

# *Journal*



## *of the Vietnam Veterans Institute*

*Volume 3, Number 1, 1994*



*This issue:*

*Reopened Wounds*

*Discrimination against Veterans*

*Patriotism as Pathology*

*An in-depth Look at a Veteran in Academia*

*In Memoriam: Lewis Puller, Jr.*

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*Editors: Dr. Peter C. Rollins*

*Mr. J. Eldon Yates*

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# *Discrimination Against Veterans*



**Journal of Vietnam Veterans Institute**

**Discrimination**

*Volume 3, Number 1, 1994*

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**J. Eldon Yates, M.A.** is Chairman of the Board and Founder of the Vietnam Veterans Institute. He is currently Vice Chairman of the Maryland Governor's Executive Advisory Council, managing seven committees on Law Enforcement. He served in Southeast Asia with MAG and SOG units. Mr. Yates received his graduate degree from Western Michigan U and taught at Mercyhurst College and Western Michigan U.

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## Preface

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*J. Eldon Yates*

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**I**t is with mixed emotions that we publish this edition of the *Vietnam Veterans Institute Journal*. Positive feelings surround the efforts of gifted Vietnam veteran scholars who after these many years remain loyal and dedicated to the cause of Vietnam veterans employment. The sad note is that activism on the issue is still necessary after more than 25 years.

The Vietnam Veterans Institute was organized in 1980 to work on the issues of employment and business opportunities for Vietnam veterans. As a think-tank and lobbying organization,

we also explored many of the underlying causes of the bleak employment picture of our fellow vets. As a result of mutual objectives, I joined the staff of a White House Initiative from the spring of 1982 to the fall of 1984. Successful Vietnam veterans throughout the United States were mobilized to serve as volunteer chairmen to develop employment and small business opportunities for their brethren in their home state. During that period, I collected data from the U.S. Department of Labor on Vietnam-era veterans employment. Those statistics painted a devastating picture of our nation's lack of commitment to our generation of veterans. According to the Department of Labor's statistics (published monthly), Vietnam veterans for 10 years following the war had a significantly higher rate of unemploy-

ment in all age groups than their non-veteran peers—which included women and minorities. Paradoxically, Vietnam veterans, according to those same statistics, have a significantly higher level of formal education.

Now at a median age of 48, Vietnam veterans still suffer from resounding bias in the job market and academia; and, while the employment statistics have improved, underemployment is still a major issue. For example, some disenchanting statistics on employment were revealed to the Vietnam Veterans Institute under the Freedom of Information Act. The career set-aside senior executive positions (top managers) at the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Central Office are only 1.47% of non-political senior executive position! 1.47%! According to DVA, in a 1992 report, veterans only comprised 26.2% of the Department's workforce nationwide. At this writing, less than 50% of the employees at the DVA Central Office—within which resides the offices that create policy affecting veterans' health care and benefits—are

veterans, the preponderance of which are in mid to low-level career positions.

When the Vietnam Veterans Institute requested the original information, and subsequently provided it to a journalist (Sharon Churcher), a spokeswoman for the Department of Veterans Affairs denied the validity of the employment statistics. Churcher requested the same information that VVI had obtained, which confirmed the statistics that VVI reported. Churcher wrote of this in her "USA Confidential" column in Penthouse Magazine's February 1992, issue entitled "Is the DVA Anti-Veteran?"

The negative stereotypes of Vietnam veterans continue to plague those who serve in our nation's longest war. The bias in the job market and the attitudes toward those who speak out as a positive voice for our comrades—the generation of 19-year-old Americans who served honorably during perhaps the greatest period of discontent and unrest in our nation's history—are reflected in the pages of this issue of the *Vietnam Veterans Insititute Journal*.

There is little doubt that this bias will follow us to our graves. Equally, there is no doubt that men and women such as those who chronicle in this publication will continue to challenge the revisionist history of American involvement in Vietnam and the post-war dogma perpetrated upon those who served. 🌐

J V V I

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**John Wheeler** is President of Valor Alliance, a network of business professionals and scholars working to end discrimination against the military, veterans, and their families. He authored of **Touched With Fire: The Future of the Vietnam Generation** (Avon, 1985) and coauthor of **The Wounded Generation: America After Vietnam** (Prentice Hall, 1981). From 1979-89 he served as chairman of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, which built "the Wall" in Washington, D.C.

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## **Reopened Wounds: The Crisis in Civil- Military Relations in The Clinton Administration**

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*John Wheeler*

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**T**he tragedy of the battle must be laid at the doorstep of the amateurs in the White House. My son Jamie was killed because Bill Clinton does not appreciate the importance of Vietnam Veterans and the positive impact they could have on his administration.

**Letter by James H. Smith, Bank executive and Vietnam veteran, on his son's death in Mogadishu.**



*My son, Casey, opposed my support for Bill Clinton. His death in Somalia — brought about by weak and indecisive amateurs — confirms my son's wisdom and my naivete.*

**Letter by Larry E. Joyce, executive, with two tours in Vietnam.**

*I will honor your service and sacrifice with deeds, not words.*

**William Clinton, American Legion Convention, Aug. 25, 1992.**



*One of the most direct measures of President Clinton's attitude toward the military is the number of citizens with military experience — America's vets — he has appointed to his administration. This white paper examines the effect on the military of President Clinton's appointments in*

light of the commitments he made to veterans and of appointments that would be expected to go to vets as simply a matter of the proportion of vets in the pool from which almost all top appointments come in the Clinton Administration — the baby boom, or Vietnam, generation.

The assessment shows that vets seem to be systematically dis-selected from appointments. It raises the issue of the damaging results of the discrimination (1) on military morale, (2) on U.S. ability to use force effectively, and (3) in reopening wounds of the Vietnam era by shunning vets again, as in the 1970's.

There are several things this paper is not. It is **not** an attack on any individual appointment, because many of the appointees who are **not** vets are excellent, including the women appointees. It is **not** a statement that most appointments should be vets, or that one must be a vet to serve well in defense related positions, **nor** is it a statement that just because a person is a vet he or she will serve well. It is **not** an attack on draft dodging. It does **not** carp about falling short in trying to

place able vets; Hispanics and Afro-Americans have complained that President Clinton's efforts for them fall short though he is making a good faith effort on their behalf.



President Clinton, "I will honor your service and sacrifice with deeds, not words."

In light of the findings of this paper, the President should convene a task force or commission on civil-military relations. Also he should honor the request of parents of Rangers killed in Mogadishu for a meeting with him and appoint vets to his administration at least in proportion to their share of the population. Finally, he should promptly fill the over 50% of Pentagon Senate confirmation slots which still

*have not been confirmed and disclose the role of Hillary Rodham Clinton in delaying Pentagon appointments.*

*The President should also publish a list of all White House as well as cabinet and independent agency (e.g. EPA and ACTION) appointments he has made, listing those who are vets, including those who served in the Vietnam War zone. The list should also contain Senate-confirmed appointments to ambassador, the federal judiciary, and boards and commissions, as well as Schedule C (lower level political slots) and be updated regularly.*

**Benchmark: At Least 33%  
of Male Appointees  
Should Be Vets, and  
10% Should also be  
Vietnam Vets**

This compilation has been made using the reports of the National Journal on persons named for slots and on phone calls to the White House, Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs, as well as other cabinet departments and agencies.

These counts change often and are difficult to make because veterans status is not compiled for public release. The things to focus upon are the order of magnitude of the figures and the existence of major gaps.

This also represents the President's "First Team" — the people he has turned to first and has most confidence in, so it is a measure of the Administration's actual policy on the military and vets.

In round figures, 60 million Americans came of age during the Vietnam War, the bulk of the baby boomers: 30 million women and 30 million men. 10 million men wore the uniform of whom 3 million served in the war zone. 60,000 men were killed and 300,000 wounded. Thus, in a neutral selection from among a pool of men in the generation, one-third would be expected to be vets and one tenth would also be Vietnam vets.

However, in his campaign President Clinton affirmed his admiration of the values of service and

sacrifice exhibited by vets, and he stressed his belief in national service.

In light of these affirmations, the 13 and 1/10 benchmarks should be viewed as minimums. Because President Clinton promised to form an administration that “looks like America,” any major gap below the benchmarks would show a breach of the commitment to vets and the military he made during his Presidential campaign.

The benchmarks for vets include Hispanics and Afro-Americans. In the Vietnam era, the proportion of blacks and Hispanics in the military were in nearly the same proportion as their numbers in the population as a whole. It is not true that minorities were wounded or killed in disproportionate numbers: the names on the Wall do form a pattern that “looks like America.” Discrimination against vets is discrimination against roughly 12% of male Afro-Americans and 9% of male Hispanics.


The appointments of vets would be expected to be distributed across all government agencies, since people of all

eras who have had military experience excell in all professional fields in America — government, law, transportation, medicine, economics, business, the arts, literature, and education.

## **Comparison to the Senate**

The 10% benchmark for Vietnam vets is low in reference to the proportion of vets elected to serve in the US. Senate. Proportionally, 1.8 senators would be Vietnam based on the number of Vietnam vets in the population. In fact there are nine: Democrats Al Gore (President of the Senate), Tom Harkin of Iowa, John Kerry of Massachusetts, Bob Kerrey of Nebraska, Tom Daschle of South Dakota, and Chuck Robb of Virginia; Republicans Bob Smith of New Hampshire, John McCain of Arizona, and Larry Pressler of South Dakota.

