

JANE FONDA

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The Truth About My Trip To Hanoi

Posted on July 22, 2011, in My Blog, with 295 Comments

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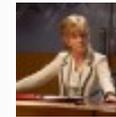
Listening to soldiers at a GI coffeehouse.

I grew up during World War II. My childhood was influenced by the roles my father played in his movies. Whether Abraham Lincoln or Tom Joad in the *Grapes of Wrath*, his characters communicated certain values which I try to carry with me to this day. I remember saying goodbye to my father the night he left to join the Navy. He didn't have to. He was older than other servicemen and had a family to support but he wanted to be a part of the fight against fascism, not just make movies about it. I admired this about him. I grew up with a deep belief that wherever our troops fought they were on the side of the angels

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SNAPSHOTS FROM MY AFI AWARD EVENING

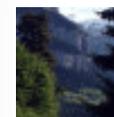
On June 12, 2014, with 61

that wherever our troops fought, they were on the side of the angels.

For the first 8 years of the Vietnam War I lived in France. I was married to the French film director, Roger Vadim and had my first child. The French had been defeated in their own war against Vietnam a decade before our country went to war there, so when I heard, over and over, French people criticizing our country for our Vietnam War I hated it. I viewed it as sour grapes. I refused to believe we could be doing anything wrong there.

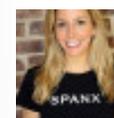
It wasn't until I began to meet American servicemen who had been in Vietnam and had come to Paris as resisters that I realized I needed to learn more. I took every chance I could to meet with U.S. soldiers. I talked with them and read the books they gave me about the war. I decided I needed to return to my country and join with them—active duty soldiers and Vietnam Veterans in particular—to try and end the war. I drove around the country visiting military bases, spending time in the G.I. Coffee houses that had sprung up outside many bases—places where G.I.s could gather. I met with Army psychiatrists who were concerned about the type of training our men were receiving...quite different, they said, from the trainings during WWII and Korea. The doctors felt this training was having a damaging effect on the psyches of the young men, effects they might not recover from. I raised money and hired a former Green Beret, Donald Duncan, to open and run the G.I. Office in Washington D.C. to try and get legal and congressional help for soldiers who were being denied their rights under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. I talked for hours with U.S. pilots about their training, and what they were told about Vietnam. I met with the wives of servicemen. I visited V.A. hospitals. Later in 1978, wanting to share with other Americans some of what I had learned about the experiences of returning soldiers and their families, I made the movie *Coming Home*. I was the one who would be asked to speak at large anti-war rallies to tell people that the men in uniform were not the enemy, that they did not start the war, that they were, in growing numbers our allies. I knew as much about military law as any layperson. I knew more than most civilians about the realities on the ground for men in combat. I lived and

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THE YIN AND YANG OF IT ALL

On June 8, 2014, with 29 Comments



MY SPANX GO TO CANNES

On May 19, 2014, with 18 Comments



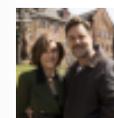
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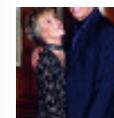
BACK IN THE NEWSROOM

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WORKING WITH RUSSELL CROWE

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EXCITING NEWS

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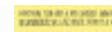


"BEING A TEEN": MY NEW BOOK ON ADOLESCENCE

breathed this stuff for two years before I went to North Vietnam. I cared deeply for the men and boys who had been put in harms way. I wanted to stop the killing and bring our servicemen home. I was infuriated as I learned just how much our soldiers were being lied to about why we were fighting in Vietnam and I was anguished each time I would be with a young man who was traumatized by his experiences. Some boys shook constantly and were unable to speak above a whisper.

It is unconscionable that extremist groups circulate letters which accuse me of horrific things, saying that I am a traitor, that POWs in Hanoi were tied up and in chains and marched passed me while I spat at them and called them 'baby killers. These letters also say that when the POWs were brought into the room for a meeting I had with them, we shook hands and they passed me tiny slips of paper on which they had written their social security numbers. Supposedly, this was so that I could bring back proof to the U.S. military that they were alive. The story goes on to say that I handed these slips of paper over to the North Vietnamese guards and, as a result, at least one of the men was tortured to death. That these stories could be given credence shows how little people know of the realities in North Vietnam prisons at the time. The U.S. government and the POW families didn't need me to tell them who the prisoners were. They had all their names. Moreover, according to even the most hardcore senior officers, torture stopped late in 1969, *two and a half years before I got there*. And, most importantly, I would never say such things to our servicemen, whom I respect, whether or not I agree with the mission they have been sent to perform, which is not of their choosing.

But these lies have circulated for almost forty years, continually reopening the wound of the Vietnam War and causing pain to families of American servicemen. The lies distort the truth of why I went to North Vietnam and they perpetuate the myth that being anti-war means being anti-soldier.



On March 3, 2014, with 44 Comments



CRYING

On February 23, 2014, with 65

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BEING A TEEN

On February 5, 2014, with 17

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THREE DAYS DOWN UNDER FOR THE RELAUNCH OF FITNESS FIRST

On January 23, 2014, with 20

Comments



MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE RANCH . . .

On January 10, 2014, with 31

Comments



ROASTED BUTTERNUT SQUASH

On January 5, 2014, with 3

Comments



CHRISTMAS 2013 AT THE RANCH

On December 29, 2013, with 29

Comments



ANSWERING ATTACKS ON MY CREDIBILITY AS A PHILANTHROPIST

On December 19, 2013, with 32

Little known is the fact that almost 300 Americans—journalists, diplomats, peace activists, professors, religious leaders and Vietnam Veterans themselves—had been traveling to North Vietnam over a number of years in an effort to try and find ways to end the war (By the way, those trips generated little if any media attention.) I brought with me to Hanoi a thick package of letters from families of POWs. Since 1969, mail for the POWs had been brought in and out of North Vietnam every month by American visitors. The Committee of Liaison With Families coordinated this effort. I took the letters to the POWs and brought a packet of letters from them back to their families.

The Photo of Me on the Gun Site.

There is one thing that happened while in North Vietnam that I will regret to my dying day—I allowed myself to be photographed on a Vietnamese anti-aircraft gun. I want to, once again, explain how that came about. I have talked about this numerous times on national television and in my memoirs, *My Life So Far*, but clearly, it needs to be repeated.

It happened on my last day in Hanoi. I was exhausted and an emotional wreck after the 2-week visit. It was not unusual for Americans who visited North Vietnam to be taken to see Vietnamese military installations and when they did, they were always required to wear a helmet like the kind I was told to wear during the numerous air raids I had experienced. When we arrived at the site of the anti-aircraft installation (somewhere on the outskirts of Hanoi), there was a group of about a dozen young soldiers in uniform who greeted me. There were also many photographers (and perhaps journalists) gathered about, many more than I had seen all in one place in Hanoi. This should have been a red flag.

The translator told me that the soldiers wanted to sing me a song. He translated as they sung. It was a song about the day ‘Uncle Ho’ declared their country’s independence in Hanoi’s Ba

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EXTENDING THANKSGIVING INTO ATLANTA

On December 8, 2013, with 17

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A FAMILY THANKSGIVING VACATION IN NEW MEXICO

On December 2, 2013, with 18

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THE UNTOLD STORY OF MILITARY SEXUAL ASSAULT — FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES

On November 25, 2013, with 6

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SOME REACTIONS TO ISSUES RAISED BY MY PREVIOUS BLOG

On November 19, 2013, with 21

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FOR MY MOTHER

On October 28, 2013, with 133

Comments



TWO INTERESTING WEEKS AWAY FROM HOME (INCLUDING PARIS)

On October 16, 2013, with 20

Comments



A REMARKABLE EVENING OF MUSIC AND ARCHITECTURE

Dinh Square. I heard these words: "All men are created equal; they are given certain rights; among these are life, Liberty and Happiness." These are the words Ho pronounced at the historic ceremony. I began to cry and clap. *These young men should not be our enemy. They celebrate the same words Americans do.*

The soldiers asked me to sing for them in return. As it turned out I was prepared for just such a moment: before leaving the United States, I memorized a song called *Day Ma Di*, written by anti-war South Vietnamese students. I knew I was slaughtering it, but everyone seemed delighted that I was making the attempt. I finished. Everyone was laughing and clapping, including me, overcome on this, my last day, with all that I had experienced during my 2 week visit. What happened next was something I have turned over and over in my mind countless times. Here is my best, honest recollection of what happened: someone (I don't remember who) led me towards the gun, and I sat down, still laughing, still applauding. It all had nothing to do with where I was sitting. I hardly even thought about where I was sitting. The cameras flashed. I got up, and as I started to walk back to the car with the translator, the implication of what had just happened hit me. "Oh my God. It's going to look like I was trying to shoot down U.S. planes." I pleaded with him, "You have to be sure those photographs are not published. Please, you can't let them be published." I was assured it would be taken care of. I didn't know what else to do. (I didn't know yet that among the photographers there were some Japanese.)

It is possible that it was a set up, that the Vietnamese had it all planned. I will never know. But if they did I can't blame them. The buck stops here. If I was used, I allowed it to happen. It was my mistake and I have paid and continue to pay a heavy price for it. Had I brought a politically more experienced traveling companion with me they would have kept me from taking that terrible seat. I would have known two minutes before sitting down what I didn't realize until two minutes afterwards; a two-minute lapse of sanity that will haunt me forever. The gun was inactive, there were no planes overhead, I simply wasn't thinking about what I was doing, only



MUSIC AND ARCHITECTURE

On October 3, 2013, with 12

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A VISIT WITH NEW FRIENDS IN MIDDLEBERG, VIRGINIA

On September 16, 2013, with 30

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TED TURNER & PRAIRIE DOGS

On August 27, 2013, with 58

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AT THE PREMIERE OF "THE BUTLER"

On August 10, 2013, with 26

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FAMILY AT THE RANCH

On July 30, 2013, with 40 Comments

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about what I was feeling, innocent of what the photo implies. But the photo exists, delivering its message regardless of what I was doing or feeling. I carry this heavy in my heart. I have apologized numerous times for any pain I may have caused servicemen and their families because of this photograph. It was never my intention to cause harm. It is certainly painful for me that I, who had spent so much time talking to soldiers, trying to help soldiers and veterans, helping the anti-war movement to not blame the soldiers, now would be seen as being against our soldiers!

