The Vietnam Conflict 1955-75

Songs of Protest & Hope

Why all the fuss about Vietnam?
British Imperialism

The British Colonial Empire in the 20th century

French Control of Vietnam

Dark blue = French colonies in the 1800s and 1900s
Vietnam and France

1857: French troops invade Vietnam
1883: All of Vietnam officially becomes a French colony in 1883.
1930: Ho Chi Minh forms the Indochinese Communist Party

WW II: During WWII, Vietnam was occupied by Japanese forces.

1954: North and South Vietnamese joined forces, finally defeating the French in, establishing Vietnam as an independent state, divided in half at the 17th parallel (supposed to have free elections in 2 years.)

The Vietnam Conflict 1955-75

- The Cold War (US vs. Communism)
- North Vietnam communist in 1930
- Mainland China communist in 1949
- Cease-fire in Korean War in 1953 (North Korea communist)
- Laos communist by 1954
- Cuba communist with Castro in 1959
- Berlin Wall built by communist East Germany in 1961
- Cuban missile crisis in 1962

Vietnam was the “line in the sand.”
US Military Advisors in Vietnam

1955: Eisenhower begins offering military and financial aid to South Vietnam, and secures Ngo Dinh Diem as the country’s president.

1959: Ho Chi Minh, supported by Russian and Chinese communists, declares a People’s War on the south to unite all of Vietnam.


1963: JFK administration ousts Diem, but new military and civil governments cannot run the country, making it highly dependent on the US. (16,000 US military advisors now)

1964: On August 2, North Vietnamese patrol boats attack the USS Maddox in the Gulf of Tonkin. On November 1, Viet Cong attack US airbase near Saigon. (23,000 US advisors now)

Songs of Vietnam Era 1959-65

1959: Where Have All the Flowers Gone (Kingston Trio)

1963: Blowin’ In The Wind (Bob Dylan)

1964: The Times They Are A Changin’ (Bob Dylan)

1965: I Ain’t Marchin’ Anymore (Phil Ochs)
Songs of the Vietnam Era - 1959

Where Have All the Flowers Gone?
by Pete Seeger
(recorded by The Kingston Trio)

Where have all the flowers gone, long time passing?
Where have all the flowers gone, long time ago?
Where have all the flowers gone?
Young girls picked them, every one.
When will they ever learn, when will they ever learn?

Where have all the young girls gone? (to young men...)
Where have all the young men gone? (to soldiers...)
Where have all the soldiers gone? (to graveyards...)
Where have all the graveyards gone? (to flowers...)

The Times They Are A-Changin'

Come gather 'round people
Wherever you roam
And admit that the waters
Around you have grown
And accept it that soon
You'll be drenched to the bone
If your time to you
It's worth savin'
Then you better start swimmin'
Or you'll sink like a stone
For the times they are a-changin'.

Come writers and critics
Who prophesize with your pen
And keep your eyes wide
The chance won't come again
And don't speak too soon
For the wheel's still in spin
And there's so tellin' who
That it's namin'
For the loser now
Will be later to win
For the times they are a-changin'.

Come senators, congressmen
Please heed the call
Don't stand in the doorway
Don't block up the hall
For he that gets hurt
Will be he who has stalled
There's a battle outside

And it is rainin'
It'll soon shake your windows
And rattle your walls
For the times they are a-changin'.

Come mothers and fathers
Throughout the land
And don't criticize
What you can't understand
Your sons and your daughters
Are beyond your command
Your old road is
Rapidly a-goin'
Please get out of the new one
If you can't lend your hand
For the times they are a-changin'.

