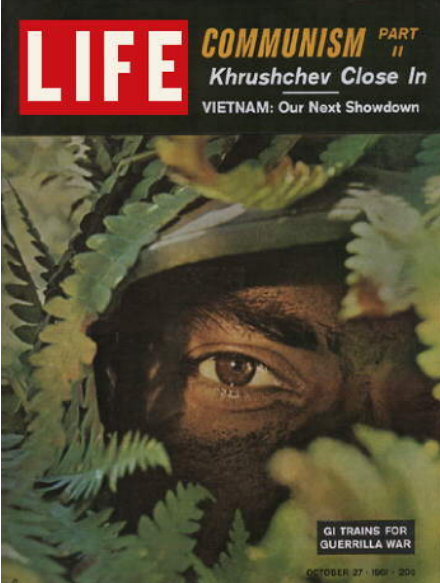



# Media Coverage of the Vietnam War, the Iraq War and Homeland Security: Expanding the Marketplace of Ideas or Strengthening the Gatekeeper?

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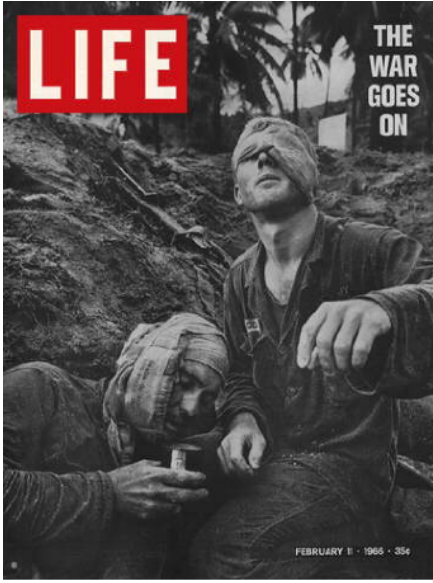





LIFE magazine cover for October 27, 1961. Cover photo titled "GI trains for guerrilla war" highlights story of "Vietnam: Our Next Showdown."




Buddhist monk Thich Quang Duc sets fire to himself in June 1963 in downtown Saigon to protest religious intolerance on part of Ngo Dinh Diem. Photo by Malcom Browne, United Press International, raises public awareness of the war.




LIFE magazine cover for February 11, 1966, depicts two wounded U.S. servicemen. By 1966, 190,000 servicemen and servicewomen are stationed in Vietnam.




Draft-card burning becomes a statement of protest against the Vietnam War by Fall of 1965 for those who oppose the war and for those who do not want to be drafted into the U.S. military and sent to Vietnam (Photo from Hulton Archives).




Rough justice is delivered when General Loan of the South Vietnamese National Police executes a captured and handcuffed Viet Cong officer on a Saigon street, without a trial. National network news first broadcast a series of photos February 1, 1968, followed by film footage two days later. Photos by Eddie Adams are published worldwide in newspapers and magazines.




Four Kent State University students are killed and nine are wounded in a demonstration protesting the presence of Ohio National Guard troops on campus. This picture from Kent State archives is taken near Taylor Hall. The guard had been called in over the weekend to quell riots and anti-war protests. The shootings occurred May 4, 1970. The university is closed later that day for the remainder of the Spring quarter. Classes resume Summer quarter.




Vietnamese children are burned by napalm accidentally dropped by a South Vietnamese Air Force plane. The young girl, Phan Thi Kim, ripped the burning clothes from her body and ran naked down a road from her village outside Saigon. The photo by Nick Ut of Associated Press is published world wide and raises critical questions about the war.




A U.S. military helicopter lands on the roof of the U.S. Embassy in Saigon to transport Americans and refugees out of South Vietnam following the fall of Saigon and the surrender of the South Vietnamese government. April 30, 1975, is seen as the end of the war in Vietnam.



Television images of the Persian Gulf War are delivered to American homes by CNN news, marking the era of 24-7 digital delivery of war coverage news of U.S. involvement in a war. Operation Desert Storm begins at 3 a.m. Baghdad time on January 17, 1991, as U.S. and Coalition forces launch a ground assault to free Kuwait from Iraqi forces. By February 27 coalition forces enter Kuwait City. President George H. Bush declares Kuwait liberated. Fleeing Iraqi troops set fire to oil wells as pictured here with U.S. troops on patrol. Media images are sanitized, reflecting an easy victory characterized by laser-guided bombs and minimal ground combat.



Violence in Iraq's Sunni triangle has killed many Americans. Here a crowd displays mutilated bodies, reflecting some of the worst violence since the beginning of the American occupation. Two blackened and mangled corpses were hung from a bridge across the Euphrates. Media sources were divided about whether to show graphic images of violence against Americans (Associated Press photo).



An American combat soldier carries a body bag containing a fellow soldier killed in the battle of Ramadi outside of Baghdad during the first week of April 2004. Photo by Mario of Gambarini/European Pressphoto Agency is published in the New York Times and many other newspapers and magazines worldwide.