So Why I Did I Go?

On May 8th, 1972, President Nixon had ordered underwater, explosive mines to be placed in Haiphong Harbor, something that had been rejected by previous administrations. Later that same month, reports began to come in from European scientists and diplomats that the dikes of the Red River Delta in North Vietnam were being targeted by U.S. planes. The Swedish ambassador to Vietnam reported to an American delegation in Hanoi that he had at first believed the bombing was accidental, but now, having seen the dikes with his own eyes, he was convinced it was deliberate.

I might have missed the significance of these reports had Tom Hayden, whom I was dating, not shown me what the recently released *Pentagon Papers* had to say on the subject: in 1966, Assistant Secretary of Defense John McNaughton, searching for some new means to bring Hanoi to its knees, had proposed destroying North Vietnam's system of dams and dikes, which, he said, "If handled right- might...offer promise...such destruction does not kill or drown people. By shallow-flooding the rice, it leads after a time to widespread starvation (more than a million?) unless food is provided—which we could offer to do at the conference table." [1] President Johnson, to his credit, had not acted upon this option.

Now, six years later, Richard Nixon appeared to have given orders to target the dikes—

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whether to actually destroy them[2] or to demonstrate the threat of destruction, no one knew.

It is important to understand that the Red River is the largest river in North Vietnam. Like Holland, its delta is *below sea level*. Over centuries, the Vietnamese people have constructed –by hand!– an intricate network of earthen dikes and dams to hold back the sea, a network two thousand five hundred miles long! The stability of these dikes becomes especially critical as monsoon season approaches, and requires an all-out effort on the part of citizens to repair any damage from burrowing animals or from normal wear and tear. Now it was June, but this was no ‘normal wear and tear’ they were facing. The Red River would begin to rise in July and August. Should there be flooding, the mining of Haiphong Harbor would prevent any food from being imported; the bombing showed no signs of letting up; and there was little press coverage of the impending disaster should the dikes be weakened by the bombing and give way. Something drastic had to be done.

The Nixon Administration and its US Ambassador to the United Nations, George Bush (the father), would vehemently deny what was happening, but the following are excerpts from the April-May 1972 transcripts of conversations between President Nixon and top administration officials.

April 25th 1972

Nixon: “We’ve got to be thinking in terms of an all-out bombing attack [of North Vietnam]... Now, by all-out bombing attack, I am thinking about things that go far beyond...I'm thinking of the dikes, I'm thinking of the railroad, I'm thinking, of course, of the docks.”

Kissinger: "I agree with you."

President Nixon: "And I still think we ought to take the dikes out now. Will that drown people?"

Kissinger: "About two hundred thousand people."

President Nixon: "No, no, no...I'd rather use the nuclear bomb. Have you got that, Henry?"

Kissinger: "That, I think, would just be too much."

President Nixon: "The nuclear bomb, does that bother you?...I just want to think big, Henry, for Christsakes."

May 4, 1972.[3]

John B. Connally (Secretary of the Treasury):..."bomb for seriousness, not just as a signal. Railroads, ports, power stations, communication lines...and don't worry about killing civilians. Go ahead and kill 'em....People think you are [killing civilians] now. So go ahead and give 'em some."

Richard Nixon: "That's right."

[Later in same conversation]

Richard Nixon: "We need to win the goddamned war...and...what that fella [?] said about taking out the goddamned dikes, all right, we'll take out the goddamned dikes....If Henry's for that, I'm for it all the way."

The administration wanted the American public to believe Nixon was winding down the war

because he was bringing our ground troops home. (At the time I went to Hanoi, there were only approximately 25,000 troops left in South Vietnam from a high of 540,000 in early 1969) In fact, the war was escalating...from the air. And, as I said, monsoon season was approaching. Something drastic had to be done.

That May, I received an invitation from the North Vietnamese in Paris to make the trip to Hanoi. Many had gone before me but perhaps it would take a different sort of celebrity to get people's attention. Heightened public attention was what was needed to confront the impending crisis with the dikes. I would take a camera and bring back photographic evidence (if such was to be found) of the bomb damage of the dikes we'd been hearing about.

I arranged the trip's logistics through the Vietnamese delegation at the Paris Peace talks, bought myself a round trip ticket and stopped in New York to pick up letters for the POWs.

Frankly, the trip felt like a call to service. It was a humanitarian mission, not a political trip. My goal was to expose and try to halt the bombing of the dikes. (The bombing of the dikes ended a month after my return from Hanoi)

The only problem was that I went alone. Had I been with a more experienced, clear-headed, traveling companion, I would not have allowed myself to get into a situation where I was photographed on an anti-aircraft gun.

The Spin

My trip to North Vietnam never became a big story in the Summer/Fall of 1972—nothing on television, one small article in the *New York Times*. The majority of the American public, Congress, and the media were opposed to the war by then and they didn't seem to take much notice of my trip. After all, as I said, almost three hundred Americans had gone to Hanoi

before me. There had been more than eighty broadcasts by Americans over Radio Hanoi before I made mine. I had decided to do the broadcasts because I was so horrified by the bombing of civilian targets and I wanted to speak to U.S. pilots as I had done on so many occasions during my visits to U.S. military bases and at G.I. Coffee houses. I never asked pilots to desert. I wanted to tell them what I was seeing as an American on the ground there. The Nixon Justice Department poured over the transcripts of my broadcasts trying to find a way to put me on trial for treason but they could find none. A. William Olson, a representative of the Justice Department, [4] said after studying the transcripts, that I had asked the military “to do nothing other than to think.”

But from the Nixon Administration’s point of view, something had to be done. If the government couldn’t prosecute me in court because, in reality, I had broken no laws, then the pro-war advocates would make sure I was prosecuted in the court of public opinion.

The myth making about my being responsible for POW torture began seven months after I returned from North Vietnam, and several months after the war had ended, and the U.S. POWs had returned home. “Operation Homecoming,” in February 1973, was planned by the Pentagon and orchestrated by the White House. It was unprecedented in its lavishness. I was outraged that there had been no homecoming celebrations for the 10s of 1000s of men who had done combat. But from 1969 until their release in 1973, Nixon had made sure that the central issue of the war for many Americans was about the torture of American POWs (the very same years when the torture had stopped!). He had to seize the opportunity to create something that resembled victory. It was as close as he would come, and the POWs were the perfect vehicles to deflect the nation’s attention away from what our government had done in Vietnam, how they had broken faith with our servicemen.

I became a target the government could use, to suggest that some POWs who had met with

me while I was in Hanoi had been tortured into pretending they were anti-war. The same thing was done to try and frame former Attorney General Ramsey Clark, whose trip to North Vietnam followed mine.

According to Seymour Hersh, author and journalist who uncovered the My Lai massacre and, later, the Abu Ghraib Prison scandal, when American families of POWs became alarmed at the news that there was torture in North Vietnam prisons, they received letters from the Pentagon saying: “We are certain that you will not become unduly concerned over the [torture] briefing if you keep in mind the purpose for which it was tailored.”[5]

But, according to what the POWs wrote in their books, conditions in the POW camps *improved* in the four years preceding their release—that is, from 1969 until 1973. Upon their release, *Newsweek* magazine wrote, “the [torture] stories seemed incongruent with the men telling them – a trim, trig [note: this is actually the word used in the article] lot who, given a few pounds more flesh, might have stepped right out of a recruiting poster.”[6]

Once the POWs were home, the Pentagon and White House handpicked a group of the highest ranking POWs—senior officers, to travel the national media circuit, some of them telling of torture. A handwritten note from President Nixon to H.R. Haldeman says that “the POW’s need to have the worst quotes of R. Clark and Fonda” to use in their TV appearances, but this information shouldn’t come from the White House.[7] These media stories were allowed to become the official narrative, the universal “POW Story,” giving the impression that *all* the men had been subjected to systematic torture—right up to the end—and that torture was the policy of the North Vietnamese government. The POWs who said there was no torture in their camps were never allowed access to the media.

Not that any torture is justified or that anyone who had been tortured should have been prevented from telling about it. But the Nixon White House orchestrated a distorted picture of

what actually occurred.

In my anger at the torture story that was being allowed to spread, at how the entire situation was being manipulated, I made a mistake I deeply regret. I said that the POWs claiming torture were liars, hypocrites, and pawns.

I said, “I’m quite sure that there were incidents of torture...but the pilots who are saying it was the *policy* of the Vietnamese and that it was systematic, I believe that’s a lie.”[8]

What I didn’t know at the time was that although there had been no torture *after* 1969, *before* then there *had* been systematic torture of some POWs. One of the more hawkish of them, James Stockdale, wrote in his book, *In Love and War*, that no more than ten percent of the pilots received at least ninety percent of the punishment.[9] John Hubbell, in *P.O.W.: A Definitive History of the American Prisoner-of-War Experience in Vietnam*, agreed, and affirmed the fact that torture stopped in 1969.[10]

When the POWs came home, some who had been there longest told the press how they clogged up prison toilets and sewers, refused to come when ordered, or follow prison rules. One of the most famous, Jeremiah Denton, said, “We forced them [the guards] to be brutal to us.”[11] I relay this not to minimize the hardships that the POWs endured, nor to excuse it– but to attempt belatedly to restore a greater depth of insight into the *entire* POW experience with their captors.

Still, whether any torture was administered to certain, more recalcitrant POWs and not to others is unacceptable. Even though only a small percent of prisoners were tortured by U.S. soldiers at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq in 2003 and 2004, it wasn’t right. According to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld’s standards, torturing prisoners to get information is

justified. It isn't. Not ever. All nations must adhere to the Geneva Convention's rules of warfare.

As anyone who knew or worked with me in those years knows that my heart has always been with the soldiers. I should have been clearer that my anger back then was at the Nixon Administration. It was the administration, in its cynical determination to keep hostilities between the U.S. and Vietnam alive and to distract people from the administration's mistakes, who tried to use the POWs as pawns.

Addressing The Internet lies

By the end of the Nineties, even more grotesque torture lies began to be circulated about me over the Internet—the ones that continue to this day.

