

# Educator's Guide to Visiting LZ Lambeau

May 21, 2010

Activities and Information for  
Students and Educators

LZ Lambeau is a chance for the state of Wisconsin to formally welcome home our Vietnam Veterans. It is also a chance to heal wounds, say thank you, and come together to learn from one another. We are pleased to welcome school groups from around the area to this important event. It is an invaluable opportunity for teenagers to meet Vietnam Veterans and see firsthand the equipment, clothing, and vehicles that they used during the war.

Before attending the event, we have created a variety of activities that teachers can employ in the classroom to prepare students for their visit. This curriculum can easily be integrated in your already established Vietnam curriculum. In addition to the materials in this packet, all teachers visiting LZ Lambeau will receive a special VFW Vietnam War Combat Chronology pamphlet in the mail which includes a detailed timeline of battles, statistics on casualties, famous Vietnam Veterans, and maps.

The pre-visit curriculum focuses on letters home from soldiers, the cultural climate of Wisconsin during the period, and a variety of maps, dictionaries, and statistics about the war. While searching for a brief overview to include in the packet, we realized that every history has its own bias and perspective, which in of itself is a topic to discuss in the classroom. Included below is a list of website resources that give the reader different angles on the Vietnam War.

The visit activities center around the exhibits featured at LZ Lambeau. Tours will begin at the Moving Wall, a replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C. In addition to a tour guide, each group will be accompanied by a Vietnam Veteran who can answer questions along the way. The groups will then move into the Lambeau Field Atrium where they will experience an object exhibit by the Wisconsin Veterans Museum and a photography exhibit from Wisconsin Public Television, among others. Finally, groups will exit the Atrium into the parking lot outside to view some of the vehicles used during the war.

After your visit the education packet suggests a variety of activities that will help students reflect on their experience. We encourage teachers to visit the Wisconsin Vietnam War Stories website. Along with maps and other resources, there are excerpts from the documentary with accompanying transcripts. These interviews are sure to make a lasting impression on your students.

Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Social Studies Instruction:  
B.8.1, B.12.1, B.8.4, B.12.4, B.12.5

#### Event Related Websites:

LZ Lambeau  
[www.lzlambeau.org](http://www.lzlambeau.org)

Wisconsin Vietnam War Stories  
<http://wisconsinstories.org/vietnam/>

Wisconsin Veterans Museum  
<http://museum.dva.state.wi.us/>

## General Overviews of the Vietnam War:

Battlefield: Vietnam from PBS

<http://www.pbs.org/battlefieldvietnam/>

American Experience: Vietnam, an on-line companion to *Vietnam: A Television History*

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/vietnam/>

Digital History Vietnam

<http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/modules/vietnam/index.cfm>

## The Air War

The Air War in Vietnam

[http://www.centennialofflight.gov/essay/Air\\_Power/vietnam/AP40.htm](http://www.centennialofflight.gov/essay/Air_Power/vietnam/AP40.htm)

The Role of Airpower in the Vietnam War

<http://www.militaryhistoryonline.com/vietnam/airpower/>

## Other Websites:

Information on the Montagnards

<http://cnnc.uncg.edu/pdfs/montagnards.pdf>

The Split Horn: Hmong in the Vietnam War

<http://www.pbs.org/splithorn/story1.html>

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (information on the wall)

<http://www.vvmf.org/>

Congressional Medal of Honor Society

<http://www.cmoHS.org/>

## Vietnam Photography:

The Vietnam War photography of Tim Page

<http://www.vietnampix.com/index.html>

Stock Photographs from Vietnam

<http://vietnamphotography.com/>

Requiem: By the Photojournalists who died in Vietnam and Indochina

<http://digitaljournalist.org/issue9711/req1.htm>

# Vietnam Warriors

## A Statistical Profile

Confusion reigns when it comes to numbers and the Vietnam War. Listed below are some figures that may help sort out fact from fiction in many media reports concerning veterans.



