

Matt Stumpf, Mara Potochny, Milena Archibold

2nd Period, APUSH

Greg Smith USMC Vietnam war

King High Remembers

Private Greg Smith was born in Canada. After completing high school, he embarked on an educational quest down to the golden state of California, where he attended a community college. Soon after he began his enrollment at the college, he lost his academic motivation, and decided to pursue other options for his future.

After his short lived college journey, Mr. Smith soon enlisted into the United States Marine Corps, to assist with the rising conflicts in Vietnam. Because he had not completed his college career, Mr. Smith was enlisted in the first combat group of Marines in Vietnam. He was in the 0311 infantry and even though he had applied for an embassy position he did not meet the qualifications of being a 6 foot hot stud.

One of his first deployments into Vietnam was on the perfume river which didn't smell at all like perfume but had become a place to dump the locals waste, human and material. Vietnam was a struggle the locals did not why don't troops there and the troops didn't want to be there either. Vietnam was a place of unknown jungles and civil unrest between the native people and American forces. Mr. Smith recalls that during many of his patrol duties they would wait through the murky waters of Vietnam and get attacked by leeches but an easy way to get them off would to just burn them with the cigarette butt.

Vietnam was hard, in the holes during the night one of Smith's fellow soldiers got attacked by a tiger and the jungle was unforgiving the weather made it near impossible to hear enemies that were close.

The locals didn't care to help the American troops because they didn't even want them there. The destruction of the Vietnam war to the people of Vietnam was huge and because most of them weren't even involved in the battle the war became a question of usefulness. The era of TV media and broadcasting had begun and pictures like the little girl who is burning from napalm became infamous across the world.

The controversy followed Mr Smith home when he went to visit his girlfriend in his uniform and her friends hissed "baby killer" and blamed him for the death of thousands. Never again did Greg wear his uniform outside of active duty because of the hate and discrimination he faced. Also the black people of America struggles in the war in terms of discrimination and social injustices.

The black people of America during the mid 1900's were not highly educated people. Many were poor and trying to survive against the white prejudices of society which followed them even into war. "Score high or die," a test to scale the "intellectual ability" of an individual was administered to all people and those who scored high, got out of the draft. Because of Black Americans little to none education, they usually failed the test that was often built around making it difficult to pass without and education. So huge amounts of black soldiers were sent to the front lines of Vietnam to die for a cause they had no say in.

As the war went on Smith was eventually let go. He left cold turkey even leaving his uniform. After His Military Service Greg returned to university, Graduated as one of the top in his class and became a teacher of history.