Let me quote a former POW, Captain Mike McGrath (USN Retired), president of the POW-NAM Organization. In a letter to Roger Friedman, at the time a columnist for Fox411, on Friday, January 12, 2001 (he gave Friedman permission to make the letter public) McGrath wrote:

Yes, the Carrigan/Driscoll/strips of paper story is an Internet hoax. It has been around since Nov 1999 or so. To the best of my knowledge none of this ever happened. This is a hoax story placed on the Internet by unknown Fonda haters. No one knows who initiated the story. I have spoken with all the parties named: Carrigan, Driscoll, et al. They all state that this particular story is a hoax and wish to disassociate their names from the false story. They never made the statements attributed to them.

In his letter, McGrath also said to Friedman that by the time I went to Hanoi in 1972, treatment of the POWs was starting to improve and that I "did not bring torture or abuse to the POWs,"

but that one man [Hoffman], the “senior ranking man in a room full of new guys,” was tortured (“hung by his broken arm”) to make him come to the meeting with me. McGrath wrote:

Why one man (name withheld by request) was picked out for torture of his broken arm is unknown...

The answer is, it never happened!

Will what I have written here stop the myths from continuing to be spread on the Internet and in mass mailings to conservative Republicans? I don't know. Some people seem to need to hate and I make a convenient lightning rod. I think the lies and distortions serve some right-wing purpose—fundraising? Demonizing me so as to scare others from becoming outspoken anti-war activists? Who knows? But at least here, on my blog (and in my memoirs), there is a place where people who are genuinely interested in the truth can find it.

[1] PP Vol. 1V, p. 43 (*Italics in the original*)

[2] As Hitler had done to the Netherlands during World War II. German High Commissioner Seyss-Inquart was condemned to death at Nuremberg for opening the dikes in Holland.

[3] Oval Office Conversation No. 719-22, May 4, 1972; Nixon White House Tapes; National Archives at College Park, College Park MD

[4] *Hearings before the Committee on Internal Security*, House of Representatives, 92

Congress, Second Session, Sept. 10 & 25th, 1972 (Washington: Government Printing Office): 7552

[5] Hersh, *The P.O.W. Issue: A National Issue is Born*, Dayton (Ohio) *Journal-Herald*, 13-18 Feb 1971

[6] Newsweek, 4/16/73

[7] Nixon Presidential Materials Staff, White House Special Files: Staff Member & Office Files: H.R. Haldeman: Box 47: Folder: H. Notes Jan-Feb-Mar 1973 National Archives

[8] NYT, 7 April 1973,11

[9] *In Love and War*, p.447

[10] *P.O.W.: A Definitive History of the American Prisoner-of-War Experience in Vietnam*, John G. Hubbell, 91,430

[11] *New York Times*, 30 April 1973.

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Antimedia

Jane, you portray yourself as always having supported the

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troops. If that's true, then how do you explain saying that military POWs were "military careerists and professional killers" who are "trying to make themselves look self-righteous, but they are war criminals according to the law"? That doesn't sound like supporting the troops, Jane. It sounds like undermining them. The truth is the Vietnam anti-war movement treated military personnel like dirt, openly scorned them, spit on them and called them baby killers. I don't recall you ever speaking out on their behalf, Jane. Did I miss that?



Jane

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Antimedia, I never said those words and don't know where they originated.



buundawg

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(This replaces prior post – key typos corrected here)

Jane,

I'm a 50 years old, married man. Over the years, I've always followed your career with great interest. I've always thought of you as a genuine artist and I am a big fan of your movies. Many times, you've brought beauty, grace and effective acting to roles which people can relate to and feel good about. And that's the key you are missing here. Allow me to explain...

Back in the day, when you were active with Tom Hayden and

the 60's CA radicals, you were able to do that, not just because you perhaps were a true believer (as per Abbie H., Jerry R. the SDS crowd, etc.) but also because of your personal financial success. And it was that personal financial success which set you apart from the lives of ordinary people.

In other words, you do know that draft deferments were available for the college crowd, but not the single, working class men, right? And you do know that the better connected you were, the better a posting you got – such as George W. Bush and John F. Kerry, right?

You see, the issue here is not that your beliefs were sincerely held or that Kissinger and Nixon were liars (who doubts that?). But that by going to Hanoi, you made a huge PR blunder. And the blunder was not that you tried to take matters into your own hands and tried to humanize the North Vietnamese in the public eye. No, the PR blunder was that you rubbed people's faces in the fact that you had the opportunity and resources to thumb your nose at the administration – and they didn't.

I was only a kid in the 60's, but we lived in Los Angeles and the fear of families seeing their kids sent off to an aimless encampment war was utterly pervasive. Americans don't mind fighting and dying, but they want to fight to win – not sit in forward firing bases and go on jungle foot patrols in circles for years.

The point is this: You flaunted your individual power by going to Hanoi and by doing so you starkly contrasted your power

against the lack of power of the individual draftee – and their families. Many American families were destroyed by the Vietnam War. But your trip to Hanoi – and your continued justifications for it flaunted (and continue to flaunt) the fact that the Vietnam was, unlike WWII and Korea, left to be fought by connected blue-bloods in safety and disadvantaged grunts at risk. What was that lyric “I ain’t no senators son?...”

The bottom line is that you are simply too prideful to admit an error in judgment: The why reason why you should have not gone to Hanoi was that large numbers of people wanted the USA public icons to show solidarity with our soldiers, not Hanoi’s.

The people to blame for Vietnam were Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon – and you can’t cure that blame by sitting around an AA gun and smiling with armed combatants who are shooting at your fellow citizens. You might be a citizen of the world, but the average American army grunt never was and never will be.

Jane you are too good of a person and have too big of a heart to let this go on any further. Just say this and mean it, and you’ll surely be forgiven:

“It was wrong for me to go to Hanoi. By going there and be photographed smiling around those weapons, I unwittingly poured salt in the wounds of my fellow Americans. I see now that my trip, though well intended by me, was a serious mistake and I apologize for it. I’m sorry and I ask your forgiveness”.

Jane, Americans like nothing better than to give good people a second chance. I implore you sincerely to take your now – it's not too late, but someday before you know it, it will be. None of us are getting any younger, so don't wait another day.

Apologize sincerely now and be done with it.



Laura Grimshaw

08.10.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

D. Gregory,

Your post is way off the mark. You seem preoccupied with the financial security and personal power you perceive that Ms. Fonda has; you show no compassion to her heartfelt post describing the circumstances; in fact it seems as if you did not read it at all; and furthermore you think you can bully her into speaking YOUR WORDS you insist will make the entire issue go away.

You come off as being jealous along with being a bully.

Enough said.



Russell DeMello

04.17.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

I think she has already apologized. 90-something

percent of what she did to protest the Viet Nam was reasonable enough, but she did make a few mistakes.

She has admitted to some mistakes and she's

apologized already. No matter how many more times

she apologizes the crowd that hates her is going to continue hating her. Their hatred isn't only about the mistakes that she made; rather it's also, and perhaps mostly, about the fact that she's a democrat. The people who hate her are the extreme right and they hate everything democrat. They hate Jane Fonda the most because the mistakes she made play right smack dab into the stuff that the extreme right hates about all democrats ie the claims that democrats are a bunch of "commies" and weak on national defense. And she's an easy target that they can use to bash democrats since they've got photos and recordings of her mistakes. They can prove some of the stuff they allege about her looks true enough and they use that to bash not only her, but the democratic party in general.

I was alive during the Viet Nam War, and I was somewhat aware of this whole "Hanoi Jane" thing, but I didn't know a lot of the details and facts until researching the issue this past week when Jane Fonda's name became news again owing to the Facebook boycott of her new movie – "The Butler." She made some mistakes for sure. And she knows this, but her critics are taking this too far. They are dragging this "defaming water torture" out for far too long. This has been going on over 40 years. They accused her of spitting in their faces but the only event between them and her involving face-spitting was when one of them spat in Jane Fonda's face. I think she should have

pressed charges, but that's easy for me to say because she, not I, is the one walking around with a lot of remorse over her mistakes.

After looking at some facts and details I definitely believe that Jane Fonda's entire intent was to try to stop the war. I believe that in her pragmatic view anything she said or did to accomplish that objective was worth it because it would save lives and reduce suffering.

She gives her explanation for how she ended up being photographed sitting on an artillery weapon used by the Viet Cong and I have no reason or evidence to contradict her. In fact, I have been at festive gatherings wherein I was having a hearty laugh while saying "I better sit down" and then securing a place to sit without really paying much attention to where I was sitting as I was still laughing, cutting up, and kind of giddy at the time. I've been in that situation so I can relate to her explanation.

I defended Jane Fonda at the pathological Facebook site where they are organizing a boycott of Jane Fonda's "Butler" movie until they prevented me from posting. While I was posting at that site I made some observations:

1. I'm glad she told the people who hate her to "get a life" and I think she is doing the right thing by being graceful with her critics most of the time but occasionally scolding them a bit by telling them to get a

life.

2. Most of the people who hate her will likely never stop hating her.

3. Some of the people who hate her could be reached if she's inclined to do more (a lot more) outreach. I believe this because a surprising number of the Jane Fonda haters at the Facebook boycott Jane Fonda site said they only started hating her when they read stories about her causing POWs to be tortured and killed by giving info to their captors, and other stories describing equally (but false) bad behavior by Jane Fonda.

4. There are some CORE Jane Fonda haters who are pushing lies about Jane Fonda to make her anti-war activity seem much worse than it really was. They can't drum up enough hatred for her by only telling the truth about what she did. These core Jane Fonda haters are doing this because they want to publicly hurt her and so they can use her public shame as a weapon against democrats. They are producing these lies against Jane Fonda in an attempt to make middle-America hate her.

5. I really hate to say this, and I'm very sad and sorry to have to say this, but if I knew Jane Fonda I would advise her to not allow the general public access to her eventual grave-site.

Hopefully Jane Fonda will live a long and happy life.

She does not deserve the poop she is having to put up with.



Jane

Thank you, Russell

04.17.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)



Russell DeMello

04.17.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

In my previous post I said that Jane Fonda could effectively reach out to some of the Jane Fonda haters. After that post I remembered reading somewhere that she's already doing outreach to veterans and stuff like that so she's already trying to make people understand that the worse stuff being said about her isn't true. So she's already trying outreach.

I wonder if the thought has crossed her mind to sue the people who are manufacturing the lies about her.