Thus, Americans have elected over triple the number of Vietnam vets to the Senate that would be expected by the proportion of Vietnam vets in the



population. This is an indication that Americans affirm the values embodied in the lives of Vietnam vets and that Vietnam vets can be looked to for good leadership in both Democratic and Republican ranks.

This figure indicates that it is reasonable to expect at least 10% of the men in the Clinton Administration to be Vietnam vets.

### **Support by Vets of the Clinton Campaign**

Vietnam vets were active in the Clinton campaign, and Vietnam vets argued in public that Americans should not punish or judge their fellows for actions taken during the Vietnam War. 6.97 million vets voted for Clinton; 6.46 million for Bush; and 3.57 million for Perot. Clinton beat Bush by 5.5 million votes —so the vets that voted for Clinton (6.97 million) were more than Clinton's margin of victory.

By the same token, vets have the power to turn the Clintons out of office in 1996.

## **Findings**

A. White House Staff (Office of the President, First Lady, NSC, CIA, National Economic Council, Council of Economic Advisors, Drug Office, Trade Representative, OMB, Science and Technology) Of the first 92 slots filled: 26 women, 66 men: 7 vets, of whom 3 are Vietnam vets (Statistics should lead us to expect at least 22 vets, including 7 Vietnam vets).

B. Cabinet Departments and Independent Agencies Of the first 330 slots filled: 83 women, 247 men: 18 vets, of whom 11 are Vietnam vets (expect at least 82 including 25 Vietnam vets).

C. Department of Defense Of the first 33 slots filled: 5 women, 28 men: 11 vets including 6 Vietnam vets (expect at least 9, including 3 Vietnam vets).

**NOTE:** No Vietnam vets at the top slots: SecDef, SecNav, SecAF, SecArmy. Only one vet (Perry) in the

top 7 DoD policy positions: SecDef, DepSec, UnderSec (Policy), DepUnderSec (Policy), UnderSec (Acquisition), Dir of Defense Research & Engineering, General Counsel (The last position is vital on the issue of homosexuals in the military).

Only 20 of 43 DoD slots have been confirmed — less than half. Only 2 of 8 Army slots have even been named — SecArmy and DepSecArmy — neither a combat vet. **After a year not one Army slot had been confirmed.** This is a “choke hold” on DoD. The big reviews of DoD policy have been done with most slots not filled. DoD is in any event not the main policy maker on defense spending or decisions to use military force; main power, as in most administrations, is in the White House.

D. Department of Veterans Affairs Of the first 8 slots filled: 2 women, 6 men: 5 vets all of them Vietnam vets (expect at least 2 vets, including 1 Vietnam vet).

**NOTE:** VA is where vets would most certainly appear. The impression

among vets and active duty personnel interviewed for this paper is that the Clintons regard the VA as the repository for vets — a kind of “ghetto.” Vets and military personnel are angry because the Clintons give the impression that vets care only about veterans benefits and not about national security or the conditions of active duty personnel — that vets can be “bought off.”

*Of the first 213 men in the departments and agencies aside from DoD and VA, there are only 2 male vets, both pre-Vietnam, where 71 would be expected, including 21 Vietnam veterans; there is little distribution of vets across the Administration.*

The vet named for the Department of Labor is in a slot — Assistant Secretary for Veterans Employment and Training — which President Clinton and Secretary Robert Reich are attempting to abolish.



## **Irony: Critical Help Given to Clinton by Vets**

The irony of this evidence of so few appointments of vets is that President Clinton owes his election and political survival to vets.

First, James Carville, a Marine vet, was his campaign manager and the key strategist of his campaign, stepping in early to take over and save it. Second, Al Gore would probably not have been selected as the VP candidate if he had not been a Vietnam vet, and in any event his selection created enthusiasm and momentum that saved the Clinton campaign, starting with the Bill and Al caravans.

Third, Roy Neel, a Navy Vietnam vet, was moved in to serve on President Clinton's staff in order to make it professional and to avoid the gaffes of the first Clinton days.

Finally, Dave Gergen, a Navy vet, was brought in to rescue Clinton's relations with the media.

## **The Harm Caused by this Discrimination: The President's Crisis in Civil-Military Relations**

The harm caused is direct. First, it has created a crisis in military morale by showing those in uniform that their deep values and commitment to country are not really honored; that the words of affirmation of the sacrifice and service of vets and the military are not matched by actual deeds that would flow from the affirmations. If a President really valued service and sacrifice, he would want people who embody those values in the Administration. This is particularly damaging to the 4 million younger, post-Vietnam vets, including those who currently are being mustered out of the service during downsizing. Military personnel noticed, for example, that a vet was not appointed to head the Office of National Service — the office whose core mission embodies the values of community, service, discipline, and leadership that are at the core of military life. The entire history of national service has been one of drawing upon the best features of military life, including the national Civilian

Conservation Corps of the 1930's and the California Conservation Corps of the present — which became the leading national example for modern conservation corps under the leadership of a vet who lost both a leg and an arm in Vietnam.

The Pentagon is the least staffed of the cabinet departments — when major reviews of military policy have been prepared and when zealous attention is given to finding and appointing women, Afro-Americans, Hispanics, and homosexuals to the Administration. The Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund has announced that 22 homosexuals now serve in the Clinton Administration.

The second direct harm is a disincentive for youngsters to consider a military career.

The young see and sense the real values being expressed by the power structure.

The third harm is that the civilian administration does not have the critical mass of resident military experience to

assure that America can use force competently. Young lives are wasted. The Rangers lost in Somalia are a painful symptom of the rejection by the Clintons of the military and the vets.

Fourth, America is deprived of a pool of good leaders for service throughout the Administration.

Fifth, the discrimination reopens the wounds of the Vietnam era by renewing the shunning that vets endured in the 1970's, extending it to their sons and daughters who now serve.

Finally, the discrimination does no honor to America's vets and most importantly to the parents and loved ones of those killed in action or who died of wounds or who were taken prisoner.

Several persons interviewed remarked that it is sad that this discrimination is coming to a head during the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the victory in World War II. World War II vets are the parents and grandparents of many of today's military and younger vets.

## **Bush Administration Appointments of Vets**

By the end of the summer in the first year of the Bush Administration, 66 White House Staff had been named: 13 women and 53 men. Of the men, 17 vets would be expected, including 5 Vietnam vets; there were 12 vets, with 4 who served in Vietnam. In the 14 cabinet departments (not including independent agencies), 158 slots had been filled, 34 women and 124 men. Of the men, there were 30 vets with 7 who served in Vietnam versus an expectation of 42 vets with 12 who served in Vietnam. There were vets in 11 of the 14 departments.

Avoidance of vets during the Bush years was obscured by the facts



*President Bush*

that (a) the President was a World War II combat vet who had high regard for those in uniform; (b) the National Security Advisor was a Vietnam vet; (c) the basic competence of the Administration to apply force was not a campaign issue; (d) the set of attitudes and values of the campaign/White House inner set — that is, the social culture of the inner group — was one that felt comfortable with and respected the military. Nevertheless, during both the Reagan and Bush years vets noticed that men who had avoided military service during the Vietnam War were emerging as spokesmen for defense and that the 35 - 45 year old men in the inner groups of President Reagan and Bush included few vets.

## **Causes and Constitutionality**

The consensus among the vets, military and nonmilitary persons interviewed for this paper is that the Clinton Administration is largely a networked clique of people who were antimilitary and antiwar during the 1960's, and that they carry their biases with them still. There is also a feeling



that some men in the Clinton Administration do not like having vets around as reminders of their lack of service in the military — they do not like being made to feel guilty by the presence of another man who did wear the uniform, and women in the clique sense and reinforce this sentiment.

campaign he disclaimed his earlier statement that by electing him America gets “two for one,” that is, both Bill and Hillary at the top.

The objection is not directed at the fact that, as First Lady, Hillary Clinton wields important substantive power.

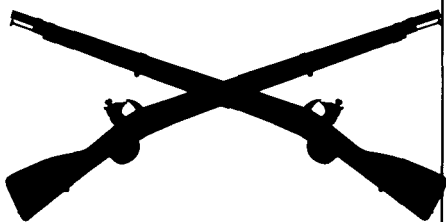
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*Top positions in the armed services, foreign affairs, and veterans affairs committees of both houses have in recent years been decreasingly held by veterans.*

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A large number of persons interviewed mentioned that Hillary Clinton checks each appointment, and that the discrimination against vets reflects her values as strongly as the President's, perhaps more so. There is resentment that her bias went hidden during the campaign, especially during candidate Clinton's speech to the American Legion and when during the

That is viewed as a positive, especially in the health care area. The objection is that during the campaign her values and attitudes on the military, national security, and vets were not revealed and that her present powers have not been subjected to either of the Constitutional safeguards on the use of Executive power: disclosure and Senate confirmation. Since she seems to have (undisclosed) effective control over appointments to the Department of Defense and because over a year since the election the Department of Defense Senate confirmed slots are less than half filled — in effect, a “choke hold” on



the Defense Department — she has material and probably unconstitutional impact on national security and military morale. The minimum cure in this situation is disclosure.

Active duty personnel observed that the Clinton Pentagon is a relapse of the Kennedy-Johnson Pentagon of the Vietnam War. In the words of one, “Lots of whiz kids and lots of Rhodes scholars who never served.”

