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Patriotism, Propaganda, Parody, and Protest: The Music of Three American Wars

When Johnny comes marching home again, Hurrah, Hurrah!
We'll give him a hearty welcome then, Hurrah, Hurrah!
The men will cheer, the boys will shout,
The ladies they will all turn out,
And we'll all be gay when Johnny comes marching home.

This rousing chorus, usually associated with the Civil War, was meant to encourage both soldier and civilian. Although it is sung in a minor mode, which traditionally denotes melancholy, solemnity, or foreboding, it has a rousing march rhythm. The lyrics promise victory and heroism. Undoubtedly many young men marched off to the war with this song ringing in their ears, dreaming of the promised hero's welcome after they had done their patriotic duty. Even if the minor key corresponded with the fear just below the surface of their consciousness, the driving rhythm and the vision of men clapping them on the backs and women kissing their cheeks must have carried them along.

The Irish have an older, much more solemn and realistic version of the song. It is sung, not as a call to arms, but as a dirge, a lament for what might have been, but is no more:

Where are your legs that used to run, Hooroo, Hooroo?
Where are your legs that used to run, Hooroo, Hooroo?
Where are your legs that used to run, my darlin' John, so pale
and wan?
Oh your dancin' days for sure are done.
Oh Johnny I hardly knew ye.

These two songs represent drastically different views of war. One might call them the before and after versions, or the idealistic and realistic versions of the same song.

Music has always been an important part of war. The ancient Scots blew bagpipes to terrify their enemies; the Turks, under Suleyman the Magnificent, marched into battle to pipes and drums in such an orderly and relentless fashion that many of their enemies lost heart before they ever saw the Turks' formidable swords; the British Redcoats had their fife and drums; American soldiers still sing cadences as they march in training. And it is not only soldiers who make the music of war. Michael Ballard, writing about the place of popular music in war, says, "In order to galvanize American might during World War I, President Wilson turned to New York's Tin Pan Alley for help. Some war songs were written out of pure patriotic conviction while others were made to order" (*Templeton*). Governments, which start the wars, encourage music that is purely patriotic, and civilians who want to support the war effort (and make a fortune as well) write sentimental songs that keep the public starry eyed about their soldiers. Much of war music is jingoistic, but wars also inspire another kind of music that is sad and bitter and disillusioned.

War literature is filled with references to music. The patriotic music is certainly there. The sentimental popular music is there. But war literature also includes the songs of propaganda, parody and protest. A close look at these different kinds of music reveals the complicated response of human beings to both the idea and to the reality of war.

Townsend Ludington makes this observation about Americans' attitudes at the beginning of World War I:

Americans were charged with excitement and with expectations of high times in Paris. They kept singing:

"God help Kaiser Bill
God help Kaiser Bill
Oh, old Uncle Sam,
He's got the infantry
He's got the cavalry
He's got artillery
Then by God we'll all go to Germany
And God help Kaiser Bill." (124)

This kind of uninformed bravado is not accidental. In his work on war and popular song in culture, Les Cleveland notes this about the popular music that surrounds these young men as they contemplate their place in the war: "The music industry also promoted an alternative view of the war as an opportunity for adventurous excitement implicit in such entertainments as George M. Cohan's 'Over There' [. . .]" (5). The lyrics of "Over There" promise that "the Yanks are

coming,” and make the boast, “And we won’t come back ‘til it’s over over there” (Cohan). Arrogant enthusiasm characterizes the music and the spirit of those men who have not yet seen the realities of battle.

John Dos Passos in *Three Soldiers*, a book that focuses on three young men in World War I, laces his entire book with references to music. John Trombold, writing about music in Dos Passos’ works, observes: “The very lives of the characters in *Three Soldiers* are directed by music” (305). One of the soldiers in this book, Dan Fuselli, has these thoughts as he is preparing to ship overseas: “The notes of the bugle and of the band playing ‘The Star Spangled Banner’ sifted into his consciousness through a dream of what it would be like over there. He was in a place [. . .] full of old men and women in peasant costume, like in the song, ‘When It’s Apple Blossom Time in Normandy’ [. . .]. The Yanks were coming” (Dos Passos 32-33). The idea from popular music that the “Yanks” will fix everything inspires Fuselli as “When Johnny Comes Marching Home” must have inspired Civil War soldiers, but, like that song, Fuselli sounds a minor note when he thinks to himself, “The guns must make a racket, though [. . .]” (33). Even though the music can inspire Fuselli, it cannot obliterate his fear.