William Pilner

07.29.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

You can be proud of what you did Jane, the mainstream media skew news... Please read the John Pilger reports to have objective information!

<http://www.johnpilger.com/articles/vietnam-the-last-battle-john-pilger-reports-from-saigon>



Gordon Quinn

07.29.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Jane,

Thanks for this. We know the truth but is great to see you standing up for yourself and all of us as you did in the past.



David Tucker

07.29.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Thank you, Jane for your clarity and your courage.

I was one of the activists who spoke to Donald Duncan in the 60s and helped him understand some of the lies he'd been told. I lost touch with him. Have been looking for him the last 5 years with no results. Do you have any contact info. on Don?

Thank you again. If we are to survive, our hearts have to change. Open and soften. That's the real battleground.

Again, thank you.

Love,

David



Jane

07.30.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

David, I too have lost touch with Donald.



John McAuliff

07.31.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

(typo corrected)

Jane,

You have always been an educator, speaking truth to

power.

It is unfortunate but necessary, as demonstrated by QVC's cowardly behavior, for you to once more describe what actually happened in Vietnam.

It is not surprising that you made this an opportunity to lift up the little known history of the unconscionable bombing of the Red River dikes.

The US like most countries does not easily deal with the underside of its history. Our war in Vietnam was defeated, but our system emerged relatively unscathed.

As a result we have never taken moral responsibility for undertaking a thirty year long intervention in Indochina that was unnecessary, illegitimate and illegal, nor for its consequences on the people of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia as well as our own.

American deaths, long term injuries, and Agent Orange induced illness and birth defects resulting from the war are regrettable enough. The costs borne by the population of Indochina was almost literally 100 times greater.

Imagine the alternative if leaders in the US government and media had listened to the men who served in Vietnam with the Office of Strategic Services and counseled in 1945 against US support for restoration of French colonialism, or to experts who favored carrying out the democratic reunification election in 1956 as mandated by the Geneva Agreement?

One can see in today's warm relations between Vietnam and the US, broad economic engagement and shared strategic

concern about China's regional ambitions what the alternative could have been.

We cannot undo our shared tragic losses but we can address more seriously the human consequences still claiming victims today of Agent Orange, land mines and unexploded ordnance.

Further information is available at

<http://www.warlegacies.org>

John McAuliff

Fund for Reconciliation and Development

<http://www.ffrd.org>



**Pauline
Schneider**

08.01.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

This is the Jane Fonda I grew up believing in, not the fascist lies in the bulk spam emails my misguided family members keep sending me.

I am so happy to see you set the record straight, and I have shared your blog with them and on my facebook page. The work you did, gratis your privileged status (which opens many doors closed tightly to the rest of us), was important work that many could never afford to undertake or even conceive of undertaking due to lack of resources. It is vital that people who DO have the resources and the wherewithal to make positive change in the world, do so. I disagree with someone who posted here that such actions merely “flaunts individual power” and that you still need to apologize.

Baloney. Those who slandered you need to apologize and

stop being cowards hiding being spam emails.

It takes special people who have made accomplishments in their lives and become aware and enlightened enough to use that rare power to make the world a better place for us all. Or at the very least to try.

You, Howard Zinn, Noam Chomsky and dozens more went to Hanoi to work for a better world, to bridge a chasm. It's sad that such positive action still attracts such negative reaction. But such is human nature. Fickle and shallow, not to mention greedy.

You know the old saying, no good deed goes unpunished... Keep it up, lovely lady. This woman here knows what you did and is grateful.



**Jacqueline Ann
Dosch**

08.02.2011 · [Log in
to Reply](#)

I was not alive during the Viet Nam war. My father was in the war, and just passed away after suffering the after-effects of the war, silently, for over 40 years. It's great that you are trying to clear your conscience after all this time, but i would like to know one thing: how can you say that you never accused the soldiers of being baby killers when I have see you say that to them on video? How can so many people in the country misunderstand your ill intentions? I think you are one of the biggest hypocrites there is and I AM NOT FONDA JANE!



Jane

08.03.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

I challenge you to show me a video in which I call soldiers 'baby killers.' Never happened.



Gene

08.02.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Dear Jane,

Finally I get to thank you in person (sort of, I guess). I am a Vietnam combat veteran (1970). Thank you for your support of the GI movement against the war. Thousands of us were just kids when we were drafted or enlisted. We didn't really know what we were getting into and by the time we did it was too late. I grew up in a small farming community in the Mid-West. There was no way I was going to desert the military over my anti-war beliefs because it would have humiliated my parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts. Instead I participated in killing people for something I did not believe in. I am but one of thousands. Upon returning from the war I helped publish a GI anti-war newsletter. It got me discharged (that at least I could hide from my family). What you and Holly Near and Donald Sutherland did buoyed a lot of spirits a long time ago. To even imagine the grief people try to give you today makes me well up with anger and tears.

So one last time, thank you!!!

Gene



C

08.03.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Thanks for writing this. I now remember much of this and that I believed you then and still do.

I think and have seen some wounded men find a strong female to oppress and try to destroy , when wounded , and I still see it.

Just recently they are going after Pelosi, for no reason. I have seen them start out with one derogatory lie, and it soon escalates into a pack like of dogs, saying horrible untrue things.

That you were duped into the picture, was , it sounds beyond your control, and I think you should stop apologizing for it. That could have happened to anyone.

I will refer anyone I hear the lies about to your article and the truth.

I think, though that some people are very comfortable in their anger .

The last thing that was mentioned is that you named a child after the north viet nam terrorist, and I don't believe that either.

Wow, I still think this is a very heavy lie and burden put off on you for way too long.

Some people are determined to believe them.



JOHN Duggan

08.05.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Dear Jane Fonda,

If you have a photo of yourself that you like and by which you would like to be remembered – please send me a copy.

I'll frame it nicely and place it on my wall next to one of Marlene Dietrich. You are two genuine twentieth century heroes.

Dietrich toured the US to raise war bands and entertained Allied troops fighting against her native Germany. She was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by the US in 1947.

When the US invaded Vietnam in one of the 20th century's most unequal and barbarous wars – you not only protested the US war but even traveled to North Vietnam and stood with the victims.

You have never been formally thanked or rewarded by the US government and probably never will be – but you remain as bona fide an inspiration and role model as Marlene Dietrich.

You probably don't remember but we met briefly in April 1968 when we shared a speaker's platform at a large anti-war rally in front of the Federal Building in Denver.

You gave a brief but enthusiastic and motivating call to carry on in our efforts to end the war. It was my pleasure to speak just before you and to stand with you as you stood with all of us.

More of us should have spoken out and written in your defense.

All the best to you!

John Duggan

New York City



Jane

08.08.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

John, Where do I send t? Better yet, send me a stamped, addressed envelope to me c/o Debra Tucker, 1450 W Peachtree, Atlanta, GA 30309



Chu Chi Thanh

09.19.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Dear Ms Jane Fonda,
I am a Vietnamese journalist and during your trip to North Vietnam I took some pictures of you. In 2010 I published a photographic book entitled 'Memories of War' which includes these pictures. I want to send you a copy of this book so please give me your address.
Best regards,
Chu Chi Thanh
Hanoi, Vietnam



Jane

09.21.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Chu Chi Thanh, thanks. My address is 1450 W Peachtree St, suite 200, Atlanta, GA 30309



sherry taylor

Shame on QVC!

08.07.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

I always believed you had to be one of the most misunderstood people in America, and doubted the things I would hear about the Hanoi event, and now after reading your blog that belief is certainly validated. Thank you for posting the details and for standing in your truth always. You are an inspiration to me.



phillip barlow

08.07.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Our paths have crossed in the past Jane but until now I have never had the opportunity to hear your version of the events discussed here. While I have always been an admirer of your beauty, grace, and talent, this event and your anti war activity were things that always bothered me about you.

I have also seen the internet discussion circulations along with the photo op which you discuss here. While I didn't want to believe those e-mails, to be honest with you they did cause me to wonder and I probably gave them more credence than they deserved. I wanted to believe it was a matter of youthful indiscretion on your part. Or perhaps an individual standing up for the principles of what she believes which is something I admire in anyone even if their views are different than my own. But I just didn't know.

However after reading here for the first time your version of the events, I am ashamed for not giving you more of the benefit of the doubt which is what I try to give everyone.

Because while I am younger than you, as I have grown and

matured over the years I have learned that there are always two sides to every story and often times the truth lies somewhere in the middle.

I applaud you for giving your recollection of those times and events. I believe them without reservation. For anyone who doubts your version of the events then they should simply consider your position and status in this life and realize that the only motivation that you could possibly have is making the truth known, which by the way has been your pattern throughout your life and during your anti war activity.

While I tend to lean heavily right in my political outlook and disagree with much of your anti war activity along with your associations of those times, I believe your version of the events are truthful and accurate. You are a stand up girl in my book for having shared it because as I have already said you certainly didn't have to.

If I could I'd like to suggest that you seek out one more opportunity to get your version of these events out there and your reasoning for your political beliefs. Since many conservative and independent thinkers firmly believe that our mainstream media outlets, and CNN to a certain extent slant the news to the left, the vast majority of them have quit using them as a source of information all together.

Therefore as painful as it might be I'd love to see you reach out, by way of your publicist or other people, to Fox News for a Bill O'reilly interview. You've got to know that many of the people who believe the e-mail circulations would hear it and watch it. While there are always people who are going to

beleive what they want to beleive regardless, I think that the majority of the viewers at Fox are fair minded and of a higher intellect. Fox of course would jump at an opportunity to do a Jane Fonda interview on this subject because the ratings would sky rocket. I am also sure that O'reilly would give you the respect that you command and deserve. I also have no doubt that you would be able to hold your own in any interview with him.



Silvia Santis

08.11.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

I honestly don't think they will ever forgive you. I didn't know about anything of this, I am from Guatemala and was born after Vietman. Hoever, even here, you can hear how the story stuck in some people. Then, I started watching biographies and reading about it and understood that some people were so insulted by it, that I would let it rest. You have apologized. Let it go.

However, I respect how brave you have been about it.

Congratulations in this blog and your new book and everything, I am an admiror of your work and life.

