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English I: Week 9/29-10/3

**Essential Questions:**

* **Unit EQ:** When memories are faulty, when people’s understanding is lacking, what does it mean to be truthful when retelling an experience from our past? How do we most accurately and effectively convey an important experience to another human being?
* **Week EQ:** 
  + How does perception work? In other words, how does information from the outside world get into our brains in order for us to make meaning of it?
  + How does what we sense affect how we perceive an event (the emotions we feel towards something and the judgements we make)?
  + Do we have to manipulate, exaggerate, change those senses in order for others to understand (to properly perceive) our experiences?

**Big Goals for the Week:**

1. Readings:
   1. TTTC: “Enemies,” “Friends,” “How to Tell a True War Story,” “The Dentist,” and “Sweetheart of the Song Tra Bong”
   2. “Sensation and Perception”
   3. Psychological Properties of Colours
2. (Due Monday 10/5): Write a memoir using the chapters we read as models (see “Memoir Prompt: How to Tell a True War Story”
3. Study for your quiz on Friday (see schedule for Friday 10/3 located below for what the quiz will be over)
4. (Due Monday 10/5) EXTRA CREDIT: Answer chapter questions located at the end of this packet (3 points each)

**Schedule and Homework for the Week:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Day** | **In Class Work** | **Homework** |
| **Monday 9/29:** | * Do Now: Answer EQ * Draw an image that best represents your memoir * Share memoirs and images with partners * Go over rhetorical strategies for this week: Imagery, metaphor, simile, selection of detail, and how it affects how you feel | * Read “Enemies,” and “Friends” * Complete 6 annotations on imagery, metaphor, simile or selection of detail |
| **Tuesday 9/30:** | * Do-now: Friends and Enemies * Discussion on imagery and selection of detail | * Read “How to Tell a True War Story” * Complete 6 annotations on imagery, metaphor, simile or selection of detail |
| **Wednesday 10/1:** | * Do-Now: Lemon Tree * Quote discussion * Watch video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mScIq2ZnNiU> | * Read “The Dentist” and “Sweetheart of the Song Tra Bong * Complete 6 annotations on imagery, metaphor, simile or selection of detail |
| **Thursday 10/2:** | * Divide up into three groups: topography of Vietnam, the Green Berets, Mary Anne’s transformation, investigate imagery related to each category | * Begin your memoir #3 (see Prompt for Memoir #3: Intensity) |
| **Friday 10/3:** Independent Reading and Quiz | * Quiz   + Events from the TTTC chapters   + Answering EQs   + Defining rhetorical strategies: imagery, selection of detail, metaphor, simile | * Complete memoir for Monday |

**Prompt for Memoir #3: Intensity**

*Directions: Write a one-paged memoir on the following prompt. You may type your memoir or handwrite it. See my example below (it’s depressing though, so watch out).*

1. This week, we have been focusing our attention on how O’Brien gets our senses involved and how those senses lead to an intense emotional response. We’ve been discussing the process of perception and how our minds make meaning of the world around us. For your memoir this week, tell the story of the most intense moment in your life. Try to use all five senses (imagery) in your story. Be aware of the details you choose to include (selection of detail) and how those details are enhancing or detracting from the story.

Janna Bunosky

English I

Janna

9/28/14

Prompt #3: Intensity

“Bye Janna! Oh wait. Will we see you at the restaurant?” Stephanie asked. She was standing by the door with her keys in her hand and her purse under her arm.

“Yep. I’m just gonna go home and change first, since we’re not meeting until 6:30,” I said as I wiped down the tables with lysol and paper towels.

“Okay. See you then,” she said with a smile, and she turned to go.

“Bah,” I said. I smiled at her and then continued to wipe down the last table. The room now smelled of lysol and everything was in its proper place. I liked to have the classroom all neat for when I returned Monday morning. A clean classroom made it feel like a fresh start, like I could wipe away all of the mistakes I had made as a student teacher that week and all of the mistakes the students made alongside me as squirrelly, beginning-of-the-year seventh graders.

When I was finished, I picked up my purse and a cardboard box full of students’ binders that I promised myself I would grade. I locked up the classroom with my purple sparkly key, the heavy box of binders digging into the side of my hip as I balanced it with one arm. I walked down the steps and got to my car, an old 1996 Lexus ES300. I popped the trunk and heaved the cardboard box inside.