The low number of veterans appointments and the crisis in military morale is best viewed as part of the larger context of the way the turbulent events of the 1960’s shaped and divided America, especially the generation that came of age during the 60’s — the generation now embodied in the Presidential administration. The low number of vets and the damage to military morale rests mostly on four causes:

⊕ A false stereotype of vets as victims, an attitude that is a holdover from the 1960’s and 70’s — that vets are people to feel sorry for. This is dismaying to vets and to the military, since most vets and military persons thought the

stereotype had been laid to rest with the end of the Carter Administration.

⊕ A false stereotype of every vet as a closet right winger, not to be trusted with a Presidential appointment.

⊕ A desire to “get even” or “show them” among the 60’s activists who now dominate the Clinton Administration. This attitude blocks acceptance of vets.

⊕ An unexpected direction of forgiveness — Americans long thought that vets would not forgive or forget the antidraft protests of their peers.

Actually, most vets have forgiven and forgotten. The unexpected development is that many men and women who did not serve will not forgive the vets for having served and gone into harm’s way.

## **Newlight on Clinton’s Gaffes Regarding The Military**

The foregoing figures indicate that the famous gaffes are not isolated, but accurately reflect the White House culture first created during the Clinton/Gore campaign: the young lady’s insult to the general officer, sending the

soldiers of the Old Guard to Capitol Hill as messenger boys, failing to see the common sense of providing armored vehicles to outnumbered infantry troops (which only political civilian appointees could have made sure were provided, since political fears are what drove Mr. Aspin's erroneous decision), creating a "National Service" bill in which noncombatant civilian service youths earn over twice the education benefits of their military counterparts, and angering both vets and military by renting a summer house on Martha's Vineyard from Robert McNamara. Vietnam veterans remember the following about Robert McNamara: he drafted the falsely low FY 1966 budget that intentionally misled the American people at the start of the Vietnam War; he refused to resign when the lie was uncovered; after the war, he refused to help the veterans building the Vietnam Veterans Memorial when they came to him in 1979 asking for his help.

## **Women Vets**

There are no women vets in the White House staff and only two in the entire administration: Mary Lou Keener, a Vietnam vet, is General Counsel of the Department of Veterans Affairs and Jocelyn Elders, a 1950's vet, is Surgeon General, and was a lieutenant in the U.S. Army as a physical therapist.

Women have had significant command experience in the military for some years now; our country suffers because the many female vets, including female service academy graduates, are not being brought into the administration.

One woman in the military interviewed for this paper wondered why Hillary Clinton has not opened the door of government service to women vets and suggested the "First Lady should have at least one woman vet in her own office."

## **Congress**

Top positions in the armed services, foreign affairs, and veterans affairs committees of both houses have in recent years been decreasingly held by veterans. In the House this represents the fact that the House Membership is getting younger so that their own young staff includes few vets. The House and Senate leadership should inventory the number of vets in key committee staff slots and stop trends that suggest inadequate representation of vets.

### **Action: The White House**

First, the President should convene a task force on civil-military relations to mend the crisis in the use, direction, and morale of the military. Vets should be appointed as quickly as possible in all segments of the Administration in numbers at least equal to their proportion of the population. The President should honor the request of parents of Rangers killed in Mogadishu for a meeting, the “choke hold” on Pentagon appointments should

be released, and the Department of Labor slot for an Assistant Secretary for Veterans Employment and Training should not be abolished. Hillary Rodham Clinton’s role in Pentagon appointments should be disclosed. These steps mark the change of heart that the President and his inner circle must make in order to ease the crisis they have created.

An old judicial saw is that “sunlight is the best disinfectant.” Before any denials or controversy, the White House should gather and release its figures on which appointees are vets, including Vietnam vets. Few appointees would object to having their veterans status disclosed; for veteran status is something to be proud of.

Veteran status is simple to establish, and the rough evidence compiled in this paper indicates that there is a serious lapse in appointing vets and the lapse has consequences: military morale worsened to the point of crisis; reopened wounds from the Vietnam era; and a diminished

competence in using military force to the point of needlessly losing young lives.

The figures should include White House staff, Senate confirmed slots in cabinet departments and independent agencies, boards and commissions, ambassadors, and the federal judiciary, and also Schedule C's (lower level political appointments).

### **Action: Capitol Hill**

The Senate and House members should keep track of the number of veterans assigned to their personal staffs and to the staffs of Congressional committees.

Veterans should demand this action and help the national veterans service organizations to press for these disclosures.

## **Reducing Major Contributions to the Clinton Campaign**

Among vets there is increasing willingness to turn William Clinton out of office in 1996, since his deeds — which he asked to be judged by — have reopened the wounds of the Vietnam era, have caused a crisis in military morale, and led to a lower competence in use of force, which, in turn, led to a needless loss of life of exposed infantry.

Citizens can voice this issue to principal donors of the Clinton campaign, with the aim of reducing the Clinton access to funding for 1996.

### **Looking Ahead: Key Answers Needed**

1. Will President Clinton accept the request for a meeting with him made by fathers whose sons were Rangers killed in Mogadishu?

2. How will President Clinton address the crisis in military morale?

3. Why is the Pentagon so far behind in appointments, especially the Department of the Army?

4. How will President Clinton address the issue of diminished effectiveness of his Administration in using armed force?

5. What role does or did Hillary Rodham Clinton have in Pentagon appointments?

6. Will an effort be made to place more female vets in Senate Confirmed slots?

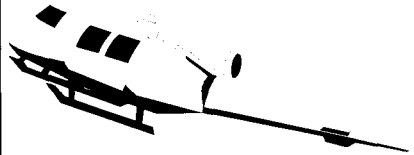
7. Does President Clinton regard the appointments of vets to Senate Confirmed slots to be evenly distributed across the cabinet, independent agencies and White House?

8. Will President Clinton abolish the Department of Labor slot for the Assistant Secretary for Veterans Employment and Training?

9. Will the White House keep updating and publishing the list of vets in all Senate Confirmed slots (including

Judges and Ambassadors), the White House staff, and Schedule C?

10. Does the President agree that the number of vets in each category in the Administration should roughly reflect their numbers in the population?



# A Special Report



**Discrimination Against Veterans by the  
Federal Agency Charged with Protecting  
Veteran's Rights**

**Affirmative Action for Vets: The Law**

**Letter to Alma Mater: A Draft**

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**R. W. Trewyn** is a Professor of Medical Biochemistry at Ohio State University. He is a founding member of the Center for the Study of Veterans in Society (18 Laurelwood Drive, Milford, Ohio 45150) and was recently named to the VVI Board of Directors. He was a Staff Sergeant in the Army infantry in Vietnam in 1969.

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## **D**iscrimination Against Veterans by the Federal Agency Charged with Protecting Veterans' Rights

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*R. W. Trewyn*

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### **Defining the Problem**

**O**ne of the best kept secrets on the college campus, and elsewhere, over the past twenty years is that veterans — Vietnam-era veterans and disabled veterans — are to be granted affirmative action employment rights comparable to women and

minorities. At least, that's the stipulation under the law if the college, or any other employer, has federal contracts in excess of \$10,000. However, as anyone familiar with the situation can attest, veterans have been afforded considerably less than parity with women and minorities in that regard. So, what happened? What went wrong?

The Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act was originally enacted in 1972, but congressional concerns over the high rate of unemployment among young Vietnam veterans led to a General Accounting Office (GAO) review of the problem<sup>1</sup> and a rewrite of the law in 1974. Affirmative action was added to the readjustment assistance package as a

means for overcoming the employment difficulties facing these veterans. The federal statute, 38 USC 4212, specifies that "the party contracting with the United States shall take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified special disabled veterans and veterans of the Vietnam era" ... *shall* (i.e., must) take affirmative action to employ *and* advance in employment. Clearly, the employment privileges — the legally mandated civil rights — are to apply to the initial hiring process as well as subsequent promotional opportunities.

Furthermore, the enabling regulations promulgated by the U.S. Department of Labor state that the affirmative action shall apply "at all levels of employment including the executive level," and that it shall include, but not be limited to: "hiring, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment or recruitment advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training."<sup>2</sup> The parameters outlined are essentially identical to those specified for women and minorities by amended Executive Order

11246 (enacted in 1965 for minorities and amended in 1972 to include women) another affirmative action mandate specifically covering federal contractors.

A preliminary examination of compliance with Executive Order 11246 *versus* 38 USC 4212 on college campuses in Ohio led the Center for the Study of Veterans in Society (CSVS), a nonprofit research institute, to conduct a more thorough investigation into the significance of the problem for veterans. The results of that investigation noted shortcomings with the federal statute, but the primary cause for noncompliance with the 1974 veterans' law appeared to be lack of enforcement by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP).<sup>3</sup> Supporting evidence for this view was provided by a subsequent GAO report,<sup>4</sup> although the GAO was rather more critical of the legislation itself.

OFCCP is charged with monitoring federal contractors for compliance with the provisions of Executive Order 11246 and 38 USC



4212, as well as provisions of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 covering individuals with handicaps and/or disabilities. OFCCP is also granted a variety of enforcement mechanisms, including the ability to suspend contracts. By these means, OFCCP is to ensure that federal contractors provide affirmative action employment rights to women, minorities, veterans, and the disabled. However, the CSVS and GAO studies confirmed that veterans have been denied their affirmative action rights under the law.

Additional evidence has now been obtained which suggests that the denial of veterans' civil rights has had more far-reaching and ominous consequences than could have been imagined from the earlier analyses. The additional evidence and consequences thereof are the topics of this report.