Silvia



Ynez

08.17.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Jane, I think you're a wonderful inspirational person and I'm truly disappointed in the public for still bringing up these horrible stories. I for one know that when being in the public eye stories get skewed and pictures can truly be misleading.

It's a real shame that in this day and age people can still have ideas of what happened that day. In any case keep doing what you do and the book sounds awesome! Take care.

Sincerely,
Ynez



Roger Tompkins

08.17.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

I've just watched your extraordinary interview with Charlie Rose. I must first tell you that I love you very much and always have. You, Woman.

This is not a personal statement so much as it is a recognition of your representation of all that is most beautiful about those my gender seeks to love and be loved by.

As a young man I joined the effort in Vietnam and, like your father, I didn't have to. After I returned I watched you on television. Not for a second did I think you did anything wrong. Neither did any of my veteran friends. You have absolutely nothing to be ashamed of. You saw what we saw. Utter, wanton, unmitigatable waste.

I have three magnificent daughters and to each of them I'll send a copy of 'Prime Time'.

May your life remain as beautiful as the light behind your face.



Konstantin

Okela

09.02.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Dear Jane,

My name is Konstantin Okela, an admirer of you and your father. To us, the people who used to live behind the Iron Curtain in East Europe and especially in Bulgaria, at least one positive thing came out as a result of your visit to Hanoi. They started showing American films with you and your father. Before that the American films were a taboo. Watching your movies made me a huge fan of yours. Furthermore, they exposed me to the American culture as well.

When I was in the army they were playing "On Golden Pond." I had to sneak out from the army base and traveled to the city to see it. For this I was punished three days in the solitary, but I didn't regret it. How could've I missed a film with two of my favorite actors. Moreover, your movies made me want to become a filmmaker.

However, the communist censorship, at that time drove me out of my country and I immigrated to America. Here I went back to school and graduated majoring in film. When I wrote my screenplay "Return to Budapest" I was imagining you playing the lead role of Adrienn, the main character. "Return to Budapest" is a love drama about Adrienn and Miklos. Separated by the Hungarian uprising against the Communist regime in 1956, Adrienn and Miklos reunite in Budapest 40 years later. The former sweethearts fall in love again but unexpected obstacles and old enemies threaten to separate them forever. If you're interested to read it I can send you or

email you the screenplay. My e-mail is

reihstagarsonist@gmail.com

Thank you Jane for inspiring me to become a filmmaker. I'm so happy that I finally can write to you, hoping that you'll read it.

Best Regards, Konstantin Okela.



Paul Moffat

09.08.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Jane Hanoi was a blunder but on the blunder scale of Vietnam yours was a mere mistake. In hindsight everyone is an expert. I served with Australian Infantry 1st Battalion and I always thought it was you and your ilk who did the most to drive public opinion and force governments to get us out. Only idiots and illinformed vets with a grudge to blame anyone and anything have a problem with your actions. I for one do not. An Im glad you made peace with your Dad before he passed away. Unfortunatly I do not beleive my own daighter will do likewise. regards paul Moffat.



BJ Cassady

12.21.2011 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

As a disabled viet-nam era vet, and recognizing you as a person of intellect and high learning, I never did quite believe the stories that circulated about you. I was pleased to read your version of what happened. I also believe a person can support the troops if not the endeavor. I am my own person, who is considered conservative but yet thinks outside of the box. I love our country as I sure you do.

As one aged warrior to another... Rock on! BJ Cassady,
USAF, writer and ISD professional



karl andersson

01.27.2012 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Dear Jane,

My name is Karl Andersson and I'm really from Sweden, but I'm visiting the Bertrand Russell Archives in Canada and I've just published an article in "Russell: Journal of Bertrand Russell Studies" about the his International War Crimes Tribunal, also, Vietnam War Crimes Tribunal, in which your biography and some books about you are listed in the secondary bibliography, which I think you will find very helpful.

You could help me to improve my introduction, which I plan to expand into a book, by shortly describing more in detail your memories of the tribunal and the connection between it and your heroic work.

Below I'll paste the page that made it to the printed version that you could comment upon. In an earlier version I mentioned you and the FTA, but I'm not quite sure how that was related to Ralph Schoenman and other people from the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation in New York. Can you help?

I also have a suggestion that we celebrate a Anti-War Memorial Meeting in Washington on the 45 anniversary of Abbie Hoffman's attempt to elevate the Pentagon (21 Oct) with all my heroines and heroes: You, Mohammad Ali, Noam

Chomsky and many more; What do you and all other anti-war friends say?

I'll send you and everyone else on this list the whole article, if you just e-mail me at;

butterflyandeson (at)hotmail.com

Best regards from a great admirer

Karl Andersson

Andrew E. Hunt in *The Turning: a History of Vietnam*

Veterans against the War

(New York: New York U. P., 1999) writes (p. 58) that Ensign and Rifkin had spent

months preparing interviews with former g.i.s and that they had received encouragement

from Ralph Schoenman, (who, however, no longer worked for the Bertrand Russell Peace

Foundation, because Russell had cut all connections with him). In that situation Schoen-

man renamed the American branch of the brpf "The American Foundation for Social

Justice" and continued to promote hearings into alleged American atrocities in Vietnam.

(See Wikipedia's article on Ralph Schoenman.) Schoenman was one link between the

iwct and later Commissions of Inquiry, including the Winter Soldier investigation. This

relationship is supported by James Simon Kunen, *Standard Operating Procedures: Notes*

of a Draft-Age American (New York: Avon Books, 1971), p.

22.

It is a sad fact that, although the Paris Peace Accords of 1973 (article 21) say that “the United States will contribute to healing the wounds of war and to postwar reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam and throughout Indo-china”, no Vietnamese victims of Agent Orange (who are still being born today) have received as much as “We’re sorry”. That is a disgrace. The following select secondary bibliography, comprising 277 items (plus an appendix of fourteen primary items, included because the iwct proceedings have never been listed before), is the result of more than fifteen years of scouting for references to this unique event in the history of international law from the Nuremberg trials to the establishment of the International Criminal Court in the Hague in 2002. The iwct also inspired Vietnam veterans and others to form Citizens’ Commissions of Inquiry like the Winter Soldier investigation.¹³ Tod Ensign, who was an organizer of such a commission, writes in *Against the Vietnam War: Writings by Activists* (cited under 1999 below) that “Within a week

after the My Lai storm hit, Jeremy Rifkin and I, both antiwar activists, met with staT members14 of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation to discuss their public call for the creation of citizens' commissions to collect testimony from Vietnam veterans" (p. 215). Anyone interested in the Vietnam War and international law will soon come across references to the four volumes of The Vietnam War and International Law (1968, 1969, 1972, 1976), edited by Falk, who by that time was professor of international law and practice at Princeton University, and is currently research professor in global and international studies at the University of California at Santa



Donald Lynch

02.18.2012 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Jane, I am a Vietnam Vet(1967-1968),who volunteered to go to Vietnam. I was 19 then and I am 64 now. While I didn't agree with how the war was being orchestrated by our side, I did agree, and still do, of why we were there. The U.S. was obliged to protect South Vietnam under provisions set by the S.E.A.T.O. pact and prevent the expansion of communism in Asia.

Another small fact you seem to ignore is that North Vietnam

was always the agressor and used extreme meaures to go out of their way to break one ceasefire after another. You should have been there for Tet 1968 when the communists infiltrated large numbers of men and weapons down the Ho Chi Minh trail. It was a lopsided victory for the U.S., but you would never know it by listening to Walter Cronkite and his ilk.

The pullout of American troops in S. Vietnam led to a subsequent massacre of people in S. Vietnam. Laos and the killing fields of Cambodia. Do you feel any regrets for those poor souls who were tortured or killed due to mostly in part for the anti-war movement you so ambitiously embraced. Not to mention the 58,000 of your fellow americans who gave it all and probably hated war as much as you. The Freedoms you and I enjoy did not come cheap.



Jane

02.19.2012 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

I knew many soldiers from all branches of the military, Donald, and I hated that they were sent there, and I tried to honor their sacrifice and reduce the deaths by being part of the movement to end the war. We have a totally different perspective on the war. So be it.
Thanks for writing.



Donald Lynch

02.19.2012 · [Log in](#)

Thank you for your response. I believe you when you say you hated the war and wanted to reduce

to Reply

the deaths and suffering. We were young, idealistic and well meaning back then. Wisdom comes with experience and sometimes followed by regrets.

We can only hope and pray that our fearless leaders do well in carefully choosing where we send our troops in the future. God bless America!

God Bless you, Jane



George Reese

03.31.2012 · [Log in](#)

to Reply

Jane – you don't owe anyone anymore explanations about what you did and where you went 40 years ago! You have already told your story hundreds of times and most of the people believe you (myself included) and those who don't will never see your side of it. Never! My brother in law (who wasn't even born when all of this was going on) thinks you are a Communist and I have had countless arguments with him about this. He refuses to see the truth and WANTS to believe you are some kind of satanic monster! These type of narrow-minded people are never going to see the truth, so to hell with them! They are never going to believe you and you shouldn't continue to defend yourself. You haven't done anything wrong! Keep up the good work and continue to use your celebrity for good causes! (p.s. – just saw your

father in "12 Angry Men" and am reminded yet again what a fantastic actor he was!)



dunn1de

06.28.2012 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Hello Jane,

My father served in Vietnam and although we differ on some political viewpoints. I do thank you for taking a stand for your beliefs.

I am reminded of a quote from Voltaire:

"I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it".

I think of your infamous anti-aircraft guns photo as the pre-facebook or twitter version of something anyone would have changed if given the opportunity.



Jane

06.30.2012 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Appreciate this from you, Dunn1de



Iris Carter

07.01.2012 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

I was only 12 in 1972, but I was passionately against the Vietnam War. I didn't understand all the implications and government hijinx, but I knew we American citizens were being manipulated by a mis-informed press. I also detested the way soldiers were treated when they returned home.

They were following orders and didn't want to be there any more than we wanted them there. The war was a fight among leaders who used citizens as pawns.

I knew people were upset with what you did, but I honestly saw through the false propaganda, and somehow understood that you were trying to make a difference. Since those years, I have heard people criticize your visit and sit in judgement of you. And though I disagreed, I didn't have enough facts to dispel their falsehoods.