The second my butt hit the driver’s seat, I let out a deep sigh. I’d survived another week. I stared straight ahead at the open corridor of the school. All the kids had gone home. The school was deserted and felt eerily peaceful, like those old ghost towns that are scattered around the western parts of this country. Finally, I put the key in the ignition and began my drive home.

When I entered the on-ramp to the 805 freeway, I sped up to 80 mph. Driving on freeways made me happy. I was in control. The monotony of the freeway, the sameness of it, was a welcomed experience given my current chaotic student-teaching situation. I turned the radio up and began singing to the country song playing on the radio. I exited for the 94 west then got onto the 5 north. Traffic was minimal as usual. I looked over to the left to see cars on the 5 south creeping along, bumper to bumper. *I’m so happy I’m not them,* I thought.

I was in one of the middle-right lanes going around 75 mph, driving on the part of the freeway just before it makes a bend around the city and then straightens out alongside the San Diego airport. I wasn’t thinking of anything, just mindlessly singing along to the current song playing on the radio, my hands gently guiding the steering wheel. The sun cast a dusty golden glow on everything at that time of the day and it was one of those rare moments that I could trick myself into believing it was fall.

The next part of this memory gets fuzzy.

The brake lights on the car in front of me suddenly flash red and stay red. Their decrease in speed is more than worrisome. I realize that I don’t have enough road in front of me to stop my car before reaching them. My brain makes a judgement call. I know the space on my left is open and I swerve into that lane, still braking hard and now maneuvering around the bend in the road. I hear my tires screeching like a ringing in my ears. My heart sinks as I feel a hard thud from the right side and the rear part of the car starts to lead rather than follow. I’m spinning and my eyes can’t focus. The world outside the car isn’t what it is supposed to be. It’s supposed to be a road ahead. I’m supposed to see the bumpers and rear windows of the cars in front of me. I’m supposed to see the yellow lines separating the lanes and they’re supposed to run parallel to my own vehicle. But that’s not what I see.

I see a massive blur outside of my front window and the only thought in my brain is, *I’m going to die now.*

My brain has already done the calculations. These cars around me were going at least 70 mph and now I’m spinning out of control farther and farther to the left-most lane, the fastest lane. There’s no way I’m getting out of this alive. There’s no way I’m walking away. There will be blood and glass and broken bones and teeth and skin grafts and stitches. There will be tears from people I won’t even have known. I feel like crying as I spin because I’ve read this story before: Jaime Brandenburg, Katie Schumann, Meghan Bell, Rigo Salgado, Salvador Mucci. It’s over. So I just let myself float. My body sways with the car like a leaf in the wind. I wait for whatever it is that’s coming.

I don’t remember slowing down. I don’t remember hitting anything else. The next thing I do remember is that I’m stopped and there’s a haze of smoke or maybe dust rising outside of the car. I’m in the left-most lane facing the wrong way, facing all of the cars behind me. My chest is moving up and down and I have no control of that part of my body. I reach for my phone. I know I have to get out of the left lane before another car hits me or other cars hit each other, even though I see that the cars behind me are jagged from their unexpected stops, but they’re stopped at least. For now. I call 9-1-1 and say I’ve been in an accident and I’m on the five. I tell her the exit: Hawthorne Street. My voice is shaking and I feel myself cracking, feeling unable to hold it together much longer. I just want to go home. I don’t want to be dealing with this. I can’t process, especially knowing that it isn’t over yet. I can’t get out of the car. Somehow I have to get over to the side, but I’m not sure how.

I’m still on the phone with the 9-1-1 operator when I see that there’s a cop blocking traffic up ahead. There’s another accident up there and I realize this accident must have been the reason the car in front of me slammed his brakes so hard. Another cop is walking towards me waving his hands, beckoning me to drive forward. I shake my head at him and he waves his hands harder, this time anger flashes in his eyes.

