is associated with opinions about current Vietnamese and personal affairs. The findings indicate that only the perception of how well the Vietnamese government performs is related to one's perception that anti-American feeling exists. Persons who say there is anti-American feeling in the village are more likely to rate the current government adequate in performance (67%) than those who believe it doesn't exist (47%).

Neither the assessment of whether it is the government or the people who should be responsible for improving community life and what the most pressing problem was facing Vietnam differed significantly in relation to whether anti-American feeling was perceived locally. Villagers who perceived anti-American feeling within the village

were only a little more likely to attribute responsibility for improving community life to the people rather than to a joint effort involving both the people and government and to consider relations with the U.S. to be Vietnam's most important problem.

HISTORICAL COMPARISONS

In this chapter, data from two surveys given during the war years of 1965 through 1971 are compared to the Duc Hoa 1992 village survey. Identical questions to those asked in the PAAS and JUSPAO surveys were also asked in the Duc Hoa village survey conducted during 1992. While the JUSPAO survey focused more on urban residents, the PAAS queried both rural and urban residents. For the purpose of this comparison, the rural responses are of most relevance. This comparative is made to detect trends in opinions and attitudes over time.

The methods by which rural residents obtained information appear to have changed little in the twenty years since the American left Duc Hoa. When villagers were asked how they obtained information about national international, or local affairs, the only change over time was an increase in access to radio news compared to the rural PAAS findings, Table 11. The absence of television sets both during the war and in 1992 indicates the slow adoption of TV and satellite technology to rural areas as only 3 percent and 4 percent respectively got their information from television. An absence of newspaper usage was observed both in 1971 (6%) and 1992 (4%).

In 1971, 28 percent of rural people got their news from friends, neighbors, and local officials compared to 16 percent of Duc Hoa residents in 1992. The biggest difference between the two times was the fact that 64 percent of villagers used the radio

for news in 1992 compared to only 49 percent who did so in 1971.

Opinions About the U.S. and Americans, Table 12

Five opinion questions used in the 1971 PAAS surveys across South Vietnam were replicated in the 1992 Duc Hoa village survey. The contrast in responses was quite pronounced between the two studies. Comparison of the findings for the two rural samples may reflect disapproval of the campaign the U.S. waged in attempting to isolate Vietnam and refusing to provide political recognition. In 1971, 35 percent of rural people believed the hostility lay on the Vietnamese side compared to only 10 percent of villagers in 1992. Those who believed the hostility lay equally on both sides remained the same at half in both points in time.

Opinions held about the U.S. and Americans during the two time periods reveal that more anti-American feeling may exist in rural areas today than in 1971. Anti-American feeling during the wartime period was reported by only 18 percent of rural residents compared to 56 percent of Duc Hoa villagers in 1992. However, most of this anti-American feeling in both time periods was attributed to "only a few people," 13% and 45% respectively. Eighty percent felt that no such feeling existed in 1971 compared to 44% of villagers who felt this way in 1992. Similarly, 36% in 1971 felt the presence of the Americans was "greatly beneficial" compared to 31% of villagers in 1992. Almost equal percentages believed the Americans were beneficial to some extent (43% versus 41%). But twice as many villagers thought the American presence had been of no benefit or bad for Vietnam in 1992 compared to 1971. Just the opposite was discovered when survey participants were asked if they "liked Americans personally." Only 37% indicated they liked Americans in 1971 compared to 79% in 1992. More than half (55%)

or rural residents did not like or hated Americans during the wartime versus only 21% who reported feeling this way during the post war survey. In both instances the proportion indicating "hate" was small at 3% in 1971 and 5% of villagers in 1992.

The village survey found a more widespread belief that there was good harmony among the Vietnamese and American characters. Whereas only 30% of rural respondents believed good harmony existed the majority of Duc Hoa villagers (56%) did so. Those believing disharmony was about the same proportion in 1992 (15%) as it was in 1971 (13%). However, a large difference was noted between those who felt the lack of harmony or hostility was on the American side (42%) in 1992 versus those who felt this was the case in 1971 (9%).

Opinions of Vietnamese Affairs, Table 13

A comparison of opinions about Vietnamese affairs involves two replicated questions from the 1971 PAAS survey. Opinions over time differed markedly between the 1971 and 1992 surveys. One third (33%) of Duc Hoa residents were unhappy about their government's performance and rated it "inadequate" in 1992 compared to only 8% of rural residents in 1971. Forty-one percent felt the government's performance was adequate during the wartime survey compared to only 17% who felt this was in 1992. The proportions tempering their positive performance rating with "as well as can be expected under the circumstances" was 30% in 1971 and 25% in 1992. Since political conditions differed so markedly between the two points in time, caution should prevail in interpreting this difference. Current conditions under a communist government is in a peacetime era. In such times, public concern often becomes more fractured and mild discontent often prevails which is directed toward the government regardless of its

political persuasion.

When asked “who’s responsibility is it to improve life?” the government’s or the people’s, the contrasting philosophy revealed was between an emphasis on “people power” versus people/government joint task.

Opinions About Personal Affairs, Table 14

The last comparison opinions replicated in the Duc Hoa village survey were from a wartime JUSPAO survey conducted in 1965. Two questionnaire items focused on how survey participants saw their personal situation. No distinction was made between rural and urban respondents in the JUSPAO survey so the clarity of interpreting trends over time is even more precarious here than it was with the PAAS findings that identified a rural subsample.

The results suggest that some reordering of people’s priorities may have occurred over the years. In response to the lead in “my greatest wish is for,” Duc Hoa villagers expressed less concern for economic conditions, i.e. better working conditions and a lower cost of living (29%) than people in the 1965 survey. The trend was toward less immediate conditions of the individual and his or her family to those of peace and unity for Vietnam and a more responsive government.

Responses to the question “are you satisfied with life” revealed only modest change in the proportion of satisfied and dissatisfied persons. More Duc Hoa villagers were dissatisfied (67%) than was the case for the wartime sample (59%). It does not appear that the end of the war has had much impact on the perception of life satisfaction of the rural Vietnamese.

This study was the first survey effort within Vietnam after the fall of Saigon to

the communists. Results were presented at the Southern Sociological Society convention during 1995 and a shorter version was published by Dr. John Dunkelberger and this author.

TABLE 1
Description of the Sex and Age Characteristics of the Duc Hoa Survey Respondents

<u>Age</u>	<u>Gender</u>		<u>Total</u>
	Male (141)	Female (97)	
	-----Percent -----		
12-29 years	20.6	31.9	25.2
30-49 years	54.6	45.4	50.8
50+ years	24.8	22.7	24.0
Sample/Sex (238)	59.1	40.9	100.0
(Number)	(141)	(97)	(238)

$\chi^2 = 4.035; p=0.183(NS)$

TABLE 2
Opinions of Duc Hoa Villagers Toward the U.S. and Americans in 1992 by Sex or Age

Opinion about U.S.	Gender		Age		
	Males (141)	Females (97)	12-29 (60)	30-49 (121)	50+ (57)
	----- Percent -----				
Is there anti-American feeling in your community?					
Yes	9.2	13.4	18.33	8.26	8.77
Yes, but only a few people	42.6	47.4	51.67	41.32	43.86
No or don't know	48.2	39.2	30	50.41	47.37
	$c^2 = 2.283; p = 0.319$ (NS)		$c^2 = 8.899; p = 0.64$ (NS)		
Has the presence of the Americans been beneficial to the people of Vietnam?					
Great benefit	31.9	28.9	33.3	26.4	36.8
Some benefit	44.0	43.3	31.7	49.6	43.9
Scarcely or no benefit	24.1	27.8	35.0	24.0	19.3
	$c^2 = 0.491; p = 0.782$ (NS)		$c^2 = 7.576; p = 0.108$ (NS)		
Whether or not you think Americans have helped Vietnam, do you like them personally?					
Like	78.0	80.4	70.0	80.2	86.0
Dislike or hate	22.0	19.6	30.0	19.8	14.0
	$c^2 = 0.199; p = 0.655$ (NS)		$c^2 = 4.694; p = 0.096$ (NS)		
How do you think the American character harmonizes with the Vietnamese character?					
Good	56.7	53.6	48.4	55.4	63.2
Fair or little	29.1	36.1	28.3	34.7	29.8
Disharmony	14.2	10.3	23.3	9.9	7.0
	$c^2 = 0.669; p = 0.434$ (NS)		$c^2 = 9.358; p = 0.053$ (NS)		
On which side does most of the hostility lie?					
Vietnamese side	9.9	9.3	16.7	6.6	8.8
Equal on both	48.9	47.4	48.3	45.5	54.4
American side	41.2	43.3	35.0	47.9	36.8
(Number)	(141)	(97)	(60)	(121)	(57)
	$c^2 = 0.116; p = 0.943$ (NS)		$c^2 = 6.972; p = 0.137$ (NS)		

Note: Chi-square tests for male-female differences in opinion were not significant at this $p < .05$ level.

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TABLE 3

Opinion of Duc Hoa Villagers about the Existence of Anti-American Feeling in their Community related to their Views of American.

Opinions about U.S.	Anti-American feeling		c ² Prob.
	Exists (132)	Doesn't Exist (106)	
	-----percent-----		
Has the presence of the Americans been beneficial to the Vietnamese?			p<.001(S)
Great benefit	18.9	45.3	
Some benefit	51.5	34.0	
No benefit	29.6	20.7	
Whether or not you think Americans have helped Vietnam, do you like them personally			p<.05(S)
Like	73.5	85.8	
Dislike	26.5	14.2	
How do you think the American character harmonizes with the Vietnamese character?			p<.01(S)
Good	45.5	67.9	
Fair	40.9	20.8	
Disharmony	13.6	11.3	
On which side does most of the hostility lie?			p=.349(NS)
Vietnamese side	10.6	8.5	
Equal on both sides	51.5	44.3	
American side	37.9	47.2	

TABLE 4

Opinion of Duc Hoa Villagers about whether the presence of Americans was beneficial to Vietnam related to other views about Americans.

Opinions about U.S. and Americans	View of American Presence		c ² Prob.
	Beneficial	Not Beneficial	
Whether or not you think Americans have helped Vietnam do you like them personally?			p<.001(S)
Like Americans	94.5	72.1	
Dislike Americans	5.5	27.9	
How do you think the American character harmonizes with the Vietnamese character?			p<.001(S)
Good	78.1	45.4	
Fair	17.8	38.2	
Disharmony	4.1	16.4	
On which side does most of the hostility lie?			p=.315(NS)
Vietnamese side	8.2	10.3	
Equal on both sides	42.5	50.9	
American side	49.3	38.8	
(Number)	(73)	(175)	

TABLE 5
Attitude of Duc Hoa Villagers Toward Americans Related to Their View of Harmony Between the Americans and Vietnamese.