Thank you for sharing your story "once more." I know how frustrating it must be to constantly defend yourself for something you did 40 years ago. (Even a murderer is often freed of punishment in half that time.) By telling your intentions once again, I now have confirmation of what I could only previously surmise. I also have even more knowledge of some of the repulsive plots instigated by the Nixon administration.

In addition to your skill in providing great entertainment, you exude a classy demeanor. I saw an interview you did with Larry King where he asked you about working with Lindsey Lohan. I was extremely impressed with your answer, which was non-committal yet was given with the utmost poise and dignity. The look in your eyes, and the words spoken, combined to indicate that Lindsey had/has issues, it wasn't your place to discuss, but that you appreciated the opportunity to work with her, she has so much potential, and you tried to give her support and advice.

I am proud to be among your fans. You do not disappoint.

Thank you.

- Iris



H. A. Melton

12.07.2012 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

When young men go to war they need all the support they can get. I'm now 67 years old and still not impressed with your decision(s) of so long ago. Obviously your hind-sight is now 100% but way too many of us Old Men today are still not impressed with you. May you continue to enjoy the support and recognition of so many who don't have a clue of what motivated so many of us youngsters of yesteryear. Those of us who came from middle class America and gave so much for what we believed in. Those with fame and unlimited financial resources just never seem to catch on.



Mike Flores

01.10.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

There are 2 things which happened during this period worth mentioning. First, Jane had ended her relationship with Donald Southerland and before the film FTA was to be released she stopped talking to men. Since 90% of film critics were men, this must have given the producers a heart attack. FTA was an amazing documentary they showed the size of the disgruntled soldiers over the Vietnam War. The film would have forced the press to cover this movement that Americans had no idea existed. Within the military there were underground papers, underground DJ's (the Rabbit

broadcasts out of South Vietnam for example), and hundreds jailed for organizing against the war. But I believe she was set up for the North Vietnam visit.

The group she was approached by was The Committee of Liaison With Families, who had organized over 250 people to carry letters to POW's in North Vietnam and then bring back letters for Vietnamese prisoners held here. They actually had a supporter in the State Department who had let them use his diplomatic pouch(Frank Sieverts). However this organization was despised by Nixon and his brownnosers in FBI and CIA. Letters were often taken from the people carrying them and opened by CIA. The CIA would have to pay The Committee of Liaison With Families money for having delayed mail years later.

Having Jane do this knowing it would distract from the message of the film would have been a brilliant move. I have no proof of this, other than many years studying Intel history. But since both groups were inside The Committee of Liaison With Families I would say there are many flags on the field as we say in football. She would have been told about the diplomatic pouch, how several hundred had done this, and that it was for the P.O.W.s. What protester would have said no? If the same person who led her to the group, also thought being silent was a great idea I would be deeply suspicious. The odds are, with both CIA and the FBI infiltrating the group, somewhere along the line, it became the easiest way to discredit her and stop the film.



Jane

01.12.2013 · [Log in](#)
[to Reply](#)

Interesting hypothesis, Mike, but not quite right. It was Tom Hayden, on my behalf, (so much for 'stopped talking to men.' I soon married him) who reached out to the Vietnamese delegation in Paris saying I was interested in coming to North Vietnam because I wanted to try and call attention to the possible US bombing of the Dikes there. They, in turn, put me in touch with the Committee of Friendship between American and Vietnamese People...or some such, I can't exactly recall the name. Once the trip was organized, I asked my friend, Cora Weiss, who ran Committee of Liason, if there were letters to bring with me to POWs.



LP

01.31.2013 · [Log in](#)
[to Reply](#)

Ms. Fonda,
It seems I am a bit late to the dance with respect to this post, but I found it last night after a vigorous discussion with a relative in which she repeated some of the nonsense that goes around about your trip to Hanoi during the war. I was young then, and not very aware of world politics-two conditions that have since both been remedied.
I wanted to say that, while your execution may have been a bit off in some ways, I firmly believe that your heart was in the right place during your activism against the war. I only hope that I would be as courageous as you have been, to

Speak against the powerful and to face your detractors again and again over these many years. I suspect that if most people faced the kind of vitriolic and continuing attacks over mistakes, both real and imagined, for forty years, they would be broken. And yet you endure. If only more people were that way, the world would be so much a better place. All the best to you.



Jane

Thank you, LP

02.01.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)



Isaiah Marquez

Hi Jane. I am a Infantry Staff Sergeant in the U.S. Army. I have to say...I'm sorry. After reading so much about your trip to Vietnam (apparently the FALSE version), I held much anger and hate towards you. I regret that. You see, my parents were anti-Vietnam protesters as well. My dad is a Vietnam vet and they don't come any more radical than him. About as far left as they come. He calls himself a revolutionary. He's my hero. How I turned out a conservative Independent, who knows? My point is, I have seen combat in Afghanistan (2002) and Iraq (2005, 2007, 2009) and I could not believe what you reportedly did in Vietnam. How could you??? Well, apparently.....you didn't. I know this one post

02.13.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

doesn't make up for all the internet hate coming your way all these years but just know that some of us out there know the truth now. We're on opposite ends of the political spectrum, but like the saying goes, I will defend your God given right to say and believe as you do. I know your point of view well....it used to be mine. Take care.

PS.

When I was a young kid, I thought Barbarella was AWESOME. You were sooooo hot! 😊 LOL (Sorry, had to throw that in.)



Jane

02.14.2013 · [Log in](#)
[to Reply](#)

Dear Isaiah, Thank you so much for writing this to me. It means a lot to me, believe me. Thanks again, xx Jane



Cayli Dobbs

02.21.2013 · [Log in](#)
[to Reply](#)

Dear Ms. Jane Fonda,
My name is Cayli. I am an eighth grader at a school near Washington, DC. In my humanities class, I was assigned to write a paper about activism in the 1960s. We were told to choose from a list of movements. One choice listed was, Protests Against the Vietnam War. I found this topic interesting simply because it was different. The majority of the other choices were about civil rights and African American laws, all of which were focused solely in America. This had to do with a larger problem, addressing all of

America's government, as well as Vietnamese people, and their government too.

Next, we were told to choose an activist that took part in this movement (these names were also on a list in which we were assigned to choose from). I was not familiar with any of the names listed, so I brought the list to my grandma and I asked her. She questioned why a few of the names were put on the list, and then wondered why your name wasn't listed. Although researching you wasn't an option, I decided to just look through your website, biographies, and a few other websites about you. I thought that for each thing you took part in, you did it with confidence; and that needed to be recognized more, even if it is only being recognized by a few more students in Northern Virginia.

The next day, my teacher asked every student to present a few facts that they had learned, just in their first night of researching. I presented simple facts that I learned about your movement: President Nixon was in office, you were against some of his opinions and choices, and that you wanted your life to have purpose and meaning which is why you traveled to Vietnam. When I was finished, she asked who it was that I researched. With little hesitation, only worrying about how my teacher may react, I said, "She wasn't on the list, but her name is Jane Fonda." At first my teacher had a simple reply. She said, "Jane Fonda, I like her." Then she continued, recognizing your name, mentioning your father and some of the movies you have both been in. She agreed that you were a very important

part of the Protests Against the Vietnam War.

The assignment that I was given includes finding, and researching a specific portion of activism in the 60's (I understand that much of what you've done took place in the 70's, but it began in the 60's, therefore it is still an acceptable topic of study), I also must create a diary entry, or write a letter, as a specific activist, write an assessment of the cause, and create a three minute video surrounding my assessment of the cause. We write our assessment about the strategies employed for the push for change, and how effective these strategies were.

I was wondering if there are any other websites you are familiar with that contain clear, credible information that is not bias. Also if there is anything else, not mentioned on your website that you have done, such as your strategies and specific reasons why you participated the way you did, that will be interesting information for my to add to both my diary essay/letter as well as my written assessment. If you are interested, I could try to send you a copy of all of my work to prove to you that what you have done for so many people is incredible, also to thank you for what you have done for me, and the rest of America, as well as Vietnam.

Sincerely,

Cayli



Jane

02.24.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Dear Cayli, very interesting letter. Thanks. I assume you want reference to a website about the anti-Vietnam War movement. I don't know of any that would discuss that history. If this is, in fact, what you are looking for, I will ask some friends who might know of one or more. If you send me your address I will fed ex you my memoirs in which there are several chapters about the war and my participation in the movement to end it. x Jane



Ricky

03.03.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Dear Jane,

In 2010 you responded to a question I asked you during a difficult time in my life, and I was so touched that you, an immense hero of mine, actually offered me such personal advice.

So you might be able to imagine the anger I felt yesterday when reading 450 people hatefully and violently bash you in the comment feed of an article regarding your feelings about the Oscars ceremony. These people infused so much rage and hate in their words, it frightened me.

Then I noticed literally every comment was related to Vietnam and their feelings about you in regards to the Hanoi visit. I wanted to immediately go on a warpath telling them what I thought of their ignorance, and their dark hearts...but I waited a second and thought 'Jane would probably say that they are not ignorant, nor are they dark hearted..they are simply victims of misplaced rage and painful trauma,

stemming from a tragedy that happened to two countries'...
Instead I decided to come here and tell you that I think you
are so brave in your beliefs, noble in your concerns, kind in
your intents and understanding in your willingness to keep
the dialogue open with these people...thank you for being
such a role model to the world (and especially me)..
-Ricky



Jane

Thanks, Ricky. xx

03.04.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)



sofia

Hey Jane,

03.28.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

I am a senior at GWU and I am currently drafting my thesis
paper about your political activism during the seventies. I
wanted to let you know that I think you are incredibly strong
and incredible role model. The more I read, the more
astonished I am. You are so awesome... if I could be half the
woman you are... I know people have written about you
many, many times and you have probably tired yourself of
reading different versions of the story that you lived, but
regardless, I'd love to send you a copy of my thesis.
I hope all is well,
Sofia



Mark Garton

04.14.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

I am a 23 year USAF vet (Apr 2011), and for the longest time I accepted and believed the story spread about you in the media. I hope you'll understand if I read your account with a grain or two of salt; that being said, I will no longer help spread what I had been told was "the truth."

I think, in time, the grain or two of salt will wash away; some beliefs we've held on to for a while die hard. That doesn't make me right, it only makes me human.

I respect your candor in this post and your willingness to clear the air, even though you didn't necessarily have to.