I’m bewildered by his insistence and his seeming annoyance with me. *I can’t drive forward,* I think. I have no idea what my car must look like, but there’s no way. I was hit. I was hit *hard*. He’s treating me like a stupid woman driver and that’s not what I am! But I finally heed his directions. I turn the key in the ignition and it starts. I put it in drive and do as he says. There’s a horrible scraping sound as my car lurches onward, but it’s at least moving. I get it off to a wide shoulder just before the Hawthorne exit and turn off the ignition. I get out and inspect the car. It’s smashed in at the right rear tire but other than that, it looks perfect. I lean against the back bumper and continue to hyperventilate, even though I survived and I now know it. I don’t know how. I was so sure I wouldn’t. Jaime Brandenburg didn’t survive. She was killed instantly when she hit a big tree out by the Kankakee River. I went to her wake and saw her powdery, puffy face. I’ve been to her gravestone and know it reads 1990 - 2007. Meghan Bell survived, but not without a foot long scar down her right thigh, a scar from her shoulder to her hip and a tired limp in her step that will never go away. I remembered crying for them, and now I was crying for myself because I realize for the first time that it could have been me. Any of their accidents. It could have been me. And I never thought of that before.

The tow truck arrives and the driver gets out. He slowly walks up to me and asks if I’m okay.

I’m still hyperventilating, making this loud heaving noise that I can’t control. I’m still crying and so in between heaves I manage to say, “I should wait before I call my family, shouldn’t I?”

He looks me over--tears, mascara, shaky limbs. He scrunched up his nose, not sure what to say. Finally he nods and almost smiles. “Don’t scare them anymore than they need to be.”

I laugh.

The police officer finally calls all of the drivers over. We ask each other if we’re okay. We all take turns saying yes. We smiled these little half smiles. That’s all we can muster. Then, the officer suggests that we each tell our stories in private. That way, there will be no arguing or disagreeing.

“It’s just easier that way,” he said.

So that’s what we did.

When I finished giving my statement, that same tow truck driver came over to me and asked if I needed him to take my car some place. I told him yes, and after he strapped in my car, I got in the passenger seat and we headed down the 5. We rode in silence until he asked me where I wanted to go.

“Take me home,” I say. I tell him I live next to an auto shop and I know Pat, my mechanic and neighbor, will take care of me when he gets in tomorrow morning.

It’s been a year since the accident, almost to the day. I still drive my old 1996 Lexus ES300. My dad was nice enough to shell out the money to save it, though the repairs cost almost as much as it was worth in parts. He said he didn’t care about the money. It didn’t matter. The insurance people kept calling to get my statement and to update me on the claim. In the end they said it was my fault. I hadn’t “maintained control of my vehicle.” They sent me the report. I never looked at it. I didn’t care enough to fight it or argue or even to look at the diagram, the police officer’s statement or the other drivers’ statements. I was busy with my dual life as a student teacher and Master’s student, and with all of life’s little tasks like grocery shopping and wiping down classroom tables with lysol.

I don’t think there’s really a point to this story. Some stories I guess don’t have points, except maybe to show that some day you might drive down the road and get in an accident. You might die that day, or you might walk away or end up somewhere in between. The police officers will come with their red and blue lights flashing to stop traffic. The tow truck driver will take the car away. The drivers behind you will eventually drive on home. And that will be that.

**Sensation and Perception**

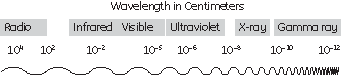
**Sensation** is the process by which physical energy from objects in the world or in the body stimulates the sense organs. The brain interprets and organizes this sensory information in a process called **perception**.

Thanks to the nose, ears, eyes, tongue, and skin, we can imagine a day at the beach: glimmering blue sky, salty water, warm sand, and crying seagulls. Our knowledge of the world depends on the senses: vision, hearing, taste, smell, position, movement, balance, and touch. If someone bounces a basketball, our eyes and ears pick up stimuli such as light and sound waves and send neural signals to the brain. This process called sensation occurs when physical energy from objects in the world or in the body stimulates the sense organs.

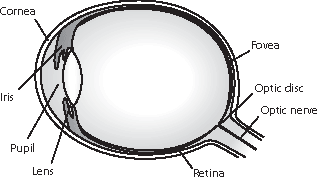
However, only when the signals come together meaningfully do we actually perceive a bouncing basketball. Perception happens when the brain organizes and interprets sensory information. Sensation and perception occur together, and normally we don’t distinguish between the two separate processes. We use all five of our senses, vision, hearing, touch, taste, and smell, and organize the information we get from them every day of our lives.

