

One of the best ways to understand the feelings of Americans during the Vietnam War is to listen to the music they made during that time period. Music expresses the emotions and attitudes that a person or a whole group of people had at that time. By listening to various kinds of music by many different artists you can develop an impression and understanding of the time. Music lets one recognize the fear, hate, love, agony, and many other emotions that history books often leave out. By analyzing music of wartime era and postwar periods we can learn a great deal about America's attitude toward the Vietnam War and war in general.

### FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH

Buffalo Springfield

There's something happening here  
What it is ain't exactly clear  
There's a man with a gun over there  
Telling me I got to beware

I think it's time we stop, children, what's  
that sound  
Everybody look what's going down

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

I think it's time we stop, hey, what's that  
sound  
Everybody look what's going down

What a field-day for the heat  
A thousand people in the street  
Singing songs and carrying signs  
Mostly say, hooray for our side

It's time we stop, hey, what's that sound  
Everybody look what's going down

Paranoia strikes deep  
Into your life it will creep  
It starts when you're always afraid  
You step out of line, the man come and take  
you away

We better stop, hey, what's that sound  
Everybody look what's going down  
Stop, hey, what's that sound  
Everybody look what's going down  
Stop, now, what's that sound  
Everybody look what's going down  
Stop, children, what's that sound  
Everybody look what's going down

### WAR • Edwin Star

War  
What is it good for  
Absolutely nothing  
War

What is it good for  
Absolutely nothing  
War is something that I despise  
For it means destruction of innocent lives  
For it means tears in thousands of mothers'  
eyes  
When their sons go out to fight to give their  
lives

War  
What is it good for  
Absolutely nothing  
Say it again  
War

What is it good for  
Absolutely nothing

War  
It's nothing but a heartbreaker  
War

Friend only to the undertaker  
War is the enemy of all mankind  
The thought of war blows my mind  
Handed down from generation to  
generation  
Induction destruction  
Who wants to die

War  
What is it good for  
Absolutely nothing  
Say it again  
War

What is it good for  
Absolutely nothing

War has shattered many young men's  
dreams  
Made them disabled bitter and mean  
Life is too precious to be fighting wars  
each day  
War can't give life it can only take it away

War  
It's nothing but a heartbreaker  
War  
Friend only to the undertaker  
Peace love and understanding  
There must be some place for these things  
today  
They say we must fight to keep our freedom  
But Lord there's gotta be a better way  
That's better than  
War

War  
What is it good for  
Absolutely nothing  
Say it again  
War

What is it good for  
Absolutely nothing

### FORTUNATE SON • CCR

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

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

Yeah!  
Some folks are born silver spoon in hand,  
Lord, don't they help themselves, oh.  
But when the taxman comes to the door,  
Lord, the house looks like a rummage sale,  
yes,

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

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

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

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

THE BALLAD OF THE GREEN BERETS • Barry Sandler

Fighting soldiers from the sky,  
Fearless men who jump and die.  
Men who mean just what they say,  
The brave men of the Green Beret.

Silver wings up-on their chests,  
These are men, America's best,  
One hundred men we'll test today,  
But only three win The Green Beret.

Trained to live off nature's land,  
Trained to combat, hand to hand.  
Men who fight by night and day,  
Courage take from The Green Beret.

Silver wings up-on their chests,  
These are men, America's best,  
One hundred men we'll test today,  
But only three win The Green Beret.

Back at home a young wife waits,  
Her Green Beret has met his fate.  
He has died for those oppressed,  
Leaving her this last request.

Put silver wings on my son's chest,  
Make him one of America's best,  
He'll be a man they'll test one day,  
Have him win The Green Beret.

THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER • The Doors

Wait until the war is over  
And we're both a little older  
The unknown soldier

Breakfast where the news is read  
Television children fed  
Unborn living, living, dead  
Bullet strikes the helmet's head

And it's all over  
For the unknown soldier  
It's all over  
For the unknown soldier

Hut, Hut, Hut ho hee up, Hut, Hut, Hut ho hee up, Hut, Hut, Hut ho hee up  
Comp'nee, Halt, Preeee-zent! Arms!

