1960s and 1970s Lesson Plans

The Vietnam Era 1967–71
War and Antiwar Sentiment
Lesson Three – Opposition to the Vietnam War

by Teresa Boruff-Young

Introduction

These lessons are part of a U.S. Department of Education Teaching American History Grant to the Brown County Schools, Nashville, Indiana, in collaboration with the Department of History, Indiana University–Purdue University at Indianapolis and the Indiana Historical Society.

In this lesson students will analyze and interpret primary sources from the Indiana Historical Society collections and other sources to consider antiwar sentiment in the United States, and especially in Indiana, during the Vietnam war.

Essential Question

How did the Vietnam War impact Americans?

Grade Level

High School

Academic Standards for the Social Studies

- Indiana Standards:
  - High School, U.S. History, Standard 7, The United States in Troubled Times: 1960 to 1980 (USH 7.3, 7.4, and 7.10)
- National Standards (National Council for Social Studies): II Time, Continuity, and Change; III People, Places, and Environments; V Individuals, Groups, and Institutions; VI Power, Authority, and Goverrnance; and X Civic Ideals and Practices

Social Studies/Historical Concepts

Vietnam War and antiwar protest

Time Required

Four eighty-minute class periods

Objectives

At the end of this lesson students will be able to:

- Identify dates and summarize significant antiwar protests and actions that took place during the Vietnam War, especially in Indiana.
- Connect the protests to military and foreign policy decisions being made during the same time period.
- Apply their knowledge of the war and opposition to it to write an essay about a fictional protest.
- Analyze and state the sentiments of people living in Indiana toward the Vietnam War.

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- Interpret newspaper articles and primary sources about opposition to the war.
- Plot the dates on a time line.
- Interpret political cartoons.
- Explain the connection between wartime events and the antiwar movement.

Materials Required

- Student-created time lines from lesson one.
  - "The Vietnam Era 1967–71, War and Antiwar Sentiment Lesson Plans" are available on the IHS Web site at http://www.indianahistory.org/teachers-students/teacher-resources/classroom-tools/1960s-and-1970s (accessed September 1, 2011).
- Audiovisual Materials
  - *The Weather Underground*, DVD.
    - Refer to the resource list on page three of this lesson.
- Print Materials
  - Photocopies of newspaper articles for the time period 1967 through 1971.
    - Refer to pages three and four of this lesson for a suggested list.
  - Senator Vance Harke's weekly press reports from the Indiana Historical Society Digital Image Collections.
    - Refer to the resource list on pages four and five of this lesson.
    - Download and print these materials for student use during class from the IHS Web site at http://images.indianahistory.org/cdm4/search.php (accessed October 7, 2011). Enter an Item ID in the "The exact phrase" field to locate the item.
- Additional Web Site Resources
  - Refer to the resource list on page five of this lesson.

Procedure

- Introduction
  - When available, show excerpts from *The Weather Underground* documentary as an introduction to this lesson.
    - Warning: This film contains language not suitable for high school students and some strong suggestions of nudity. Excerpts should be screened carefully, but the film does give an excellent picture of the antiwar sentiments of the time.
    - If the film is not available, students may view political cartoons from newspapers depicting opposition to the war, statements from Vietnam War veterans who were opposed to the war, and materials explaining the "May 2nd Movement." Refer to the "The Vietnam Era 1967–71, War and Antiwar Sentiment Lesson Resources" available on the IHS Web site at http://www.indianahistory.org/teachers-students/teacher-resources/classroom-tools/1960s-and-1970s (accessed September 1, 2011).
  - Following a brief discussion of the film or related antiwar materials, ask students to use this information to speculate why some people were opposed to the Vietnam War. During the course of the discussion, ask students to make a connection to the current situation in the Middle East, or elsewhere, and opposition to present-day wars.

- Student Activities
  - Ask students to complete these tasks:
    - Read newspaper accounts of antiwar protests in the United States from 1967 to 1971.
    - Plot the protest dates on the same time line as they plotted the events of the war in lesson one.
    - Participate in class discussions of the connection between events of the war in Vietnam and the antiwar protests at home.
- Write a fictional newspaper account of an antiwar protest.

Assessment

Participation in class discussion will indicate the student has grasped the concepts that were introduced in the film or introductory reading assignments. The time line and essay will be graded using rubrics found on the handouts. Refer to pages six and seven of this lesson.