**Vision**

Because people need sight to perform most daily activities, the sense of sight has evolved to be highly sophisticated. Vision, however, would not exist without the presence of light. **Light** is electromagnetic radiation that travels in the form of waves. Light is emitted from the sun, stars, fire, and light bulbs. Most other objects just reflect light.



#### **Structure of the Eye**



The process of vision and the structure of the eye:

* The **cornea** is the transparent, protective outer membrane of the eye.
* The **iris**, the colored part of the eye, is a ring of muscle.
* The iris surrounds an opening called the **pupil**, which can get bigger or smaller to allow different amounts of light through the lens to the back of the eye. In bright light, the pupil contracts to restrict light intake; in dim light, the pupil expands to increase light intake.
* The **lens**, which lies behind the pupil and iris, can adjust its shape to focus light from objects that are near or far away. This process is called **accommodation**.
* Light passing through the cornea, pupil, and lens falls onto the retina at the back of the eye. The **retina** is a thin layer of neural tissue. The image that falls on the retina is always upside down.
* The center of the retina, the **fovea**, is where vision is sharpest. This explains why people look directly at an object they want to inspect. This causes the image to fall onto the fovea, where vision is clearest.

##### **Rods and Cones in the Retina**

The retina has millions of photoreceptors called rods and cones. **Photoreceptors** are specialized cells that respond to light stimuli. There are many more rods than cones. The long, narrow cells, called **rods**, are highly sensitive to light and allow vision even in dim conditions.

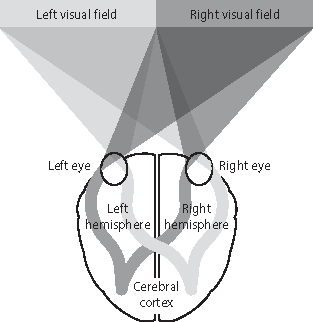
**Cones** are cone-shaped cells that can distinguish between different wavelengths of light, allowing people to see in color. Cones don’t work well in dim light, however, which is why people have trouble distinguishing colors at night.

**Transmission of Visual Information**

Visual information travels from the eye to the brain as follows:

* Light reflected from an object enters the eye and hits the retina’s rods and cones.
* Rods and cones send neural signals to the bipolar cells.
* Bipolar cells send signals to the ganglion cells.
* Ganglion cells send signals through the optic nerve to the brain.

#### **Visual Processing in the Brain**

After being processed in the thalamus and different areas of the brain, visual signals eventually reach the primary visual cortex in the occipital lobe. From the primary visual cortex, visual signals often travel on to other parts of the brain, where more processing occurs. Cells deeper down the visual processing pathway are even more specialized than those in the visual cortex. Psychologists theorize that perception occurs when a large number of neurons in different parts of the brain activate. 