## Noncompliance with the Law

In 1992, there were 7.4 million Vietnam-era veterans in a civilian labor force composed of 122.9 million men and women eighteen years of age and older,<sup>5</sup> i.e., Vietnam-era veterans constituted 6.0% of the total as shown in Figure 1. That percentage has remained relatively stable over the past few years, with a gradual downward trend. For example, the value was 6.4% in 1988, with 7.5 million veterans of the Vietnam era in a labor force of 117.5 million.<sup>6</sup>

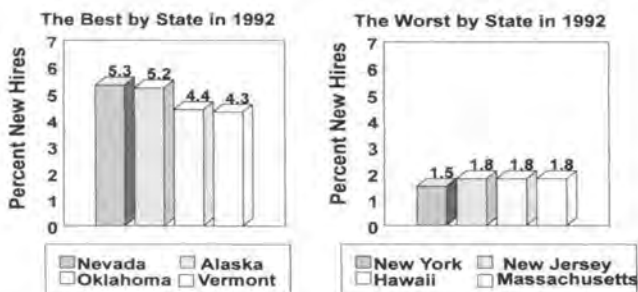
In a dynamic employment arena such as that in the United States, one might expect the annual hires of Vietnam-era veterans by federal contractors to be roughly proportional to their representation in the civilian labor

**Figure 1. Vietnam Era Veterans in the Civilian Labor Force**



U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics  
Report: USDL 92-255, 14 May 1992  
Re: Men & Women, 18 and older

**Figure 2. Federal Contractor Employment of Vietnam Era Veterans**



force. By definition, affirmative action should yield a level of employment even higher. The report provided by CSVS to the House Committee on Veterans Affairs demonstrated this not to be the case in 1991,<sup>3</sup> and similar results have now been obtained for 1992. Federal contractor employment of Vietnam-era veterans nationally was well below the 6.0% level, averaging a mere 2.8% in 1992;<sup>7</sup> down from 2.9% in 1991. And as shown in Figure 2, only two states, Nevada and Alaska, exceeded a new employment level of five percent, while New York, New Jersey, Hawaii, and Massachusetts failed to reach the two percent level.

The fact that federal contractors in some states managed to hire Vietnam-

era veterans at near the level expected by chance, would indicate that the 6.0% level is not an unreasonable goal. In fact, the federal contractors in Guam surpassed these expectations by hiring 8.2% Vietnam-era veterans in 1992; data suggestive of affirmative action as required by law. To make that judgment unequivocally, however, one would need to know the actual composition of the labor pool for each state and territory; information not provided in the Department of Labor report. Likewise, one would need to know the composition of each federal contractor's workforce to determine with certainty whether veterans have been provided or denied their affirmative action rights. Unfortunately, the Department of Labor does not collect this data as part of the VETS-100 report each contractor is required to file on an annual basis, i.e., the data

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near the  
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6.0% level  
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collection is flawed. This is curious considering the Department of Labor was cited by the GAO in 1974 for problems with data collection.<sup>1</sup>

Some useful information can be gleaned from the VETS-100 report, however. Contractors are required to provide data regarding the total number of new hires each year as well as the number of Vietnam-era veterans hired, thereby allowing the state-by-state performance evaluation partially depicted

in Figure 2. Individual federal contractors can be examined by this means as well.

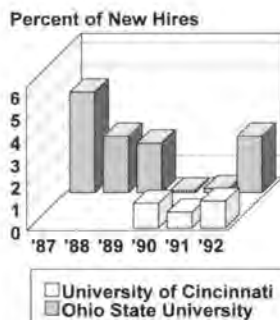
Two universities were reviewed with regard to their hiring practices as part of the previous CSVS study,<sup>3</sup> and because the results illustrate so demonstrably the nature of the employment problem facing veterans,

the data will be presented here as well.

As shown in Figure 3, the University of Cincinnati (UC) and the Ohio State University (OSU) have performed in less than stellar fashion in recent years when it comes to the hiring of Vietnam-era veterans; at least, the data provided by each university would suggest this to

**Figure 3. University Employment of Vietnam Era Veterans**

- Vietnam-era veterans comprised 6.4% of the civilian labor force in Ohio in 1991
- Actual hires for 1991:
  - UC: 9 of 1,215 = 0.7% [6.4% = 78]
  - OSU: 5 of 2,097 = 0.2% [6.4% = 134]
- Data from UC & OSU VETS-100 reports



be the case. Federal contractors have been required to file the VETS-100 report annually since 1988, but UC apparently failed to do so the first three years. OSU, on the other hand, managed to submit the reports each year, but the percent of Vietnam-era veterans hired dropped precipitously, reaching a low of 0.1% in 1990 (1 veteran out of 889 new hires). Veterans

at OSU argued that the aggregate data were indicative of discrimination, but officials with the university testified before the Ohio State Senate in 1991 that they were, in fact, providing affirmative action to veterans as required by law.<sup>8</sup>

A formal complaint had already been filed with OFCCP in 1988 alleging discrimination against Vietnam-era veterans at OSU based on the failure to provide affirmative action,<sup>9</sup> but it was not until congressional pressure was brought to bear in 1991 that a compliance review was conducted. The Department of Labor justified the delay in investigating because the complaint was general in nature rather than specific.<sup>10</sup> The rationale put forth was that OFCCP is equipped to investigate and resolve complaints of discrimination against individuals, but the allegations against OSU involved discrimination against *all* veterans. Therefore, they hadn't bothered to investigate. Congressional inquiries changed that.

Following the compliance review, a conciliation agreement was signed

between OFCCP and OSU in 1992 in which the university was cited for seven major violations: (1) no affirmative action programs for veterans or the disabled; (2) no one in charge of implementing affirmative action for veterans or the disabled; (3) jobs not listed with the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services; (4) data not adequately collected or used; (5) information about affirmative action benefits not disseminated internally or externally; (6) no review of employment practices to insure affirmative action; and (7) a climate of harassment, intimidation, and coercion for veterans. Not a trivial list by any means. However, except for the moderate increase in percent of new hires in 1992, back up to 2.5% (Figure 3), and the establishment of an Office of Veterans Affairs, little improvement has been noted by veterans at OSU. Actually, the harassment, intimidation, and coercion for veterans may have gotten worse. Furthermore, no explanation has been forthcoming from OFCCP as to why it should have taken almost two decades to discover that a major federal contractor like OSU had no affirmative



**Figure 4. Affirmative Action Complaints Filed by Protected Groups**



action programs for veterans or the disabled.

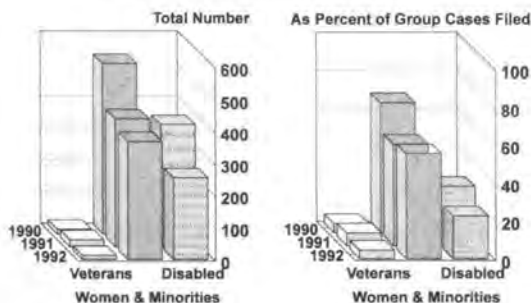
### Further Evidence Indicting OFCCP

Evidence continues to mount that the blame for lack of affirmative action for Vietnam-era veterans and disabled veterans can be placed directly at the feet of officials within OFCCP an agency whose internal culture appears hostile towards veterans and the disabled. An evaluation of the financial agreements

mediated by OFCCP on behalf of the various protected groups supports this disturbing conclusion.<sup>11</sup> One can begin by looking at the number of complaints filed by members of the various protected groups for the years 1990 through 1992 (Figure 4).

In each instance, there were hundreds of complaints filed annually, with the totals for individuals with disabilities topping one thousand. Women and minorities are depicted together because the data obtained from OFCCP was categorized according to the legal basis for the complaint, in this case, Executive Order 11246.

**Figure 5. Financial Agreements Mediated by the Department of Labor**

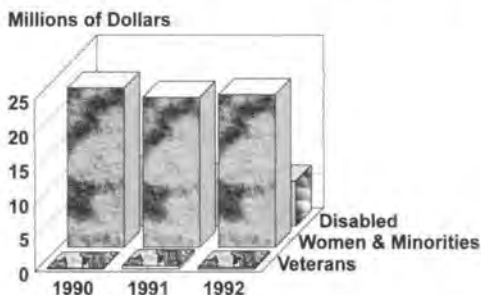


While the number of complaints filed by veterans was low compared to the other protected classes, there may be good reasons why veterans fail to file. As can be seen in Figure 5, few cases filed by veterans

resulted in financial agreements being mediated on their behalf; the average being about 5% per year. And similarly, individuals with disabilities were not well served by OFCCP, with only 20-30% of the cases resolved in their favor. Women and minorities, on the other hand, won their cases greater than 50% of the time all three years; a favorable settlement level each group might reasonably expect.

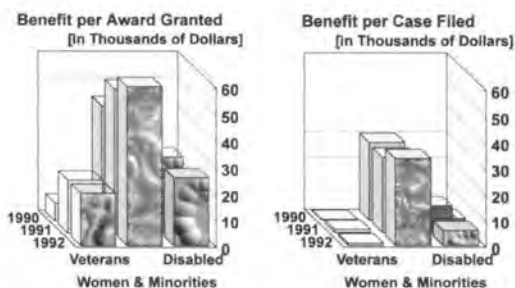
However, if the results look appalling when the number of

**Figure 6. Total Cash Benefits Awarded to Protected Groups**



cases are examined, the situation gets even worse when monetary awards are reviewed. As shown in Figure 6, veterans and the disabled fared exceedingly poorly, especially veterans. Twenty to twenty-five million dollars in cash benefits were awarded annually to

**Figure 7. Average Cash Benefits Awarded to Protected Groups**





women and minorities, whereas veterans received \$104,077, \$447,530, and \$260,592 for the years 1990 to 1992. At least the disabled reached the seven figure plateau, with benefits ranging from \$6.6 to \$7.8 million.