Opinion about Americans	Attitude Toward Americans		c ² Prob.
	Like Americans	Dislike	
Has the presence of the Americans been beneficial to the people of Vietnam?			p<.001
Great benefit	36.7	8.0	
Some benefit	45.2	38.0	
Scarcely or none	18.1	54.0	
How do you think the American character harmonizes with the Vietnamese character?			p<.001
Good	67.0	12.0	
air or little	23.4	64.0	
Disharmony	9.6	24.0	
On which side does most of the hostility lie?			p<.001
Vietnamese	8.0	16.0	
Equal on both	44.1	64.0	
American	47.9	20.0	
(Number)	(188)	(50)	

TABLE 6
Opinions of Duc Hoa Villagers About the Condition of Vietnamese Affairs in 1992 by Sex or Age

	Gender		Age		50+
	Male (141)	Female (97)	12-29 (60)	30-49 (121)	
----- Percent -----					
How well does the Vietnamese government perform?					
Adequately or as well as can be expected	44.0	39.2	45.0	40.5	42.1
Inadequately or don't know	56.0	60.8	55.0	59.5	57.9
	$c^2=0.543;p=0.461(NS)$		$c^2=0.334;p=0.846(NS)$		
Whose responsibility is it to improve community life?					
The government	26.3	26.8	21.7	27.3	29.8
The people	34.0	37.1	33.3	29.7	49.1
Both	39.7	36.1	45.0	43.0	21.1
(Number)	(141)	(97)	(60)	(121)	(57)
	$c^2=0.5359;p=0.836(NS)$		$c^2=10.832;p=0.029(S)$		
What do you consider the most important problem facing Vietnam?					
The economy	29.1	30.9	33.3	24.0	38.6
Relations with US	58.1	58.8	55.0	64.5	49.1
Other	12.8	10.3	11.7	11.5	12.3
	$c^2=0.364;p=0.833(NS)$		$c^2=4.847;p=0.303(NS)$		
My one wish is for:					
Better working conditions and lower cost of living	30.9	27.8	28.3	28.9	31.6
Greater government responsiveness to needs	30.9	38.2	33.3	31.4	38.6
Peace and Unity among Vietnamese and the world (no response for 2 males)	38.2	34.0	38.4	38.0	29.8

TABLE 6 (continued)
Opinions of Duc Hoa Villagers About the Condition of Vietnamese Affairs in 1992 by Sex or Age

	Gender		Age		
	Male (141)	Female (97)	12-29 (60)	30-49 (121)	50+ (57)
	----- Percent -----				
	$\chi^2=2.717; p=0.437(NS)$		$\chi^2=3.483; p=0.746(NS)$		
I am:					
Satisfied with life	34.0	30.9	36.7	32.2	29.8
Dissatisfied with life	66.0	69.1	63.3	67.8	70.2
(Number)	(141)	(97)	(60)	(121)	(57)
	$\chi^2=0.253; p=0.615(NS)$		$\chi^2=0.654; p=0.84721(NS)$		

TABLE 7

Opinion of Duc Hoa Villagers about how well the existing Vietnam Government performs related views on current affairs.

Opinions	Government Performance		c ² Prob.
	Adequate	Inadequate	
Whose responsibility is it to improve community life?			p=.368(NS)
The government	22.0	29.7	
The people	39.0	32.6	
Both	39.0	37.7	
What do you consider the most important problem facing Vietnam?			p=.213(NS)
Economy	25.0	33.3	
Relations with U.S.	65.0	53.6	
Other	10.0	13.1	
My one wish is:			p=.910(NS)
Better working conditions and lower cost of living	30.3	29.2	
Greater government responsiveness to needs	32.3	35.0	
Peace and unity among Vietnamese and the world	37.4	35.8	
(Number)	(100)	(138)	

TABLE 8
Satisfaction with life among Duc Hoa villagers related to their views of current Vietnamese affairs

Opinions about Vietnamese affairs	Life satisfaction		c ² Prob.
	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	
	-----percent-----		
How well does the Vietnam government perform?			p<.001(S)
Adequate and as well as can be expected under the circumstances	59.0	33.8	
Inadequate and don't know	41.0	66.2	
Whose responsibility is it to improve community life?			p=.194(NS)
The government	19.2	30.0	
The people	37.2	34.4	
Both	43.6	35.6	
What do you consider the most important problem facing Vietnam?			P=.253(NS)
Economy	23.1	33.1	
Relations with U.S.	65.4	55.0	
Other	11.5	11.9	
My one wish is:			p<.01(S)
Better working conditions and lower cost of living	31.2	28.9	
Greater government responsiveness to needs	20.8	40.3	
Peace and unity among Vietnamese and the world	48.0	30.8	
(Number)	(78)	(160)	

TABLE 9

Satisfaction with life among Duc Hoa villagers related to opinions about Americans and their current Vietnamese affairs.

Opinions about U.S.	Life satisfaction		c ² Prob.
	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	
	-----percent-----		
Is there anti-American feeling in your community?			p < .001(S)
Yes	23.0	5.0	
Yes, but only among a few people	38.5	47.5	
No or don't know	38.5	47.5	
Has the presence of the Americans been beneficial to the Vietnamese?			p=.040(S)
Great benefit	32.6	33.1	
Some benefit	38.5	46.3	
No benefit	28.9	20.6	
Whether or not you think Americans have helped Vietnam, do you like them personally			p<.001(S)
Like	65.4	85.6	
Dislike	34.6	14.4	
(Number)	(78)	(160)	

TABLE 10

Opinion of Duc Hoa Villagers about the existence of anti-American feeling in their community related to selected opinions about current Vietnamese affairs.

Opinions about Vietnamese affairs	Anti-American Feeling		c ² Prob.
	Exists	Doesn't Exist	
	-----percent-----		
How well does the Vietnam government perform?			p<.002(S)
Adequate and as well as can be expected under the circumstances	67.0	47.1	
Inadequate and don't know	33.0	52.9	
Whose responsibility is it to improve community life?			p=.077(NS)
The government	26.5	26.4	
The people	40.9	28.3	
Both	32.6	45.3	
What do you consider the most important problem facing Vietnam?			P=.188(NS)
Economy	26.5	26.4	
Relations with U.S.	40.9	28.3	
Other	32.6	45.3	
(Number)	(132)	(106)	

Table 11
Comparison of Information Sources Reported in the 1971 Pacification Attitude Analysis System (PAAS) Survey and the 1992 Duc Hoa Village Survey

Sources	PAAS 1971		Duc Hoa 1992
	Urban	Rural	Village
	-----Percent-----		
How do you get information about national, international, and local affairs?			
Radio	28	49	64
Television	13	3	4
Newspapers	31	6	4
Local Officials	3	16	7
Friends and Neighbors	8	12	9
None	18	13	12
(Number of respondents)	(774)	(1,732)	(238)

* The PAAS tables do not always sum up to 100% because some respondents failed to answer the question.

Table 12
Comparison of 1971 Pacification Attitude Analysis System (PAAS) Survey and 1992 Duc Hoa Village Survey Results for Opinions of South Vietnamese Toward the U.S. and Americans

Opinion About U.S. and Americans	PAAS 1971		Duc Hoa 1992
	Urban	Rural	Village
	-----Percent-----		
Is there anti-American feeling in your community?			
Yes	10	5	11
Yes, but only among a few people	23	13	45
No or Don't Know	67	80	44
(Number of respondents)	(1,975)	(4,463)	(238)
Has the presence of the Americans been beneficial to the people of Vietnam?			
Greatly	13	36	31
To some extent	63	43	41
No benefit or bad effect	16	13	38
(Number of respondents)	(774)	(1,732)	(238)
Whether or not you think Americans have helped Vietnam, do you like them personally?			
Like	12	37	79
Don't like	78	52	16
Hate	6	3	5
(Number of respondents)	(772)	(1,729)	(238)
How do you think the American character harmonizes with the Vietnamese character?			
Good harmony	13	30	56
Little harmony	34	34	17
Disharmony	32	13	15
Don't know	19	22	12
(Number of respondents)	(774)	(1,732)	(238)
On which side does most of the hostility lie?			
On the American	3	9	42
On both	53	54	48
On the Vietnamese	37	35	10
(Number of respondents)	(274)	(368)	(238)

*PAAS tables do not always sum up to 100% because some respondents failed to answer the question.

Table 13
Comparison of 1971 Pacification Attitude Analysis System (PAAS) Survey and 1992 Duc Hoa Village Survey Results for Opinions About Current Vietnamese Affairs

Opinions About U.S. and Americans	PAAS 1971		Duc Hoa 1992
	Urban	Rural	Village
	-----Percent-----		
How well does your government perform?			
Adequately	45	41	17
About as well as can be expected under the circumstances	29	30	25
Inadequately	15	8	33
Don't know	10	20	25
(Number of respondents)	(2,865)	(4,209)	(238)
Whose responsibility is it to improve community life?			
Government	24	36	27
People	6	7	35
Both	61	52	38
(Number of respondents)	(700)	(898)	(238)

*PAAS tables do not always sum up to 100% because some respondents failed to answer the question.

Table 14
Comparison of Personal Assessments of Life Quality Reported in the 1965 Joint U.S. Public Affairs Office (JUSPAO) Attitude and 1992 Duc Hoa Village Surveys

Quality of Life Assessments	JUSPAO 1965 Nationwide	Duc Hoa 1992 Village
	-----Percent-----	
My greatest wish is for:		
Better working conditions and lower cost of living	42	29
Peace and unity among Vietnamese and the world	29	36
Greater government responsiveness to needs	29	34
Are you satisfied with life?		
Satisfied	41	33
Dissatisfied	59	67
(Number)	(5,624)	(238)

*JUSPAO did not distinguish between rural and urban

VIETNAMESE ATTITUDES SURVEY

INTRODUCTION

“A Time to Heal and Time to Build”

Two decades after the war that bitterly divided Americans and left 58,000 U.S. Servicemen dead, President Bill Clinton uttered the above words as he normalized relations with communist Vietnam.

Because of the adversarial relationship that existed between the United States and Vietnam since the communist government assumed control of South Vietnam in 1975, much confusion and many questions exist about the opinions and thoughts of the people of that country. This study addresses this lack of information.

An abundance of information is available about the U.S. war effort in Vietnam and its impact on American society. There is, however, a lack of knowledge concerning the attitudes and beliefs of the people residing in that Southeast Asian country.

The rapid re-establishment of relations with Vietnam has drawn worldwide attention to the country. With millions of Vietnamese refugees and American war veterans living in the U.S., there is a new interest in the country and the attitudes of the Vietnamese population toward the American people.

This study was the first research to take place in Vietnam since relations with that country were established by President Clinton. Information obtained is useful in understanding the attitudes and opinions of the people of Vietnam. Insight into the character of the Vietnamese people is provided that may aid public and private entities in their dealings with the citizens of that country.

