

Enlistment has always been and always will be in the recruiting process of the military. In All Quiet on The Western Front (Erich Maria Remarque), The Things They Carried (Tim O'Brien), and A Long Way Gone (Ishmael Beah), all exhibit the enlistment of soldiers into war. In each book, the topic is similar, and different to each author. The author has their own point of view, and how they have experienced the process of enlistment. Enlistment was often persuasion through mental pressure, peer pressure, and physical pressure. Enlistment is just to get people to join a cause to go to war that they may feel that is not necessary to go and fight for.

In the book All Quiet on The Western Front by Erich Maria Remarque, Paul went through enlistment to go and fight for Germany in World War 1. In most war books, enlistment is thought to be more voluntary, while in the reality it is a matter of force. Paul describes that he was pressured to join the war. They were too cowardly to say "no", and that they would be dishonoring their families, which also made them go to war. "Won't you join up, Comrades?" (Page 5). Paul felt that he had no good choice of avoiding the war, and had to go through with the whole war to end up being killed in battle, looking calm and at peace of his death. "For us lads of eighteen they ought to have been mediators and guides to the world of maturity, the world of work. (Page 6). Once they became soldiers, they have changed completely.

In The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien, Tim writes about his whole experience in the Vietnam War. Tim O'Brien was drafted to go and fight the war. "My conscience told me to run, but some irrational and powerful force was resisting, like a weight pushing me toward the war. What it came down to, stupidly, was a sense of shame." (Chapter 4, pg. 52). Tim had the choice of fleeing the country to avoid war, but the cons weighted more than the pros of Tim's situation. Tim felt as if he was too good for the war and became angry. He believed that the people that chose the war should go off and fight the war, and not him. I survived, but it's not a happy ending. I was a coward. I went to the war." (Chapter 4, pg. 61). Tim O'Brien is trying to convey that even though he went, and survived the war, he was a coward for going to war in the first place.

In the book A Long Way Gone by Ishmael Beah, enlisted in to the army to fight the rebels. For Beah, he saw that the military was his best option at the time. He lost his immediate family, and was convinced that he must make the rebels pay for what they did to his family. "Whenever I looked at rebels during raids, I got angrier, because they looked like the rebels who played cards in the ruins of the village where I had lost my family. So when the lieutenant gave orders, I shot as many as I could, but I didn't feel any better" (page 122). Under Beah's circumstances, he felt that the army would be his best option to stay alive. "One of the unsettling things about my journey, mentally, physically, and emotionally, was that I wasn't sure when or where it was going to end. I didn't know what I was going to do with my life. I felt that I was starting over and over again" (Page 69). Beah tried to show that being enlisted gave him all this emotional weight that he has to carry for the rest of his life. When the lieutenant showed the bodies of those

who left, that made many stay and fight with the army, out of fear of being tortured, and killed by the rebels.

Each author had their own point of view on the enlistment to their war. Paul Baumer was enlisted by peer pressure, and was too cowardly to say “no”. He believed that he had no other choice. Tim O’Brien didn’t want to go to war, but decided to go, because he didn’t want to leave his whole life behind, and known as a coward. Ishmael Beah, felt that it was the only thing he could do without being killed in the war. He felt that as if he had a better chance of survival. A common trend in enlistment is that they would be cowards if they don’t go to war, they are all small town people, and they go to war. Some differences were that some weren’t choosing life, or death. Another difference is that Beah felt that it would be in his best interest to fight the rebels to avenge his family’s death, while other authors didn’t see going to war would be in their best interest.

Marcin Ciszek

Part 2

Winds of War

Before I learned about enlistment in the army, I believed that enlistment was just the soldier's decision, and to go willingly to war to fight for their country. Now that I have learned enough to know that enlistment to the army was, and is not always voluntary. All Quiet on The Western Front, The Things They Carried, and A Long way Gone show that the soldiers did not want to be a part of the war. They went to war either being drafted, through peer pressure, or purely through force. When I learned that, I was shocked to learn that. I recall a term, "draft dodgers", but I thought that not a lot of people did that. Enlistment is a very important topic because it is the start of going into the involvement in war. Essentially, enlistment is the gateway to war. The topic of enlistment is important to learn about because it shows that the enlistee doesn't always have that choice of saying no, or not to go to war. The army tries to lure recruits to go to war. If I were to teach this topic to a future enlistee, I would tell him exactly what he/she are getting themselves into. I would explain it to them; I would also advise them to read the books listed above. If they were to read them, they would see what happens to soldiers before and after wars. It would range from the enlistment all the way to the mental scars they might get from the war. People should be aware of the risks, and consequences of enlisting and to go fight in a war. The topic of enlistment should be more emphasized in knowing if the individual will want to go to war, or to learn and to avoid it. Just like in the first two books I stated previously, the people that should be