Because the representation in Figure 5 as to the number of cases resolved favorably on behalf of protected group members was so illustrative, a similar depiction was generated for cash awards — the bottom line. Again, as can be seen in Figure 7, veterans and the disabled were relegated to second class status by OFCCP an unambiguous conclusion whether one examines the average cash benefit per award granted or per case filed.

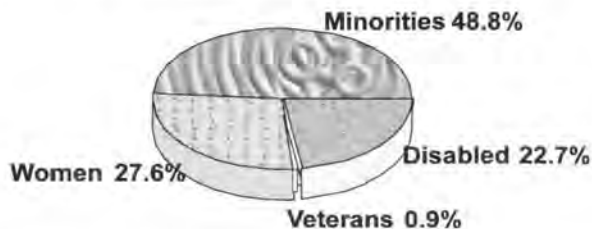
And finally with respect to the financial agreements mediated by OFCCP, the relative

distribution of cash benefits was derived for 1992, the most recent year for which data is available. As shown in Figure 8, veterans received less than 1% — *one percent* — of the cash benefits for the year. Women and minority members who filed less than one-third of the complaints in 1992 received greater than three-fourths of the monetary rewards. Equity? Parity? Not by any criteria most people would recognize.

### Perpetrating a Crime Against Veterans

Unfortunately, the crime perpetrated against veterans by OFCCP may not be limited to those veterans

**Figure 8. Distribution of Cash Benefits to Protected Groups in 1992**



Women: \$8,041,146. Minorities: \$14,183,352.  
Veterans: \$260,592. Disabled: \$6,599,236.

who filed complaints fruitlessly. That may represent but a trivial monetary loss by Vietnam-era veterans and disabled veterans even if parity in cash awards should have been realized. In fact, OFCCP's failure to enforce affirmative action as mandated by 38 USC 4212 ("... to employ *and* advance

A 1987 article by Crane and Wise<sup>12</sup> establishes the broad framework for this assertion. These economic researchers made use of the National Longitudinal Study of the High School Class of 1972, along with ensuing surveys up to 1979, to determine the effect of military service on civilian earnings.

Although the sample size in the national study on which the article was based is not overwhelming large (roughly 23,000 high school seniors from 1,300 schools), the conclusions are profound. As stated by

**Table 1. Effect of Military Service on Civilian Earnings: A Hypothetical Case Study. (1)**

Age	Nonveteran	Veteran	Difference	Total
18	\$12,000			
19	\$12,480			
20	\$12,979			
21	\$13,498	\$12,000	\$1,498	\$1,498
25	\$15,791	\$14,038	\$1,753	\$8,116
30	\$19,212	\$17,080	\$2,132	\$17,989
40	\$28,439	\$25,282	\$3,157	\$44,618
50	\$42,097	\$37,424	\$4,673	\$84,037
60	\$62,313	\$55,396	\$6,917	\$142,383
65	<b>\$75,814</b>	<b>\$67,398</b>	<b>\$8,416</b>	<b>\$181,347</b>

in employment ...") may ultimately cost hundreds of thousands of veterans hundreds of thousands of dollars in lifetime earnings. How's that for a legacy of service to America?

Crane and Wise: "After controlling for other attributes of high school graduates, the weekly earnings on civilian jobs of those who served in the military were in 1979 approximately 12 percent less than the earnings of those



who worked in the civilian sector." Twelve percent less, seven years after graduating from high school.

One needs only to construct a simple, hypothetical case study to understand how this might occur; it's obvious. Consider two high school graduates in 1972, one goes in the military, the other goes to work for a large manufacturing corporation. Then, after completing military service, the veteran goes to work for the same corporation. The postulated implications are illustrated in Table 1.

Using the simple assumptions for this theoretical case study (three years on active duty and wage increases of 4% annually), what are the differences in annual earnings seven years after graduation, at age 25? Approximately 12 percent; just what was found by Crane and Wise.<sup>13</sup> What are the differences in annual earnings at age 50? Approximately 12 percent. And what are the differences in annual earnings at retirement, at age 65? Approximately 12 percent. It's not a difficult scenario to follow, but the long-term cost of military service can

become staggering, over \$180,000 in this example. And if one uses \$20,000 as the initial wage, the total difference in lifetime earnings jumps to over \$300,000.

Furthermore, one need not rely on the Crane and Wise study to support the simplified civilian earnings model in Table 1. In one of the most methodologically sound analyses to date, J.D. Angrist reported a similar — even greater — effect of military service on civilian earnings.<sup>14</sup> In his 1990 paper, Angrist set out "to measure the long-term labor market consequences of military service during the Vietnam era." He used the draft lotteries of 1970, 1971, and 1972 to assign risk of induction parameters to individuals born between 1950 and 1953, restricting his investigation "to men who turned 19 in the year they were at risk of induction." By this means, he was able to identify "draft eligible" and "draft ineligible" subjects. Angrist then used Social Security records to monitor the earnings of these individuals from 1964 to 1984, with the longest period for assessing the effect of military service on earnings

being fourteen years, from 1970 to 1984.

Angrist's investigation established that prior to the draft lottery, there were no significant differences in the earnings of the two groups, a valuable control for his study. However, the situation changed dramatically for those who became eligible for the draft; their annual earnings dropping appreciably compared to the draft ineligible group. And by analyzing the Social Security records to 1984, Angrist was able to conclude that "long after their service in Vietnam was ended, the earnings of white veterans were approximately 15 percent less than the earnings of comparable nonveterans." Fifteen percent in this case.<sup>15</sup> Taken in conjunction with the Crane and Wise study, it would appear that the rationale behind Table 1 is sound, only the magnitude of the career losses would be in doubt.

One could argue, of course, that seven years (the time frame for the Crane and Wise study) or even fourteen years (the maximum time frame in the Angrist study) is not sufficient to draw

such sweeping conclusions; perhaps the individual veteran just hasn't had enough time to catch up. But, how would the veteran go about catching up? By going to college on the GI Bill, back when it was still available? Possibly, but the college campus was not a friendly place for veterans during the Vietnam era. It still isn't.<sup>16</sup> And as might be expected in that hostile environment, fewer Vietnam-era veterans completed their undergraduate studies than nonveterans,<sup>17</sup> and those who did would still be behind their nonveteran peers ... other college graduates.<sup>18</sup>

How else might veterans catch up? What employment principle could possibly overcome the loss in seniority caused by service to the nation? Probably only one ... affirmative action! That would be especially true if employers were required to take "affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified special disabled veterans and veterans of the Vietnam era."

Consider, once again, the Department of Labor's regulations



regarding affirmative action for covered veterans.<sup>2</sup> It shall apply “at all levels of employment including the executive level,” and it shall include, but not be limited to: “hiring, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment or recruitment advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training.” Would affirmative action in all these areas allow the veteran to catch up? Perhaps.<sup>19</sup> At least, the veteran would be given a fighting chance. Regrettably, by not enforcing their own regulations, officials within OFCCP have stolen that chance from veterans.



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## Notes

<sup>1</sup>The findings are summarized in a report entitled: “*Employment Services for Vietnam-Era Veterans Could be Improved*” (B-178741), General Accounting Office, 29 November 1974.

<sup>2</sup> Information contained in: Title 41, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 60, Section 250; specifically, 41 CFR 60-250.6(a).

<sup>3</sup> Written testimony from the Center for the Study of Veterans in Society entitled:

“*Title 38, United States Code, Section 4212: Implementation and Enforcement by the U.S. Department of Labor*,” by A.H. Miller, J.A. Stever, and R.W. Trewyn. Submitted to the Veterans Affairs Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives at the request of Chairman G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery, 15 October 1993.

<sup>4</sup> A report entitled: “*Federal Contractor Hiring: Effect of Veteran Hiring Legislation is Unknown*” (GAO/GGD-94-6), General Accounting Office, 18 October 1993. (See below.)

<sup>5</sup> Data compiled from Tables 1 and 8 in a report entitled: “*BLS Reports on Labor Market Situation of Vietnam-era Veterans*.” Published in: Bureau of Labor Statistics News (USDL 92-255), U.S. Department of Labor, 14 May 1992.

<sup>6</sup> Data compiled from Tables 1 and 8 in a report entitled: “*BLS Reports on Labor Market Situation among Disabled Veterans of the Vietnam Era*.” Published in: **Bureau of Labor Statistics News** (USDL 88-489), U.S. Department of Labor, 30 September 1988.

<sup>7</sup> Calculations are based on data contained in a summary report entitled *Veteran Employment Totals by State: 09/24/93*. The report was provided by Richard E. Larson, Freedom of Information Act Disclosure Office, Veterans Employment and Training, U.S. Department of Labor, in response to a Freedom of Information Act request forwarded to the Secretary of Labor, Robert Reich, on 6 November 1993.

<sup>8</sup> Reported in an article entitled "*OSU says it's doing its best to help vets; they disagree*" by T. Doulin and R. Snell. Published in: **The Columbus Dispatch**, 20 February 1991.

<sup>9</sup> *Trewyn versus Ohio State University* (Complaint No. E880445). Concerns over the lack of affirmative action for veterans and the disabled at OSU led to months of unproductive correspondence with university officials. When it became clear that the university had no affirmative action programs for these groups and that university officials had little interest in implementing such programs, a complaint was forwarded to the Chicago regional office of OFCCP on 27 December 1988; supplemental information supporting the allegations was obtained and forwarded on 30 December 1988. OFCCP responded, assigning a complaint number, on 8 February 1989.