Former U.S. soldiers and other American citizens will assuredly continue to visit

Vietnam in increasing numbers. Understanding the attitudes of the South Vietnamese people greatly enhances one's ability to anticipate the reception these and other Americans will receive. Information from this study may aid American businessmen in assessing the feelings of the South Vietnamese towards American business investment in Vietnam.

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This survey was designed to assess some of the prevailing attitudes within Vietnam about the American people, culture, other ethnic groups, and certain world events.

THE INSTRUMENT

Six thousand Vietnamese language questionnaires were printed for distribution within Vietnam. These booklets measure 4 1/4 inches by 5 1/2 inches and were printed on high quality white paper. The cover is hard cardboard and each booklet contains two staples. Designed for heavy wear, the questionnaire held up under difficult field conditions. Tough construction of the questionnaire allowed for much handling by the respondents and for environmental conditions that included moisture.

The front cardboard cover contains a cover letter that explains the purpose and instruction for the completion of the survey. The questionnaire contains 65 questions indicative of Vietnamese attitudes. The instrument was translated into Vietnamese by Hieu Ngoc Huynh, a Vietnamese associate of the author who is fluent in both English and Vietnamese.

The first fifteen questions provide information about the respondent and serve as independent variables for correlational purposes. The remaining questions are actually

statements with which a respondent either agrees or disagrees. These statements are patterned after a design by Likert (1932) (Bailey, 1987). The essence of the Likert technique is to increase the variation in the possible scores, by coding the responses. A respondent may "strongly agree," "strongly disagree," "agree," "disagree," or simply be "uncertain."

All responses are scaled so that a higher score on a particular item indicates a stronger agreement with the attitude. Lesser feelings about a statement are assigned a lower scale. These scores were correlated to determine what degree of feelings a respondent has about a particular question.

The first page (or cover letter) informs the respondent about the nature of, the purpose of, and the instructions for completion of the survey. The final statement thanks the respondent for his or her participation in the survey.

Some statements elicited responses indicative of a person's attitude about the Chinese the French, and the Americans. Each of these nationalities has a history of military involvement in Vietnam. (Blalock, 1989).

Other statements are targeted specifically toward individuals who had contact with Americans during the war years or during their lives. These persons are presumably able to give an informed opinion about the U.S. and Americans.

An attempt is made to determine what impact American culture, contact with Americans, or watching American war movies may have had on an individual's attitude toward Americans.

The respondents' opinions toward the U.S. involvement in the Gulf War is briefly queried. Responses provide an insight into Vietnamese opinions about the U.S.

military intervention in Iraq.

And finally, the instrument queries the individual about his or her feelings about the restoration of relations between the United States and Vietnam, the return of U.S. soldiers as tourists, and the possible introduction of U.S. capitalist interests into the area.

The Vietnamese language and English language versions of the questionnaire cover sheet are presented in their entirety at the end of this study.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

This study consists of 136 cases. Some may consider this to be a small sample. When considering the time, effort, and expense that went into the collection of this information, the reader may change his or her mind. The author went into Vietnam on three separate occasions and was consequently arrested and deported from that country three times. Over 5,000 blank and 34 completed questionnaires were confiscated by the authorities. Some persons who cooperated with the study were detained by the police. In view of the expenses and difficulties this author faced, this is a sizable sample.

Almost two-thirds (63%) of the respondents were male. The rest (35%), of course, were female (please see table 2). Ninety-one percent were ethnic Vietnamese. Six percent were Amerasian (half American and half Asian). Those remaining were either French, Chinese, or other nationality.

The results of the Vietnamese Attitudes study are presented in table form. Because some questions were omitted by the respondent, the percentages do not always add up to 100%. These tables are discussed in detail in this chapter. The reader may go to the tables for more specific details about the frequency distributions.

The study took place in areas formerly controlled by the South Vietnamese government. In fact, 38% of the respondents claimed to have actually worked for the Americans during the war period; more than 20 years before this research began (please see table 3). Two-thirds admitted to having a family member who had worked for the South Vietnamese government in some way (please see table 5). Forty-seven (35%) identified themselves as former South Vietnamese soldiers (please see table 14). Fifty-three respondents (39%) were incarcerated in prison or in “re-education” camps as a result of their wartime activities (please see table 6). Such high incidents of prior U.S. affiliation probably results directly from the geographic location of the study. This assumption is affirmed by the fact that only seven respondents said they were former North Vietnamese soldiers (please see table 7). Three percent refused to identify their former affiliation. Despite instructions to the survey participants not to discuss their answers, many went to great efforts in conversations with the author to identify themselves as having worked against the North. They exhibited pride about their prior cooperation with South Vietnam or the Americans.

The war affected almost everyone in some way. Many were directly affected by the Vietnam conflict. Forty-four percent had sustained some property damage during the war (please see table 9). One-third lost a family member (please see table 10), while 57% knew someone who was killed during the war (please see table 11). These figures reflect the high level of conflict that occurred in the survey areas during the war era.

In order to better understand Vietnamese opinions about the U.S., this study examines prevailing attitudes toward the French, Chinese, and the Americans. It is limited to these three nationalities because they are the only ones that have a history of

a lengthy military and cultural intervention into Vietnamese affairs. The Japanese briefly entered the country during World War II (Cooper, Killigrew, & La Chárite, 1964). The results of this ethnic examination are discussed below.

Attitudes Toward the French

The years from 1882 to 1954 are known in the western world as the period of French occupation. Although the French lived mainly near Hanoi, their influence crossed the entire country. In fact, Vietnam was once known in the western countries as “French Indochina.” Today, street vendors often sell old French money, stamps, and other artifacts to tourists. In spite of the fact that France once controlled Vietnam, there were 22 respondents that had never met a French person (please see table 8).

Seventy percent reported some anti-French feeling in their community (please see table 15). This was offset by the fact that over half (52%) had the opinion that French character harmonized well with the Vietnamese character (please see table 51). Only 29% believed that the French do not like the Vietnamese people (please see table 14). However, only 7% stated they did not like the French (please see table 36). In fact, three-fourths said they actually liked the French (please see table 16). Eleven percent offered no opinion.

Some respondents were unaware of any improvements the French may have made while they ran the country. Almost a third (32%) did not know if the French improved education during the colonial period (please see table 30). Forty-three percent felt they the French had helped to develop education in a positive manner.

Respondents were asked if they would like to live in France. Two-thirds (67%) expressed a desire to live there. Nineteen percent would not (please see table 22). The

people of Vietnam seem to like the French. There appeared to be an absence of widespread dislike for the French.

Attitudes Toward the Chinese

The Chinese have had a greater effect on Vietnamese culture than did the French or Americans. For centuries China ruled Vietnam with an iron fist. Throughout history they have tried to assimilate Vietnam into China. Millions of Chinese were resettled in Vietnam in an attempt to blend the Chinese and Vietnamese cultures. In fact, Vietnam once became known as Indochina. There have been numerous attempts to expel the Chinese. As recently as 1979, China and Vietnam fought a brief war over a border dispute inside Northern and Central Cambodia.

During the author's first return to Vietnam in 1989, he visited the "Museum of Chinese Atrocities" in Ho Chi Minh City. Featured there were newspaper articles and photographs that depicted and documented the cruel treatment of the Vietnamese at the hands of the Chinese. The museum has since been dismantled and made a part of the "Saigon War Museum."

Despite the historically harsh relationship between the two countries, two-thirds (65%) recognized that the Chinese had indeed contributed to the Vietnamese culture (please see table 49). Their opinions about the Chinese were not so kind in other areas. Almost half (46%) felt that there was indeed anti-Chinese feeling in their community (please see table 29). A large majority (80%) said they did not want to seek a better relationship between China and Vietnam in spite of the poor relations that exist today (please see table 40). Only 13% would like better relations with China.

The Vietnamese are also aware of population and other problems faced by the

Chinese. Some said that they resented the Chinese use of Vietnam as a dumping ground for its excess population. Sixty-one percent believed that the Chinese character harmonizes poorly with the Vietnamese (please see table 57). When asked if they agree with the statement "I would like to live in China," 84% indicated that they disagreed (please see table 51). This was a stark contrast to the responses to the same question about France and the United States. While nearly everyone expressed a desire to live in these two western countries, the Vietnamese apparently do not view China as a good place to live.

Attitudes Toward Americans

In recent history, the Americans profoundly influenced Vietnam. The area in which this survey takes place was formerly occupied by Americans. This may be why only five respondents had never met and were presumably unable to make an accurate assessment of an American (please see table 13). In spite of the U.S.'s prior presence in the area, only thirteen percent felt that anti-American feeling existed in their community (please see table 63). This is considerably fewer than those who recognized anti-French or Chinese bias.

Attitudes About the Gulf War

This study took place four years after the major U.S. war effort against Iraq. The author included questions about the Vietnamese view of this Gulf War conflict. Surprisingly, fifty-six percent stated that the U.S. was morally right to fight this war (please see table 44). However, two-thirds (67%) believed the U.S. had a selfish motive in this conflict (please see table 50). The Gulf War came up many times during interviews. That conflict was covered very well by the Vietnamese press and the

Vietnamese people are very informed on the subject. In fact, on the train from Hanoi to Saigon, this author spoke with a student group returning from a singing competition in Hanoi. All eight individuals said they were well aware of the conflict and were happy with its conclusion. "The Americans did a good job with Iraq" was a common statement. An enormous 92% of those who completed a survey were happy with the way the Persian Gulf war ended (please see table 42).

Attitudes Toward Prior U.S. Involvement in Vietnam

On the subject of the Vietnam War, slightly more than half (52%) believed it was a wise decision for the U.S. to withdraw from Vietnam (please see table 47). Younger people were more likely to feel this way. The other half (54%) indicated that the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam caused "great problems" for Vietnam (please see table 45). These were primarily older adults.

Two-thirds felt that the U.S. had selfish motives for its participation in the Vietnam war effort (please see table 35). Almost two-thirds recognized that the U.S. was not actually defeated militarily by the communists (please see table 48). Younger people were more likely to believe the U.S. suffered a military defeat. This is perhaps due to their exposure to propaganda glorifying the communist war heroes and to their experiences in the Vietnam system.

Almost three-fourths (73%) were aware that the Americans left Vietnam in 1973 primarily because of public pressure at home (please see table 19). Surprisingly, two-thirds (65%) were actually unhappy that the communists won their conflict against America and its allies (please see table 59). Only 31% percent were "very happy" that the communists were victorious. Statements such as this may indicate a wide

disenchantment of the citizens of this part of Vietnam with its current government. Some seemed to realize how different Vietnam would be today if the South had been victorious. Sixty three percent agreed that Vietnam might be a richer country today had the U.S. won the war (please see table 62). Exactly half thought that the brief American presence in Vietnam helped that country (please see table 60).

