

Robert M. Holt
English 101
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Theme #5

The Bush Hat

titles do not need to be underlined

Having spent time in the jungles of South Viet Nam fulfilling my military obligation, I acquired many objects that have different meanings for me. One of these is the bush hat, worn exclusively by American G.I.'s over there, especially the infantrymen. Having served in the infantry, this hat has been with me on many different occasions, throughout the mass confusion of combat and the joyous celebration of leaving South Viet Nam. *excellent Introduction - clear & personal*

The bush hat has camouflage colors of green, yellow, black, and brown, ^{as is} made of cheap South Viet Nam cloth. Throughout the constant exposure ^{to} of the hot sun and the long monsoon rains, the colors have faded and the cloth has shrunk considerably. The hat is oval in shape and resembles that of a fishing hat. There are three air vents on each side of the hat and numerous other holes which shows the signs of wear and tear. Hanging from one of the vents is the pin from a grenade that I tossed while in Viet Nam. The pin, the loose treading, the holes and the whole shabby appearance of the hat reminds me of my stay in Viet Nam. *excellent descriptive writing*

I acquired the bush hat within my first 10 days in Viet Nam. I bought it off a small 10 year old South Viet Nam girl who I guess helped to support her family by selling hats and sunglasses to the many G.I.'s that passed

the village where she lived.

To the infantry man in Viet Nam, the bush hat has special status because it becomes so much of a part of him. During the raining season, it is the bush hat that keeps his head dry. When the sun is out, the bush hat shields the sun from his eyes. When he is washing in a stream out in the fields, the bush hat holds his valuables, such as watches, rings, and wallets. It sometimes serves as a small pillow if nothing else is available. The bush hat is the infantry man's constant companion twenty four hours a day. *fine personal expression*

good personal explanation

To the other positions of the service, such as cooks, clerks, and truck drivers, the bush hat has meaning to them because they wear it (also) in Viet Nam. I doubt if they wear the bush hat with as much pride and righteousness as an infantry man because this hat signifies his job of endless walking and constant fighting with the enemy. *important qualification* The term bush hat was derived from the word bush, the territory of the infantry man.

While I was there, I enjoyed wearing this hat because it helped signify the role I played in defending my country. It was also much more comfortable than the standard service issued steel helmet which is huge and bulky.

Today as I look at this same bush hat, a feeling of pride is still within me because of the fact that while I was in Viet Nam, I did my job to the best of my ability and God given talents. *very strong personal statement*

(over)

Bob, this theme is perhaps the best piece of student writing I have experienced this year. You have captured in two pages more than you perhaps realize, about yourself, your understanding of yourself, your role as a soldier, one's duty to his country. If you don't mind, I would like to make a copy of this theme for my files.

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