<sup>10</sup> Reported in an article entitled *Veterans advocate wonders why OSU audit was delayed so long*, by T. Doulin. Published in: **The Columbus Dispatch**, 22 September 1991.

<sup>11</sup> Data provided by Robert B. Greaux, Director of Program Operations, OFCCP, U.S. Department of Labor, in response to a Freedom of Information Act request forwarded to the Secretary of Labor, Robert Reich, on 4 November 1993.

<sup>12</sup> A National Bureau of Economic Research Project Report from the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, entitled *Military service and civilian*

*earnings of youths*, by J.R. Crane and D.A. Wise. Published in: **Public Sector Payrolls** (David A. Wise, Editor), University of Chicago Press, Chicago, pp. 119-145, 1987.

<sup>13</sup> In fact, Crane and Wise reported that veterans earned approximately 12% less; the inverse calculation was used here, i.e., that nonveterans would earn approximately 12% more.

<sup>14</sup> A report from the Department of Economics, Harvard University, entitled "*Lifetime earnings and the Vietnam era draft lottery: Evidence from Social Security Administration records*," by J.D. Angrist. Published in: **The American Economic Review**, 80: 1284-1286, 1990. A typographer's error is reported in the earlier article whereby the titles and captions for Figures 1 and 3 were inverted.

<sup>15</sup> The differential in annual earnings in the early 1980s (for veterans and nonveterans in their early 30s) was reported to be approximately \$3,500, well in excess of their difference projected in Table 1.

<sup>16</sup> Many reports on the problems veterans face on the college campus in the 1990s have originated from analyses in Ohio. See, for example: E. Holland's *A peacetime war*, **Ohio State Quest**, 14(1): 5-7, 1992; A. H. Miller and J. A. Stever and R. W. Trewin's *Veterans and the campus war*, **The Ohio AMVET**, 7(1): 14-15, 1992; and A.H. Miller's *Political correctness state universities: What state legislators need to know*, **The Heritage**

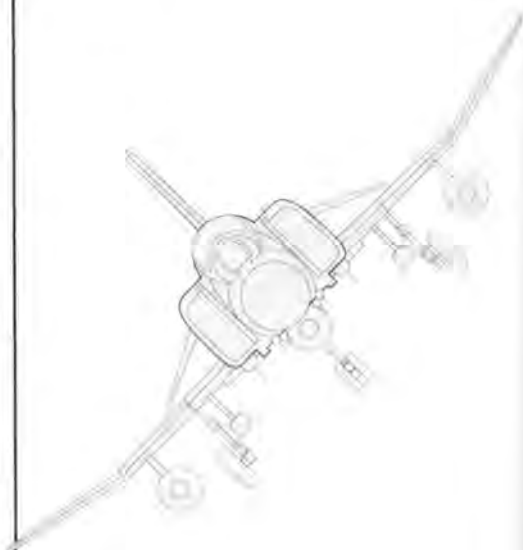


**Lectures**, published by the Heritage Foundation, Washington, D.C., 1992.

<sup>17</sup>From a report entitled *The Vietnam-era cohort: Employment and earnings*, by S.R. Cohany. Published in: **Monthly Labor Review**, 115: 3-15, 1992.

<sup>18</sup>While a loss in seniority similar to that depicted in Table 1 would occur when comparing veteran and nonveteran college graduates, that in no way negates the fact that higher education should increase one's civilian earning potential. As a result, it is possible that those veterans who were able to make use of their GIBill benefits could exhibit more earning potential over their lifetime than nonveterans with a high school education. The actual benefits derived by veterans were quantified in another article by J.D. Angrist entitled *The effect of veterans benefits on education and earnings*, **Industrial and Labor Relations Review**, 46: 637-652, 1993. The 1987 Survey of Veterans was employed by Angrist to determine that for each year of additional education, annual earnings of veterans increased by 4.3%. For those veterans who received the benefits, 1.4 years of additional education were accrued, on average. However, the 6% (1.4 years times 4.3%) increase in annual earnings would not overcome the 15% loss in earnings experienced by white Vietnam-era veterans (Angrist, 1990; footnote 14).

<sup>19</sup>As already stated, these are the same affirmative action rights provided to women and minorities by Executive Order 11246; rights which are rigorously enforced by OFCCP. Angrist's 1990 studies (cited in footnote 14) found only short-term detrimental effects of military service on the earnings of nonwhite Vietnam-era veterans. It's possible, therefore, that affirmative action, provided under the aegis of Executive Order 11246 and the Civil Rights Act, was able to overcome the long-term negative impact for nonwhite veterans.



# fragments from the applicable law



## **Affirmative Action for Veterans: Excepts from Title 38, United States Code (As of October 10, 1992)**

### **Chapter 42— Employment and Training of Veterans**

*The term* “veteran of the Vietnam era” means an eligible veteran any part of whose active military, naval, or air service was during the Vietnam era.

*The term* “disabled veteran” means (A) a veteran who is entitled to compensation (or who but for the receipt of military retired pay would be

entitled to compensation) under laws administered by the Department of Veterans’ Affairs, or (B) a person who was discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability.

*The term* “eligible veteran” means a person who—



served on active duty for a period of more than 180 days and was discharged or released therefrom with other than a dishonorable discharge;



was discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability; or



as a member of a reserve component under an order to active duty



pursuant to section 672 (a), (d), or (g), 673, or 673b of title 10, served on active duty during a period of war or in a campaign or expedition for which a

shall take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified special disabled veterans and veterans of the Vietnam era. The provisions of

*The United States has an obligation to assist veterans of the Armed Forces in readjusting to civilian life*

campaign badge is authorized and was discharged or released from such duty with other than a dishonorable discharge.

### **Veteran's Employment Emphasis under Federal Contracts**

Any contract in the amount of \$10,000 or more entered into by any department or agency<sup>1</sup> for the procurement of personal property and nonpersonal services (including construction) for the United States, shall contain a provision requiring that the party contracting with the United States

this section shall apply to any subcontract entered into by a prime contractor in carrying out any contract for the procurement of personal property and non-personal services (including construction) for the United States. In addition to requiring affirmative action to employ such veterans under such contracts and subcontracts and in order to promote the implementation of such requirement, the President shall implement .

The provisions of this section by promulgating regulations which shall require that (1) each such contractor undertake in such contract to list

immediately with the appropriate local employment service all of its suitable employment openings, and (2) each such local office shall give such veterans priority in referral to such employment openings.

If any special disabled veteran or veteran of the Vietnam era believes any contractor of the United States has failed to comply or refuses to comply with the provisions of the contractor's contract relating to the employment of veterans, the veteran may file a complaint with the Secretary of Labor, who shall promptly investigate such complain and take appropriate action in accordance with the terms of the contract and applicable laws and regulations.

The Secretary shall include as part of the annual report required by section 4107(c) of this title the number of complaints filed pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, the actions taken thereon and the resolutions thereof. Such report shall also include the number of contractors listing suitable employment openings, the nature, types, and number of positions listed and the number of

veterans receiving priority pursuant to subsection (a)(2) of this section.

Each contractor to whom subsection (a) of this section applies shall, in accordance with regulations which the Secretary shall prescribe, report at least annually to the Secretary on-

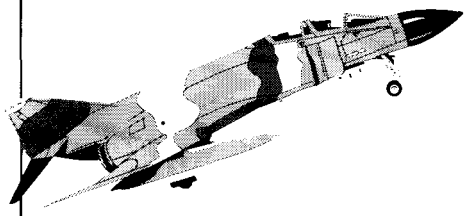


the number of employees in the work force of such contractor, by job category and hiring location, who are veterans of the Vietnam era or special disabled veterans;



the total number of new employees hired by the contractor during the period covered by the report and the number of such employees who are veterans of the Vietnam era or special disabled veterans.

The Secretary shall ensure that the administration of the reporting requirement under paragraph (1) of this subsection is coordinated with respect to






any requirement for the contractor to make any other report to the Secretary.

## **Employment within the Federal Government**

The United States has an obligation to assist veterans of the Armed Forces in readjusting to civilian life since veterans, by virtue of their military service, have lost opportunities to pursue education and training oriented toward civilian careers. The Federal Government is also continuously concerned with building an effective work force, and veterans constitute a major recruiting source. It

is therefore, the policy of the United States and the purpose of this section to promote the maximum of employment and job advancement opportunities within the federal Government for disabled veterans and certain veterans of the Vietnam era and of the post-Vietnam era who are qualified for such employment and advancement. 




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<sup>1</sup>For the purposes of this section, the term "agency" means a department, agency, or instrumentality in the executive branch.



# Letter to Alma Mater

*Send this letter to your college/university to get the ball rolling!*

Dear President \_\_\_\_\_:

As an alumni member of \_\_\_\_\_ University, class of 19\_\_, I would like to request your assistance. You are no doubt aware that disabled veterans and Vietnam-era veterans are granted affirmative actions rights under the 1974 Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act (38 USC 4212). Included among the Department of Labor enabling regulations is a requirements for federal contractors to file a VETS-100 report annually (41 CFR 61-250); a stipulation that has been in place since 1988. In that regard:

- Would you please provide me with copies of the VETS-100 reports submitted by \_\_\_\_\_ University for the years 1987 to the present, and

- Would you provide a copy of the most recent EEO-6 report [Form IPEDS-S (10/25/93)] submitted as required by the Civil Rights and Higher Education Acts.