Some actually had fond memories of Americans. Almost half (46%) stated that they have pleasant memories about the Americans in Vietnam (please see table 26). Of course, many of the respondents were too young to have any memories of the U.S. presence in that country. In one "lie scale" question that was asked in two different ways, more than half (54%) indicated that the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam caused "great problems" for Vietnam (please see table 45). Less than half (43%) felt the U.S. withdrawal promoted Vietnamese nationalism (please see table 38). Apparently most feel that contact with Americans improves relations. More than two-thirds (71%) believe that those people who experienced the war like Americans (please see table 28). Ninety percent think that even those Vietnamese who did not experience the war like Americans (please see table 25).

Other respondents indicated that the U.S. influence on Vietnam was bad. Although many appeared to want to "let bygones be bygones," slightly more than half (52%) believed Americans committed "great crimes against the Vietnamese people" (please see table 37). Thirty-nine percent believed the Vietnamese who helped Americans deserved their prison time (please see table 45). Young people were again more likely to have these negative opinions.

Opinions Toward the American People

Attention now turns to Vietnamese opinions toward the American people. High opinions about Americans were evident among all ages. More than two-thirds (68%) agreed with the statement "I love the American people" (please see table 58). Eighty-four percent disagreed with "I do not like Americans" (please see table 44). Only 11% would not allow a member of their family to marry an American; probably the best indicator of a person's attitude toward the American people (please see table 32). This demonstrates the high regard in which most Vietnamese hold Americans.

Problems in ethnic relationships were discovered. Only forty percent felt that the American character harmonizes well with the Vietnamese character (please see table 61). Some people volunteered the opinion that most of the disharmony was on the American side. Two-thirds (69%) believed the Americans did not care about the Vietnamese people (please see table 55). Sixty percent felt that Americans do not like the Vietnamese (please see table 46). This feeling is a stark contrast to the belief that Vietnamese like Americans and is perhaps a result of years of U.S. boycott of their country. Some were troubled that the U.S. had avoided contact with them for so many years. Forty-one percent just felt Americans should stay out of Vietnamese affairs (please see table 56).

Opinions About Normalization of Relations

At the time the questionnaire was printed, the U.S. had no diplomatic relations and consequently no embassy in Vietnam. American businesses were prohibited by law from contact with Vietnam. On August 11, 1995 plans for diplomatic relations were announced by President Clinton. Three months later this study began. This created a

unique opportunity to get information about the respondent's opinion of "normalization."

The people were overwhelmingly in support of this process of normalization of relations. Almost all (96%) felt that the U.S. should have an embassy in Vietnam (please see table 24). Three-fourths (76%) felt that U.S. businesses should be allowed in Vietnam (please see table 31). In fact by the time the questionnaire was distributed, a few American businesses were already operating in Vietnam. Almost all (96%) believed this normalization of relations with America should proceed (please see table 27). An overwhelming 91% offered the opinion that the Vietnamese economy improved with better relations with Americans (please see table 39).

Opinions About American Culture

When asked if they had seen an American movie about Vietnam, 100 respondents (74%) said "yes" (please see table 4). A large majority (84%) indicated they liked them. Exactly half of the respondents went further to state that they "strongly agreed" with a statement that they liked American movies (please see table 18). Counterfeited movies are prevalent throughout Vietnam. American war movies about Vietnam are especially popular. The violent war movie "Platoon" was being shown in an old U.S. bunker while I was in Cu Chi. The inside of bunker had been reconstructed in Cu Chi and admission was charged.

A large majority (87%) also stated that they would like to live in America (please see table 52). This is significantly higher than the desire to live in France or China and is evidenced by the millions of Vietnamese who have fled to America since the war. The average Vietnamese views America as the promised land. Desire to emigrate to the U.S.

is almost universal.

Vietnamese go far out of their way to make all foreigners (especially Americans) feel welcome and at home. Almost all (95%) agreed that Americans are welcome in Vietnam as tourists. Only 4% declined to offer such a welcome (please see table 33). Perhaps the same 95% were the ones that stated they would extend a welcome to former American soldiers to return to Vietnam. Seventy-one percent felt “strongly” about this (please see table 34). These sentiments were apparent throughout Vietnam as evidenced by the joyous reception received by the author.

CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS

A chi-square analysis was conducted on all the variables in order to detect possible relationships among them. In a process known as chi square analysis, a computer compared all responses and searched for relationships. The computer assigned to each a score ranging from one (no relationship) all the way to zero which signifies that two variables are perfectly related. Very popular in scientific circles, chi square analysis proved to be the most useful tool for this study. For the purpose of this paper, a correlation coefficient (score) of .05 or less is considered a significant correlation among two variables. Below are presented all significant observations of relationships among variables.

An interesting correlation was found among those respondents who were happy that the communists were victorious. They were likely to believe that the United States was defeated militarily by the North. Younger people prominently held both opinions.

The respondents' age was influential in determining many other opinions. The younger the respondent, the more likely he or she was to believe that the U.S.

contributed great crimes against the Vietnamese people. Most people alive during the war years were not happy about the outcome of the war; however, there was a perfect correlation among opinions of the young people and the belief that the U.S. made a wise decision to leave Vietnam. Young people universally recognized that most people who experienced the war like Americans. This demonstrates that most people realize that contact with Americans increases the likelihood that they will like Americans.

Thirty-nine percent of all survey participants expressed a belief that the Vietnamese who helped Americans deserved to go to prison. Thirty-nine percent also believed that Americans had a selfish motive for their war with Iraq. As usual, there was a correlation among these opinions and the respondents age. Younger people's opinions may be the product of the current regime's political indoctrination and their happiness with the status quo.

The remaining relationships examined here are among the opinions of those who were affected by the American presence in Vietnam. Persons young or old who had a relative killed during the Vietnam war were less likely to believe that individuals who helped Americans deserved prison time. They also believed that both those alive during the war and those who were not yet born probably liked Americans. People who lost a relative were also likely to believe that the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam was an unwise decision and that the U.S. was not defeated militarily by the communists. They also reported less anti-American feeling in their communities. More importantly, those who lost a relative said they would welcome American tourists to visit Vietnam. They also reported a love for the American people. Persons who reported property damage during the Vietnam war had similar statistically significant

opinions.

Strong relationships also occurred among the opinions of those who had actually worked for the Americans during the war. These individuals were highly likely to report a love for the American people, that American tourists are welcome in Vietnam, and a feeling that persons who helped Americans did not deserve prison time. They also recognized that the U.S. may have left Vietnam because of public pressure at home, and not because they were defeated by North Vietnam. This may be because they remember the war years and are more aware of public discontent in the U.S. during the Vietnam war. Those who formerly worked for Americans were also highly likely to be happy about the U.S. victory over Iraq in the Persian Gulf War.

ANALYSIS OF THE L SCALE

In any survey, there may be a few people who randomly mark answers or respond without thinking about the question. To detect this trend, the same question is often asked in a different way, and the answers to the same questions compared. This is known as an "L scale," or a "lie scale." This survey had four such sets of statements in different sections. These questions may be found in Appendix one. They are tables numbered 16, 36, 21, 53, 44, 58, 43, and 60. Frequency tables for all eight questions are presented in Appendix One. Interpretation of this "L" scale indicates high attention and truthfulness. The similarity of responses and lack of conflicting answers adds to the validity of the test results.

Conclusion

One thousand questionnaires were distributed to citizens of Southern Vietnam. Sixty-five questions were asked soliciting opinions about the French, Chinese, and

Americans. Opinions about other topics were explored.

The author is very familiar with Vietnam. He first visited the country when he served as an advisor to the South Vietnamese army during 1967-68. He returned there in 1989. In 1992, he distributed a questionnaire to residents of Duc Hoa, Vietnam, in an effort to determine prevailing attitudes toward the U.S. and Americans. That study was the forerunner of and laid the foundation for this one.

This study focused attention on the current views of the South Vietnamese people living in areas formerly dominated by the U.S. toward the U.S. and Americans. Collection of survey data was accomplished through the use of a questionnaire containing 15 independent variables such as age and sex. Fifty Likert scale statements followed. Findings reveal widespread positive feeling toward the U.S. and Americans by these residents.

An astonishing 65% of all respondents were unhappy about the communist victory over the U.S. supported South in 1975. Results are certainly biased because the survey took place in areas where there was a wartime U.S. presence. Many respondents were former collaborators during the American presence in Vietnam, and others worked for the Americans working as drivers and other service jobs.

Age was a significant factor in a person's opinions of past American activities in that country. While older people were more tolerant of those who helped the Americans, younger people were more likely to believe that U.S. collaborators deserved to spend time in prison for the pro American activities. It may be that young adults are more in line with the government's position on issues, compared to the older adults who experienced life under the American supported Saigon government. High regard

for Americans was overwhelmingly evident among all ages.

The French and Chinese had periods of control over Vietnam. Because of their previous cultural and military interference in the affairs of the country, attention was given to the attitudes of Vietnamese people toward both ethnic groups. A strong dislike for the Chinese was uncovered with the majority of residents expressing anti-Chinese sentiment. Ninety-six percent said they would not want to live in China. No such anti-French bias was uncovered. Almost all respondents stated that they would like to live in France or the United States. The anti-Chinese attitude may be the results of over a thousand years of Chinese domination and warfare. After all, the U.S. and the French intervention lasted only a fraction of that. Also, the quality of life is much better in France or the U.S. than in China.

The study took place three months after the beginning of normalization of relations between the U.S. and Vietnam. Most respondents (90%) recognized the importance of this process for the Vietnamese economy. Almost all (96%) were happy about the recent normalization of relations with the U.S.

Perhaps the most surprising discovery is that there was overwhelming support for the U.S. military activities in Iraq during the Persian Gulf War. Ninety-two percent were happy with the way that war ended. More than half offered the opinion that the U.S. was morally right to fight Iraq. The conflict was covered very thoroughly by the Vietnamese news media and the overwhelming majority supported this military intervention.

Results of this study show that American tourists will assuredly receive a warm welcome from the Vietnamese people. This is evidenced by the warm reception given

the author each time he visits the country. The survey results support this conclusion. Ninety-five percent said American tourists would receive a warm welcome if they came to Vietnam. Three-fourths had very strong opinions about this. Perhaps more amazing is the fact that the majority (94%) stated that visits by former American soldiers would be welcomed by the Vietnamese people.

Findings reveal the absence of any widespread anti-American feeling in Vietnam. Pro-American opinions were observed in virtually all categories. The study concludes that the U.S. and Americans are perceived in a positive manner by most Vietnamese living in areas formerly controlled by the United States.

Frequencies in Table Form

Table One
Respondent's age.