Jane

04.17.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Thank you, Mark. I appreciate your willingness to 'let it go.' What's being spread are lies and there's nothing more I can say to make them stop. Some people just need to have a focus of their hate. I'm glad that's not the case with you anymore.



Edward Hager

05.13.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

I was born in 1977 and had no true knowledge of the Vietnam War. I cannot say what happened. I have learned since I have grown that you can't judge a book by its cover. So I hold no ill will toward you. Had I been an adult when it was going on, who knows what my stance would have been.

I am currently a member of the Utah Army National Guard and have served my country for the last 18 years, through two deployments in Iraq. I have learned another lesson in those years, there are two sides to every story. I applaud you for telling your side. I have heard one version since it started circulating and have always wondered what your side was. I do not consider myself a conservative or liberal because I refuse to believe that one side has the complete answer for the correct direction our country needs to take. I also know that both political parties have their own spin on everything, to make themselves look better. Frankly, I'm tired of it. I don't understand why each side refuses to cooperate with the other, and work together to find the common good of the people. I have experienced being shunned from liberals and conservatives because I do not agree 100% of their way of thinking. If one single idea isn't the same, I am instantly trying to preach the other side and do not know what I am talking about. I just want this way of thinking to stop and more open mindedness to other ideals to start, so that we may all work together to move forward and stop holding ourselves back because "my way is the best and I refuse to listen to you." As a soldier, I accept your apology and am willing to move forward with my life, and hopefully with cooperation of everyone around me, to do my part to move my country forward and help it continue to be the land of the free and home of the brave. Thank you for your words.



Susan

06.01.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Jane–

Although I don't agree with what you did– (My brother was serving in Vietnam at that time)I feel that your were brave to have done it. People should stop bashing you– and be willing to see that no-one is perfect and we can all have changes of heart. You were brave enough to follow your heart and should be proud of that and you were brave enough to admit that not all of your trip was perfect. You are a class act–Please never stop fighting for what you believe we– the world needs people like yourself!



Jane

06.08.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Thanks, Susan.



Rock

08.15.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

All I can say is that, while I was way too young during the Vietnam War to even know who Jane Fonda was, I can still now clearly hear the remarks I had heard from all the adults for her infamous and shameful trip. I, myself, have carried that shame with me, for myself, and for my country, throughout the years, and very few have embarrassed me more than she, over those years. Betrayal is all I can say. Sheer betrayal. Her father did not bring her up right, sadly

to say, and I don't blame him if he's as ashamed as I.



**MAJ Anthony P.
Smith, US Army
Active**

*08.24.2013 · [Log in](#)
to Reply*

Ms. Fonda,
I have read and finally heard the truth of this matter and I started thinking of it all. Having all the advantages that America has provided you and your family I believe you made a mistake. That being said. We have all been young, naive, and just plain stupid. The world proves it everyday on television and the internet. If I had grown up with the privileges that you had, I too might have thought I could have stopped a war. Take it from me (3 combat tours) if I thought I could have stopped the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan I would have. I still believe you should take more of a stand out active role in supporting veterans (the Wounded Warrior Project, USO, Vietnam Veterans Associations). Maybe then some healing for both of you and Vietnam Veterans might be found. Some will never stop hating and a majority of those that are hating have never served the first day in the military or in a war zone. They're ignorant and stupid. I heard your apology in your video and I think it should finally be put to rest. War, Hate, and Ignorance on any side has ever solved the worlds problems. God bless America, Families, the Military and you.
MAJ Anthony Smith, US Army Active



Jane

08.26.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

THANK YOU, MAJOR SMITH. I APPRECIATE YOUR WRITING ME. I CREATED "COMING HOME," THE FILM THAT WAS VOTED THE VETS FAVORITE (ALONG WITH GREEN BERETS) BACK IN THE 70'S. I SPENT A LOT OF TIME WITH VETS AND FELT (AND WAS TOLD BY VETS) THAT THAT FILM HELPED PEOPLE UNDERSTAND WHAT SO MANY WENT THROUGH. I AM AGAIN EXPLORING A PROJECT THAT WOULD PUT VETS FRONT AND CENTER. I HOPE IT WORKS OUT. AGAIN, THANKS.



Sandro Camarao

08.26.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Hey Jane,
Saw a negative post on Facebook regarding your portrayal of Nancy Reagan. Saw comments perpetuating all the lies. Researched it and found this blog post. You were a true hero and American. I posted this blog so the truth can be shared with more people.
You have my support and thanks for what you did. I was born in 72 and i wished that there were celebrities in my generation as courageous as you, to speak out against the torture and wars of this age.



Jane

08.26.2013 · [Log in](#)

THANKS, SANDRO

[to Reply](#)



Larry (chip)

Lipps,pe

09.11.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Dear Jane:

It was good to come across your website about your involvement in the Vietnam war. I am glad to now know your side of the events as only you can tell them. I was in that conflict during 1969 as a young corps engineer officer who did not want to be there, but went because it was my duty to our country. Because I wanted to do something positive instead of killing, I became a combat engineer to build bunkers to try and protect the lives of our troops. I never have hated you for the stories being circulated, but felt sad in thinking that you were misguided and would suffer for it. God knows that we all do and say things in youth and throughout our lives that we regret, and hopefully become able to avoid, as we become wiser. As for myself, I could have done more for the men under my control at that time. I feel for you that you have had to endure guilt and criticism for all these years. Unfortunately, your individual story gained more notoriety because you are a public figure making news whether the reports are true or not, since your actions do influence people. What impresses me is that you are still bearing this cross from so long ago and are willing to even now respond publicly to try and tell your truth. Your courage to try and do something about your beliefs and telling the truth is admirable. That is an example that all

should follow. You also have talents.

As a Christian, I am so thankful that Christ is compassionate and willing to forgive all who seek His grace. None have to endure today or an eternity of guilt for mistakes in life made for whatever reason as far as god is concerned. I believe that you already have his forgiveness and I know you have mine. I hope you have his peace, even now. Scripture says that all who love God are tested to make us stronger and gain in glory, being drawn closer to God. (2 Cor. 4:17 and Psalms 66:10-11) We grow more in the valley times of hardship than the mountaintop pleasure experiences. You have my wishes for more mountaintop views and happiness.
Larry Lipps



Mh60

11.08.2013 · [Log in](#)
[to Reply](#)

No disrespect to you at all because that would be rude (even though you've disrespected millions of my fellow Americans) but I was only able to get through the first two paragraphs, I didn't come here to see your life story and all the drama in your life, I came to see how your trip to Hinoi was... So can you please sum it up for me?

Did you get to stay at the prison for 10 years and nearly starve to death or did you stay in a five star hotel and take a tour of the lovely countryside and enjoy a very nice steak dinner?

Oh and by the way I know you use your popularity with the American Public to attempt to persuade people without

common sense about your anti-war views, I was just wondering...Do you hate war or do you hate every single person who gave their life up for their country whether they signed up or they were drafted? What have you done for this country? Oh wait you were in France my apologies I was in such a rage that I forgot you were completely unaware of what was going on in America at the time.



Jane

11.09.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Excuse me, Mh60, I spent 3 years working with Vietnam vets, interviewing active duty servicemen who were going over there or had returned, I turned much of what I learned into a film called "Coming Home," which was voted, according to a VA poll of that year, veterans favorite film along with "Green Beret." I have written a blog called "What Really Happened in North Vietnam" about year and a half ago. If you took the time and cared about the truth you would check in the archives of my past blogs on this website. But maybe you don't really care about the truth.



Maggie Young

12.29.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Dear Jane,
I am an author, writer, feminist, and Navy veteran. In 2004, I found myself fresh out of a Tennessee high school as the 13th female on a newly integrated destroyer, the USS Higgins. Needless to say, drama and affairs flourished and I

racked up world experience that evaporated any inkling of childhood innocence I had left.

In 2008, I became a writer, publishing my first cover story with the San Diego Weekly Reader, Confessions of a Phony Navy Wife. It was about a platonic marriage I entered for the housing allowance, followed by a 6-month NCIS investigation and embezzlement accusations (I did not get charged, was honorably discharged, and used my GI Bill for my UC Berkeley degree). It was also about the military's tendencies to financially reward service members for matrimony while sweeping male philandering under the rug. Of course, when the story was released I had a massive amount of backlash. I had to make a decision: to suppress my writing abilities or pursue them along with the controversy that was bound to follow.

I then wrote a memoir structured around the first 23 men I had sex with. It is about how society curbs women to validate themselves by men. It also has a great deal of military scandal. The book is under contract and I am awaiting word from my publisher for the editing process. However, I have blogged a good bit of it. Although the connections I make through my writing are more than worth it, I am frequently called trash, a whore, and a slut (even by my own mother). I have had more gains than losses, but the losses can still hurt.

Growing up, I knew little about you beyond 9 to 5, Monster in Law, and that Mickey Avalon song. I've had a goal to get my thighs into Barbarella condition. But as a millennial, your

Vietnam controversy was before my time. Then a few years ago, I came across your mugshot. I posted it on my Facebook page simply because I thought it absolutely had to be the most glamorous, stunning mugshot in history.

What shocked me was the slew of nasty comments made by a handful of my military veteran friends, but what horrified me was the venom released through the mouths of some of the greatest men I have ever known. These vicious Jane Fonda threats were coming from loving fathers, husbands, and friends so loyal and supportive that I have no doubts that they would jump in front of a shotgun to save me.

I had to know more about Hanoi Jane.

The more I learned, the more I loved.

Jane, I want you to know how much I hurt for you for the hatred you have been subject to for four decades. However, a part of me is angry at myself for my gratitude that you have endured it too. Not because you deserved it, but it's something that I have never connected to so deeply. Your strength gives me strength. Your life feeds my inspiration to stay true to my voice and talents. I just want to thank you for existing.

This blog is the writing sample I submitted for my application for my PhD in Women's Studies. It dives into the core of the illogical repugnance towards "Hanoi Jane." I apologize for the graphic images and language of social media users, but their placement has a purpose.

I wish you the best, Jane. You are my hero.