We hear echoes of “God Save Kaiser Bill” in *Three Soldiers*. Early in the narrative, Dos Passos crams the soldiers into a Y.M.C.A. hut where a “Y” man leads them in a chorus of “We’re Going to Get the Kaiser.” This song is designed, like the propaganda film the men have been gathered to watch, to unify the men in their hatred of the German leader:

Hail, hail the gang’s all here
We’re going to get the Kaiser
We’re going to get the Kaiser
We’re going to get the Kaiser
Now! (20-21)

Even this early in their war experience (the men are still in training in the States) the soldiers parody the propaganda song the “Y” man is singing with them. The “Y” man responds: “ ‘Somebody tried to put one over on the ‘Y’ man and sing ‘What the hell do we care?’ But you do care, don’t you Buddy?’” (21). Dos Passos repeatedly portrays the “Y” men as shallowly patriotic and ineffective with the men as we see in his characterization of Spencer Sheffield (250-251). The soldiers do not regard them as comrades. The men do not want to be told what to think (or what to sing) by the “Y” man. Trombold notes: “Dos Passos observed that soldiers could assert some independence of mind by not always singing the approved martial songs, and—somewhat more daringly—by singing approved song in parody” (294). This parody, early in the soldier’s training is all in fun.

After they have had some experience, their parody takes a darker turn. The

cadences that the men sing as they march have always been a perfect vehicle for parody or even protest. These songs have simple tunes and steady marching rhythms, thus they are easy to learn. Cleveland observes that soldiers used popular tunes that are “well-known tunes that can be easily remembered and do not require much musical skill to reproduce” (31). As they are marching on a long, arduous march in France toward the sound of battle, the soldiers sing this song:

Oh ashes to ashes
And dust to dust;
If the gasbombs don't get yer
The eighty-eights must. (181)

This song that mocks their own fear, helps them to control that fear so they can march forward. Cleveland, commenting on the soldiers' making parody says, “it improvises responses to alarming or inconvenient experience and mocks at what it cannot alter or control” (20). The sentiment in “Ashes to Ashes” is oceans apart from “God Help Kaiser Bill.”

Experience has shown the soldiers of World War I that a huge difference exists between the homeland “Hoorahs” and the horrors of war. Again Cleveland notes:

In wartime these [disturbing experiences that are not supposed to be there] emerge as contradictions between the ideological hyperbole of popular culture content and the daily actualities experienced by its consumers [. . .]. To a soldier, it is the disparity between the ideal and the actual, measurable in the contrast between patriotic fervor and battlefield realities. (2)

These “battlefield realities” move them away from such songs as “There's a Long, Long Trail A-Winding” with its “land of dreams,” and toward the grizzly “The Hearse Song” with its “the worms crawl in, the worms crawl out” (Cleveland 7).

Protest music in World War I is evident both inside and outside the military. Cleveland offers two verses of “That Bloody War” as a sample of internal protest:

The Captain asked me why I ran,
I said the reason why,
The only reason that I ran
Was cos I couldn't fly!
Bloody War! Oh, bloody war!
I ran all over Europe

A 'fightin' for my life
And before I go to war again
I'll send my darlin' wife!
Bloody War! Oh, bloody war! (6)

In this song, the war becomes, not a fight for patriotism, but a fight for the soldier's own life. Cleveland goes on to list two contrasting song titles as evidence of protest outside the army. Those titles are: "If I Had a Son for Each Star in Old Glory," and "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier" (6). Of the latter title Cleveland says, "This 1915 composition warned prophetically of 10 million soldiers going to the war and protested that warfare would cease if other mothers made the same pacifistic declaration as she had" (6).

While soldiers entered World War I to the strains of "God Help Kaiser Bill," young men at the time of World War II were encouraged by several different media of popular culture. Writing about Hollywood and propaganda during World War II, Robert Tyne makes this point about a popular movie—*The Purple Heart*: "From the opening frame every component of effective propaganda was evident. The lugubrious strains of the American patriotic hymn, 'My Country Tis of Thee,' wailing softly in the introductory titles, served as the musical harbinger for the martyrdom that must follow" (64). Here, as in World War I, patriotic songs are used to encourage men to join the fight for their country's sake.

