

Vietnam studied: can we learn from our mistakes?

by Glen Bidari
Contributing Reporter

The Vietnam War has been over for more than 15 years, but for one professor at UNLV, it is certainly not forgotten.

That professor is Dr. Joseph Fry, diplomatic historian. Twice a week he tries to explain to an auditorium full of students what exactly happened in the Vietnam War.

He has been teaching the course on Vietnam since the late 1970s. There were many war veterans sitting in the seats of his classroom then. Today, none can be found there. A new generation of students has emerged. But they are still just as interested in the war, according to Fry.

"The reason people are inter-

ested in it is not much different than it was then," Fry said. "Some of them have parents, older brothers, or friends who were in the war."

"I don't spend a whole lot of time defending the war."

Fry was not in the Vietnam War. He was in the Army ROTC for two years, but the U.S. government started withdrawing troops from Vietnam about the time he was going to be sent to the war, Fry said.

He said he hopes his class causes students to ask questions about government policies and to critically think about what the gov-

ernment tells them. He said, "I want the students to be able to analyze historical events and cause and effect relationships." Fry added that because the Vietnam War is more controversial than other American wars, it offers the opportunity for more in depth analyzing by the students.

Fry said that his personal view of the war does have some affect on his teaching of the course.

"I don't spend a whole lot of time defending the war," said Fry, sarcastically. The Vietnam War was one of the two great tragedies in American history, he said. The other was black slavery.

Fry said that it was a misconception to think that the war was winnable. Some people think if the U.S. simply changed its tactics it would have won, Fry said.

"The problem with that argument is that it ignores the Vietnamese side of the equation," he explained. "It ignores three things: the environment, the weakness of the South Vietnamese government (which the U.S. supported), and the strength of our enemy." He said that the U.S. was trying to impose a military solution to what in many ways was a political problem.

"It was a misconception to think that the war was winnable."

The current crisis in the Middle East has some similarities to Vietnam, the professor noted. "It certainly has the potential to be

more drawn out," he said. "There may be a coalition with other Arab states but that may not hold up. The environment is difficult. Our radar might not work in the sands. There is a similarity."

But he was quick to point out some differences. "Russia is on our side," he said. "It's not the U.S. versus communism this time. Theoretically it's the U.S. versus aggression. In reality, it's the U.S. versus our economy."

Fry, who said he prepares two hours before each lecture, admits that not all students take his course because they are interested in the Vietnam War. The course satisfies the constitutional requirement for UNLV students. But he said it does not bother him.

"If they can learn a lot in the process, that's great."

Environmental sculptures grace the campus

Pictures and story
by Eileen Brady
Reporter



Jennifer Fisher, with help from Stacey Sylvester



Toni Thomas, Andrea McDonald, Debra Lane

Students in Sculpture 1 were recently asked to show respect to their mother. Mother Earth, that is.

Visiting Assistant Professor Ed Inks assigned his class to do an environmentally-based sculpture. He wanted the sculptures to somehow draw attention to the environment.

The students were required to give a visual presentation to the departments that are responsible for the grounds on which the sculptures were to be placed.

The sculptures aren't permanent, though. They have to be taken down by Thursday, Dec. 13.



Naoko Negishi



Sean Jones



Adam Thrommorton, with help from Dennis Bresee

Attendance policies controversial at UNLV

by Gena Atkinson
Reporter

Attendance policies at UNLV are a controversial issue. As college students, many feel that the decision to attend class is theirs to make. On the other hand, professors and administrators say attendance is necessary for the learning process.

"At this time, there is no university-wide attendance regulation," said senior vice president and provost Dr. John Unrue. Instead, decisions regarding attendance are made by colleges and individual professors. Classes that are likely to have the strictest attendance policies are those that teach a skill. Dr. Unrue stated that in skills courses, attendance is very important because students learn through a process.

"By not attending these classes, students are denied the opportunity to learn," Dr. Unrue also said.