### IN UNIFORM AND IN COUNTRY

- Vietnam Vets: 9.7% of their generation.
- 9,087,000 military personnel served on active duty during the Vietnam era (Aug. 5, 1964 – May 7, 1975).
- 8,744,000 personnel were on active duty during the war (Aug. 5, 1964 – March 28, 1973).
- 3,403,100 (including 514,300 offshore) personnel served in the Southeast Asia Theater (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and sailors in adjacent South China Sea waters).
- 2,594,000 personnel served within the borders of South Vietnam (Jan. 1, 1965 – March 28, 1973).
- Of the 2.6 million, between 1 and 1.6 million (40-60%) either fought in combat, provided close combat support or were at least fairly regularly exposed to enemy attack. 15% were in combat units.
- Another 50,000 men served in Vietnam between 1960 and 1964.
- 7,484 women (6,250 or 83.5% were nurses) served in Vietnam.
- Peak troop strength in Vietnam: 543,482 (April 30, 1969).

### CASUALTIES

- Hostile deaths: 47,418.
- Non-hostile deaths: 10,811.
- Total: 58,229 (includes men formerly classified as MIA and *Mayaguez* casualties). Men who have subsequently died of wounds account for the changing total.
- 8 nurses died — 1 was KIA.
- Married men killed: 17,539.
- 61% of the men killed were 21 years old or younger.
- Highest state death rate: West Virginia — 84.1 per 100,000 males (national average in 1970: 58.9).
- Wounded: 303,704 — 153,329 hospital-

ized + 150,375 injured who required no hospital care.

- Severely disabled: 75,000 — 23,214 100% disabled; 5,283 lost limbs; 1,081 sustained multiple amputations.
- Amputation or crippling wounds to the lower extremities were 300% higher than in WWII and 70% higher than in Korea. Multiple amputations occurred at the rate of 18.4% compared to 5.7% in WWII.
- Missing in Action: 2,338 (at war's end).
- Prisoners of War: 766 (114 died in captivity).

### DRAFTEES VS. VOLUNTEERS

- 25% (648,500) of total forces in country were draftees. (66% of U.S. armed forces members in WWII were drafted.)
- Draftees accounted for 30.4% (17,725) of combat deaths in Vietnam.
- Reservists killed: 5,977.
- National Guard: 9,000 served; 22 KIA.

### RACE AND ETHNIC BACKGROUND

- 88.4% of the men who actually served in Vietnam were Caucasian (includes Hispanics); 10.6% (275,000) were black; 1% belonged to other races.
- 86.3% of the men who died in Vietnam were Caucasian; 12.5% (7,241) were black; 1.2% belonged to other races.
- 170,000 Hispanics served in Vietnam; 3,070 (5.2% of total) died there.
- 86.8% of the men who were killed as a result of hostile action were Caucasian; 12.1% (5,711) were black; 1.1% belonged to other races.
- 14.6% (1,530) of non-combat deaths were among blacks.
- 34% of blacks who enlisted volunteered for the combat arms.
- Overall, blacks suffered 12.5% of the deaths in Vietnam at a time when the

percentage of blacks of military age was 13.5% of the total population.

- Religion of dead: Protestant — 64.4%; Catholic — 28.9%; other/none — 6.7%.

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

- 76% of the men sent to Vietnam were from lower middle/working class backgrounds.
- Three-fourths had family incomes above the poverty level; 50% were from middle-income backgrounds.
- Some 23% of Vietnam vets had fathers with professional, managerial or technical occupations.
- 79% of the men who served in Vietnam had a high school education or better when they entered the military service. (63% of Korean War vets and only 45% of WWII vets had completed high school upon separation.)