The line it is drawn
The curse it is cast
The slow one now
Will later be fast
As the present now
Will later be past
The order is
Rapidly fadin'
And the first one now
Will later be last
For the times they are a-changin'.
I Ain’t A Marchin’ Anymore

Oh I marched to the battle of New Orleans
At the end of the early British war
The young land started growing
But I ain’t marchin’ anymore

For I’ve killed my share of Indians
In a thousand different fights
I was there at the Little Big Horn
I heard many men lying I saw many more dying
But I ain’t marchin’ anymore

(chorus)
It’s always the old to lead us to the war
It’s always the young to fall
Now look at all we’ve won with the saber and the gun
Tell me is it worth it all

For I stole California from the Mexican land
Fought in the bloody Civil War
Yes I even killed my brothers
And so many others But I ain’t marchin’ anymore

For I marched to the battle of the German trench
In a war that was bound to end all wars
Oh I must have killed a million men
And now they want me back again
But I ain’t marchin’ anymore

(chorus)

How many roads must a man walk down before you call him a man?
Yes’n’ How many seas must a white dove sail before she sleeps in the sand?
Yes’n’ How many times must the cannonballs fly before they’re forever banned?
The answer, my friend, is blowin’ in the wind
The answer is blowin’ in the wind

How many times must a man look up before he can see the sky?
Yes’n’
How many ears must one man have before he can hear people cry?
Yes’n’
How many deaths will it take till he knows that too many people have died?
The answer, my friend, is blowin’ in the wind.
The answer is blowin’ in the wind

US Longest Foreign Wars

America’s longest wars on foreign soil

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>War</th>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Length (years)</th>
<th>Troops Involved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghan War (estimated)</td>
<td>2001-16</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>2,400 killed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam War</td>
<td>1962-73</td>
<td>8.75</td>
<td>58,000 killed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean War</td>
<td>1950-53</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>36,500 killed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippine-American War</td>
<td>1899-1902</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4,100 killed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World War I</td>
<td>1917-19</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>116,000 killed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish-American War</td>
<td>1898</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>2,400 killed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persian Gulf War</td>
<td>1990-01</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>258 killed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
US at War in Vietnam

March 1965: President Johnson starts active US involvement with 3,500 US soldiers and 100 US fighter-bombers that descend on North Vietnam. Later that month, when the Viet Cong bomb the US embassy in Saigon, Johnson sends 20,000 more troops.

May 1965: 125,000 US soldiers in Vietnam. Videotaped color television war footage begins to be broadcast in America on the 6PM news. (184,000 US troops by end of that year)

1966: US presence in Vietnam rises to 385,000

1967: By end of year, 485,000 US troops with over 16,000 dead. Martin Luther King begins to speak out against “our tragic, reckless adventure in Vietnam.”

New York City (April 15, 1967)

On this date, Manhattan was the site of the largest anti-war rally in US history, when 300,000 people gathered to protest President Lyndon Johnson’s escalation of the Vietnam conflict.
At the Pentagon (Oct 21, 1967)

On that Saturday, 75,000 people gathered in front of the Lincoln Memorial to peacefully hear anti-war speeches. Afterward, 30,000 of them linked arms and marched to demonstrate outside the Pentagon, which is shown surrounded by armed MP guards.

At the Pentagon (Oct 23, 1967)

A bold demonstrator places pink carnations into the barrels of loaded rifles of the MP guards. Minutes later, a series of violent skirmishes erupts.
Songs of Vietnam Era 1965-67

1965: So Long Mom/The Folk Song Army (Tom Lehrer)
   I Ain’t Marchin’ Anymore (Phil Ochs)
   Fixin-To-Die Rag (Country Joe Mac Donald)
   The Eve of Destruction (Barry McGuire)
   Universal Soldier (Donovan)

1966: Turn! Turn! Turn! (The Byrds)
   Ballad of the Green Berets (Barry Sadler)

1967: For What It’s Worth (Buffalo Springfield)
   Handsome Johnny (Richie Havens)