Make a grave for the unknown soldier  
Nestled in your hollow shoulder  
The unknown soldier

Breakfast where the news is read  
Television children fed  
Bullet strikes the helmet's head

And, it's all over  
The war is over  
It's all over  
The war is over  
Well, all over, baby  
All over, baby  
Oh, over, yeah  
All over, baby  
Wooooo, hah-hah  
All over  
All over, baby  
Oh, woa-yeah  
All over, All over, Heeeeyyyy

I-FEEL-LIKE-I'M-FIXIN'-TO-DIE RAG • Country Joe & the Fish

Yeah, come on all of you, big strong men,  
Uncle Sam needs your help again.  
He's got himself in a terrible jam  
Way down yonder in Vietnam  
So put down your books and pick up a gun,  
We're gonna have a whole lotta fun.

And it's one, two, three,  
What are we fighting for ?  
Don't ask me, I don't give a damn,  
Next stop is Vietnam;  
And it's five, six, seven,  
Open up the pearly gates,  
Well there ain't no time to wonder why,  
Whoopee! we're all gonna die.

Well, come on generals, let's move fast;  
Your big chance has come at last.  
Gotta go out and get those reds —  
The only good commie is the one who's dead  
And you know that peace can only be won  
When we've blown 'em all to kingdom come.

And it's one, two, three,  
What are we fighting for ?  
Don't ask me, I don't give a damn,  
Next stop is Vietnam;  
And it's five, six, seven,  
Open up the pearly gates,  
Well there ain't no time to wonder why  
Whoopee! we're all gonna die.

Huh!

Well, come on Wall Street, don't move slow,  
Why man, this is war au-go-go.  
There's plenty good money to be made  
By supplying the Army with the tools of the trade,  
Just hope and pray that if they drop the bomb,  
They drop it on the Viet Cong.

And it's one, two, three,  
What are we fighting for ?  
Don't ask me, I don't give a damn,  
Next stop is Vietnam.  
And it's five, six, seven,  
Open up the pearly gates,  
Well there ain't no time to wonder why  
Whoopee! we're all gonna die.

Well, come on mothers throughout the land,  
Pack your boys off to Vietnam.  
Come on fathers, don't hesitate,  
Send 'em off before it's too late.  
Be the first one on your block  
To have your boy come home in a box.

And it's one, two, three  
What are we fighting for ?  
Don't ask me, I don't give a damn,  
Next stop is Vietnam.  
And it's five, six, seven,  
Open up the pearly gates,  
Well there ain't no time to wonder why,  
Whoopee! we're all gonna die.

OHIO • CSNY

Tin soldiers and Nixon's coming  
We're finally on our own  
This summer I hear the drumming  
Four dead in Ohio  
Gonna get down to it soldiers are cutting us down  
Should have been down long ago  
What if you knew her and found her dead on the ground  
How can you run when you know.  
Gonna get down to it soldiers are cutting us down  
Should have been down long ago  
What if you knew her and found her dead on the ground  
How can you run when you know.

MASTERS OF WAR • Bob Dylan

Come you masters of war  
You that build all the guns  
You that build the death planes  
You that build the big bombs  
You that hide behind walls  
You that hide behind desks  
I just want you to know  
I can see through your masks

You that never done nothin'  
But build to destroy  
You play with my world  
Like it's your little toy  
You put a gun in my hand  
And you hide from my eyes  
And you turn and run farther  
When the fast bullets fly

Like Judas of old  
You lie and deceive  
A world war can be won  
You want me to believe  
But I see through your eyes  
And I see through your brain  
Like I see through the water  
That runs down my drain

You fasten the triggers  
For the others to fire  
Then you set back and watch  
When the death count gets higher  
You hide in your mansion  
As young people's blood  
Flows out of their bodies  
And is buried in the mud

You've thrown the worst fear  
That can ever be hurled  
Fear to bring children  
Into the world  
For threatening my baby  
Unborn and unnamed  
You ain't worth the blood  
That runs in your veins

How much do I know  
To talk out of turn  
You might say that I'm young  
You might say I'm unlearned  
But there's one thing I know  
Though I'm younger than you  
Even Jesus would never  
Forgive what you do

Let me ask you one question  
Is your money that good  
Will it buy you forgiveness  
Do you think that it could  
I think you will find  
When your death takes its toll  
All the money you made  
Will never buy back your soul

And I hope that you die  
And your death'll come soon  
I will follow your casket  
In the pale afternoon  
And I'll watch while you're lowered  
Down to your deathbed  
And I'll stand o'er your grave  
'Til I'm sure that you're dead