### WINNING & LOSING

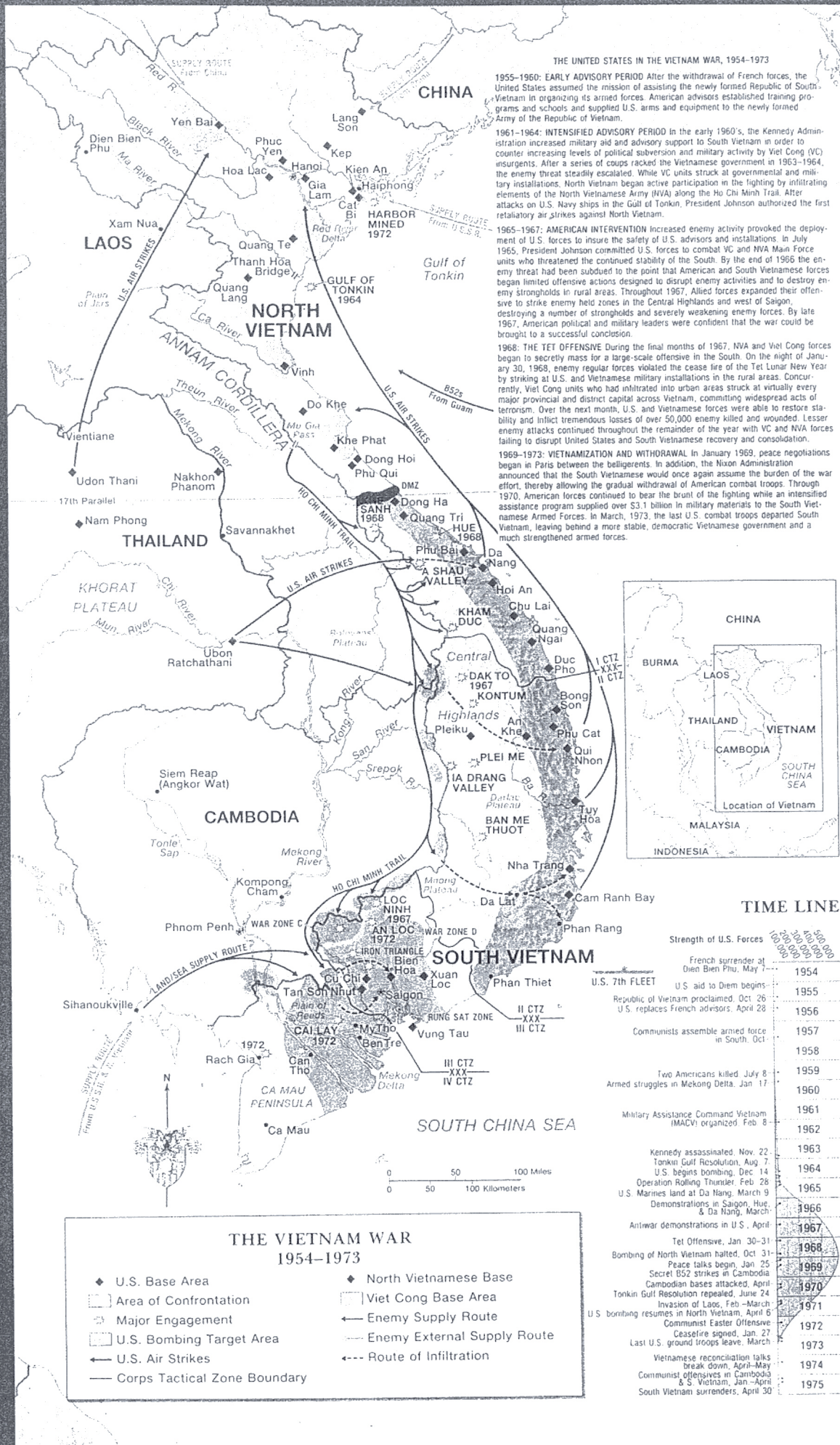
- 82% of veterans who saw heavy combat strongly believe the war was lost because of lack of political will.
- Nearly 75% of the general public agrees that it was a failure of political will, not of arms.

### AGE & HONORABLE SERVICE

- Average age of the Vietnam War GI: 19 (26 for WWII).
- 97% of Vietnam-era veterans were honorably discharged.

### PRIDE IN SERVICE

- 91% of actual Vietnam War veterans and 90% of those who saw heavy combat are proud to have served their country.
- 66% of Vietnam vets say they would serve again if called upon (polled in the 1980s).
- 87% of the public now holds Vietnam veterans in high esteem.



## Commonly Used Slang from the Vietnam War

**Agent Orange:** One of several defoliants that were designated by the color stripe on the container. Defoliants were used by the U.S. military to destroy enemy cover and to prevent the enemy from growing needed crops.