The beginning of World War II produced a whole new group of sentimental popular songs. One of the most compelling is "The White Cliffs of Dover":

There'll be bluebirds over the white cliffs of Dover
Tomorrow, just you wait and see.
There'll be love and laughter and peace ever after
Tomorrow when the world is free.

The shepherd will tend his sheep,
The valley will bloom again.
And Jimmy will go to sleep
In his own little room again. (Burton)

This song, set in England, became an important anthem of sacrifice and hope for American audiences. They saw themselves as liberators of brother England and suffered vicariously with the English.

Even though such traditional patriotic songs as "My Country Tis of Thee," "The Star Spangled Banner," and "America the Beautiful" were sung loudly and often, new songs were also being written that would become standard patriotic tunes. Irving Berlin's "God Bless America," which is much more about America than it is

about God, crossed over from a show tune to a patriotic song. Cleveland notes that popular song writers during World War II “relied less on jingoism and the deity and more on the patriotic values of nationhood [. . .]” (7). With these sentimental and patriotic songs ringing in their ears, the G.I.’s faced the ghastly reality of the beaches of Normandy and Guadalcanal. It is no wonder that sentimentality turned to sarcasm.

For the soldiers of World War II, like the soldiers of World War I, the sarcastic response to sentimentality took shape in parody. Paul Fussell, writing about the frustration a soldier feels with the misunderstanding at home of the atrocities of the war, says, “The troop’s disillusion and their ironic response, in song and satire and sullen contempt, came from knowing that the home front then could (and very likely historiography later would) be aware of none of these things” (“Real War” 1-2). This frustration expressed itself in bawdy cadences and irreverent songs. In his book *Wartime*, Fussell says the book is “about the psychological and emotional culture of Americans and Britons during the Second World War,” and he notes that “‘The Beer Barrel Polka’ [. . .] in its secular hedonism was significantly the Second World War’s ‘Onward Christian Soldiers,’ and in its utter avoidance of anything like patriotism and ideology, it was the Second World War’s ‘Over There’” (187). “The Beer Barrel Polka” does not ask soldiers to spout inane sentimentalities. It does, however, celebrate comradeship; therefore, it is a song they can sing with gusto.

Cleveland offers this parody of the show tune “People Will Say We’re in Love” (from *Oklahoma*) as an example of the kind of song G.I.’s fabricated to express their frustration and to make them laugh at themselves at the same time:

Don’t throw grenades at me,
Don’t lob mob mortar shells,
Don’t shoot your artillery,
People will say we’re at war.

Don’t throw grenades at me,
Don’t pull that safety pin,
Kraut-buddy, don’t you see,
People will say I’m done in (61).

James Jones, in his novel *The Thin Red Line*, writes a song that both verbally and musically expresses “sullen contempt” for war. In a jauntily syncopated rhythm, with directions to sing it at a march tempo, Jones sets the following lyrics in a tell-tale minor key:

Don't monkey around with death,
 It will only make you dirty;
 Don't futz around with the reaper,
 He will only make you smell.
 Have you got B.O.?
 Then do not go
 Fiddling around with that Scytheman;
 Because your best friends will not tell you;
 Don't monkey around with death;
 You will only wind up soiled. (xiii-xiv)

In the novel these lyrics run through John Bell's mind as he flees the sight (and smell) of a Japanese mass grave that the men in his platoon have disturbed. He has been chiding himself for failing to stop this desecration. This face-to-face encounter with the putrid reality of death incongruously elicits from Bell the memory of a jazzy torch song (77). This incongruity mirrors the inappropriateness of Bell's laughter at the socially unacceptable behavior of the men at the Japanese grave.

"Incongruous" is a word that appears often in literature about war. Studs Terkel makes this comment about the title of his book *"The Good War"*: "Quotation marks have been added, not as a matter of caprice or editorial comment, but simply because the adjective 'good' mated to the noun 'war' is so incongruous" (vi). This book, a compilation of interviews with a wide range of people about World War II, repeatedly demonstrates the incongruity of its title. In the section titled "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy," Maxine Andrews of the Andrews Sisters, an extremely popular act during World War II, makes this observation: "I felt we were invincible. Right is right and we were right and we're gonna [sic] win. But the news was not encouraging [. . .]. I would look on the set and see all those wonderful young men. It would go through my mind: am I ever gonna see them again?" (294). This purveyor of upbeat, sentimental, and patriotic songs admits her doubts that those songs tell the whole story.