<b>VIETNAM WAR: 1960 to 1975</b>	<b>1960</b> The National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam is formed on December 20, 1960, six weeks after John F. Kennedy is elected president.	the South and to stop the growth of Viet Cong insurgents.	<b>1963</b> <b>November 1.</b> Ngo Dinh Diem is overthrown and executed. Nguyen Van Thieu, chief of staff of the Armed Forces of South Vietnam, replaces Diem. <b>November 22.</b> Kennedy is assassinated and Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson is sworn in as president.	<b>1964</b> <b>August.</b> U.S. Congress passes the Tonkin Gulf resolution significantly increasing U.S. military aid to South Vietnam. <b>1965</b> <b>July.</b> Johnson orders the deployment of 125,000 servicemen and servicewomen.	<b>October.</b> The first draft card burning begins. <b>1966</b> Troop strength in Vietnam numbers 190,000 servicemen and servicewomen. <b>1967</b> Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, appearing before a U.S. Senate	subcommittee, testifies that U.S. bombing raids against North Vietnam have not achieved their objectives. McNamara maintains that movement of supplies to northern forces in South Vietnam has not been reduced, and neither the economy nor the morale of the North Vietnamese has been broken.	<b>1968</b> Tet Offensive is launched by Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces at the end of January and through February. Lyndon Johnson announces he will not seek re-election. Peace talks between the United States and North Vietnam begin in Paris.	<b>1969</b> Troop strength in Vietnam numbers 550,000 armed forces personnel. <b>1970</b> <b>April.</b> President Richard M. Nixon alters tactics to combine U.S. troop withdrawals with intensified bombing and invasion of Communist strongholds in Cambodia.	<b>1971</b> The New York Times publishes the Pentagon Papers revealing a legacy of deception, concerning U.S. policy in Vietnam, on the part of the military and the executive branch. The Nixon administration, eager to stop leaks of what they consider sensitive information, appeals to the Supreme Court to	<b>1975</b> <b>April 30.</b> The Saigon government and its army collapse. The Vietnam War ends with the unconditional surrender of the South Vietnamese government. <b>1976</b> <b>July.</b> Vietnam is formally reunified. Saigon is renamed Ho Chi Minh City.	<b>PERSIAN GULF WAR: 1990 - 1991</b> <b>1990</b> <b>August 2.</b> Iraq invades Kuwait and seizes Kuwaiti oil fields. Iraq masses troops along the Saudi border. The United Nations condemns Iraq's invasion and demands withdrawal. <b>August 9.</b> First U.S. military forces arrive in Saudi Arabia. <b>August 28.</b> Iraq declares Kuwait its 19th province. Kuwait City is renamed al-Kadhima. <b>December 17.</b> United Nations sets deadline for Iraqi withdrawal on January 15, 1991. Saddam Hussein rejects resolution.	<b>1991</b> <b>January 12.</b> U.S. Congress grants President George H. Bush authority to wage war. <b>January 17.</b> Operation Desert Storm begins at 3 a.m. Baghdad time. <b>January 30.</b> Iraqi and Coalition forces engage in first important ground battle in Khafji	located in Saudi Arabia. <b>February 24.</b> Allied ground campaign begins. <b>February 26.</b> Hussein announces Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait. Iraqi troops' exodus from Kuwait City results in "Highway of Death." <b>February 27.</b> Coalition forces enter Kuwait City. U.S. 1st Armored Division	fighter battle of Medina Ridge against Iraqi Republican Guard in Iraq. President Bush declares Kuwait liberated. <b>IRAQ WAR: 2003 TO PRESENT</b> <b>2001</b> <b>September 11.</b> Terrorists kill	thousands on U.S. soil. President George W. Bush states that the United States "will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed the acts and those who harbor them." <b>2002</b> <b>October 10-12.</b> Congress votes to give President George W. Bush	authority to use force against Iraq. <b>2003</b> <b>February 5.</b> Secretary of State Colin Powell presents evidence to the U.N. Security Council in support of U.S. arguments that Iraq is concealing weapons of mass destruction. Opponents of a U.S.-led war are unconvinced.	<b>March 7.</b> Deep divisions at the U.N. Security Council harden following a report by Chief U.N. weapons inspector Hans Blix, that Iraq is improving its cooperation in disarmament. <b>March 20.</b> U.S.-led invasion of Iraq begins with missile strikes in Baghdad. <b>May 1.</b> President Bush declares major combat operations in Iraq over.	<b>November 15.</b> U.S.-led coalition and Iraqi Governing Council sign agreement on transfer of sovereignty to Iraqis. <b>December 13.</b> Saddam Hussein is captured in underground hide-out near his hometown of Tikrit. <b>2004</b> <b>January 15.</b> Thousands of Shiites demonstrate in Basra seeking direct elections for Iraqi government, not indirect selection by caucuses. <b>February 28.</b> U.S.-mandated deadline for adoption of interim constitution passes.	<b>March 1.</b> Governing Council, after weekend of talks, agrees on interim constitution. <b>March 8.</b> Governing Council signs charter, opening way for transitional government and handover of U.S. power to Iraqis by July 1.
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Media images in times of war can be very influential in either reinforcing or changing public and individual opinion. Media coverage during the Vietnam War, especially, demonstrated the ability of media to change public perceptions and feelings about war in general and the country's involvement in war. The Vietnam War therefore marked a turning point in the nature of news coverage of war. This is yet another legacy of the Vietnam War which remains relevant today.

