Definition Of War Essay, Research Paper

Definition of War: Sherman’s Hell The term “war” is one that most competent English speaking people arefamiliar with, and it is one that most of those same people could attemptto define. The only problem lies in the definition that one would receive.War is so complex and multifaceted that it is truly understood by only afew people. Wars date far back into history, and they have been foughtfor more reasons than could be listed. It seems strange, but untimalely,they are fought for one reason. Freedom has been the issue of every warsince the beginning of time, and whenever a group of individuals feelsthat their freedom has been infringed upon, war is always possibility. It is only logical that in a war there must be some form of a protagonistas well as an antagonist, but in many cases it is unclear who gets whichlabel. The American Civil War is a perfect example. The South wanted thefreedom to make decisions that benefited a largely agricultural society,and when that freedom was denied they withdrew from the Union. The Union,on the other hand, viewed the South as a group of radicals making anattempt to dissolve the unity of states that their ancestors had workedso hard to create. As a result they felt their freedom of unity andnationhood had been taken away. It is difficult to say who was in theright, but when all of the negotiations had been exhausted, war was theresult. In this case there was no other option because both sides believedin their cause. Gen. William T. Sherman said |War is HellX, and that quote hasremained famous because even though simple, it is accurate. American menspent weeks at a time in rat infested trenches with lice all over theirbodies in both World War One and Two. There are countless examples ofhorrible war crimes, biological weapons, napalm strikes, and of coursenuclear weapons. War has claimed millions of lives throughout history. War is glorified by many, but the people who know see no glory in it, yetthey do it for freedom, and most if asked would say that they would do itagain. In all of these wars, the soldiers believed they were fighting for

their own personal freedom, or the freedom of some other group ofindividuals. Had they not believed this, they would not have risked theirlives. War it a last resort. Generally speaking, people do not like war, andwant to avoid it at all costs. It is believed that a large part of whyAmerica went to Vietnam was for monetary reasons. Companies have to makeall of the ships, helicopters, airplanes, and supplies. As a result, jobsare created and the economy in stimulated, but the U.S. government couldnever tell that to the public. It is very possible that these wereulterior reasons for the Vietnam war, but the government simply turned itinto an issue of freedom. As a result the public was told that aftertrying to make peace with North Vietnam, the U.S. Navy was continuallybeing assaulted and that there was no option but to go to war. At thatpoint Americans had the option to believe that they were involved fornoble and acceptable reasons. Even though freedom of some type is directly related to all majorconflicts, it is not necessarily the freedom of all those involved.Operation Desert Storm is a good example. Though it was technically not awar, in had many of the characteristics attributed to war. The UnitedStates was involved because of Iraq+s blatant disregard for the freedom ofthe people of Kuwait. There have been countless arguments about whether the United States should be the |policemanX to the world, but a finaldecision will never made because there is answer. War is about freedom. The cynics will tell you that Americans go to warfor ulterior reasons like money, and there may be some truth to that. Theargument has been made Operation Desert Storm would never have occurredhad it not been for oil. It is possible that this is true, but if it wasnot for the oil, Kuwait would seem to powerful countries as much moredistant place. The fact is, Kuwait does have oil, and as a result the U.S.deals with Kuwait on a very close and personal level. With this kind ofrelationship, it is only natural that we would protect Kuwait if theirfreedom was threatened. War is painful, bloody, and terrible, but as longas people want freedom, it will be a way of life.