If civilians had a difficult time correlating popular songs with the reality of war, soldiers had an even harder time. Consequently, they often changed the words to popular songs to better suit their situations. Cleveland notes that one such change resulted in transforming the song titled "Bless 'Em All" to "Fuck 'Em All!" He explains this need to change proprietorship of these songs this way:

Parallel with the morale building effusions of wartime [. . .] there exists among the troops an entirely different and contradictory expressive tradition [. . .]. Such songs are oppositional to the dominant ideology of the popular

culture, ridiculing the ideals of heroism and military propriety. Hundreds of them circulated in World War II, illustrating the disparity between values that affirmed the righteousness and seriousness of the collective wartime effort and the nihilist cynicism of its rank-and-file participants. (19)

Later in his discussion, Cleveland explains the importance and function of these “oppositional” songs. He writes:

To the reluctant warrior grouching about life in the services, grumbling about the food or yearning for the comforts of home, the singing of oppositional songs offers a semblance of at least having some control over the dictates of technique in the performance of duties. ‘Fuck’em All’ thus becomes a hymn of endurance and a source of psychological support as much as it is a disaffected denunciation of authority. (145)

Here the difference in those who only have an idea of war and those who experience its reality is clearly demonstrated.

Terkel includes in his book this song by Tom Paxton, a folk singer from the early 1960s:

What did you learn in school today, dear
Little boy of mine?
What did you learn in school today, dear
Little boy of mine?
I learned that war is not so bad
I learned about the great ones we have had
We fought in Germany and in France
And I am someday to get my chance
That’s what I learned in school today
That’s what I learned in school. (vii)

His placing this song, written in the sixties, in a book about World War II, demonstrates that ambivalent attitudes toward war span generations.

The time between the ending of World War II and the Vietnam War, whenever one chooses to date its beginning, was a time of profound social change in America. The Civil Rights Movement was about to see its greatest leader rise. The birth control pill gave women new freedom and added impetus to the

already burgeoning Women's Liberation Movement. Widespread recreational drug use was about to change (in a drastic way) what parents worried about. Popular music is an important chronicler of all these cataclysmic changes. From "We Shall Overcome," the hymn of the Civil Rights Movement, to Leslie Gore's "You Don't Own Me," which foreshadowed the Women's Movement, America was singing about its changes. Onto this kaleidoscopic stage of changes entered the Vietnam War. The beginning of the war is impossible to date, as Bruce Franklin points out in *The Vietnam War in American Stories, Songs, and Poems* (11). It is certain, however, that by the middle of the 1960s the Vietnam War was a centerpiece of the American psyche.

Another movement that coincided with the Vietnam War was a huge resurgence in the popularity of folk music. It moved off the porches and out of the coffeehouses into America's radios and stereos. It became bona fide popular music. Folk music has always been the perfect vehicle for recording social history because of its storytelling narratives and simple, singable melodies. The gradual change in popular folk music from the relatively quiet, acoustically accompanied early days of Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, and Peter, Paul, and Mary to the screaming, electrically enhanced sounds of The Animals and Jimi Hendrix paralleled the escalating war in Vietnam. Many of the songs produced by both the folk artists and later the rock artists—who readily acknowledge their debt to folk music—have become inextricably linked with the Vietnam War. Franklin explains the symbiotic relationship of popular music and the war:

Songs were a prominent feature of the anti-war movement and a shaping element of its associated counterculture, an inspiration for pro-war sentiment, and an essential part of G.I. culture in Vietnam. In more subtle ways, the war exerted deep and lasting influences on the form and content of popular music. (203)

From folk and rock music, which registered more protest than support, to country music, which was largely pro-war, everyone seemed to be singing about Vietnam.

