Willis T. Allstead

CH 203

Response Week 10

16 April 2017

**Group 1, Question C**

Tim O’Brien detailed belongings of soldiers in the Vietnam war in his story “The Things They Carried”. He listed off many types of belongings: statues of buddha, wannabe love-letters, a lucky pebble, etc.. The belonging that most stood out to was the thumb Norman Bowker carried. The description was that of a gruesome death, which had become the norm to these men. “The thumb was dark brown, rubbery to the touch, and weighed 4 ounces at most. It had been cut from a VC corpse, a boy of fifteen or sixteen. They'd found him at the bottom of an irrigation ditch, badly burned, flies in his mouth and eyes” (O’Brien 15). To Norman this thumb signified more than just one boy’s death. It probably signified the outright confusion taking over the soldiers. They were taught and trained to hate the Vietnamese people, to hate the soil they dug trenches in, to hate the sky above them. In all of this training they we’re not taught how to deal with the shear amount of death they would come to see and take part in first hand.

**Group 2, Question B**

The epilogue written by Marilyn B. Young provided a saddening look into the way veterans were treated after the Vietnam war. The most sobering part of reading this epilogue was the recognition of just how little this problem has been changed in the years between then and now. Luckily now veterans and their families are more vocal about what goes on at home after a war, but so little money is diverted to veteran programs that it can still be perceived as an issue the U.S. government simply brushes off. With more research going into PTSD, less Americans feel so gung-ho about fighting for their country. This obviously goes against the national security interests of our country and provides a scenario in which our soldiers don’t want to complain to their higher-ups about horrible experiences and trauma. This sort of hush-hush attitude was touched on in Young’s epilogue, “Even the Veterans Administration, obviously reluctant to single out Vietnam veterans as having any particular difficulties (especially in the light of the meager benefits accorded them), reported a ‘greater distrust of institutions’ and a ‘bitterness, disgust and suspicion of those in positions of authority and responsibility.’” (Young 321). With more openness from not only the soldiers affected by war but their families, we will hopefully see progress regarding the treatment of our veterans.

**Group 3, Question B**

Milton Friedman explicitly refutes the idea that a corporation should be considered a person in the eyes of the government, or anybody else. What he claims is that a corporation is an “artificial person and in this sense may have artificial responsibilities, but "business" as a whole cannot be said to have responsibilities, even in this vague sense” (Friedman 1). The idea that a business is one entity is absurd in his eyes, because a business would not be able to exist on its own. He brings up the fact that certain people may be the “face” of a corporation such as the executives and that “As a person, he may have many other responsibilities that he recognizes or assumes voluntarily–to his family, his conscience, his feelings of charity, his church, his clubs, his city, his country” (Friedman 2). He claims that a business is not cognizant, and this alone is reason enough to believe that the idea of personifying a business from the perspective of the U.S. government is against the thoughts outlined in his essay.

**Group 4**

The undeniable decline of patriotism in the era of the Vietnam war was the topic of Creedence Clearwater Revival’s “Fortunate Son”, and this is followed by a time period of music that spawned Bruce Springsteen’s “Born in the USA”. The prior highlights the thoughts going through the minds of the younger generation, explaining that they aren’t lucky enough to escape the war due to their family’s money or political influence. “It ain't me, it ain't me  
I ain't no senator's son, son” is a clear explanation of this feeling. In “Born in the USA”, “I'm ten years burning down the road Nowhere to run ain't got nowhere to go” symbolizes the other end of the war, when veterans were left without proper help—physically or mentally.

Works Cited

O’Brien, Tim | <https://ares.library.unr.edu/ares/ares.dll?SessionID=L072524800V&Action=10&Type=10&Value=74686>

Young, Marilyn | <https://ares.library.unr.edu/ares/ares.dll?SessionID=L072524800V&Action=10&Type=10&Value=74692>

Friedman, Milton | <https://ares.library.unr.edu/ares/ares.dll?SessionID=L072524800V&Action=10&Type=10&Value=74675>

Springsteen, Bruce | Provided in webcampus

Creedence Clearwater Revival | Provided in webcampus