# Psychological Properties Of Colours

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| **There are four psychological primary colours - red, blue, yellow and green. They relate respectively to the body, the mind, the emotions and the essential balance between these three. The psychological properties of the eleven basic colours are as follows (Learn how you can harness the positive effects of the colours, by joining us on one of our** [**courses**](http://www.colour-affects.co.uk/colour-courses)**):** |  |
| **RED.** Physical  Positive: Physical courage, strength, warmth, energy, basic survival, 'fight or flight', stimulation, masculinity, excitement.  Negative: Defiance, aggression, visual impact, strain.  Being the longest wavelength, red is a powerful colour. Although not technically the most visible, it has the property of appearing to be nearer than it is and therefore it grabs our attention first. Hence its effectiveness in traffic lights the world over. Its effect is physical; it stimulates us and raises the pulse rate, giving the impression that time is passing faster than it is. It relates to the masculine principle and can activate the "fight or flight" instinct. Red is strong, and very basic. Pure red is the simplest colour, with no subtlety. It is stimulating and lively, very friendly. At the same time, it can be perceived as demanding and aggressive. |  |
| **BLUE.** Intellectual.  Positive: Intelligence, communication, trust, efficiency, serenity, duty, logic, coolness, reflection, calm.  Negative: Coldness, aloofness, lack of emotion, unfriendliness.  Blue is the colour of the mind and is essentially soothing; it affects us mentally, rather than the physical reaction we have to red. Strong blues will stimulate clear thought and lighter, soft blues will calm the mind and aid concentration. Consequently it is serene and mentally calming. It is the colour of clear communication. Blue objects do not appear to be as close to us as red ones. Time and again in research, blue is the world's favourite colour. However, it can be perceived as cold, unemotional and unfriendly. |  |
| **YELLOW.** Emotional  Positive: Optimism, confidence, self-esteem, extraversion, emotional strength, friendliness, creativity.  Negative: Irrationality, fear, emotional fragility, depression, anxiety, suicide.  The yellow wavelength is relatively long and essentially stimulating. In this case the stimulus is emotional, therefore yellow is the strongest colour, psychologically. The right yellow will lift our spirits and our self-esteem; it is the colour of confidence and optimism. Too much of it, or the wrong tone in relation to the other tones in a colour scheme, can cause self-esteem to plummet, giving rise to fear and anxiety. Our "yellow streak" can surface. |  |
| **GREEN.** Balance  Positive: Harmony, balance, refreshment, universal love, rest, restoration, reassurance, environmental awareness, equilibrium, peace.  Negative: Boredom, stagnation, blandness, enervation.  Green strikes the eye in such a way as to require no adjustment whatever and is, therefore, restful. Being in the centre of the spectrum, it is the colour of balance - a more important concept than many people realise. When the world about us contains plenty of green, this indicates the presence of water, and little danger of famine, so we are reassured by green, on a primitive level. Negatively, it can indicate stagnation and, incorrectly used, will be perceived as being too bland. |  |
| **VIOLET.** Spiritual  Positive: Spiritual awareness, containment, vision, luxury, authenticity, truth, quality.  Negative: Introversion, decadence, suppression, inferiority.  The shortest wavelength is violet, often described as purple. It takes awareness to a higher level of thought, even into the realms of spiritual values. It is highly introvertive and encourages deep contemplation, or meditation. It has associations with royalty and usually communicates the finest possible quality. Being the last visible wavelength before the ultra-violet ray, it has associations with time and space and the cosmos. Excessive use of purple can bring about too much introspection and the wrong tone of it communicates something cheap and nasty, faster than any other colour. |  |
| **ORANGE.**  Positive: Physical comfort, food, warmth, security, sensuality, passion, abundance, fun.  Negative: Deprivation, frustration, frivolity, immaturity.  Since it is a combination of red and yellow, orange is stimulating and reaction to it is a combination of the physical and the emotional. It focuses our minds on issues of physical comfort - food, warmth, shelter etc. - and sensuality. It is a 'fun' colour. Negatively, it might focus on the exact opposite - deprivation. This is particularly likely when warm orange is used with black. Equally, too much orange suggests frivolity and a lack of serious intellectual values. |  |
| **PINK.**  Positive: Physical tranquillity, nurture, warmth, femininity, love, sexuality, survival of the species.  Negative: Inhibition, emotional claustrophobia, emasculation, physical weakness.  Being a tint of red, pink also affects us physically, but it soothes, rather than stimulates. (Interestingly, red is the only colour that has an entirely separate name for its tints. Tints of blue, green, yellow, etc. are simply called light blue, light greenetc.) Pink is a powerful colour, psychologically. It represents the feminine principle, and survival of the species; it is nurturing and physically soothing. Too much pink is physically draining and can be somewhat emasculating. |  |
| **GREY.**  Positive: Psychological neutrality.  Negative: Lack of confidence, dampness, depression, hibernation, lack of energy.  Pure grey is the only colour that has no direct psychological properties. It is, however, quite suppressive. A virtual absence of colour is depressing and when the world turns grey we are instinctively conditioned to draw in and prepare for hibernation. Unless the precise tone is right, grey has a dampening effect on other colours used with it. Heavy use of grey usually indicates a lack of confidence and fear of exposure. |  |
| **BLACK.**  Positive: Sophistication, glamour, security, emotional safety, efficiency, substance.  Negative: Oppression, coldness, menace, heaviness.  Black is all colours, totally absorbed. The psychological implications of that are considerable. It creates protective barriers, as it absorbs all the energy coming towards you, and it enshrouds the personality. Black is essentially an absence of light, since no wavelengths are reflected and it can, therefore be menacing; many people are afraid of the dark. Positively, it communicates absolute clarity, with no fine nuances. It communicates sophistication and uncompromising excellence and it works particularly well with white. Black creates a perception of weight and seriousness. |  |
| **WHITE.**  Positive: Hygiene, sterility, clarity, purity, cleanness, simplicity, sophistication, efficiency.  Negative: Sterility, coldness, barriers, unfriendliness, elitism.  Just as black is total absorption, so white is total reflection. In effect, it reflects the full force of the spectrum into our eyes. Thus it also creates barriers, but differently from black, and it is often a strain to look at. It communicates, "Touch me not!" White is purity and, like black, uncompromising; it is clean, hygienic, and sterile. The concept of sterility can also be negative. Visually, white gives a heightened perception of space. The negative effect of white on warm colours is to make them look and feel garish. |  |
| **BROWN.**  Positive: Seriousness, warmth, Nature, earthiness, reliability, support.  Negative: Lack of humour, heaviness, lack of sophistication.  Brown usually consists of red and yellow, with a large percentage of black. Consequently, it has much of the same seriousness as black, but is warmer and softer. It has elements of the red and yellow properties. Brown has associations with the earth and the natural world. It is a solid, reliable colour and most people find it quietly supportive - more positively than the ever-popular black, which is suppressive, rather than supportive. |  |