	Frequency	Percent
Below 25	20	14.7
25-40	54	39.7
40-50	28	20.6
Above 50	34	25.0

Table Two
Respondent's sex.

	Frequency	Percent
Male	86	63.2
Female	48	35.3

Table Three
I once worked for Americans.

	Frequency	Percent
True	51	37.5
False	76	55.9

Table Four
I have seen an American movie about the Americans in Vietnam.

	Frequency	Percent
True	100	73.5
False	34	25.0

Table Five
A member of my family served in the South Vietnamese Army or worked for the South Vietnamese government prior to 1975.

	Frequency	Percent
True	92	67.6
False	43	31.6

Table Six
I was in a re-education camp or prison after the war.

	Frequency	Percent
True	53	39.0
False	78	57.4

Table Seven
I served with the North Vietnamese Army or with the Viet Cong during the war.

	Frequency	Percent
True	7	5.1
False	125	91.9

Table Eight

I have met a French person.

	Frequency	Percent
True	107	78.7
False	22	16.2

Table Nine

I had property damaged during the war.

	Frequency	Percent
True	60	44.1
False	71	52.2

Table Ten

I had a relative killed during the war.

	Frequency	Percent
True	45	33.1
False	88	64.7

Table Eleven

I knew someone (non-relative) who was killed during the war.

	Frequency	Percent
True	77	56.6
False	57	41.9

Table Twelve

I served in the Army of South Vietnam.

	Frequency	Percent
True	47	34.6
False	86	63.2

Table Thirteen

I have met an American.

	Frequency	Percent
True	130	96.3
False	5	3.7

Table Fourteen

The French do not like the Vietnamese.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	18	13.2
Strongly Agree	8	5.9
Agree	31	22.8
Disagree	66	48.5

Vietnam Research 64

Strongly Disagree 12 8.8

Table Fifteen

There is anti-French feeling in my community.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	7	5.1
Strongly Agree	1	0.7
Agree	95	69.9
Disagree	32	23.5
Strongly Disagree	1	0.7

Table Sixteen

I like the French.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	15	11.2
Strongly Agree	14	10.4
Agree	87	64.9
Disagree	13	9.7
Strongly Disagree	5	3.7

Table Seventeen

The Chinese made positive contributions to Vietnamese culture.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	26	19.1
Strongly Agree	12	8.8
Agree	75	55.1
Disagree	18	13.2
Strongly Disagree	5	3.7

Table Eighteen

I like American movies.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	17	12.5
Strongly Agree	69	50.7
Agree	45	33.1
Disagree	4	2.9
Strongly Disagree	1	0.7

Table Nineteen

The Americans left Vietnam because of public pressure in the U.S.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	8	5.9
Strongly Agree	35	25.7
Agree	65	47.8
Disagree	24	17.6

Vietnam Research 66

Strongly Disagree 4 2.9

Table Twenty

It was a wise decision for the U.S. to withdraw from Vietnam.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	4	2.9
Strongly Agree	37	27.2
Agree	24	17.6
Disagree	44	32.4
Strongly Disagree	27	19.9

Table Twenty-One

I would like to live in China.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	10	7.0
Strongly Agree	5	4.0
Agree	2	1.4
Disagree	64	47.1
Strongly Disagree	52	38.2

Table Twenty-Two

I would like to live in France.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	19	14.0
Strongly Agree	18	13.2
Agree	73	53.7
Disagree	14	10.3
Strongly Disagree	12	8.8

Table Twenty-Three

The average Vietnamese who was not alive during the war likes Americans.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	4	2.9
Strongly Agree	54	39.7
Agree	68	50.0
Disagree	9	6.6
Strongly Disagree	1	0.7

Table Twenty-Four

The United States should have an embassy in Vietnam.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	1	0.7
Strongly Agree	99	72.8
Agree	32	23.5
Disagree	3	2.2

Vietnam Research 68

Strongly Disagree 1 0.7

Table Twenty-Five

Vietnamese who helped Americans deserved their prison time.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	5	3.7
Strongly Agree	31	22.8
Agree	22	16.2
Disagree	26	19.1
Strongly Disagree	51	37.5

Table Twenty-Six

I have pleasant memories or thoughts about the Americans in Vietnam.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	13	9.6
Strongly Agree	22	16.2
Agree	42	30.9
Disagree	41	30.1
Strongly Disagree	18	13.2

Table Twenty-Seven

I would like to see normalization of relations between the U.S. and Vietnam.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	1	0.7
Strongly Agree	90	66.2
Agree	41	30.1
Disagree	2	1.5
Strongly Disagree	2	1.5

Table Twenty-Eight

The average Vietnamese who experienced the war likes Americans.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	6	4.4
Strongly Agree	53	39.0
Agree	44	32.4
Disagree	19	14.0
Strongly Disagree	14	10.3

Table Twenty-Nine

There is anti-Chinese feeling in my community.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	14	10.3
Strongly Agree	15	11.0
Agree	48	35.3
Disagree	46	33.8

Vietnam Research 70

Strongly Disagree 13 9.6

Table Thirty

During the French Colonial Era, the French improved education, health and developed the country.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	43	31.6
Strongly Agree	5	3.7
Agree	53	39.0
Disagree	19	14.0
Strongly Disagree	16	11.8

Table Thirty-One

I think American business should be allowed inside Vietnam.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	15	11.0
Strongly Agree	50	36.8
Agree	53	39.0
Disagree	13	9.6
Strongly Disagree	5	3.7

Table Thirty-Two

I would allow a member of my family to marry an American.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	8	5.9
Strongly Agree	37	27.2
Agree	76	55.9
Disagree	12	8.8
Strongly Disagree	3	2.2

Table Thirty-Three

American tourists would receive a good welcome if they came to Vietnam.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	1	0.7
Strongly Agree	104	76.5
Agree	25	18.4
Disagree	3	2.2
Strongly Disagree	3	2.2

Table Thirty-Four

Visits by former American soldiers would be welcome by the Vietnamese people.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	2	1.5
Strongly Agree	96	70.6
Agree	32	23.5

Vietnam Research 72

Disagree	1	0.7
Strongly Disagree	5	3.7

Table Thirty-Five

I believe Americans had selfish motives for their participation in the war in Vietnam.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	18	13.2
Strongly Agree	37	27.2
Agree	54	39.7
Disagree	16	11.8
Strongly Disagree	10	7.4

Table Thirty-Six

I don't like the French.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	16	11.7
Strongly Agree	4	3.0
Agree	8	6.0
Disagree	85	63.0
Strongly Disagree	13	10.0

Table Thirty-Seven

American soldiers committed great crimes against the Vietnamese people.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	7	5.1
Strongly Agree	45	33.1
Agree	25	18.4
Disagree	36	26.5
Strongly Disagree	23	16.9

Table Thirty-Eight

U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam promoted Vietnamese nationalism.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	16	11.8
Strongly Agree	26	19.1
Agree	33	24.3
Disagree	36	26.5
Strongly Disagree	25	18.4

Table Thirty-Nine

Normalization of relations with the U.S. would improve the Vietnamese economy.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	8	5.9
Strongly Agree	86	63.2
Agree	38	27.9

Vietnam Research 74

Disagree	1	0.7
Strongly Disagree	3	2.2

Table Forty

I would like closer social relations with the Chinese.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	9	6.6
Strongly Agree	3	2.2
Agree	15	11.0
Disagree	72	52.9
Strongly Disagree	37	27.2

Table Forty-One

The U.S. was morally right to fight Iraq.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	23	16.9
Strongly Agree	29	21.3
Agree	49	36.0
Disagree	27	19.9
Strongly Disagree	8	5.9

Table Forty-Two

I'm happy with the way the Persian Gulf war ended.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	2	1.5
Strongly Agree	85	62.5
Agree	40	29.4
Disagree	3	2.2
Strongly Disagree	6	4.4

Table Forty-Three

I think the Americans helped Vietnam.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	8	5.9
Strongly Agree	23	17.0
Agree	45	33.3
Disagree	34	25.2
Strongly Disagree	25	18.5

Table Forty-Four

I don't like Americans.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	5	3.7
Strongly Agree	6	4.4
Agree	10	7.4
Disagree	52	39.2

Vietnam Research 76

Strongly Disagree 63 46.3

Table Forty-Five

The U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam caused great problems.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	7	5.1
Strongly Agree	35	25.7
Agree	39	28.7
Disagree	34	25.0
Strongly Disagree	21	15.4

Table Forty-Six

Americans do not like Vietnam.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	12	8.8
Strongly Agree	29	21.3
Agree	53	39.0
Disagree	29	21.3
Strongly Disagree	13	9.6

Table Forty-Seven

It was wise for the U.S. to withdraw from Vietnam.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	8	5.9
Strongly Agree	29	21.3
Agree	23	16.9
Disagree	43	31.6
Strongly Disagree	33	24.3

Table Forty-Eight

The U.S. was defeated militarily by communist forces.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	5	3.7
Strongly Agree	27	19.9
Agree	18	13.2
Disagree	29	21.3
Strongly Disagree	57	41.9

Table Forty-Nine

I believe that the Chinese made contributions to Vietnamese culture.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	23	16.9
Strongly Agree	15	11.0
Agree	51	37.5
Disagree	32	23.5

Vietnam Research 78

Strongly Disagree 15 11.0

Table Fifty

I believe the Americans had selfish motives for their war against Iraq.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	24	17.6
Strongly Agree	38	27.9
Agree	53	39.0
Disagree	11	8.1
Strongly Disagree	10	7.4

Table Fifty-One

The French character harmonizes well with the Vietnamese character.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	36	26.5
Strongly Agree	11	8.1
Agree	59	43.4
Disagree	18	13.2
Strongly Disagree	12	8.8

Table Fifty-Two

I would like to live in the U.S.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	8	5.9
Strongly Agree	76	56.3
Agree	41	30.4
Disagree	4	3.0
Strongly Disagree	6	4.4

Table Fifty-Three

I would like to live in China.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	11	8.1
Strongly Agree	3	2.2
Agree	5	3.7
Disagree	60	44.1
Strongly Disagree	56	41.2

Table Fifty-Four

The Americans fairly compensated people who lost property during the war.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	18	13.2
Strongly Agree	3	2.2
Agree	8	5.9

Vietnam Research 80

Disagree	42	30.9
Strongly Disagree	64	47.1

Table Fifty-Five

Americans care about the Vietnamese.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	25	18.4
Strongly Agree	4	2.9
Agree	12	8.8
Disagree	65	47.8
Strongly Disagree	29	21.3

Table Fifty-Six

Americans should not involve themselves in the affairs of the Vietnamese.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	13	9.6
Strongly Agree	25	18.4
Agree	41	30.1
Disagree	35	25.7
Strongly Disagree	22	16.2

Table Fifty-Seven

The Chinese character harmonizes well with the Vietnamese character.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	18	13.2
Strongly Agree	8	5.9
Agree	27	19.9
Disagree	56	41.2
Strongly Disagree	27	19.9

Table Fifty-Eight

I love the American people.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	22	16.3
Strongly Agree	32	23.7
Agree	60	44.4
Disagree	14	10.4
Strongly Disagree	7	5.2

Table Fifty-Nine

I'm very happy the communists were victorious.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	6	4.4
Strongly Agree	30	22.1
Agree	12	8.8

Vietnam Research 82

Disagree	37	27.2
Strongly Disagree	51	37.5

Table Sixty

The presence of the Americans was beneficial to the people of Vietnam.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	13	9.6
Strongly Agree	25	18.4
Agree	44	32.4
Disagree	28	20.6
Strongly Disagree	25	18.4

Table Sixty-One

The American character mixes well with the Vietnamese character.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	19	14.0
Strongly Agree	20	14.7
Agree	52	38.2
Disagree	32	23.5
Strongly Disagree	13	9.6

Table Sixty-Two

Vietnam would be a richer country today if the U.S. had defeated the communists.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	13	9.6
Strongly Agree	51	37.5
Agree	35	25.7
Disagree	18	13.2
Strongly Disagree	19	14.0

Table Sixty-Three

There is considerable anti-American feeling in my community.