**ARVN:** abbreviation for the Army of the Republic of Vietnam. Pronounced “ar-vin”.

**AWOL:** abbreviation for Absent Without Official Leave, meaning to leave a post or position without permission.

**Base Camp:** 1.the rear area. 2.a resupply base for field units and a location for headquarters units, artillery batteries, and air fields.

**Boo-Coo:** perversion of the French word Beaucoup, meaning many or plenty.

**Black Magic:** nickname for the M-16 rifle. The standard military rifle used in Vietnam.

**Body Count:** a MACV term for the number of enemy killed, wounded, or captured during an operation. It was used by Saigon and Washington as a means for measuring the progress of the war, or success in a mission.

**Bug Juice:** 1. slang for Kool-aid, which soldier in Vietnam drank in great quantity. 2. slang for government provided insecticide, which was usually not effective.

**Charlie:** 1. the military phonetic for the letter C. 2. short for Victor Charlie, meaning the Viet Cong, or the enemy.

**Didi Mau:** Vietnamese for go quickly.

**Dinky Dau:** from the Vietnamese for dien cau dau, to be literally off the wall, crazy, bad, or no good.

**Dogtags:** small metal tags imprinted with the soldier’s name, serial number, blood type, and religion. Usually worn around the soldier’s neck or laced into boots, they were often worn one around the neck and one in a boot so that a body could be identified even if dismembered.

**Donut Dolly:** nickname for the Red Cross women who handed out coffee and doughnuts.

**Dust-off:** medical evacuation by helicopter, also called medevac. The term came from the great amount of dust thrown up by the rotors as the medevacs came to land.

**DZ:** abbreviation for Drop Zone, the prearranged landing area for parachuted men or equipment.

**Firebase:** a self-contained and self-defended artillery base.

**FNGs:** abbreviation for F\*cking New Guys. The FNG was usually avoided and shunned by the others in the unit for fear of his making a serious mistake or having an accident that could affect others.

**Frag:** 1. abbreviation for fragmentation hand grenade. 2. using a fragmentation grenade to wound or kill one's own officer, often because of perceived incompetence.

**Freedom Bird:** slang for the planes that brought American soldiers back to the States after their tour of duty in Vietnam.

**FUBAR:** abbreviation for F\*cked Up Beyond All Recognition.

**Gook:** one of several derogatory terms for a Vietnamese person, especially the enemy. Gook is the Korean word for person, and the term was passed down from Korean war veterans and others who had served in Korea.

**Green:** slang for safe. For example, a green LZ.

**Grunt:** in Vietnam the word grunt originally referred to fighting marines, but later, to any soldier fighting there.

**Hmong:** a dominant Laotian hill tribe.

**Hanoi Hilton:** the nickname of the Hoa Lo Prison, a highly feared prisoner-of-war camp in North Vietnam. One of the most famous men that was held there was Senator John McCain.

**Ho Chi Minh Trail:** the infiltration route used extensively by the North Vietnamese Army to move troops and supplies from North Vietnam through Laos and Cambodia to all parts of South Vietnam.

**Hootch:** (hooch) a hut or simple dwelling, either military or civilian.

**Hot/Cold:** Hot is slang for a dangerous area under fire. Compared to a cold area, which is an area with no danger. Often used in terms of a Landing Zone, such as a Hot LZ or Cold LZ.

**Hump:** slang meaning to walk. Also calling humping, which was slang for marching with a heavy load.

**In-Country:** in Vietnam.

**Indian Country:** slang for areas controlled by the Viet Cong, or North Vietnamese Army, or anywhere the enemy was.

**Jody:** generic name for the guy back home who took the wife or girlfriend of a soldier at war.

**Jolly Green Giant:** nickname for the largest helicopters used for transporting troops and material supplied to the American forces.

**Jungle boots/jungle rot:** footwear that looked like a combination combat boot and canvas sneaker. The canvas material dried faster after soldier waded through water than traditional leather combat boots. Because of the damp environment and wet feet, many soldier developed jungle rot, a skin rash, on their feet.