fighting the war are the people who voted for it. Let the politicians go to war if they choose to vote for war, and not to force others to go to fight in a war that they do not want to. Enlisting is a very important element for going into the military, and should be evaluated more and taught to people to understand it better.



Uploader: Gary Lucken Date taken: 1915

Link: <http://www.fotolibra.com/gallery/670320/world-war-one-fall-in-poster/>

The photo depicts that the United States' government tried to get many soldiers as they can to go to war. This was a common type of enlistment to go to war. They would give you this sense of patriotism to your country if you go and fight. During many wars a person would see a lot of propaganda to promote and to rally the people to fight in a war. It would make you think that you are a hero. In the end, the soldier would go home, or never come back. These are the types of propaganda that led many people to go to war and fight for a cause that they felt was good, according to some posters and commercials about it.



Title: MED CAP Artist: Dennis O. McGee Year: 1967

Found:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:VietnamCombatArtCAT03DennisOMcGeeMedCap.jpg>

I believe that this piece of art symbolizes the help toward the war, too give the people a feeling of “I have to help them because they are dying out there”. It shows the need for the people to go and help out in the war effort. The art is also trying to manipulate people’s instinct to care for the weak, and the wounded. The piece doesn’t show directly on telling people to go to war, but tries to convince them physiologically. During this time, many people were drafted to go to war, while other people decided to voluntarily join the war effort. The “draft dodgers” were one of the many people that saw

what was happening, while the others that didn't went to fight, and die for a not so clear cause.



By: Dustsplat

Year: 2013

Title: Modern war illustration

Found: <http://dustsplat.deviantart.com/art/Modern-war-illustration-433542816>

Enlistment is a very unique thing in the recruiting process of the military. They show you how great it would be if you joined. In this piece of art, I felt a great sense of patriotism when I saw this art. It would affect many men, because it would inspire them to be this tough, soldier that fights to keep his country safe. It also gives a sense of pride to them; it shows that they are winning in this battle and with a great number of people. Enlistment mostly tries to target there intended audience, physiologically, or even forcefully. With the photos, art, or commercials the military tries to make itself the most appealing to their intended audience so they have people joining their cause. With this photo it shows that they have many people, strong, motivated, and determined to be the best of the best of the military.

Marcin Ciszek

Part 4

Winds of War

While being in the National Veterans Art Museum, I met a veteran named Ned Ricks. Ned was 1st Squadron in 9th, and 10th Air cavalry, in the Vietnam War. I didn't really know of the air cavalry, because Vietnam mostly spoke of the soldiers on the ground. Ned Ricks was not drafted into the war; he wanted to go to the war. When he told us this, I was surprised to hear that because; many people avoided the war by fleeing the country. When he signed up, he learned that the officer he replaced was shot by his own men in the platoon. Just like in the war books, they also did drugs, played games and get food and supplies from Salvation Army. After reading The Things They Carried, I only assumed that they did drugs and gotten supplies during the Vietnam War. One day they found a village and decided to give them the food they weren't going to eat. I thought that the soldiers didn't interact with the civilians because; they could have been the enemy. He didn't stay in touch with the men in his platoon. I know a veteran and he seems to keep in touch with the men that were in his platoon, so I was a bit surprised when Ned said that. I believed that soldiers in their platoon kept in touch with each other after the war. He had a struggle how to explain, how it was in the war, civilians couldn't understand. I wasn't really surprised that veterans can't talk about their experience because it was too hard for them to talk about it. During the interview, his last story hit me hard personally. He was hinting toward Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

(PTSD). After the war, he took his new car, and drove to the army base in Texas. He is in the Pizza Pub, having fun until he heard a loud boom. He went to the ground with the table to the corner for safety. He realized he was the only one. He thanks those people for helping him cope with it at the time. That was a very difficult story he had to tell. It was a very touching, and moving story. The interview with Ned Ricks, changed my view on Veterans, and I have a little more knowledge what they went through.