Songs of the Vietnam Era - 1965

The Eve of Destruction by Barry McGuire

The eastern world, it is explodin’
Violence flarin’, bullets loadin’
You’re old enough to kill, but not for votin’
You don’t believe in war, but what’s that gun you’re totin’
And even the Jordan River has bodies floatin’
But you tell me over and over and over again, my friend
Ah, you don’t believe we’re on the eve of destruction?
Don’t you understand what I’m tryin’ to say
Can’t you feel the fears I’m feelin’ today?
If the button is pushed, there’s no runnin’ away
There’ll be no one to save, with the world in a grave
Take a look around you boy
It’s bound to scare you boy
**Songs of the Vietnam Era - 1965**

*Universal Soldier* by Donovan

He's five foot two and he's six feet four, he fights with missiles and with spears. He's all of thirty one, and he's only seventeen. He's been a soldier for 1000 years. He's a Catholic, a Hindu, an Atheist, a Jain, a Buddhist and a Baptist and a Jew. And he knows he shouldn't kill, and he knows he always will, Kill you for me, my friend, and me for you. And he's fighting for Canada, he's fighting for France, He's fighting for the USA And he's fighting for the Russians, and he's fighting for Japan And he thinks we'll put an end to war this way. But without him how would Hitler have condemned him at Dachau? Without him Caesar would have stood alone. He's the one who gives his body as a weapon of the war, and without him all this killing can't go on. He's the universal soldier, and he really is to blame, his orders come from far away no more. They come from here and there, and you and me, And brothers, can't you see, this is not the way we'll put the end to war.

**Songs of the Vietnam Era - 1966**

*Turn! Turn! Turn!* by Pete Seeger

*(recorded by The Byrds)*

To everything, turn, turn, turn. There is a season, turn, turn, turn. And a time to every purpose under heaven. A time to be born, a time to die. A time to plant, a time to reap. A time to kill, a time to heal. A time to laugh, a time to weep. To everything, turn, turn, turn. There is a season, turn, turn, turn. And a time to every purpose under heaven. A time to build up, a time to break down. A time to dance, a time to mourn. A time to cast away stones. A time to gather stones together… A time of love, a time of hate. A time of war, a time of peace. A time you may embrace. A time to refrain from embracing… A time to gain, a time to lose. A time to rend, a time to sow. A time for love, a time for hate. A time for peace, I swear it's not too late.
**Songs of the Vietnam Era - 1966**

**Ballad of the Green Berets** by SSgt. Barry Sadler

Fighting soldiers from the sky, fearless men who jump and die,
Men who mean just what they say, the brave men of the Green Berets.
Silver wings upon their chest, these are men, America's best,
One hundred men, will test today but only three win the Green Beret.

Trained to live off nature's land, trained in combat hand to hand,
Men who fight by night and day, courage peak from the Green Beret,
Silver wings upon their chest, these are men, America's best,
One hundred men, will test today but only three win the Green Beret.

Back at home a young wife waits, her Green Beret has met his fate,
He has died for those oppressed, leaving her his last request:
"Put silver wings on my son's chest, make him one of America's best,
He'll be a man they'll test one day, have him win the Green Beret."

**Songs of the Vietnam Era - 1967**

**For What It’s Worth** by Stephen Stills

(recorded by The Buffalo Springfield)

There's something happening here, what it is ain't exactly clear.
There's a man with a gun over there, telling me I got to beware.
I think it's time we stop, children, what's that sound?
Everybody look what's going down.

There's battle lines being drawn. Nobody's right if everybody's wrong.
Young people speaking their minds, getting so much resistance from behind…

What a field day for the heat, a thousand people in the street,
Singing songs and carrying signs, mostly say, “Hooray for our side.”

Paranoia strikes deep: into your life it will creep. It starts when you're always afraid. You step out of line, the man come and take you away…
Songs of the Vietnam Era - 1967

**Handsome Johnny** by Richie Havens

Hey look yonder, tell me what's that you see, marching to the fields of Concord
It looks like Handsome Johnny with a musket in his hand
Marching to the Concord war…
Hey look yonder, tell me what you see, marching to the fields of Gettysburg
Looks like Handsome Johnny with flintlock in his hand marching to the Gettysburg war,
Hey, it's along the hard road   It's a long hard road…Before we'll be free.