Your assistance in this matter is most appreciated. Thank you.

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**Dr. Phoebe S. Spinrad**, Capt., USAF (Ret), is associate professor of English at Ohio State University.

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## **Patriotism as Pathology: Anti-Veteran Activism and the VA**

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***Dr. Phoebe S. Spinrad***

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**I**s patriotism a mental disorder? According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, yes, it is—at least in Vietnam veterans. For more than 25 years, VA counseling services, in conjunction with the broader body of mental health professionals, have built their in- and outpatient treatment of Vietnam era veterans—and post-Vietnam veterans as well—on a model developed by antiwar activists of the 1960s and 1970s, a model that assumes the following:

★the proud veteran is a person in need of mental rehabilitation;

★families and friends who share a veteran's pride are codependents in the illness and must also be rehabilitated;

★the military in which the veteran served is a dehumanizing producer of atrocities;

★the war in which the Vietnam veteran fought is a disease still infecting the body politic.

To be sure, the segment of the Vietnam veteran population actually treated for this mental disorder at VA facilities is small; VA figures themselves place the proportion of Vietnam-era veterans (VEVs) suffering from posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) at 15% of the total VEV

population, although some VA psychologists speculate that the actual percentage, allowing for those who don't report symptoms, may be as high as 36%.<sup>1</sup> However, the treatment reaches far beyond the affected veteran population; it has spread out into the general public's perception of the Vietnam veteran and of the Vietnam conflict itself. And small wonder; the professionals who developed the definitions and treatment of PTSD were self-confessed antiwar advocates who used their professional status and their patients as tools to disseminate their political agendas to the general public.

### **The Myth of the Shattered Hulk**

Before examining the treatment of Vietnam veterans in VA facilities, we may do well to ask whether Vietnam veterans do in fact need more help than other veterans, or, for that matter, than the general civilian population. As noted above, VA sources themselves posit the affected group at 15-36%, depending on variables such as degree of combat, time and duration of service, and, indeed, degree of speculation on

the part of the statistics compilers. Complicating the statistical analysis is the fact that PTSD itself was not defined until 1980, and was then defined differently from the stress disorders defined for veterans of previous wars.

Furthermore, stress disorders themselves were not recognized officially between 1968, when they were removed from the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM)*, and 1980. However, one conclusion we may reach is that the official 15% figure is surprisingly low for a veteran population viewed stereotypically as a group of people shattered by their war experiences. Fully 85% were not shattered.

Comparisons of emotional problems among VEVs, other veterans, and nonveterans yield similarly surprising results, in view of the stereotype. In a 1982 study done by Josefina J. Card, VEVs showed few significant differences from other groups (see Table 1);<sup>2</sup> in fact, in the area of enjoying free time and recreation, they reported slightly *lower* rates of

problems than the nonveteran group. As for indicator symptoms of PTSD, according to Card, although 19% of

other veterans, and of course far more serious problems than nonveterans (see Table 2).<sup>4</sup>

Problem Areas Reported (%)				
Problem	Veterans (Vietnam)	Veterans (Non-Vietnam)	Non-Veterans	Significant Group Difference
Getting on track in life	45.2	39.4	43	No
Having someone emotionally close	43.7	31.6	29	Yes (0.001 level)
Getting along with wife or girlfriend	42.6	36.6	33.4	Yes (0.05 level)
Getting along with family	26.4	23.4	24.8	No
Getting along with friends	22.2	19.2	17	No
Enjoying free time and recreation	36.2	32.7	38.3	No

Table 1. Selected Indexes of Social Health, 1981, as compiled by J. Card, with statistical rates of significant difference across the three sample groups.

Vietnam veterans tested positively on a majority of the indicators, so did 12% of nonveterans.<sup>3</sup> The figures, then, may be somewhat misleading.

Despite the statistically insignificant differences, however, VEVs and nonveterans alike, according to a Louis J. Harris survey prepared for the VA in 1980, see Vietnam veterans as having more serious problems than

Of particular interest in Table 2 is the breakout of the general public into “educators” and “antiwar activists.” These are primarily the people who influenced the VA in shaping treatment of Vietnam veterans, and who continue shaping that treatment, both inside and outside the official agencies, today.

Perception that Vietnam-Era Veterans' Problems are more Serious than those of WWII and Korea Veterans (Rounded %)						
Perceptions	Veterans (Vietnam Era)	Veterans (Non-Vietnam)	General Public	Employers	Educators	Antiwar Activists
More Serious	56	51	52	60	68	75
About the same	39	45	40	35	26	21
Less Serious	2	3	4	3	2	2

Table 2. *Perceptions of Veterans' Problems, extracted from Harris study for the VA, 1980.*

## The APA and the War

In 1968, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) issued a new version of its *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, DSM-II*. Unlike the previous version, this one made no mention of stress disorders or any other specifically combat-related symptomology, instead grouping the symptoms under such headings as "inability to adjust to adult life." The year was significant: 1968, the Tet Offensive, the shift in media reporting of the war, and the explosion of campus antiwar activities. Antiwar activism was making itself heard within the APA as well, with prominent members chairing antiwar sessions at its conferences and delivering the first of many papers on the role of the therapist as antiwar advocate.<sup>5</sup>

By 1970, the year homosexual activists stormed the annual APA meeting and demanded (successfully) that the description of homosexuality as a disorder be removed from the *DSM*, the Board of Trustees was already formulating its official antiwar resolution, which was published the next year:

*The Board of Trustees of the APA wishes to add its voice to that of the great masses of the American people who have so firmly expressed their agony concerning the war in Southeast Asia. Also, as psychiatrists we have specialized deep concern about its grave effects on morale and on the rise of alienation, dehumanization, and divisiveness among the American*

*people. Therefore: The Board hereby expresses its conviction that the prompt halt to the hostilities in Southeast Asia and the prompt withdrawal of American forces will render it possible to reorder our national priorities to build a mentally healthier nation*<sup>6</sup>

Of special note in this resolution is the assumption that a mentally healthy nation (and thus each individual within the nation) is by definition opposed to the war, and that the war itself is a pathology, one that alienates, dehumanizes, and divides. It is hardly surprising, then, that Vietnam veterans cannot be described in terms developed for veterans of other wars. “Shell shock,” “combat fatigue,” “gross stress disorders”—all these earlier terms placed the veteran in the context of physically painful (rather than morally objectionable) activities, and assumed as part of the treatment that the veteran must extract some sense of purpose from the pain. Such definitions and treatments obviously could not be used for participants in a pathology rather than an activity.

With stress disorders no longer a possible diagnosis, veterans showing evidence of emotional problems had to be diagnosed in other ways. Between 62% and 77% of Vietnam veterans reporting stress problems in VA and other facilities were diagnosed as schizophrenics, alcoholics, and borderline personalities. The borderline personalities were turned away as social misfits, the alcoholics were thrown into drunk tanks, and—most reprehensibly of all—the schizophrenics were pumped full of antipsychotic medications such as thorazine, some of them developing lifelong drug dependencies from this treatment.<sup>7</sup>

Since these diagnoses and methods of treatment were also being used in the field, one can only speculate on how much damage was done to troops who were sent back into combat on the medication, which might interact in unknown and as yet untested ways with the troops’ routinely prescribed antimalarial drugs.<sup>8</sup>

In addition, mental health professionals both inside and outside VA facilities tended to view their

Vietnam veteran patients with what can only be called loathing. Veterans already traumatized by their combat experiences, as well as by their less than warm welcome home, found themselves being called the same names by clinicians as they had heard from antiwar protestors on the streets: murderers, losers, baby killers, and so on.<sup>9</sup> But help was on the way from the more concerned of the mental health professionals—or so we have been led to believe. Even as veterans were being drugged and reviled in VA facilities, the APA antiwar activists were preparing to fill the vacuum left by their removal of stress disorders from the *DSM*; they were beginning their work on what was to become the standard method of psychological treatment for veterans throughout the VA.

### **The Early Experiments: Lifton, Shatan, and Jane Fonda**

Among the antiwar psychiatrists attending the 1970 APA convention was perhaps the single most influential person in the development of both PTSD treatment and the Vietnam veteran stereotype: Robert Jay Lifton.

A New York psychiatrist with an interest in psychohistory, Lifton had previously studied victims of the Holocaust and prisoners returning from North Korean POW camps. Now he was active in the antiwar movement, publishing articles about the evils of the war—and of the military—and urging the necessity of political advocacy on other members of the mental health professions.