Resource List

- Audiovisual Materials
  - Billy Ayers, Kathleen Cleaver, Bernadine Dohrn, Mark Rudd, Brian Flanagan, Lily Taylor (narrator), et al. *The Weather Underground*, DVD. Directed by Sam Green II and Bill Siegel. New York: New Video Group, 2004.
- Print Materials
  - Newpaper articles for the time period 1967 throught 1971.
    - Check state and local libraries for news accounts of the Vietnam War.
  - The following are examples of newspaper articles from two Bloomington, Indiana, newspapers reporting on Vietnam and local opposition to United States involvement in the war:
    - *Bloomington Herald-Telephone*
    - "An Opportunity to Express Your Opinion," April 4, 1967
    - "How Do You Vote on Vietnam Policy?" April 4, 1967
    - Voice of the People "Straw Vote on Vietnam," April 4, 1967
    - "'Grassroots Opinion' Supports More Pressure," May 9, 1967
    - "Demonstration Cost U.S. Lives: Westmoreland," April 24, 1967
    - "Hartke Assails LBJ as Viet 'Dissenter,'" October 5, 1967
    - "Anti-Draft Pamphlets Passed at South Bend," October 6, 1967
    - "1,068 in Bloomington Ask Viet Bombing Halt," October 8, 1967
    - "This Way Out" Political Cartoon," October 8, 1967
    - "Vietnam Protests Won't Paralyze Pentagon," October 15, 1967
    - "Anti-War Protests Spread Across U.S." October 17, 1967
    - "20 Injured at Oakland: Protests Continue," October 18, 1967
    - "Rallyists Divided," October 19, 1967
    - "Police Repel Protester Charge," October 19, 1967
    - "Antiwar Rallies Flare; Brooklyn Bout Bloody," October 20, 1967
    - "Thousands Attack Pentagon; Marshalls, Troops Repel Push," October 22, 1967
    - "Guardsmen Rout Students with Gas on Cal Campus," March 1, 1969
    - "31 Students Protests in Week, but Resistance Is Stiffening," March 2, 1969

- *Indiana Daily Student*
- "Viet Cong Hit Saigon; Red Flag Flies at Hue," February 1, 1968
- "Johnson Rules Out Viet Bomb Halt; Dead and Wounded Exceed 14,000," February 2, 1968
- "U.S. and Soviet Ships Collide Near North Korea," February 2, 1968
- "A Communication to Students," February 1968
- "The Right to Demonstrate: . . . CEWV-Larger Than Vietnam Issue," February 17, 1968
- "Robert Turner: Strong Support for Vietnam," February 22, 1968
- "New Draft Policy Offers Canada and Confusion," March 1, 1968
- "War Critics in Senate Spark Vietnam Debate," March 8, 1968
- "Ex-Peace Corpsman to Form Anti-war Club," March 3, 1968
- "Invitation to Responsibility," March 1968
- "Anti-war Activities Planned," April 3, 1968
- "Some Faculty to Participate in Strike," April 24, 1968
- "Dunn Meadow Anti-war Fair Set," April 24, 1968
- "Officials Discuss Faculty Strike," April 26, 1968
- "Strike Cuts Class Attendance," April 27, 1968
- "Parades, Protests, and Rallies Today," April 27, 1968

° Senator Vance Harke's weekly press reports from the Indiana Historical Society Digital Image Collections:

- "What Should We Do?" Item ID: M0134_FOLDER1_WHAT _SHOULD_WE_DO
- "Vietnam and Mr. Lincoln" Item ID: M0134_FOLDER1_VIETNAM _AND_MR_LINCOLN
- "The Wall" (Item ID: M0134 _FOLDER1_THE_WALL
- "The Hidden Costs of Vietnam" Item ID: M0134_FOLDER1 _HIDDEN_COSTS_OF_VIETNAM
- "Don't Let Our Students Pay for Viet Nam" Item ID: M0134 _FOLDER1_DONT_LET_OUR _STUDENTS_PAY_FOR _VIETNAM
- "The Cornerstone of Peace" Item ID: M0134_FOLDER3 _CORNERSTONE_OF _PEACE_001
- "1967 Veterans Act Provides New Benefits" Item ID: M0134 _FOLDER3_1967_VETERANS _ACT
- "The Road Home from Vietnam" Item ID: M0134_FOLDER2 _ROAD_HOME_FROM _VIETNAM
- "A Letter a Mother" Item ID: M0134_FOLDER2 _LETTER_FROM_INDIANA _MOTHER_001
- "Former Marine Commander Speaks Out on Vietnam" Item ID: M0134 _FOLDER2_FORMER_MARINE _SPEAKS