	Frequency	Percent
Uncertain	4	2.9
Strongly Agree	10	7.4
Agree	7	5.1
Disagree	61	44.9
Strongly Disagree	54	39.7

Vietnamese Language Questionnaire

THE MEKONG DELTA COMMUNITY SURVEY

ABSTRACT

During late 1999 and early 2000, the author traveled to the Mekong Delta in Southern Vietnam to distribute a 35-question instrument designed to determine the residents' opinion about life in the Delta and other information about their possessions, lifestyles, and opinions of government infrastructure.

Most respondents were fishermen and their families with few material possessions. Findings revealed a high degree of satisfaction with community life and a positive opinion of police, government, and infrastructure. Elementary and secondary schools received almost a unanimous high rating.

Merchants were more likely to have material possessions than other occupational categories and were more likely to rate government with a high score. An absence of a Fire Department, medical clinic, dental services, or a newspaper was revealed.

About 28% expressed a desire to move away, but this was attributed to the predominant opinion that there were few opportunities in the area.

INTRODUCTION

Flat as a pancake and lusciously green and beautiful, the Mekong Delta is in the southernmost region of Vietnam. It was formed by sediment deposited by the Mekong River. This process continues today with silt deposits extending the Delta's shoreline at the mouth of the river as much as 79 meters per year. The river is one of the world's largest and it has two daily tides (Storey & Robinson, 1995, p. 261).

The land of the Mekong Delta is renowned for its richness, and most of the area

is under cultivation. The area is known as Vietnam's "breadbasket," although "ricebasket" would be a more appropriate word. The Mekong Delta provides enough rice to feed the entire country with a huge surplus left over for export. Other food products from this district include fish, fruits, and coconuts. Indeed, the vast majority of Delta residents appear to be engaged in either farming or fishing.

The Mekong River is one of the world's greatest rivers. It originates high in the mountains of Tibet and flows more than 4,500 kilometers through China, between Myanmar (Burma) and Laos, across Laos, along the border of Thailand and Laos, and through Cambodia and Vietnam until it empties into the South China Sea. The deposits from the river at its termination create the fertile Mekong Delta and employment opportunities for thousands of people. It is the residents of this area that are the respondents of this study.

The level of the Mekong begins to rise around the end of May and reaches its highest point in September. Its flow ranges from 1900 to 38,000 cubic meters per second depending on the season (Robinson & Wheeler, 1992). Living on the Mekong with its flood plain presents some technical challenges. Lacking any high ground, many delta residents build their houses on stilts in order to avoid the rising waters. They dig canals for irrigation and travel. Boating is a major activity in the area. Anyone who wishes to get a good look at the Mekong Delta must have a boat.

U.S. Wartime Activity in the Delta

Only one major battle happened in the Mekong Delta. Aside from this 1972 conflict, fighting in the delta was confined to small-scale ambushes. Unfortunately for the Americans, the vast swamps and mangrove forests provided excellent camouflage

for the Viet Cong (VC). The population density made indiscriminate bombing by the Americans impossible. This resulted in ground level “search and destroy” missions. Helicopter gunships, boats, and ground soldiers tried to intercept guerrillas traveling by boat to their sanctuaries (Karnow, 1988).

The VC responded with booby traps, night time raids, assassinations, and ambushes. Essentially, the Communists controlled much of the delta at night. Both the VC and the South Vietnamese Army (ARVN) conscripted many young men from the delta into their respective armies. It was not unusual for brothers to be fighting on opposite sides, often against their will. Desertions from both sides were high (Karnow, 1988).

Agent Orange was used to clear the mangrove forests of the delta. The U.S.A. employed deliberate destruction of the area in an effort to deny sanctuary to the Communist guerrillas. Some defoliated areas are today covered with weeds locally known as “American grass.” Many residents blame their health problems on the U.S. use of the chemical agents.

The Mekong Delta Economy

Besides being the delta’s largest export crop, rice is the primary food of the Vietnamese population. Except for a few well-defined regions, the arable land of the delta has always been devoted to rice cultivation. A rapid expansion of planted rice land followed a 1908 French decree to export rice. The rice cultivators, certain of selling their rice at a very high price in the markets of Singapore, Hong Kong, and Java, doubled and tripled their cultivated land (Brocheux 1995, p. 51).

Fishing is the second most important industry in the region

(Brocheux, 1995, p. 59). The majority of these people not involved in rice production spend their time fishing with nets, hooks, and spears. The Mekong Delta is covered by boats of various sizes and designs engaged in this enterprise.

The activities of small-time peddlers, operating principally out of small boats along the canals, are as important to the economy as the commerce that is available in the towns. The floating merchant proclaims his product with a cry or by ringing a bell. Often this sort of trading is a major source of money for entire families. With fruits, vegetables, sweets, or drinks packed into baskets and placed in small boats they frequent the floating markets and other high population density areas.

Trade in the Mekong Delta has not always been so robust. After reunification in 1975, the economy of Vietnam was plagued by enormous difficulties in production, imbalances in supply and demand, inefficiencies in distribution, soaring inflation rates, and rising debt problems. Vietnam experienced a sharp economic deterioration in its postwar reconstruction period. Reasons for this mediocre economic performance have included severe climactic conditions, bureaucratic mismanagement, elimination of private ownership, extinction of entrepreneurial classes in the South, and the military occupation of Cambodia (which resulted in a cut off of much needed international aid) (Department of State, 1989, p. 143).

The demise of collective farming and the re-introduction of private ownership of property in 1989 appears to have revived private initiative resulting in higher productivity in the Mekong Delta. Indeed the farmers toil, sunup to sunset on their private plots and on their boats providing an abundance of food for sale or for personal use.

The residents of the Mekong Delta are an interesting people. This study addresses their opinions toward their living environment and the government infrastructure that supports their lifestyle.

THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The questionnaire consisted of 35 questions printed on the front and back of one sheet of paper. It was translated into Vietnamese. Both the Vietnamese version and the English translation appear in the final pages of the study.

Three questions provided the independent variables of age, gender, and occupation. The next 18 questions were a summated ratings scale that asked the respondents to rate a service or facility from "excellent" to "very bad."

A summated scale is computed by summing up the number of questions he or she answers in a certain way. A higher score represents a higher level of satisfaction with the concept being measured (Bailey, 1978, p. 344).

Eight "yes" or "no" questions were included to determine what material possessions were owned by the respondents.

Five more questions assessed the respondents' opinions about certain aspects of the community. These items were designed on the Likert technique.

The essence of the Likert technique is to increase the variation in the possible scores, by coding from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." A scale score is computed for each respondent (Bailey, 1978, p. 346).

There were a few open-ended questions that eventually were ignored for the purposes of this study.

The 35-question instrument developed by Dunkelberger and Morris was

distributed to residents of the Mekong Delta. This instrument examined the respondents' attitudes toward the various government services and the living conditions in the Mekong Delta.

METHODOLOGY

In 1998, the author traveled to the Mekong Delta and distributed the questionnaire to the people living there. Mr. Morris lived in the Mekong Delta for two months collecting information for this study. He made several follow-up journeys to the Mekong area in 1999 and during early 2000. He visited Ca Mau village, Can Tho, Ha Tien, and few other nameless towns in the Mekong Delta.

Mr. Morris hired a boat and English speaking guide to search the river and canals for respondents. Although very friendly and eager to help, most of the people didn't have the skills to participate in the study. The schools in the area were established about 1980 and only a few elderly people in the area were educated. This study is limited to those persons who were able to read the Vietnamese language and willing to fill out a questionnaire. Two hundred twenty three respondents participated in this study.

The research data was sent to Dr. Krishna Paudel, a statistician at the University of Georgia. He analyzed the frequency distribution and ran correlations on the numbers in order to discover any relationships. The statistical test used was Chi-Square. The results of this analysis are presented below.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

There were three independent variables in the questionnaire; age, gender, and occupation. Age and gender showed no variation in their responses. Respondents

ranged in age from thirteen to ninety-eight years old with the majority between 16 and 42. Because of the length and randomness of the age distribution no table is provided for "age." Sixty-five percent were male.

Gender of Respondent

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Male	144	64.6
Female	79	35.4

Total Responses = 223

The vast majority (70.4%) of the study participants were fishermen. Other employment categories are listed in the table below. Of the ten employment categories described under the occupation section, initial tests showed that only the "merchants" showed variation in their responses. Employment categories with less than three respondents have been collapsed into "other." A "T Test" was performed on all response categories to determine if variation exists. A probability score of less than 0.05 indicates variation. This variation is discussed when the probability measurement is less than 0.05.

Occupational Status of Respondent

	<u>Farmer</u>	<u>Fisherman</u>	<u>Merchant</u>	<u>Rice Worker</u>	<u>Cycle Driver</u>	<u>Other</u>
%	10.8	70.4	3.6	6.3	3.1	5.7

Questions were asked to determine if the respondent has personal possessions. The majority of respondents owned a bicycle (92.4%) and a radio (72.2%). More than half (59%) owned their own home. Merchants were more likely to own a motorcycle (PROB = .027), television (PROB = .003), refrigerator (PROB = .0000) and a telephone (PROB = .0000).

Material Possessions of Respondent

	Car, Truck, or Van	Motorcycle	Bike	Television	Refrigerator	Telephone	Radio
% Who Own	4.5	13.5	92.4	7.6	6.3	4.0	72.2

Using a summated ratings scale, a series of questions was asked with responses ranging from "excellent" to "very bad." The results were analyzed to determine attitudes of the local people about public services and institutions. These results are presented in the following table and are discussed below.