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Chapter(s): “Enemies” and “Friends”

TTTC Annotations

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Chapter(s): “How to Tell a True War Story”

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Chapter(s): “The Dentist” and “The Sweetheart of Song Tra Bong”

TTTC Annotations

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**Chapter Questions:**

**For every chapter you read, ask yourself: why did O’Brien include these chapters? What is his point?**

*Directions: These are possible questions that will be on the quiz. If you answer any of these questions and turn them in Monday (10/5), each question is worth 3 points. You MUST include at least one additional quote from the book in order to receive full credit and responses must be at least 3 sentences long.*

“Enemies”

1. “No safe ground: enemies everywhere...At night he had trouble sleeping--a skittish feeling--always on guard, hearing strange noises in the dark, imagining a grenade rolling into his foxhole or the tickle of a knife against his ear” (63). What does Dave Jensen’s crazy behavior show about a person’s mental state in a war like Vietnam?

“Friends”

1. “Later we heard that Strunk died somewhere over Chu Lai, which seemed to relieve Dave Jensen of an enormous weight” (66). Why does Dave Jensen seem to be “relieved...of an enormous weight” with Lee Strunk’s death? Why does O’Brien include this story?

“How to Tell a True War Story”

1. “At its core, perhaps, war is just another name for death, and yet any soldier will tell you, if he tells the truth, that proximity to death brings with it a corresponding proximity to life” (81). How could this pose a problem for soldiers who come back from the war?
2. “But if I could ever get the story right, how the sun seemed to gather around him and pick him up and lift him high into a tree, if I could somehow re-create the fatal whiteness of that light, the quick glare, the obvious cause and effect, then you would believe the last thing Curt Lemon believed, which for him must’ve been the final truth” (84). What do you think is the “final truth” that O’Brien is talking about here?
3. What does Mitchell Sanders “moral” mean: “you got to listen to your enemy” (76)? How does it relate to O’Brien’s quote at the end of the chapter: “Because she wasn’t listening. It *wasn’t* a war story. It was a *love* story” (85).
4. “You can tell a true war story if you just keep on telling it” (85). What does O’Brien mean by this?

“The Dentist”

1. Why does O’Brien tell this story about Curt Lemon? Why does he want to guard against getting “too sentimental about the dead” (87)? Should we all fear that?
2. Why does Lemon have the dentist yank out a perfectly good tooth? What does that say about him and what he wants others to think of him?

“Sweetheart of the Song Tra Bong”

1. “It wasn’t a question of deceit. Just the opposite: he wanted to heat up the truth, to make it burn so hot that you would feel exactly what he felt. For Rat Kiley, I think, facts were formed by sensation, not the other way around…” (89). Do you think this is a more truthful way of describing events, or more false?
2. “What happened to her, Rat said, was what happened to all of them. You come over clean and you get dirty and then afterward it’s never the same. A question of degree” (114).