Country music, which has always been more politically and socially conservative than folk and rock music, became the chosen vehicle for pro-war sentiment. Les Cleveland mentions "The Ballad of the Green Berets" as an example of the pro-war song (129). This song, recorded in 1966 and sung by Green Beret Barry Sadler, is an extremely sentimental and patriotic song about the heroics of the Green Berets. The last two verses of the song clearly indicate its tenor:

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. (Franklin 212)

This sentimentality begged to be parodied by the men who were actually fighting in Vietnam. Lydia Fish, writing about music in the Vietnam War, affirms that it “spawned dozens of parodies” (3). She goes on to state that these parodies “served as a strategy for survival, as a means of unit bonding and definition, as entertainment, and as a way of expressing emotion” (3). Inane sentimentality is simply not a useful emotion for those who are in the midst of the reality of war.

As in previous wars, soldiers in the Vietnam War era made their own songs. Sometimes they made parodies as in “The Ballad of the ASA.” This song is a parody written by the men of the Army Security Agency at Ft. Devens in 1965-66. It uses the melody of “The Ballad of the Green Berets.” A sampling of two verses indicates the song's flavor:

Drunken Soldiers, Always High
Dropouts from old Sigma Phi
Men who bullshit all the way
These are the men from the ASA

Plastic cans upon our ears,
We've been cleared and we're not Queers
One hundred men we'll test today,
But only three make the ASA. (Army Security Agency)

Sometimes soldiers appropriated popular songs for their own purposes. Fish observes: “The troops had their own top forty of songs about going home like ‘Five Hundred Miles,’ or ‘Leaving on a Jet Plane,’ or of darker or more cynical album cuts which reflected their experiences: ‘Run through the Jungle,’ ‘Bad Moon,’ ‘Paint It Black,’ or ‘The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down’” (2). They also claimed the Animals’ “We Gotta Get Out of This Place” for obvious reasons (1).

Not all of the songs the Vietnam soldier made his own were about going home. Sometimes those songs had multiple meanings. Franklin says this about “Puff the Magic Dragon”:

Songs have varied meanings, which multiply as people relate them to their own lives. G.I.'s in Vietnam turned Peter, Paul, and Mary's 'Puff the Magic Dragon,' an apparently innocent childhood fantasy sung by leading antiwar folksingers, into both the nickname of the deadliest of all gun ships and a sly celebration of marijuana" (203).

If they could not make any sense of their war experiences, at least these soldiers could sing of them in humorous and familiar terms.

The infantrymen of John Del Vecchio's novel, *The 13th Valley* sing a song in the bar on the eve of their deployment to the infamous "13th Valley." This song, "The Boonie Rats" is both an honest account of the progression of a "Boonie Rat" from his first experience in the boonies—

I landed in the country,
One year of life to serve
My only friend a weapon,
My only prayer to live.
Boonie Rats, Boonie Rats
Scared but not alone,
300 days more or less,
Then I'm going home.—

to his becoming an experienced soldier:

Boonie Rats, a legend
For now and times to come,
Wherever there are soldiers,
They'll talk of what we've done.
Boonie Rats, Boonie Rats,
Scared but not alone,
50 days more or less,
And then I'm going home.

The song ends with a proud tribute to the brotherhood of Boonie Rats:

They say there'll always be a war,
I hope they're very wrong,
To the Boonie Rats of Vietnam
I dedicate this song. (91-93)

This song, made by the men who are fighting, for the men who are fighting, has no hint of sarcasm or parody or even patriotism. It is a song of comradeship.

Songs of protest against war made an appearance early in the Vietnam conflict. "Masters of War," recorded in 1963 by the young folksinger, Bob Dylan, asks the question:

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. (Znet 4)

Here Dylan indicts the "masters of war," but not the soldier. When he wrote this song, widespread protest against the war had not yet begun. Four years later, in 1967, Peter Yarrow emphasizes the reaction of the public to a young pacifist in his song "The Great Mandala":

Tell the people they are safe now
Hunger stopped him, he lies still in his cell.
Death has gagged his accusations
We are free now, we can kill now,
We can hate now, now we can end the world
We're not guilty, he was crazy
And it's been going on for ten thousand years! (Znet 58)

