

1 **America in the Vietnam War**

Chapter 30
American History

NOTE: Coverage in class will be out of section order; from old textbook presentation

2 **The War in the 1960s**
(Vietnam War 1960-1968)

3 **War in the Sixties**

- Background of the War
- Eisenhower's Domino Theory
- John Kennedy's Policy
 - Support for S. Vietnam (Diem Gov't.)
 - JFK increased military advisors
 - Opposition to the Diem government

4 **Mr. Johnson's War**

- Viet Cong take control of the war
- Johnson's initial response
- **Gulf of Tonkin Resolution** (1964)
 - Virtual blank check to the President!
- Drastic escalation: 1965-1968
 - **Gen. William Westmoreland**
 - Stats? 25,000 in '65 → 543,000 by '68
 - US forces took over combat fighting

5 **Tet Offensive 1968**

6 **Vietnam 1968-1975**

Turmoil and Retreat

7 **Opposition to the War**

- 1968 Tet Offensive
- Johnson's falling approval ratings
- Gene McCarthy & Robert Kennedy challenge for the Dem. Nomination; Johnson decides not to run again
- **Election of 1968** – Richard Nixon, 37th President

8 **Nixon's Handling of the War**

- **Vietnamization** – gradual withdrawal of troops from Vietnam

- Continued bombing raids
- April 1970 – attack Cambodia (receives opposition & protest)
 - Protest at Kent State University turns bloody
 - (also at Jackson State Univ., Miss.)

9 **U.S. Withdrawal from the war**

- Bombing campaigns 1972
- Cease fire in January 1973
- Nixon Doctrine (not in book)
- Fall of Saigon 1975

(War Legacy will be covered at end)

10

11 **Special Topic:**
Brutality of the War

12 **Conditions for US Troops**

- Why go (at first)? Defend against communism; idealistic goals
- Hot, wet jungles; guerilla fighting and Viet Cong sabotage
- Vietnamese seemed unwilling
 - Some were terrorists: women and children, too!

13 **Vietnamese Civilians Suffer**

- Routine bombing raids
- Agent Orange and napalm
- My Lai Massacre – shock at home

14 **Special Topic:**
Student Protest

15 **Student Protests**

- 1971 Pentagon Papers
- Student activism begins when “baby boom” generation graduated from high school
- Examples:
 - Students for a Dem. Society (SDS)
 - New Left (radical changes were the only way to solve problems)

16 **More protest to the war**

- Free Speech Movement, beginning at Berkeley University, CA

- Begins protests at many US colleges
- Teach-in (college faculty)
- Conscientious objectors – tried to avoid the draft by opposing the war on moral grounds

17 **Special Topic:**
Counterculture

18 **Reflections of the counterculture**

- Hippies – rejection of conventional norms
- Sexual Revolution: more freedom for personal choices
- Drugs: psychedelic drugs (cause abnormal brain behavior)
 - LSD, and others; effects

19 **Others...**

- Woodstock and Altamont

20 **Conclusion**

- Historians accept that the Vietnam War was mis-managed
- DO NOT ASSUME that most 1960s Americans were hippies, or protestors, or part of any other countercultural movement.... This is not an accurate description!
- What is “revisionist history”?