



The Vietnam
Peace
Movement

Art as a Catalyst for
Change

Vietnam Overview

- Vietnam is a small country in Southeast Asia.
- Began as a civil war between Communist-ruled North Vietnam and noncommunist South Vietnam
- Longest war in which the U.S. has taken part
- The war lasted from 1957 to 1975, but the U.S. was involved between 1965 and 1973.
- North Vietnam wanted to unite the north and south into a single nation under communist rule. The United States and the South Vietnamese army tried to stop them.

U.S. Involvement

- U.S. involved in a **Cold War** with Russia
- U.S. fears the spread of **communism** and provides military training for South Vietnam to try to stop the Northern communists from ruling
- South Vietnam army is unsuccessful so U.S. gets involved in conflict
- After almost a decade of fighting, a peace **treaty** is signed and U.S. military leaves
- North Vietnam ignores the treaty and begins fighting again, defeating South Vietnam to unite the country under communism

Facts about Vietnam

- This was the last war that had a **draft**
- First war with a lot of TV coverage
- 58,000 U.S. soldiers killed
- 365,000 U.S. soldiers wounded
- 1.5 million Vietnamese killed
- Longest U.S. War

**RESULT: MANY OPPOSED THE
WAR AND A WIDESPREAD PEACE
MOVEMENT BEGAN**

Counterculture Movement

- The **counterculture** of the 1960s was a rebellion of teens and young adults against the norms and values of American society,
- They were against what they called the **establishment**, the government, large companies, etc.
- They wanted to create an alternative culture based on peace and love instead of on strict rules and money/jobs.

The Hippie Movement

- Grew out of the Counterculture Movement
- Believed in living communally and sharing
- Rejected materialism and embraced freedom
- Valued self-expression through music and art, as well as through clothing and style
- Felt love and peace were most important
- Many left behind family, work, and traditional home life for more freedom (sex, drugs, and rock and roll)

Anti-War Movement

- Over time, the Vietnam War became increasingly unpopular
- **Hawks:** those who supported the war
- **Doves:** those who were against the war
- **Students for a Democratic Society** were a radical group that protested the war on college campuses
- Though some violence occurred, this movement was largely focused on peaceful protest, especially using music and art

Art as a Catalyst for Change

- Many musicians and artists began composing pieces to help support the peace movement and bring about an end to the war
- In 1969 a network of antiwar activists across the US planned the *National Vietnam Moratorium*, a nationwide coordinated protest against the war on Vietnam.
- Activist and student groups set Wednesday October 5th, 1969 as the target date for mass demonstrations.

Protest and Peace Music of Vietnam

- During the Vietnam War, many musicians used their popularity to speak out against the war and offer hope for peaceful times ahead
- Some songs told specific stories, others criticized war in general, and some just offered a hope for more peaceful times ahead

I was only 19 (Redgum 1983)

Mum and Dad and Denny saw the passing-out parade at Puckapunyal

It was a long march from cadets.

The sixth battalion was the next to tour, and it was me who drew the card.

We did Canungra, Shoalwater before we left.

And Townsville lined the footpaths as we marched down to the quay

This clipping from the paper shows us young and strong and clean.

And there's me in my slouch hat with my SLR and greens.

God help me, I was only nineteen.

[REDACTED]

From Vung Tau, riding Chinooks, to the dust at Nui Dat

I'd been in and out of choppers now for months.
But we made our tents a home, VB and pinups on the lockers

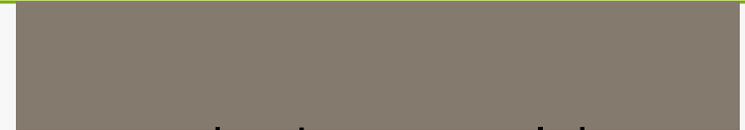
And an Agent Orange sunset through the scrub.

And can you tell me, doctor, why I stil can't get to sleep?

And night-time's just a jungle dark and a barking M16?

And what's this rash that comes and goes, can you tell me what it means?

God help me, I was only ninteenn.



A four week operation when each step could mean
your last one on two legs
It was a war within yourself.
But you wouldn't let your mates down til they had
you dusted off
So you closed your eyes and thought about
something else.

Then someone yelled "Contact!" and the bloke
behind me swore
We hooked in there for hours, then a Godalmighty
roar
Frankie kicked a mine the day that mankind kicked
the moon,
God help me, he was going home in June.

I can still see Frankie, drinking tinnies in the Grand
Hotel

On a thirty-six hour rec leave in Vung Tau

And I can still hear Frankie, lying screaming in the
jungle

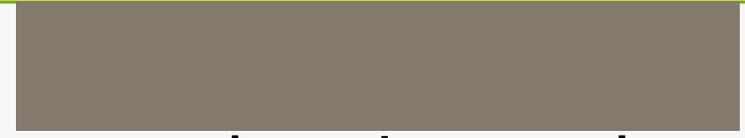
Til the morphine came and killed the bloody row.

And the Anzac legends didn't mention mud and
blood and tears

And the stories that my father told me never
seemed quite real.

I caught some pieces in my back that I didn't even
feel

God help me, I was only nineteen.



And can you tell me, doctor, why I
still can't get to sleep?

And why the Channel Seven
chopper chills me to my feet?

And what's this rash that comes
and goes, can you tell me what it
means?

God help me, I was only nineteen.

Some Anti-War Artists

- During the Vietnam War, many musicians used their popularity to speak out against the war and offer hope for peaceful times ahead
- Some songs told specific stories, others criticized war in general, and some just offered a hope for more peaceful times ahead

Vietnam Era Songs

- The Beatles' "Give Peace a Chance"
- The Beatles' "Revolution"
- Country Joe and the Fish's "I Feel Like I'm Fixing to Die Rag"
- Barry McGuire's "Eve of Destruction"
- Pete Seeger's "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?"
- Elvis Presley's "If I can Dream of a Better Land"
- Bob Dylan's "The Times They Are A-Changing"