With love and gratitude,

Maggie Young

<http://themaggieryoung.blogspot.com/2013/12/hanoi-jane-unconscious-rage.html>



Jane

12.30.2013 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Dear Maggie, thank you for your "letter." If you haven't already, check my blog from a year or more ago called "What Really Happened in Hanoi." XXX Jane



Chris

01.10.2014 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Wow, I must have read through half the article, thinking this was just someone else writing about Jane Fonda, before I realized I was actually reading about it from the woman who was there.

Did you get some facts wrong? Did you not always take the perfect picture? Maybe. But you did a damn amazing job and you changed the minds of a lot of people. And I think even your "mistakes" might have made a more of a difference than you thought.

I recently saw a clip of your 1972 TV interview here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aLvDXZZ5u0>

Outstanding! This performance, and many others like them, undoubtedly increased the support for the anti-war movement, and probably helped stop the war, at least a little bit earlier than it would otherwise have ended. As you said in the video, the US was already essentially defeated in

1972, but it was only a matter of how long, slow and bloody, the retreat would be. I assume some of the time had to be given to speechmakers.

I especially appreciate the fact that many years later, while defending yourself from slander, you have held true to the principles you stood for and even taken pride in them.

There are precious few that do, although this week we seem to have a few more if you have read about the FBI break-ins.

Anyway, I just wanted to say thanks. You made a difference, and there's a lot of people who appreciate it.

Take care,
Chris



Jane

How very nice, Chris. Many thanks. xx

01.11.2014 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)



Brad F

I was a 12 year old protester in San Francisco back in 1967 with my Aunt Trish. I hated the VietNam war because both of my brothers were killed there in 1966. To this day, their bodies have never been recovered. As a young boy, I was very proud of my participation in what has become known as the “anti-war” movement. To me, it was personal, very personal. My Aunt Trish and I were against the war for other

01.25.2014 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

reasons, too. But losing my brothers was the biggest reason for me, and for my Aunt Trish, too. Jane Fonda isn't perfect, but to this day, I have always been happy to have her fighting for us. Little brothers and sisters that have lost their big brothers in the war. To Jane Fonda. Thank you so very much for doing your part in getting our men out of VietNam. Had it not been for you, the death toll would've been higher, much higher.



Jane

01.25.2014 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Dear Brad, thank you for this and I am so sorry for your loss during that unpardonable war...but a war that should never be blamed on the men who fought. It as not their fault. They –all of us–were lied to. XX Jane



Jim Donovan

02.04.2014 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Jane:

I watched "Coming Home" last night. As someone who served in the USAF from 1993-99, and did three tours in Saudi Arabia, I appreciated reading your full accounting of your trip to Hanoi and clearing the record, once and for all, about what really happened over there. I always felt that Vietnam ripped the country apart in a way that never properly healed. I believe that you had good intentions in going to Vietnam, and everyone should let it rest.

My best to you from Boston,

Jim



Jane

02.05.2014 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

thank you, Jim. you can't know what your words mean to me. xx Jane



Melissa

06.05.2014 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Hi Jane,

I am a USAF veteran, and for many years I, too, have followed the party line of "Hanoi Jane" hatred and belief of the lies perpetuated about you. I was born in 1970, so I was too young to contemporaneously understand the Vietnam war, so I believed what I was taught. However, after reading your side of the account I am pleased to say that I can let go of that anger.

In addition to being a veteran, I also counseled disabled veterans at the VA. Vietnam veterans are a group of people who were monumentally let down by our country. To see you demonized for your efforts to help them really brings to mind some of the same types of things going on today with the current war. What prompted me to open up and actually do some research today was that I saw a post on Facebook that compared the recently-released prisoner of war Bowe Bergdahl to "Hanoi Jane". I found this comparison repugnant because I believe that we don't leave our own behind, and we don't tear down our own in public. I am disgusted by the

way the republicans are tearing apart this young soldier and his poor family.

Knowing now your true feelings about veterans- I wonder- if you spoke out publicly in this family's defense would it make things better for them, perhaps?



Jane

06.08.2014 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Dear Melissa, thank you for reaching out to me and for your willingness to explore and reexamine previously held positions. Re Bergdahl, I fear my saying anything about his situation could do nothing but harm to him at this point. Like you, I feel for him and his family.



mc79

06.14.2014 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

I was only born in 1979 so I do not know about this personally. I have done research because I also have read the reports about the paper being passed. My very own hero growing up a real American hero also (my grandfather) wouldn't allow us to even watch anything with you in it. I never understood why until I was older and went into research mode.

I now am a member of a few supporting our troops organizations. I believe after some serious research and question. (I'm contracted with the VA to help veterans remain in the homes. So I hear stories from veterans of many wars and have for many years.) I believe, you

believed you were helping. I believe without a doubt you went to bring light to people who were being misled. I also believe looking back (hind-sight always 20/20. And it was you not me) that you went about it wrong. I think many veterans now and then think you were awful because you took it to the soldiers not american public so much. Military personnel even those who didn't agree went because they were told to. Because that is what our country required them to do. Instead of being in front of the countries leaders rubbing their face in whats wrong the vets feel like you were rubbing it in theirs. A few that still will talk about that point in their lives feel as though you were the face of the hate they came home to. American civilians, though not stupid, go mainly with the majority and having people protesting the war loudly and often was turned into protesting the soldiers. You may not have spit in their faces literally but many feel like you did with the way you and others with influential power turned american public against them. I believe they didn't then and still do not get the notice of hero that they are and were.



heather carter

06.29.2014 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Hello Mrs. Fonda!

I just discovered this about you as my mother and i were having a discussion about Ted Turner. We are watching old movies at the moment and discussing the terrible things he has done to the people that had a part to play in some of

those movies by buying out the station therefore receiving all royalties etc. there is much much more that we know so please know that we are awake! Anyhow I have to tell you that you have my utmost respect at this moment due to some things that i know now. I commend you for your courage and your bravery in standing up for our men and boys! I have a few friends who fought in Vietnam as well as family members. The stories that they are able to tell is absolutely horrific! You are quite the advocate and I am so proud of you! I would really enjoy talking with you if you have the time. I would be greatly honored! I believe you can find my email address on file if not would you please request it from me? That is if you would like to speak with me. I am just a regular single mother and I am 33 yrs old. Thank you so much for your time! Have a wonderful day!!



mcharves

07.03.2014 · [Log in](#)

[to Reply](#)

Greetings Mrs. Fonda -

First, I wanted to say that I registered on your site specifically to address this page and story. I was unaware of the existence of this blog until today, and have found it enlightening to say the least. While much of what you state here I've learned previously since, to read it in your own words is illuminating.

I grew up in the aftermath of the Vietnam War. Born in 1968, my youth was steeped in American values and exceptionalism, and I was fiercely patriotic and somewhat

anti-liberal. I had been very interested in history and military history since a young age, and naturally the story of you going to Hanoi was part of learning about the Vietnam War. I must say at the time that I felt as many of the so called haters do – I believed the stories, and believed the hate rhetoric that I found everywhere. I was very angry at you for those self righteous perceptions, and did nothing to find out if the stories were, in fact, true or not.

Throughout my own life, I have found myself constantly accused of things that were either fabrications, lies, or distortions of the truth. A growing realization of knowing just how much I didn't know made me realize things weren't always as they seemed. I was simply too arrogant in my youth to see that until much later in my life. It took years of a diet of foot-in-mouth before I began to see past my own ignorance... for many things.

I want to apologize to you, as directly as I can, for the thoughts, angst, and even proliferation to friends of the lies regarding this situation about you. I want to apologize for my ignorance, and my lack of compassion in my errant youth. I want to apologize for not having the strength of character to seek out the truth and hold the stories at bay until I found it. We all make mistakes of judgement sometimes- and unfortunately we typically don't realize it until its too late... I know I have many times (to my own horror). I am truly sorry. What you did to stand up for not only our own soldiers but also for peace is commendable beyond words, and that it has all been cloaked behind lies that seem to be larger than

the truth is despicable. You have my utmost respect and gratitude.

My sincere repentance -
Mike



Jane

07.03.2014 · [Log in](#)
[to Reply](#)

Dear Mike, your words mean so much to me. I thank you for writing. xx Jane



George

08.03.2014 · [Log in](#)
[to Reply](#)

Hi Jane, Congratulations on your AFI award. It was a wonderful tribute to you. On my Facebook page I posted about it and got a couple of responses from FB friends that simply wrote "Hanoi Jane" as their response. One even posted a poorly made youtube video on this topic, all rubbish. My heart goes out to you in having to cope with that episode.

My initial interest when the comments were made was how it must have impacted your relationship with your father, who had this All-Americann image (i.e., fighting for our country in WWII and portrayal of great american characters through his films) and whether your relationship with him, especially as it was portrayed in On Golden Pond, reflected his disappointment with that episode in your life. I know you've mentioned that he didn't display much emotion outwardly and kept a lot to himself. That situation in your life must

have been tough for him to get over, even forgive, in light of his pride and the Fonda name.

Anyway, I did respond to the comment and this is what I wrote in response to the 'Hanoi Jane' comments:

"This piece illuminates her point of view on that episode of her life. <http://www.janefonda.com/the-truth-about-my-trip-to-hanoi/> She admits having made mistakes on how she handled herself. We all make mistakes and its especially glaring when you are in the spotlight, like she was. Her political activism made her particularly vulnerable to other points of view on an emotionally charged issue such as Vietnam. Personally I feel compassion towards her, as I believe her purpose regarding that war was to criticize our role there (not the soldiers) and further promote the anti-war sentiment that was brewing in our country. History is still writing the verdict on Vietnam and in many circles it's not a bright picture, serving as an important guide informing our current foreign policy decisions. As for her body of work, she had the courage of her convictions to play a wide variety of roles reflecting the multifaceted nature of being human and being a woman. I have enjoyed her acting, particularly "On Golden Pond," as she captures the struggle of communicating with her father, reflecting an all too common problem in the parent/child relationship, causing pain, resentment, and suffering for many who've struggled to connect with their parents . Her role in the "China Syndrome," another politically charged issue, speaks to the dangers of nuclear energy (i.e., Fukushima, Chernobyl) and

was just another example of a well done film on an important issue. There is a lot to talk about on the subject of Jane Fonda – I will continue to look at her body of work with interest.”

Anyway, thanks for being open to public input. It's a true pleasure having a chance to write to such a great person as yourself. All the very best....

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