

# The Soldier's Dilemma

## Discussion Questions

1. If Dillon holds his fire, why does the fact that the people in his squad are his “friends” make a difference (or does that make a difference)?
2. If Dillon decides to shoot the woman and it turns out that she was just an innocent peasant woman, do you think he has done anything wrong? Why or why not?
3. If Dillon killed an innocent civilian would you be willing to call him a murderer? Why or why not? If yes, what should his punishment be? Why?
4. If Dillon decides not to shoot the woman, and it turns out that she was a guerilla soldier who sets off a mine or a booby trap, and some of his fellow soldiers are killed and wounded, do you think he has done anything wrong? Why or why not?
5. If Dillon fails to shoot the woman and some of his fellow soldiers are killed and wounded as a result of his failure to shoot, would you be willing to say that he has committed a crime? Why or why not? What crime has he committed and what should his punishment be? Why?
6. What do you think the morals of war are? What guidelines or criteria can someone use to live by in a war?
7. What impact do you think this might have on what people write and what they read?

Adapted from Johannessen, L.R. (1997, January 20). Teaching the Vietnam War. Presented at a teacher's institute meeting at Township High School, LaGrange, IL.