**LRRP:** abbreviation for Long-range Reconnaissance Patrol, an elite team usually composed of five to seven men who would go deep into the jungle to observe enemy activity without initiating contact.

**LZ:** Abbreviation for Landing Zone. A landing zone is a small clearing secured temporarily for the landing of helicopters to unload men and cargo.

**MACV:** (pronounced Mac-v) abbreviation for Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. This was the American military headquarters of the senior general

**MIA/KIA:** abbreviation for Missing In Action/Killed In Action

**Montagnard:** a Vietnamese term for several tribes of mountain people made up of roughly 60 ethnic groups and 5 million people all together. They were courted by both sides during the war because of their extensive knowledge of mountain terrain.

**MOS:** abbreviation for Military Occupation Specialty, the numerical code for assigned jobs in the army or marines.

**MRE/c-rats/c-rations:** abbreviation for Meal, Ready-to-Eat. This combat ration replaced c-rations. The troops said MRE stood for Meal, Rejected by Everyone.

**Napalm/Nape:** a jellied gasoline incendiary used in flamethrowers and bombs, napalm was used on both sides in the Vietnam War as a defoliant and as an antipersonnel weapon. Napalm adheres to whatever it touches, including human skin.

**NLF:** abbreviation for National Liberation Front, the political organization of the guerilla forces in South Vietnam. Its purpose was to overthrow the government of South Vietnam and unite with North Vietnam.

**Pop Smoke:** slang for igniting a smoke grenade to identify a location or to signal an aircraft.

**POW:** abbreviation for Prisoner of War. There were 12,000 men listed as POW/MIA during the Vietnam War.

**Punji Stake:** primitive booby traps used by the Viet Cong. Traps consisted of sharpened bamboo stakes hidden under water, at ambush sites, along trails, or in carefully dug hidden pits. Often dipped in feces or poison, these stakes penetrated soldiers' feet.

**R & R:** abbreviation for rest and recuperation, a three to seven day vacation from the war for soldiers once during their one year tour.

**Short-timer:** a person with just a few weeks or days before the end of his tour of duty. Short-timer's created "short-timer's calendars", with a countdown of his days left.

**Slick:** a UH-1 (Huey) helicopter used as a troop carrier. It did not have protruding armaments and was, therefore, "slick".

**Viet Cong/VC:** Vietnamese guerrillas. The term comes from Vietnam Cong San, signifying Vietnamese Communists, and was used in its abbreviated form "VC."

Jim Kurtz was born in Appleton Wisconsin in 1940. He joined the ROTC Program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and served with the 1st Infantry Division during the Vietnam War. As a platoon leader, Kurtz experienced combat as well as the problems associated with a leadership role. Kurtz was honorably discharged from service in 1967 and settled in Madison, Wisconsin.

Jim Kurtz wrote these letters during his one year tour in Vietnam (1966-1967). When reading the letters, think about how his background might have shaped his opinion on the war and the enemy.

In addition, think about how the following issues of the Vietnam War are reflected through Kurtz's letters.

1. Fighting the boredom. While many soldiers experienced combat, others might have only seen a few minutes of combat in their entire tour. How does this affect the soldier?
2. Guerilla warfare. What toll does this take on a soldier?
3. The draft. Who was drafted? Who got deferments?
4. Body count. What was the body count? How important was body count to the U.S. military?
5. What is the cost of war?
6. The jungle as an added enemy to U.S. troops.
7. The unlikely hero.



Dear Folks;

12 July  
1966

Well the first big adventure is over for the time being. I don't think I will ever forget the last 2 1/2 weeks. I wouldn't say that they were miserable, but they sure were close to it. You can believe all the bad things that you hear about this place & then some.

I was in an operation that netted 400-600 VC body count in just a few days. When they give that kind of number we aren't kidding. The VC are all dooped up, you have to kill them to stop them. They appear to be very well equipped & well fed. One thing is for sure there is nothing glamorous about war.

The worst part of it is the dying. Fortunately that doesn't happen very often, but still there is too much of it.