WHAT'S GOING ON • Marvin Gaye

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

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

Picket lines and picket signs  
Don't punish me with brutality  
Talk to me, so you can see  
Oh, what's going on  
What's going on  
Ya, what's going on  
Ah, what's going on

In the mean time  
Right on, baby  
Right on  
Right on

Father, father, everybody thinks we're wrong  
Oh, but who are they to judge us  
Simply because our hair is long  
Oh, you know we've got to find a way  
To bring some understanding here today  
Oh

Picket lines and picket signs  
Don't punish me with brutality  
Talk to me  
So you can see  
What's going on  
Ya, what's going on  
Tell me what's going on  
I'll tell you what's going on - Uh  
Right on baby  
Right on baby

BORN IN THE USA • Bruce Springsteen

Born down in a dead man's town,  
the first kick I took was when I hit the ground .  
You end up like a dog that's been beat too much,  
'till you spend half your life just covering up .

Born in the U.S.A.  
I was born in the U.S.A.  
Born in the U.S.A.

Got in a little hometown jam, so they put a raffle in my hand .  
Sent me off to a foreign land, to go and kill the yellow man .

Born in the U.S.A.  
I was born in the U.S.A.  
Born in the U.S.A.

Come back home to the refinery,  
hiring man says: "Son, if it was up to me" .  
Went down to see my V.A. man, he said:  
'Son, don't you understand now'.

Had a brother at Khe Sahn, fighting off the Viet Cong .  
They're still there, he's all gone .

He had a woman he loved in Saigon,  
I got a picture of him in her arms now .

Down in the shadow of penitentiary,  
out by the gas fires of the refinery .  
I'm ten years burning down the road,  
nowhere to run ain't got nowhere to go .

Born in the U.S.A.  
I was born in the U.S.A.  
Born in the U.S.A.  
I'm a long gone daddy  
in the U.S.A.  
Born in the U.S.A.  
I'm a cool rocking daddy  
in the U.S.A.

GOODNIGHT SAIGON • Billy Joel

We met as soul mates on Parris Island  
We left as inmates from an asylum  
And we were sharp, as sharp as knives  
And we were so gung ho to lay down our lives

We came in spastic like tameless horses  
We left in plastic, as numbered corpses  
And we learned fast to travel light  
Our arms were heavy, but our bellies were tight

We had no home front, we had no soft soap  
They sent us Playboy, they gave us Bob Hope  
We dug in deep and shot on sight  
And prayed to Jesus Christ with all our might

We had no cameras to shoot the landscape  
We passed the hash pipe and played our Doors tapes  
And it was dark, so dark at night  
And we held on to each other like brother to brother  
We promised our mothers we'd write

And we would all go down together  
We said we'd all go down together  
Yes we would all go down together

Remember Charlie, remember Baker  
They left their childhood on every acre  
And who was wrong? And who was right?  
It didn't matter in the thick of the fight

We held the day in the palm of our hands  
They ruled the night and the night  
Seemed to last as long as six weeks On Parris Island  
we held the coastline they held the highlands

And they were sharp as sharp as knives  
They heard the hum of our motors  
They counted the rotors  
And waited for us to arrive

And we would all go down together  
We said we'd all go down together  
Yes we would all go down together

## The Big Parade • 10,000 Maniacs

Detroit to D.C. night train, Capitol, parts East. Lone young man takes a seat. And by the rhythm of the rails, reading all his mother's mail from a city boy in a jungle town postmarked Saigon. He'll go live his mother's dream to join the slowest parade he'll ever see. Her weight of sorrows carried long and carried far. "Take these, Tommy, to The Wall."

Metro line to the Mall site with a tour of Japanese. He's wandering and lost until a vet in worn fatigues takes him down to where they belong. Near a soldier, an ex-Marine with a tattoo of a dagger and eagle trembling, he bites his lip beside a widow breaking down. She takes her Purple Heart, makes a fist, strikes The Wall. All come to live the dream, to join the slowest parade they'll ever see. Their weight of sorrow carried long and carried far, taken to The Wall.

It's 40 paces to the year that he was slain. His hands slipping down The Wall for it's slick with rain. How would life have ever been the same if this wall had carved in it one less name? But for Christ's sake, he's been dead over twenty years. He leaves the letters asking, "Who caused my mother's tears, was it Washington or the Viet Cong?" Slow deliberate steps are involved. He takes them away from the black granite wall toward the other monuments so white and clean.

O, Potomac, what you've seen. Abraham had his war too, but an honest war. Or so it's taught in school.

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