## FROM WORLD WAR II TO KOREA AND VIETNAM

Coverage of the Vietnam War broke from the tradition of boosterism characteristic of World War II coverage. During World War II, civilian leaders and the military were accustomed to patriotism from radio news correspondents such as Edward R. Murrow and George Hicks, who urged gunners on D-Day to "Give it to her, boys" and cheered for bombers launching a "massive blow of retribution." By contrast, the Vietnam War was the first American war in which reporters sought to take no sides. It was also the first war in which local populations, and their social and economic conditions, were part of the story.

This shift in coverage started to emerge already in the 1950s, during the Korean War. Whereas World War II photographers glorified the struggle of good against evil, Korean War photographers were depicting two themes - the American soldier fighting in a war he did not understand, and a country torn apart by war. Korean War photographers also showed increasing attention to the gritty and gruesome business of war.

By the beginning of the 1960s, war correspondents of a new breed were making their mark, despite objections that they were refusing to get "on the team," as senior military commanders would complain of Vietnam War correspondents. Many of these correspondents went to Southeast Asia convinced American missions were just. They grew first into skeptics, and then critics as news management on the part of the U.S. military failed. War correspondents had started down a path that would take them far from the type of news coverage characteristic of their World War II predecessors. Reporters were discarding journalistic practices of the McCarthy era and the reliance on conventions with little analysis; journalists were incorporating interpretation and analysis into their reports,

and insisting more and more on valid, verifiable information rather than trusting official briefings of questionable accuracy. Leaked information was accepted and sources' identities were protected in news reports.

Images of the Vietnam War provide historical evidence for understanding the shift in public opinion about the war, from support to opposition. The brutal effect of the war on the native population, and on U.S. and foreign troops, is depicted in the photo images published in magazines and newspapers, and was also depicted in television images aired on network news.

Among the images most remembered as symbols of the war in Vietnam are those of a Buddhist monk's self-immolation in 1963, General Loan's street execution of a Viet Cong suspect during the Tet Offensive of 1968, and a little girl accidentally napalmed by South Vietnamese planes and running naked down a road in 1972. The public remembers selected images of the brutal nature of war that depict conflict and suffering in a dramatic manner. By nature of their inherent drama they are oft repeated - pictorial accounts of the events

that stretched through more than ten years of the war and remain in the public psyche today.

## THE GULF WAR, THE WAR ON TERRORISM AND THE IRAQ WAR

By the time of the Persian Gulf War in 1991, military management of news was instituted through press pools. This arrangement, coming 16 years after the end of the Vietnam War, usually amounted to military control and supervision of small and restricted groups of correspondents. The press pools provided close-up access to certain sources, but these were sources selected by the military. Press pools provide dramatic coverage of one side of a story, but reporting of the other side is lacking.

During the Iraq War the U.S. Defense Department instituted the practice of embedding reporters within particular units throughout the armed services. This policy does not provide reporters the freedom to shift between military units, a freedom which reporters had during World War II and the Vietnam War. Embedding does, however, offer better access to the battlefield and to fighting troops than correspondents had in

the Persian Gulf War. One issue raised with respect to embedding is whether dramatic television images make for solid journalism. Press pools and embedded correspondents may not provide a balanced perspective on the war; the people and culture most affected can be missing from the "big story." Alternative news sources might provide the balanced coverage that is arguably lacking in American corporate cable and network news. But whether this is politically significant depends on whether the public makes good use of these alternative news sources, such as those now available through the Internet, and foreign broadcasts available through cable television services. Supporters of news sources such as al-Jazeera will argue that these sources provide a more balanced geo-political perspective and expand the marketplace of ideas. Opponents will argue that these sources undermine the mission and safety of U.S. and allied forces in Iraq.

Just as media coverage of the Vietnam War was criticized for portraying military actions in Vietnam in an unfavorable light, and for showing dissent and protest at home, suggesting a nation divided, media coverage of the War in Iraq is now subject to criticism for possibly compromising security at

home and in Iraq. Media have been accused of over-emphasizing war protests and underemphasizing successes in Iraq. Media have at times also been accused of relaying messages from terrorist leaders, or have been subject to censorship aimed at preventing the dissemination of such messages. Censorship and other less obvious constraints on reportage deprives the public of a robust marketplace of ideas, even if constraints are imposed in the name of national security. Political and military constraints on war coverage will likely become even more controversial as international media coverage becomes more available, balanced and diverse.

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