The jungle is something else. The god lord created it for something other than walking in. There are places that the vines are so low & thick that you have to crawl. This is no fun when you have 60 lbs (everything you need to live for 3 weeks) on your back.

You can be sure that I will have some real fun stories for you when I get back. Most of them aren't the type that you can really write about.

It looks like that old LLB is going to  
come through again for the trial. In the  
near future I'll be pulled out of the  
field & get on the 1st Bn/18th SF job.

My new address will be  
Holsters 1st/18th Inf APO SF  
V96345

This will be a tremendous break. I'm willing  
to pull my share in the field, but when  
they say boy come on in I'll make it.  
You can be sure that it will only be an accident  
if I become a hero but I guess that is true  
of all of them. I know that it's no  
fun to be shot at.

Enough war stories. How is everything  
going back home? I hope that you all  
aren't working too hard. Could you see if  
you could get the Lutheran Witness sent  
over here? A little later I might  
ask you to send me some paper backs.  
One thing is there is nothing else to do but read  
when you aren't working.

I sending 400 to be put in Anchor. My  
abstinent won't be coming for a few months.

Well goodbye for now & say hello to  
everyone for me.

Jim

14 July  
1966

Dear Folks;

Right now we are fighting the worse part of the war called boredom. At least no one gets hurt though.

Had a little excitement yesterday. I had an ambush patrol out. Unfortunately we were sitting 400 hundred yards from a dub 500# bomb. Bob sent out a demo detail to blow it without telling me about it. It goes without saying that I jumped so high that I looked like I was flying. Then all the rocks & all debris started flying. Fortunately no one was hurt. The thing that is hard to get used to is that you'll get shot at when you least expect it. When I came over I thought there would be big fire-fights all the time, but it ain't so. The VC fight dirty. You cannot imagine the traps etc that they use. We can handle them, even though they are on dope. In one base camp I saw enough to get 500-600 all hopped up.

The average rifleman over here is from the lowest classes. Many of them were huns before they got here, but this place has really shaped them up. I would be proud to go anywhere with the troops that are doing the fighting. It is fantastic. How few troops we actually have in the field. I would say that at least 1/2 of the people over here are in no more

danger than if they were in Madison.  
Easy to throw stones but after living like a  
savage for awhile these garrison troops  
are gone. The principle thing is that they  
filter off a lot of the supplies that are  
really needed in the field.

I don't get me wrong I'll get out of the  
field as quick as I can. This only because  
a man a fool to expose himself any more than  
necessary. It looks like I'll be Calcutta  
right soon but I'll still get some action.

I have lost some weight but not as  
much as I expected. My health so far  
has been fine. Let's hope that it stays  
that way.

I have been get mail good since the  
4th of July.

Well say hello to everyone for  
me.

Jim

The 1979 documentary, *The War At Home*, highlights the student led anti-war movement on the campus of University of Wisconsin-Madison in the late 1960's and early 1970's. It gives the viewer insight on the climate of college campuses during this time period.

These same college students and other American youth were the men drafted to serve in Vietnam. This documentary provides students with an understanding of the anti-war mentality that shaped some of the soldiers that the U.S. sent to Vietnam. It also could be used to facilitate a discussion about the hostility Vietnam veterans faced from their peers when returning home from their tour of duty.

If this DVD is unavailable at your school, you can find it at your local library or video rental site.

## The War At Home

How did Lyndon Johnson's presidential campaign commercial play into cold war fears?

In the spring of 1965, what was the student movement's first overt action against the government?

The sit-in at the UW Administration building was due to a protest over what?

Why did students protest over Dow Chemical in 1967?

How did students try to motivate the greater community to become involved in the anti-war movement?

Why did Wisconsin delegates want to change the location of the 1968 Democratic National Convention?

What type of research was done at the Army Math Research Center?

What was the New Years Gang?

How did Nixon's invasion of Cambodia change the college anti-war movement?

In your opinion, who is responsible for the criminal action of a country?

How did the Vietnam Veterans shown in this documentary view their experience in Vietnam?

Is this movie biased and if so, what is the bias?

Do you think there would have been a college protest movement against the Vietnam War had there been no draft?