Hey look yonder, tell me what's that you see, marching to the fields of Dunkirk
Looks like Handsome Johnny with a carbine in his hand, marching to the Dunkirk war,
Hey look yonder, tell me what you see, marching to the fields of Korea,
Looks like Handsome Johnny with an M1 in his hand marching to the Korean war,
Hey look yonder, tell me what you see, marching to the fields of Viet Nam
It looks like Handsome Johnny with an M15, marching to the Viet Nam war,
Hey, look yonder, tell me what you see, marching to the fields of Birmingham
It looks like Handsome Johnny with his hand rolled in a fist
Marching to the Birmingham war. Hey, marching to the Birmingham war

US at War in Vietnam

1965: goes from 3,500 to 184,000
1966: to 385,000 (over 6,300 killed)
1967: to 485,000 (over 11,300 killed)
1968: to 542,000 (over 16,800 killed)
1969: to 536,000 (over 11,700 killed)
1970: to 335,000 (over 6,100 killed)
1971: to 156,000 (over 2,400 killed)
1972: to 24,000 (over 750 killed)
Turmoil Back in the US - 1968

March 1968: On March 16, Senator Robert Kennedy belatedly enters the US presidential race. Two weeks later, President Johnson announces that he is dropping out of the race for re-election.

April 4 1968: While crusading for the rights of sanitation workers, Rev. Martin Luther King is assassinated in Memphis by James Earl Ray.

April 23-29 1968: “Students for a Democratic Society” (SDS), take over the administration buildings at Columbia University. Over 900 students were arrested and 180 injured during that week.

June 5 1968: Robert Kennedy is assassinated in Los Angeles by Sirhan Sirhan just minutes after winning the California Democratic Primary.

Turmoil Back in the US - 1968

August 27-29 1968: At Grant Park, across the street from the site of the 1968 Democratic Convention, Chicago police under orders from mayor Richard Daley use force to disperse protesters, who in turn prepare to march on the convention.

October 31 1968: Just days before the ‘68 election, President Johnson announces that US bombing of North Vietnam would cease at 8AM the next morning. Johnson is good to his word, but the furious South Vietnamese refuse to follow his unilateral decision.

By end of that year, 542,000 US troops in Vietnam, and over 30,000 dead.
Governor George Wallace of Alabama—at the time, an avowed white supremacist—won almost 14% of the popular vote and carried 5 southern states.

In 1969, newly-elected President Richard Nixon tries a policy of gradual troop disengagement from Vietnam, while escalating the bombing of North Vietnam.
US at War in Vietnam

1965: from 3,500 to 184,000
1966: to 385,000 (over 6,300 killed)
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1972: to 24,000 (over 750 killed)

November 15, 1969

1 million Americans assemble in Washington DC to protest the Vietnam War (v6)
On December 1, 1969 Congress intensified the Selective Service “draft” system with a lottery requiring mandatory military service for men aged 18-26 (the first time since 1942’s initial World War II draft). A lottery of 366 balls was used to determine the order-of-call to service for those born between 1944 and 1950. Men between 20-25 with the first 195 draft numbers were called to active duty that year.

### Songs of Vietnam Era 1968-69

**1968:** Movie—*The Green Berets* (starring John Wayne) v5
- Revolution (Beatles—flip side of “Hey Jude” single) v6
- Unknown Soldier (The Doors)
- Musical—*Hair* (Vietnam War & Hippie storyline)

**1969:** Fortunate Son (Creedence Clearwater Revival) *13
- American Woman (The Guess Who) *14
- One Tin Soldier (From *The Legend of Billy Jack*)
- Give Peace a Chance (John Lennon) v6

**WOODSTOCK:**
- Fixin’-to-Die Rag (Country Joe) v7
- Star Spangled Banner (Jimi Hendrix) v8
- Find the Cost of Freedom (CSN & Y) *12

War is Over…If you want it (Lennon/Ono) v9 v10
**Songs of the Vietnam Era - 1969**

*Fortunate Son* by Creedence Clearwater Revival

Some folks are born made to wave the flag, ooh, they're red, white, and blue!
And when the band plays "Hail to the Chief", they point the cannon right at you.