Respondents' Rating of the Community Service (Percentage)

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Bad
Public Elementary Schools	47.5	46.6	2.7	2.2	0.9
Public High School	45.3	48.4	2.7	2.2	1.3
Community Roads	24.2	44.4	14.3	11.7	5.4
Police Department	33.6	41.7	9.0	12.1	3.1
Local Government	31.8	44.8	8.5	10.8	3.6
Quality of Life	35.0	33.6	7.2	15.2	8.5
Electric Service	22.9	39.0	10.8	15.7	8.5
Sewage System	10.3	21.5	17.0	29.6	18.4
Water Supply	38.6	43.9	9.0	7.6	0.4

After the Communist victory over the Saigon government in 1975, considerable effort was directed toward the public school system. Free education was available to all for many years. Following the introduction of market reforms and privatization in 1989

this changed. Today, a surcharge of about \$15.00 is assessed for each child attending school. Those who are able to afford the tuition attend clean schools with good teachers. Only a few families can afford to send their children to school. Students wear uniforms of navy blue trousers or skirts, white shirts, and a red scarf around their necks symbolic of the Communist party. Over 95% of respondents gave a high rating for both grade school and secondary school.

Although primitive by American standards, the predominantly dirt roads were rated good or better by more than two-thirds. Only 12% considered them “very bad.”

Residents in general expressed satisfaction with both the police department and the local government. Three-fourths (75.3%) rated the police as “good” or “excellent,” while those same respondents (76.7) gave local government officials a similar rating.

Merchants were more likely to give a positive assessment to both the police department ($\chi^2 = .0332$) and the local government ($\chi^2 = .0310$).

Questions regarding public service infrastructure revealed a general satisfaction with these facilities. Residents rated the electrical services good or better (62%). Only seven respondents declared that they have no electricity. Appraisals of the sewage system had an approval rating of almost half (48.9%) describing the system as “fair” or better. An abundance of clean water availability is revealed by the overall approval rating of 91.5% that indicated a “fair” to “excellent” supply.

The quality of community life was given a “good” or better rating by two-thirds (68.6%), indicating a general satisfaction with life in the Mekong Delta.

Using a Likert rating scale, a question with responses ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree” was presented to determine the respondents’ attitudes

toward five statements about the community situation. These results are presented in the following table and discussed below.

Respondents Rate the Community (Percentage)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Local residents are friendly and help each other	39.5	51.6	4.5	4.5	0.0
The community has good schools	62.3	32.3	0.9	2.7	1.8
Local government tries to help residents with problems	29.6	47.5	4.9	15.2	2.7
There are few good opportunities for the young	51.6	44.8	0.9	2.2	0.4
If I could, I would move away	13.5	14.3	3.6	29.1	39.5

Almost all agreed that the community had good schools (94.6%) and that the local residents are friendly and try to help each other (91.0%). More than three-fourths (77.1%) believed that government workers made an attempt to help residents with their problems.

In a land where fishing is the predominant occupation, the lack of other

employment opportunities is apparent. Over 96% felt that there were few good job possibilities for the young. Less than one-third (27.8%), however, would move away from the area if offered the opportunity to do so, indicating a relatively high level of satisfaction.

CONCLUSIONS

One purpose of this study was to understand the residents of the Mekong Delta. Survey results revealed that the vast majority of respondents were fishermen with few material possessions. Bicycles and radios were widely owned while only a few respondents had the luxury of a telephone, television, refrigerator, or car. Merchants were more likely to possess these luxury items. Most respondents in all categories were likely to own their place of residence.

The primary purpose of this study was to assess the opinions of these Mekong Delta residents toward their community, government, and infrastructure. Survey results revealed a general satisfaction with local government and the police. This satisfaction was apparent in all categories of respondents.

Schools received the highest ratings with an almost unanimous high assessment of the educational system. This may be a reflection of the massive improvement of schools that took place after the 1975 communist victory combined with the fact that a required tuition improves the teacher-student ratio and reduces wear on the school infrastructure.

Electricity, sewage, roads, water supply and other infrastructure also received a positive rating. Although primitive by western standards, these facilities appear to be well maintained and widely available.

An absence of a fire department, medical clinic, dentist, and newspaper was revealed. Medical care, when available, is very expensive and above the economic capabilities of most residents. Herbal remedies are widely available and very popular. Fire and other emergencies are remedied by the local residents as best they can since they enjoy no benefit of emergency services. Residents receive most of their news from the radio.

While residents expressed a general satisfaction with life in the area, twenty-eight percent stated that they would leave the Mekong Delta if they could. This may be a reflection of the almost unanimous belief that there was a lack of opportunity in the Mekong Delta.

The Instrument: Vietnamese Language Questionnaire

English Translation of the Instrument

THE PRESENCE OF POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER IN VIETNAMESE VETERANS

What is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder?

According to the American Psychiatric Association, the essential feature of this disorder is the development of characteristic symptoms following a psychologically distressing event that is outside the range of usual human experience. The initial stress producing this syndrome would be markedly distressing to almost anyone, and is usually experienced with intense fear, terror, and helplessness. The characteristic symptoms involve re-experiencing the traumatic event, avoidance of stimuli associated with the event or numbing of general responsiveness, and increased arousal. The diagnosis is not made if the disturbance lasts less than one month (American Psychiatric Association, 1987).

It was not until World War I that specific clinical syndromes came to be associated with combat duty. In prior wars, it was assumed that such casualties were the result of the poor discipline and cowardice. However, with the protracted artillery barrages commonplace during "The Great War," the concept evolved that the high air pressure of the exploding shells caused actual physiological damage, precipitating the numerous symptoms that were subsequently labeled "shell shock." By the end of the war, further evolution accounted for the syndrome being labeled a "war neurosis" (U.S. Congress, 1992). The syndrome became further developed through the Korean and Vietnam wars into a disorder recognized by the APA. During the early eighties, the APA renamed the disorder "Post Traumatic Stress Disorder."

Post traumatic Stress Disorder in American Combat veterans

Most veterans have adjusted well to life in the United States, during the years following their wartime experiences. That is a tribute to these veterans who faced a difficult homecoming to say the least. The homecoming experienced by soldiers in this war was at times very hostile. A very large number of veterans have not made it all the way home from the war in Southeast Asia. Some experts estimate at least half a million Vietnam veterans still lead lives bothered by serious, war-related readjustment problems. Veterans Administration hospitals are full of individuals experiencing emotional and psychological problems resulting from their experiences in Vietnam.

There are numerous movies about the heroic police officer disarming an individual who is bent on killing people or is otherwise creating a terrorist situation. In many of these cases, the perpetrator turns out to be a Vietnam veteran. So it is in real life as well. Numerous news reports detail the incidents involving Vietnam war veterans, many of which are the result of problems they may have developed as a result of the veterans Vietnam was experience.

How Vietnam Was Different From Other Wars

When direct American troop involvement in Vietnam became a reality, military planners examined the previous war experiences of this psychological disorder. By then it was understood that those persons with the most combat exposure suffered the highest incidence of breakdown. In Korea, this knowledge resulted in use of a "point system." After accumulating so many points, an individual was rotated home. It did not matter about the progress of the war. This was further refined in Vietnam into the DEROS (date of expected return from overseas). Every individual serving in Vietnam

knew before leaving the United States when he or she was scheduled to return (Mathews, 1992).

The advantage was that there would not be an endless period of combat with the prospect of becoming a psychological casualty as the only hope for the return to the United States without wounds. If a combatant could hold together for 12 or 13 months, he would leave the war far behind.

Because of this very individual aspect of the war, unit morale, unit cohesion and unit identification suffered tremendously. Many studies from past wars point to the concept of his unit integrity acts as a buffer for the individual against the overwhelming stresses of combat. Many of the veterans of World War II spent weeks or months with their units returning on ships from all over the world. During the long trip home, these men had the closeness and emotional support for one another to rework the especially traumatic episodes they had experienced together. The end for the Vietnam veteran, however, was a solitary plane ride home with complete strangers and a head full of grief, conflict, confusion and joy (United States Senate, 1986).

A conclusion may be drawn from existing data that the Vietnam veteran lacked many of the bonds that held soldiers of other wars together. This may have created a feeling of isolation. Add to this the fact that U.S. soldiers in Vietnam returned home to a hostile and thankless environment and it is easy to see how Vietnam was different from other wars.

It has been speculated that this return to a thankless society may have contributed to the development of PTSD in some veterans.

Symptoms of PTSD

People who suffer from PTSD continually reexperience a traumatic event or series of events although they desperately try to avoid memories of the event. PTSD sufferers have a variety of physiological symptoms of anxiety such as trembling, inability to sleep, and hypersensitivity to noise. Anything associated with the traumatic event may provoke great emotional distress (Halgin & Whitdourne, 1993).

Depression

Many Vietnam combat veterans I know are depressed. Some have the classic symptom of sleep disturbance, psychomotor retardation, feelings of worthlessness, difficulty in concentrating etc. When recalling various combat episodes during an interview, the veteran with a post-traumatic stress disorder often cries. He usually has had one or more episodes in which one of his buddies was killed. Due to the special circumstances of this war, extended grieving on the battlefield was unproductive and could become a liability. Hence, grief was handled as quickly as possible, allowing little or no time for the grieving process (U.S. Congress & Senate, 1982).

It appears that this subdued grief in many cases re-appears at a later date for many combat veterans. Since PTSD sufferers are often quite violent and no strangers to death, it is important to find out if the veteran keeps a weapon in close proximity. The possibility of suicide is always present (Diagnostic & Statistical Manual III R, 1987).

Rage

The veterans' rage is frightening to them and to others around them. For no apparent reason, many will strike out at whoever is near. This includes their wives and children. Some of these veterans can be quite violent. This behavior generally frightens

the veterans, apparently leading to question their sanity; they are horrified at their behavior. However, regardless of their afterthoughts, the rage reactions occur with frightening frequency (U.S. Congress & Senate, 1982).

Avoidance of Feelings: Alienation and Isolation

The Spouses of the affected veterans I have known complain that their men are cold, uncaring individuals. Indeed, the veterans themselves will recount episodes in which they did not feel anything when they witnessed the death of a buddy in combat or the more recent death of a close family relative. Combat veterans have few friends. Many veterans who witnessed traumatic experiences complain of feeling like old men in young men's bodies. They feel isolated and distant from their peers (Mathews, 1982).

Anxiety Reactions

Many Vietnam veterans think of themselves as very vigilant human beings; their autonomic senses are tuned to anything out of the ordinary. A loud discharge will cause many of them to start. A few will actually take such evasive action as falling to their knees or to the ground when they hear a loud noise. Many veterans become very uncomfortable when people walk closely behind them. A very good friend of mine does not let people drive directly behind him. He will pull off the road, letting others pass. He is very suspicious and paranoid.