## Back in the World

“Back in the World”, a portrait exhibit from Wisconsin Public Television, highlights the Vietnam Veterans featured in the Wisconsin Vietnam War Stories documentary. The artist, Jim Gill asked veterans to bring and pose with an object that was significant to their Vietnam experience. The text panels that correspond to the portrait contain quotes that come straight from the veteran’s interview for the documentary.

Explore and take in the portraits in the exhibit.

1. Was there a particular portrait that drew you in?
2. Why?
3. What emotions do you see in this portrait?
4. How does this portrait make you feel?
5. After viewing the portrait and reading the accompanying text, have you gained any insight about this veteran?

## Objects of the Vietnam War

The Wisconsin Veterans Museum collects objects from soldiers serving in the U.S. Military from the Civil War to the present day conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan. The museum's collection of 25,000 objects includes helmets, uniforms, weapons, flags, souvenirs, equipment, and much more. While every object has a unique history behind it, it is the objects that came from the Vietnam War that often give the visitor the most personal representation of the donor.

Soldiers from the Vietnam War often personalized their boonie hats, helmets, jackets, dog tags, and other equipment. Sometimes this meant that a soldier wrote quotes, lyrics, and symbols on his boonie hat. In other instances, a soldier added items to his dog tags to make them more useful. Soldiers were able to get around military regulations because these regulations were not always enforced by commanding officers. As the Vietnam War dragged on, morale became increasingly low due to the anti-war movement at home and a drafted soldier base that was affected by the unpopularity of the war and the reality of combat.

You will see examples of personalized objects in the Wisconsin Veterans Museum exhibit. Choose two of these objects to focus on. Answer the following questions:

What are the objects?

Who used the objects?

How are the objects personalized/altered?

Was this alteration done for comfort? To express emotion? For ease of use?

What can you learn about the owner from viewing this object?

How does viewing objects used during the Vietnam War affect your thoughts on the war and/or the people that fought in it?

## The Moving Wall

### **\*Memorial Etiquette\***

Students: please remember that you are at a memorial and should act accordingly. Many of the visitors at this wall are paying respect to friends and family that they lost in the Vietnam War.

- No eating at the memorial
- Do not litter
- Please walk
- Speak in a quite voice
- The memorials are designed so that you can touch them, but please refrain from sitting or climbing on them
- The materials left at the wall are tributes to the fallen soldiers, please do not touch them
- No backpacks

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial was designed by Maya Lin and dedicated in Washington, D.C. on November 13, 1982. There are 58,253 names inscribed on the wall and they are arranged according to the date of casualty. The Moving Wall is a traveling replica of the memorial in Washington, D.C.

Lin designed the memorial as an interpretation of her feelings on the Vietnam War. How does the structure of the memorial make you feel?

Lin chose to list names by date of casualty. What do you think her purpose was for doing this?

Choose one or two names from the wall that you find interesting. Search these names on the internet and find out the soldier's story.

To learn more about the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Maya Lin's vision, visit:  
<http://www.vvmf.org/141.cfm>

### Post LZ Lambeau Visit Curriculum Suggestions:

1. Have students write a reflection of their experience at LZ Lambeau. This reflection could include what they learned about Vietnam War/Vietnam Veterans, what they would like to learn more about, and if their feelings about the Vietnam War/Veterans changed after the event.
2. View clips (audio slideshows) from the Wisconsin Public Television documentary “Wisconsin Vietnam War Stories”. The website to find the audio slideshows is:  
[http://wisconsinstories.org/vietnam/slideshow\\_allen.cfm](http://wisconsinstories.org/vietnam/slideshow_allen.cfm) There are transcripts posted on the website that correspond to the clips.
3. Invite a veteran into the classroom. Students can brainstorm in the days ahead of the visit about possible questions by incorporating images and ideas garnered from their experience at LZ Lambeau. To find names of Vietnam Veterans in your community, call the Wisconsin Veterans Museum’s Reference Archivist at (608) 267-1790, toll-free 1-800-WIS-VETS (947-8387) or e-mail him at [reference.desk@dva.state.wi.us](mailto:reference.desk@dva.state.wi.us)