"Draft Dodger Rag," by Phil Ochs, addresses the view of the war from the perspective of the young men who are expected to fight it. The whole idea of dodging the draft in the later years of the Vietnam War created a sort of culture of its own, complete with an underground network for moving young men to Canada. This song captures perfectly the hypocrisy of the attitude of many Americans—"Maybe this war needs to be fought, but my son is not going to fight it." The chorus and the last verse sarcastically states that attitude:

I'm just a typical American boy from a typical American town
I believe in God and Senator Dodd and keeping old Castro down
And when it came my time to serve I knew better dead

than red

But when I got to my old draft board, buddy, this is what I said:

I hate Chou En Lai, and I hope he dies,
But one thing you gotta see
That someone's gotta go over there
And that someone isn't me
So I wish you well, Sarge, give 'em Hell
Yeah, kill me a thousand or so
And if you ever get a war without blood and gore
Well I'll be the first to go. (Ochs)

In 1965 Country Joe and the Fish recorded "The I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin-to-Die-Rag," which approaches protest from a different angle than "Draft Dodger Rag." The song begins sardonically:

Yeah come on all 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 ends bitterly:

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. (Znet 49)

Franklin asserts that this song, "expressed the vitality of the [anti-war] movement [. . .]. The song also formed part of the transition from folk to rock" (205). The protest song genre had not, before the Vietnam War, had such a wide appeal or such eloquent and prolific expression. Country Joe's song hinted at a new wave of anti-war music. Douglas Reitingger, writing about the music of Vietnam War films, states:

The fact that in many ways the rock music tradition parallels the American experience during the Vietnam War

cannot be avoided: both had their roots in the post World War II baby boom, both were infants twisting the night away in the naivete of Jack Kennedy's Camelot, both spent their *American Graffiti*-like adolescence while LBJ stepped up the war, and both raged madly at My Lai and Altamont. In the seventies rock music and the Vietnam War went mega. (58)

As the war wore on, and general support for it waned, the public embraced the protest genre more readily. By the time of the shooting of students at Kent State in May, 1970, the public was ready for a popular protest. This readiness explains the immense popularity of the song "Ohio," written by Neil Young and recorded by Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young in July, 1970. The middle verse expresses the frustration and horror that Americans felt at this event:

Got to get down to it
Soldiers are gunning us down,
Should have been done long ago
What if you knew her and
Found her dead on the ground
How can you run when you know?
(qtd. in Franklin 213-214)

Even after the Vietnam War was officially over, protest music continued. The most notable anti-war song of the 1980's is Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the U.S.A." This song tells the story of a Vietnam veteran. Bobbie Ann Mason uses this song, along with other icons of popular culture, as the background for the characters in her novel *In Country*. The repetition of the song in the book emphasizes the maladjustment of Emmett, a Vietnam veteran. The middle verses of the song capture the essence of the veteran's disaffection:

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 Sanh 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 the 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.
(qtd. in Franklin 218)

After the war is over, both the veteran and the American public are trying to come to grips with its aftermath. Emmett and his niece Sam struggle throughout the book to find a way to deal with the fallout from Vietnam that affects each of them differently. This song captures their frustration. The repetition of the phrase "Born in the U.S.A." emphasizes the irony of a veteran who is dishonored by his country.

In his book *Dispatches*, Michael Herr comments on the way popular rock music melded with the war during and after the Vietnam War years and affirms that it became part of the Vietnam experience. He writes: "Out on the street I couldn't tell the Vietnam veterans from the rock and roll veterans. The Sixties had made so many casualties, its war and its music had run power off the same circuit for so long they didn't even have to fuse" (258). Here music is not only a commentary on the war, it becomes an integral feature of a whole country's remembrance of that war.

War and music are inextricably linked in history. Music and the lyrics it accompanies serve an important function as they reveal different attitudes toward and perceptions of war. Cleveland comments on this function:

Many lyrics reinforce morale by maintaining sentimental and patriotic linkages with the homeland. Others help to bring fears and anxieties under social control, while an uninhibited core of less compliant utterance allows criticism and resentment of authority to be openly voiced within the boundaries of official tolerance as a desirable alternative to refusal of duty or even mutiny. (145-146)

The music of war has made its way into our popular culture and serves to remind us of the difference in the before and after versions of war and between the idealistic and realistic visions of war. Whether the music inspires marching, saluting, toe-tapping, or weeping, it enters our collective memory and acts as a bench mark for every generation who has gone to war.

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