Sleep Disturbances and Nightmares

Few veterans struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder find the hours immediately before sleep comfortable. In fact, many will stay awake as long as possible. They will often have a drink or smoke some cannabis to dull any uncomfortable cognition that may enter during this vulnerable time period. Many

report that they have nothing to occupy their minds at the end of the day's activities, and their thoughts wander. For many of them, it is a trip back to the battle zone. Very often they will watch TV late into the mornings (Mathews, 1982).

Some report having dreams about being shot at or being pursued and left with an empty weapon, unable to run anymore. Recurrent dreams of specific traumatic episodes are frequently reported. It is not unusual for a veteran to re-experience, night after night, the death of a close friend or a death that he causes as a combatant.

Treatment

The DSM-IV-R manual does not prescribe a specific treatment for PTSD. Treatment varies according to the individual and many times symptoms of the disorder must be treated separately. For example, self medication is very popular among Vietnam veterans with PTSD. Marijuana, alcohol, and other illegal drugs are many times the drug of choice. As a consequence, many veterans are eventually treated for the dependency of these drugs.

Group therapy is an effective for many, and individual "one on one" treatment and counseling is practiced by many VA doctors.

For those who need medication, there is a variety of treatment available. Valium controls hypervigilance, nervousness, and anxiety. Elavil controls depression. Thorazine controls thought disorders and flashbacks. Sleeping pills are used to induce sleep and to help control nightmares. For some especially disturbed individuals, bi-weekly shots of strong antidepressants are often prescribed in order to control violent behavior.

The psychological assessment of individuals who have been traumatized by

extreme stressors is a challenging and multidimensional process. It includes not only a delineation of symptoms, but also an evaluation of the nature of people's traumatic experience, their unique mode of adaptation, and their methods of coping with the symptoms. Thousands of American veterans of the Vietnam War returned home suffering from this disorder, formerly known as combat or battle fatigue. The Veterans Administration has spent millions of dollars treating victims and scientists have researched the subject resulting in the production of thousands of volumes of data regarding this issue.

While much is known about U.S. combat veterans' adjustment after the Vietnam war is that a high percentage of these men (and women) reported symptoms of PTSD after their return to America, nothing is known about the psychological effects of combat/war among members of the North Vietnamese, South Vietnamese or Viet Cong forces. The goal of this project was to assess the nature and symptoms of war-related trauma among a sample of indigenous Vietnamese fighters, and to provide data that up until now has been nonexistent.

The Project Director recruited subjects who fought in the war from various cities and villages in the southern regions of Vietnam. He traveled to Vietnam during 1999 and 2000 where he surveyed combat veterans in Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon), Bien Hoa, Cu Chi, and throughout the Mekong Delta.

Mr. George Hoey Morris, the Project Director of the research visited the University of Dalat, an institution nestled in the mountains of Vietnam. This area was made famous during the war by the participation on Montagnard Fighters, who were intensely loyal to their American allies. A professor assisted when he translated into

Vietnamese two surveys commonly used with American veterans. Mr. Morris, a combat veteran himself who has returned to Vietnam many times since the end of the war, worked through an interpreter to locate war veterans who would be willing to respond to the surveys or be briefly interviewed in case they are illiterate. Completion of the surveys took no longer than 15 minutes.

The primary risk to participants was potential psychological distress as a result of answering questions about their history which are sensitive in nature. All study candidates were asked for their participation and at the slightest sign of refusal, reluctance or anxiety the Project Director and/or interpreter terminated the interaction with the candidate.

Given the special circumstances of this exploratory research, a written consent seemed inadequate or meaningless. Potential candidates were informed prior to responding to the surveys that they did not have to participate and that they could stop their participation at any time after they begin. They were informed that their names were not needed, and that their identity would be kept confidential.

Preparations for the study were complete after Mr. Morris arranged for a “directed study” under the supervision of Dr. Robert Rotunda of the University of West Florida in Pensacola, Florida. Dr. Rotunda is the chairman of the Psychology Department at that institution.

Dr. Rotunda located two common diagnostic tools that have proven helpful for the detection of PTSD among American veterans. The “combat exposure scale” and the “PCL-M” are widely used among scientists in this country. The PCL-M was developed by the National Center for PTSD and is endorsed by the American Psychiatric

Association. Both the English and Vietnamese versions are provided in another book written by this author.

The University of West Florida Research Review Board eventually withdrew or failed to provide its endorsement of the project because of their concern for ethical issues involving confidentiality and potential risks for research participants. Despite this setback, Mr. Morris proceeded with the project that was already in progress and presents the results in another manuscript for the use of behavioral scientists throughout the world. By using computer software such as *Lotus 1-2-3* and other similar computer software, interested readers are invited to statistically analyze this data, draw inferences and publish their conclusions. The author's first person description of the research procedure follows.

The Vietnam Airlines flight to Dalat was inexpensive and quick. Within 30 minutes the jet touched down and I relished the change from the intense heat in Saigon to the cool mist temperature of the mountain air.

I rented a room and wasted no time in traveling to the nearby University of Dalat where I contacted a Psychology Professor with whom I had associated in Saigon on numerous occasions. This man provided valuable help by translating the survey instruments in a manner that could be quickly and easily understood by potential respondents. Because of the laws regulating research in Vietnam and potential problems that could develop, I agreed to keep confidential the name of my Vietnamese associate.

I stayed in Dalat for one week while I toured the city and spent some time with the Montagnard hill tribes. Anxious to begin my research, I returned to Saigon where I

immediately began to prepare for the study.

The first step in any research procedure that involves a questionnaire, of course is to find respondents. Southern Vietnam has no shortage of such subjects. They are in virtually every city. I decided to travel first to Cu Chi, former headquarters for the American 25th Infantry Division and the location of the underground tunnels widely used by the communist forces as a hiding place and to direct their combat activities.

I was very open in my search for potential respondents and made no effort to avoid the police, several of whom filled out questionnaires. I administered the questionnaire in a restaurant. After word spread, cooperative volunteers arrived every day.

Two weeks later, local police politely informed me that I could no longer continue my work. They allowed me to keep my research materials, and I returned to Saigon where I continued to administer the survey to anyone willing to participate.

I was not very successful in the capitol of former South Vietnam so I traveled to Bien Hoa where once existed a giant U.S. Air Force Base. Once again I had ample volunteers. It seemed that the former soldiers welcomed a chance to participate in such a project. Progress was fast because the average time to complete the questionnaire was only about 5 minutes.

Because I had friends who were also former soldiers in the Mekong Delta I traveled there and hired a boat that took me to a very nice air conditioned hotel accessible only by boat that rented for the incredibly expensive (by Viet standards) of \$13.00 per day. The research effort continued smoothly until the early part of the new century.

On January 15, 2000, a very good friend of mine who managed a hotel in Saigon made the long drive to warn me that two foreign affairs policemen (Viet equivalent of the CIA) had visited his hotel and inquired about my whereabouts. Someone apparently recognized me there and informed them of my presence. He told them he had not seen me. They left his hotel and returned to question him further after only an hour. I rewarded my friend \$50.00, the amount he makes working for a month and then told him goodbye.

The following morning I went straight to the airport to fly to Bangkok. Had the police been aware of my alias, I would have been arrested at the airport. Since they were not, I had an uneventful flight to Thailand.

My hasty exit prevented me from obtaining the 2000 respondents I wanted, but I had enough completed questionnaires for a very good statistical analysis. I was happy.

I intend to use this data as the subject of a PhD thesis at a future date. Until then, I offer in the following pages the questionnaires and frequencies (responses) of the subjects of this PTSD study. Interpretation of these documents is self-explanatory.

PCL-M (English Language)

PCL-M (Vietnamese Language)

Combat Exposure Scale (English Language)

Combat Exposure Scale (Vietnamese)

Interpreting the Data

For questions 1-17, the numbered responses represent a Likert scale where 1 = not at all, 2 = a little bit, 3 = moderately, 4 = quite a bit, and 5 = extremely.

1. Repeated, disturbing, memories, thoughts, or images of a stressful military experience?
2. Repeated, disturbing dreams of a stressful military experience.
3. Suddenly acting or feeling as if a stressful military experience were happening again (as if you were reliving it)?
4. Feeling very upset when something reminded you of a stressful military experience?
5. Having physical reactions (e.g., heart pounding, trouble breathing, sweating) when something reminded you of a stressful military experience?
6. Avoiding thinking about or talking about a stressful military experience or avoiding having feelings related to it?
7. Avoiding activities or situations because they reminded you of a stressful military experience?
8. Trouble remembering important parts of a stressful military experience?
9. Loss of interest in activities that you used to enjoy?
10. Feeling distant or cut off from other people?
11. Feeling emotionally numb or being unable to have loving feelings for those close to you?
12. Feeling as if your future somehow will be cut short?
13. Trouble falling or staying asleep?
14. Feeling irritable or having angry outbursts?
15. Having difficulty concentrating?
16. Being "superalert" or watchful or on guard?

17. Feeling jumpy or easily startled?

For numbers 18 through 24, the possible responses 1-5 are individually defined per question.

18. Did you ever go on combat patrols or have other very dangerous duty?
- | | | | | |
|----|------|-------|--------|-----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No | 1-3x | 4-12x | 13-50x | 51+ times |
19. Were you ever under enemy fire?
- | | | | | |
|-------|----------|---------|---------|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never | <1 month | 1-3 mos | 4-6 mos | 7 mos or more |
20. Were you ever surrounded by the enemy?
- | | | | | |
|----|------|-------|--------|-------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No | 1-2x | 3-12x | 13-25x | 26x or more |
21. What percentage of the men in your unit were killed (KIA), wounded or missing in action (MIA)?
- | | | | | |
|------|-------|--------|--------|-------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| None | 1-25% | 26-50% | 51-75% | 76% or more |
22. How often did you fire rounds at the enemy?
- | | | | | |
|----|------|-------|--------|-----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No | 1-3x | 4-12x | 13-50x | 51+ times |
23. How often did you see someone hit by incoming or outgoing rounds?
- | | | | | |
|----|------|-------|--------|-----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No | 1-3x | 4-12x | 13-50x | 51+ times |
24. How often were you in danger of being injured or killed (i.e., pinned down, overrun, ambushed, near miss, etc.)?
- | | | | | |
|----|------|-------|--------|-----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No | 1-3x | 4-12x | 13-50x | 51+ times |

The following pages contain the coded responses for all persons participating in the PTSD study. Please use the foregoing code to interpret this data. Scientists are invited to use this data for any purpose. This author will eventually interpret this data as partial satisfaction of requirements for a Doctoral degree.

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