It ain't me, it ain't me, I ain't no senator's son, It ain't me...I ain't no fortunate one

Some folks are born silver spoon in hand, Lord, don’t they help themselves.
But when the tax man comes to the door, Lord the house looks like a rummage sale.

It ain't me... I ain't no millionaire's son. It ain't me...I ain't no fortunate one.

Some folks inherit star spangled eyes, ooh, they send you down to war.
And when you ask them, "How much should we give?" They only answer "More!"

It ain't me, it ain't me, I ain't no military son. It ain't me...I ain't no fortunate one.

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**Songs of the Vietnam Era - 1969**

*American Woman* by The Guess Who

American woman, stay away from me, American woman, mama let me be,
Don't come hare hanging around my door I don't wanna see your face no more.
I got more important things to do, than spend my time growin' old with you.

Now woman, I said stay away, American woman, listen what I say.

American woman, get away from me, American woman, mama let me be,
Don't come here knocking around my door, don't wanna see your shadow no more.
Colored lights can hypnotize, sparkle someone else's eyes.

Now woman, I said get away, American woman, listen what I say.

American woman, I said get way, American woman, listen what I say
Don't come here hanging around my door, Don't want to see your face no more
I don't need your war machines, I don't need your ghetto scenes.
Colored lights can hypnotize, Sparkle someone else's eyes.
Now woman, get away from me, American woman, mama let me be...
**Songs of the Vietnam Era - 1969**

*Give Peace a Chance* by John Lennon

One two three four, Ev'rybody's talking about
Bagism, Shagism, Dragism, Madism, Ragism, Tagism, This-ism, that-ism, is-m…
All we are saying is give peace a chance…

C'mon, Ev'rybody's talking about ministers, sinisters, banisters and canisters
Bishops and Fishops and Rabbis and Pop eyes, and bye bye, bye byes.
All we are saying is give peace a chance…

Let me tell you now, ev'rybody's talking about revolution, evolution, masturbation,
flagellation, regulation, integrations, meditations, United Nations, congratulations.
All we are saying is give peace a chance…

Ev'rybody's talking about
John and Yoko, Timmy Leary, Rosemary, Tommy Smothers, Bobby Dylan,
Tommy Cooper, Derek Taylor, Norman Mailer, Alan Ginsberg, Hare Krishna…
All we are saying is give peace a chance…

**Troops to Cambodia (April 1970)**

In a shocking move, on April 30 1970, President Nixon tells the nation via TV that he has sent US troops into Cambodia (without first consulting or informing Congress).
Kent State Riots (May 2, 1970)

At KSU, an impromptu protest is held on Friday, May 1, with a more formal rally scheduled for noon on May 4. SDS subversives seize the opportunity. On May 2, KSU students burn down the campus ROTC building, causing Gov. Rhodes of Ohio to declare martial law. By May 3, one thousand Ohio National Guardsmen were on-campus to keep the peace. KSU President White legally revokes the right to assemble on campus.

Kent State (May 4, 1970)

Despite the ban, by noon on Monday, May 4, approx. 3000 protesters and onlookers have assembled on the Common and adjacent buildings. Campus police use bullhorns to try to disperse the crowd.
General Canterbury commands the guardsmen to load and lock their weapons, then they advance towards the crowd throwing tear gas.

After guardsmen from Troop G advance up Blanket Hill to disperse more protesters, approx. 70 guardsmen move into an adjacent practice football field area, where they are pelted with rocks, bricks, wood with nails and razors.
Surrounded on all sides, the guardsmen huddle while several kneel and aim their weapons at students in the parking lot. The guardsmen continue to be taunted and hit with a barrage of objects. (58 guardsmen were injured, but only 1 needed treatment.)

Alan Canfora is waiving black flag of death at the Guardsmen.