- "The Tragedy of the Vietnam 'Pacification' Breakdown" Item ID: M0134_FOLDER3_VIETNAM _PACIFICATION_BREAKDOWN _001
- "For Whom Do We Mourn?" Item ID: M0134_FOLDER3_FOR _WHOM_DO_WE_MOURN

- Additional Web Site Resources
  - Viet Nam Generation, Inc. and the Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, The Sixties Project, "What is the May 2nd Movement?" http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties /HTML_docs/Resources/Primary /Manifestos/PL_M2d_manifesto.html (accessed February 15, 2011).
  - Viet Nam Generation, Inc. and the Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, The Sixties Project, "GIs Untied Against the War in Vietnam: Statement of Aims" http://www2 .iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs /Resources/Primary/Manifestos /GIs_United_aims.html (accessed February 15, 2011).
  - Viet Nam Generation, Inc. and the Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, The Sixties Project, "Vietnam Veterans Against the War Statement by John Kerry to the Senate Committee of Foreign Relations," http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties /HTML_docs/Resources/Primary /Manifestos/VVAW_Kerry_Senate.html (accessed February 15, 2011).
  - Viet Nam Generation, Inc. and the Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, The Sixties Project, "A Veteran Speaks—Against the War" http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties /HTML_docs/Resources/Primary /Manifestos/VVAW_Muller.html (accessed February 15, 2011).

Lesson Three, Student Handout One
Opposition to the Vietnam War

Instructions

- Use materials gathered by your teacher or other resources from a public library that has access to microfilm of local newspapers from 1967 to 1971. Look for newspaper articles reporting antiwar activities during this time period. You are likely to find a series of articles about a single protest that discusses the organizer's plans and protest activities.
- Read about ten different protests, at least one from each year between 1967 and 1971. Some of these protest events may be on a national scale, while others may be local.
- As you read about the protests, plot them on your time line using the same format as you did earlier. Include a date card, title card, and description card for each antiwar protest event.
- Your time line will be graded using the following chart:

Criteria	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**
Dates	Twelve key dates are accurately plotted	Ten to eleven key dates are accurately plotted	Eight to nine key dates are accurately plotted	Fewer than eight key dates are accurately plotted
Events	Events described are significant to the war as military actions or foreign policy decisions	Events described are somewhat significant to the war	Events described are not very significant to the war	Events described indicate the student did not understand the assignment

Lesson Three, Student Handout Two
Opposition to the Vietnam War

Instructions

- Assume the role of a protest organizer, choose an actual event of the Vietnam War, and then organize a protest against it. The event may be a military action in Vietnam or a decision made by the president or the U.S. Congress that affects the progression of the war.
- Write an article for your local newspaper to announce the upcoming protest and urge people to join you.
- Your article must include the following:
  - A catchy slogan
  - A detailed description of the event or decision to which you are opposed
  - The reasons for your opposition to this particular event or decision
  - Your proposed solutions
  - The kind of protest you propose
  - The location where the protest will take place
  - A description of what you hope to accomplish by protesting
- Your article will be graded according to this rubric:

Criteria	5	4	3	2
Event	All information about the event is accurate and indicates a strong reason to protest	Most information is accurate and indicates a good reason to protest	Some information is accurate and the reason to protest is weak	Most information is not accurate or does not indicate a reason to protest
Protest	Protest plans indicate thoughtfulness, organization, and excellent planning	Protest plans indicate thoughtfulness, some organization, and some planning	Protest plans indicate some thought, little organization, and little planning	Protest plans do not indicate thought, organization, or planning
Solution	Solution offered indicates clear and complete understanding of the event and its consequences	Solution offered indicates good understanding of the event and its consequences	Solution offered indicates some confusion about this event and its consequences	No real solution is offered
Mechanics	No errors in spelling, grammar, and sentence structure	Few errors in spelling, grammar, and sentence structure	Many errors in spelling, grammar, and sentence structure	So many errors that the essay is not decipherable