Foreign language classes are one type of skills class where at-

tendance is important. Different professors have various policies, but most have attendance policies that penalize students for missing classes.

"A student who does not at-

"There is no university-wide attendance regulation."

tend class doesn't participate and practice their language skills," said Maria Roa, Spanish professor.

Despite the academic justifications for attending classes, some students say attendance should not be mandatory, but preferential. "It's great when you have to work full time to not be required to go to classes, and I'm willing to take the consequences," said Shelly Rhodes, business major.

However, students who are in classes with strict attendance policies, and for some reason cannot attend class, are penalized

harshly. Dr. Unrue said that in his opinion, there should be some distinction between excused and unexcused absences.

"There are times when allowances should be made for students who are ill or involved in university activities," said Unrue.

Other institutions of learning have followed different paths. Communications professor, Claude Hall related his experience at New York's Rochester University where any student missing 15 percent of classes was failed.

"Students had no problem with the policy, they just made do," Hall said.

Whatever their personal feelings on attending classes, students at UNLV have very little choice but to attend class or receive lower grades.

"If students know they will have excessive absences in a class where attendance is important for a learning process, they should schedule classes when they know they will have time," said Unrue.

Revision Committee may change structure of executive board

by Karen Splawn
Staff Reporter

If the Student Government Constitutional Revision Committee votes yes, the power structure of the executive board will be changed, said Senate President Gina Polovina.

The senate president would be elected by the senate instead of by the student body. Polovina said she and other members agreed that it was time for a change.

"Most (students), when they vote, don't know what the senate president does," Polovina said.

If the committee passed the proposal, 10 percent of the stu-

dent body and the UNS Board of Regents is needed to approved the constitutional change, she added.

Although the senate president would not be elected by the student body, he or she would have certain executive board responsibilities, such as signing business forms.

One of the problems is that it might create an unfriendly aura of competitiveness between senators who may want the position, Polovina added.

Technically the committee, made up of Student Government members, is only temporary, she said. More deliberation on the proposal will be done over the semester break.

Looking to Rent or Buy?

OFFICE: (702) 458-8888
HOME: (702) 456-8484
PAGER: (702) 381-0900

Americana
Group

Better Homes
and Gardens

2625 N. Green Valley Pkwy
Green Valley, NV 89034

CARMELITA "MELY" AXBERG
Realtor

EVERY DAY LOW PRICES			CHUCK'S JEWELRY		
14K GOLD NUGGET RING \$45 ⁹⁵	LARGE DIAMOND CUT NUGGET EARRINGS Reg. \$188 SALE \$138 ⁹⁵	ZODIAC RINGS Reg. \$99 SALE \$60 ⁰⁰			
14K GOLD DIAMOND RING (1 CARAT TOTAL WT.) REG. \$1799 SALE \$699 ⁹⁵	DIAMOND WEDDING SETS REG. \$249 SALE \$159 ⁹⁵	14K GOLD INITIAL ROPE EARRINGS REG. \$99 SALE \$37 ⁹⁵			
14K GOLD SOLID ROPE CHAIN WITH BARREL LOCK PLAIN DIAMOND CUT AND UP \$126 ⁰⁰	14K GOLD BALL STUD EARRINGS	14K GOLD			
14K DIAMOND STUD EARRINGS					
2 pt. (sug. ret. \$36) \$18.95	10 pt. (sug. ret. \$300) \$99.95				
4 pt. (sug. ret. \$66) \$34.95	12 pt. (sug. ret. \$350) \$99.95				
6 pt. (sug. ret. \$80) \$46.95	15 pt. (sug. ret. \$375) \$104.95				
8 pt. (sug. ret. \$100) \$54.95	20 pt. (sug. ret. \$400) \$140.95				
	25 pt. (sug. ret. \$500) \$174.95				
VISA • MASTERCARD • DISCOVER CARD					
WE DO ALL REPAIRS INCLUDING WATCHES					
3100 E. LAKE MEAD #19					
Aces, From Domino's Pizza					
399-4141					