When they run out of tear gas, the guardsmen begin to retrace their steps back up Blanket Hill to the Commons.

Thinking the confrontation is over, many students start walking to their classes.
Upon reaching the top of the hill, approx. 30 of the retreating guardsmen make a 180-degree turn and without provocation open fire on students in the distant parking lot. 67 shots fired in 13 seconds; 4 students killed, 9 others injured.

15-year old Mary Vecchio (a runaway from Florida), kneels over the dead body of Jeffrey Miller, who had been shot through the mouth and head from 265 feet away.
Kent State (May 4, 1970)

1. Joseph Lewis (71 ft)
2. John Cleary (110 ft)
3. Thomas Grace (200 ft)
4. Alan Canfora (225 ft)
5. JEFFREY MILLER (265 ft–active protester)
6. Dean Kahler (300 ft)
7. Doug Wrentmore (329 ft)
8. ALLISON KRAUSE (343 ft–active protester)
9. James Russell (375 ft)
10. WILLIAM SCHROEDER (382 ft–going to class; ROTC member)
11. SANDRA SCHEUER (396 ft–going to class)
12. Robert Stamps (495 ft)
13. Don MacKenzie (730 ft)

(Highlighted students died)

A diagram of the guardsmens’ retreat from the practice field, and the relative location/distance of the victims.

Kent State (May 4, 1970)

Lyrics to “Ohio” from Déjà vu album (1970)

Tin soldiers and Nixon coming,
We’re finally on our own.
This summer I hear the drumming,
Four dead in Ohio.

Gotta get down to it
Soldiers are gunning us down
Should have been done long ago.
What if you knew her
And found her dead on the ground
How can you run when you know?
Music of Vietnam Era 1970-71

1970: Ohio (Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young)  
War (Edwin Starr)  
Bridge Over Troubled Water (Simon & Garfunkel)  
Who’ll Stop the Rain (Creedence Clearwater Revival)

1971: What’s Goin’ On? (Marvin Gaye)  
The Grave (Don McLean from American Pie album)  
Imagine (John Lennon)

In 1971, the 26th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified, giving 18-year-olds the right to vote.

Songs of the Vietnam Era - 1971

What’s Goin’ On? by Marvin Gaye

Mother, mother, there's too many of you crying  
Brother, brother, brother, there's far too many of you dying  
You know we've got to find a way  
To bring some lovin' here today, hey

Father, father, we don't need to escalate  
War is not the answer, for only love can conquer hate  
You know we've got to find a way  
To bring some lovin' here today

Picket lines and picket signs, Don't punish me with brutality  
Talk to me, so you can see what's going on, what's going on,  
Yeah, what's going on, ah, what's going on?
“Vietnamization” Continues

1972: In February, President Nixon established formal relations with communist China. On April 15, Nixon initiated one last barrage of heavy bombing of North Vietnam, which lasted 8 1/2 months.

In November, Nixon won re-election in a landslide victory, tainted later by the Watergate scandal.

By the end of ‘72, US troop levels in Vietnam were down to 27,000.

With one of the most famous handshakes in history, Nixon greets Mao Tse-tung, Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party.

Peace in Paris

1973: On January 27, the Paris Peace Accords were signed, officially ending US involvement in Vietnam, and paving the way for many POWs to return home.

Engulfed by the Watergate scandal and facing impeachment, President Nixon resigned his presidency on August 8, after seeing that all military funding was cut off to Vietnam.

After resigning, Nixon says goodbye to his staff with a “victory” sign.
Saigon Surrenders

1975: Without US support, the South Vietnamese were no match for the Russian/Chinese-aided Viet Cong. By March 1975, half of South Vietnam was under communist control, with Saigon finally falling on April 21.

1976: After decades of struggle, both Vietnams united on July 2 as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Saigon was renamed Ho Chi Minh City.

By the war’s end, over 58,000 Americans lost their lives, as did over 2 million on both sides.

The Vietnam Conflict 1955-75

Songs of Protest & Hope