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# Movie reveals Vietnam conflict with horrific but truthful images

By Kevin Cowan  
Senior Reporter

**"In The Year Of The Pig," Sheldon Film Theater, plays today at 7 p.m. and Saturday (no charge on Saturday) at 3, 7 and 9 p.m. U.S.A., 1969, 101 minutes.**

## Movie Review

Emile de Antonio's "In The Year Of The Pig" further documents the hell on earth created by the American "police action" in Vietnam. Through vivid militant montage, Antonio shows the inhumane strong-arm tactics used to wrestle women, children and men into non-human existence. Antonio combines documentary form with filmic aestheticism to create a political horror.

"We must continue our bombing until we destroy every work of man if necessary," said General Earle G. Wheeler. And bomb they did. We all know that. We all know five pounds of shrapnel were dropped on every square inch of Cambodia, as well as Vietnam: consistently cruel punishment for crimes never committed.

The camera's eye catches Vietnamese peasants on the natural turf, bowing and pleading like well-trained animals. The look of horror in their eyes is worlds more powerful than the shell-shock psychosis portrayed by the American veteran. Why? Because "our boys over there" were on the killing end of things. The Vietnamese were tortured, herded and killed. Antonio utilizes combat newsreel footage, authentic political commentary — the incredible amount of disinformation spewed on the American populace — and current interviews with political theorists, war correspondents and Vietnam veterans to relay the hideous barrage of war crimes committed by the powers that were.

American intervention in Vietnam actually started in 1845, said a professor of Vietnamese literature at Cornell. So it's not one of those things that merely started to boil in the early 1950s. Intervention stepped up in 1945 when Ho Chi Minh held the high post in Vietnam. Paul Mus, professor of Buddhism at Yale, acting as negotiator for the French president, De Gaulle, was sent to contact Minh for the first time.

Mus informed Minh that De Gaulle wanted him to join the French Union. Minh asked what the union was: a circle or a square — a metaphor from a Confucian proverb. A square, to Confucius, was solidity, the earth; a circle was more associated with

heaven and intelligence. Mus said he didn't know which it was, and Minh reacted with surprise. His response to De Gaulle's request:

"I have no army (it's not true now), I have no finance, I have no diplomacy, I have no public institutions, I have just hatred. And I will not disarm it until you give me confidence in you."

"Ho trusted us," Mus said, "and we betrayed him."

Broken trust and lies stand front and center in Antonio's work. He continually juxtaposes what we were told and what was actually happening.

Upon the initial screening of "In The Year Of The Pig," Antonio was criticized for turning out a severely slanted documentary, which he agrees with wholeheartedly. But in the light of the tainted information espoused by the U.S. government, a bit of bias towards the underdog seems insignificant. To document all aspects of the Vietnam incident in one film would be futile — nothing short of a 48-hour documentary. Actually, the incorporation of aestheticism and angle are refreshing from the normal set-camera, medium close-up shots that plague so many documentaries. There's nothing wrong with making the package visually pleasing. Considering the enormously intense content, within itself graphically disturbing, a little internalized creation makes the viewing dramatically more rewarding.

Shot after shot bounces back and forth between clean-cut army generals and politicians, repeating with glib lies the humane manner with which we are handling the Vietnam situation; then on to a militia brutalizing peasants into submission.

"The prisoners were executed in our outfit as a standard policy," said David K. Tuck, former U.S. private in Vietnam.

A bush rattles with convulsive action, and the broken and maimed body of a Vietnamese peasant falls to the roadside.

We are so inundated with American propaganda, it's hard to believe that such demonic treatment of other human beings could go on, condoned, for decades. This is not the case, obviously, for the typical Vietnam peasant or soldier. For centuries they've been subject to aggressive domination by political institutions seeking power for their own good. The physical destruction of their village does not mean the absence of existence. If their village is destroyed, the communal group remains together and rebuilds it from scratch.

Antonio makes the point that the internalized ability to survive is one of

the reasons Vietnam was a police action that could never be won.

Antonio's film is an abrasive masterpiece worthy of standing front runner in the Vietnam genre, striking a much-needed blow to the U.S. system of strong-arm domination. The time has come for Americans to realize the horror ever-present in so much of our foreign policy.



Courtesy of Sheldon

A scene from "In the Year of the Pig."

# 'Laser Visions' at planetarium

Mueller Planetarium has added a new series, "Laser Visions," to its regular schedule of laser light shows.

"Laser Gold" features music of the 1950s, '60s and '70s in a multimedia extravaganza. On Nov. 15 Chuck Berry, Elvis and other '50s stars are featured in "'50s Flashback."

"Laser Rhapsody" (Sunday through Nov. 22) illustrates favorite

artists such as Phil Collins; Crosby, Stills and Nash; Kenney G; and Fleetwood Mac.

"All Hits Laser Show" (Nov. 1 and Nov. 29) rocks with the music of Whitesnake, Bon Jovi, Huey Lewis and the News, and others.

"Laser New Age" (Nov. 8 and Dec. 6) is a fusion of classical, jazz and pop, such as Mannheim Steamroller, Paul

Winter, George Winston and Shadowfax.

All "Laser Visions" shows start at 3:30 p.m. on Sundays and last about 50 minutes. Admission is \$3.50 for adults, \$3 for high school and college students, and \$2 for children under 12.

Tickets for the shows will be sold at

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