Although Lifton had not yet begun his experimental work with veterans, he had already decided what he would find: the same “psychic numbing” he had seen in Holocaust survivors, brutalization (Lifton’s colleague Chaim Shatan had begun referring to this characteristic as “dehumanization” in his own work), and, of course, guilt.<sup>10</sup> Guilt over what? Over becoming part of what he termed the “filth” of the war.<sup>11</sup> As Lifton testified before a Senate committee chaired by Senator Alan Cranston in 1970, the war itself was an atrocity-producing situation, and all American troops had accordingly committed atrocities. “All killing,” according to Lifton, “touches upon atrocity.” [123]

Lifton had also begun working closely with Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW), with whom he had testified before the Cranston committee, and in December 1970, he began his now famous series of “rap groups” with selected members of the New York chapter. He chose his sample carefully, as he acknowledges in *Home from the War*: “Almost all of them belong[ed] to the minority of Vietnam veterans who emerge with an articulate antiwar position . . . I made no attempt to gather data from a ‘representative’ group of veterans.” [19] The articulacy was



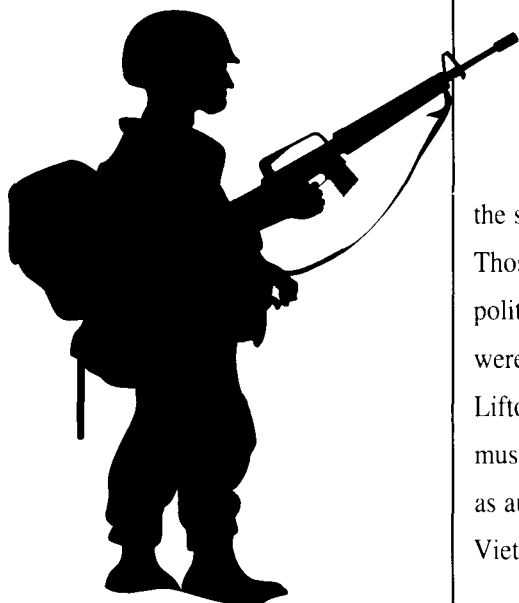
perhaps as important to him as was the antiwar position, since another of his stated goals was to make the men into public advocates:

*Antiwar veterans generate a special kind of force, no less spiritual than political, as they publicly proclaim the endless series of criminal acts they have witnessed or participated in. . . . The groups differed from street corner psychiatry in their second function,*

*important from the beginning, of probing the destructive personal experiences of the Vietnam War for eventual dissemination to the American public. . . . For a number of them, and at varying intervals, political activities become inseparable from psychological need. [31, 69, 81]*

The need was quickly met. In January 1971, Lifton and his VVAW contacts organized what came to be called the “Winter Soldier Investigation,” a public media event staged in Detroit, at which 113 veterans—and Lifton—recited lists of atrocities the veterans had committed and claimed that these atrocities were being committed routinely by all American troops in Vietnam. As a way of horrifying the American public and increasing the pressure on the government to withdraw U.S. troops, such testimony could hardly be improved upon; as a way of destroying the good name of millions of American veterans, it has proved successful to this day. We should not be surprised, then, to learn that one of the primary sources of funding for the event was Jane Fonda.<sup>12</sup>

Later that year, Lifton organized yet another event around his VVAW subjects: Dewey Canyon III, the demonstration during which the veterans threw away their medals on the Capitol grounds. And as his subjects became more and more “articulate” through the rap group training sessions, he sent them to speak to veterans’ organizations, civic groups, and even psychologists’ meetings. For the most articulate, however, even better things were in store: opportunities to run their own counseling centers, instruct mental health professionals in what they had learned, and shape both the next version of the *DSM* and the new VA counseling system that was to begin in 1979.



## The “Rap Groups”: Models for the Future?

If Lifton’s initial selection of a biased sample for his research was questionable—not to mention his deciding in advance what he would find—his selection of co-researchers and his means of *keeping* his sample biased were even more questionable. According to his own account again, he and Shatan collected a group of antiwar psychologists and psychiatrists in the New York City area, but if any of them during the course of the project objected to the “radical” politicization of the activities, they were simply invited to leave; or, as Lifton puts it, “those of us who held a more radical view of the groups tended to outlast the others in the general program.” [83]

As for the veterans themselves, the same campaign of attrition applied. Those who could not be sufficiently politicized, or admit sufficient “guilt,” were bullied until they left the group. Lifton’s “findings,” then—which, we must keep remembering, are still cited as authoritative on the subject of *all* Vietnam veterans—could be based

solely on those who produced the desired results.

To cite just two cases of this attrition: “One former infantryman, though bitterly opposed to the war and increasingly committed to the rap groups, repeatedly insisted, ‘I just can’t *feel* any guilt.’” [110] Members of the group bombarded him verbally until he burst into tears and acknowledged feeling guilt. His “crimes” had been killing some North Vietnamese troops, and having sent his men out on patrol, where they subsequently died. Such events are always traumatic experiences in any war, but in themselves they are not atrocities as most people understand the term, nor did the infantryman give any indication that he had sent out the patrol in error or with insufficient equipment or support.

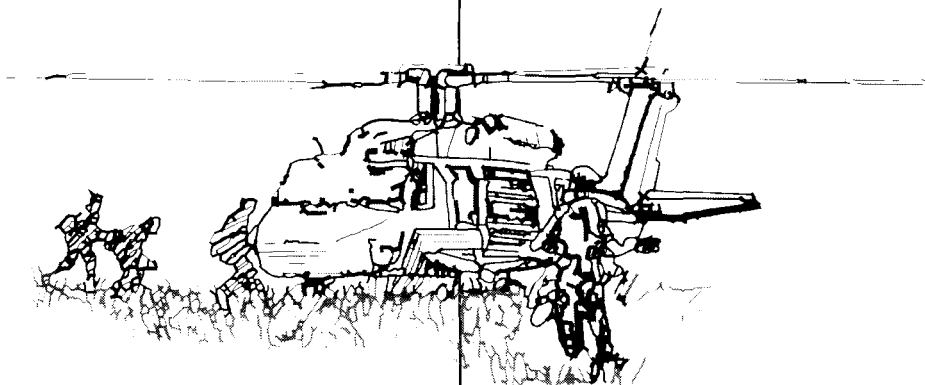
No one has ever denied that killing, watching others being killed, and living in constant fear of death oneself are terrible experiences. Indeed, novelist John Del Vecchio maintains, in his foreword to a major psychological study of veterans with PTSD, that: “killing should hurt the killer—that,

thank God, it does indeed cause lasting emotional scars—even if that killing is considered justified.” However, Del Vecchio also points out that sometimes the killing is necessary, as horrible as it may be: “In the past several years I have spoken to thousands of veterans. Almost all have expressed a feeling that we . . . were not there to kill but were there to save lives . . . If I killed someone in Vietnam, I believe that action saved the lives of other Americans and, more importantly, saved the lives of many South Vietnamese citizens.”<sup>13</sup>

Whether or not one agrees with Del Vecchio about the purpose of the Vietnam war, his distinction between the evil of killing and the necessity of killing in a time of crisis is one that has been accepted even in our judicial system, where distinctions are made in cases of homicide, involuntary manslaughter, self-defense, necessary force on the part of police in stopping a crime, and other death-dealing actions. However, to Lifton every act committed in war is an atrocity and must bear the same kind of guilt, the guilt of having committed a criminal act. (By chapter

three of *Home from the War*, the terms “war” and “war crimes” are used interchangeably.) The infantryman in this case, who by normal societal definitions had committed no crime,

change.” [148-49] This man, too, was driven from their midst. The important point in this case, however, is the ominous note struck by Lifton’s phrase, “causing them to doubt their own” new



was congratulated on his new-found criminal guilt, but he never returned to the rap groups. [110-113]

In another case, “about four or five veterans joined in an angry condemnation of a former member” for “still being a first sergeant” and not going along with the program of the rest of the group. “The target of rage was a man from among them who held tenaciously to an identity element they had pointedly rejected, causing them to doubt their own capacity to rid themselves of that element and undergo

identities. The unrepentant veteran has become a personal danger to the others, and must be destroyed or driven away. We will look more closely at this problem later, in connection with current counseling methods in the VA.

### **Vet Centers and the *DSM-III*: The Major Players**

After two years’ work with the rap groups, Lifton published his landmark book, *Home from the War*, in 1973, to overwhelming applause and copious quotation in his own professional

circle--and in the academic and media professions as well. The stereotype was now corroborated by a psychiatrist: all Vietnam veterans had committed atrocities, all were crawling with a guilt that caused "psychic numbing," and the only way to "animate" the guilt was to acknowledge their criminality and force others to acknowledge it as well. In

on Lifton's and Shatan's work had spread across the country. The stereotypes were firmly in place, and so were the networks. It was time to join the lobbying effort for better counseling systems for veterans--and, of course, some guidelines in the *DSM* on how to diagnose and treat the veterans. Lifton and Shatan were in the forefront of both

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*MacPherson's narrative suggests that the percentage of antiwar Vet Center counselors and team leaders is actually much higher than 47 percent*

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fact, only those who had successfully animated their guilt were considered capable of helping others; those like the infantryman and the first sergeant were still hopelessly sick themselves. Again, this assumption was to have a serious impact on the setting up of counseling systems.

By 1975, the year of the fall of Saigon, hundreds of rap groups modeled

these lobbying efforts, and they headed the APA working group to write the new *DSM-III*.<sup>14</sup>

Lifton and Shatan had already done some groundwork on the VA project. In 1972, they sponsored the "First National Conference on the Emotional Needs of Vietnam-Era Veterans," held in St. Louis, Missouri. The conference was attended by ten

people from the VA central office, who took copious notes and were introduced to the whole network of antiwar therapists from whom they would later draw their ideas for counseling systems.<sup>15</sup> Some participating groups at this conference were:

❖ *Flower of the Dragon* -

A veterans' counseling program in Sonoma County, California, which became one of the models for Vet Centers. The assumptions used in counseling were Lifton's and Shatan's, e.g., the military as dehumanizing agent, the war as a meaningless producer of atrocities, and "psychic numbing" and paranoia as universal characteristics of Vietnam veterans.<sup>16</sup>

❖ *Twice-Born Men* -

A San Francisco group headed by Jack McCloskey, a VVAW member who later created yet another antiwar group, Swords Into Plowshares (see below).

❖ *Veterans Service Project* -

A St. Louis-based organization run by members and former members of VVAW.

❖ Various other antiwar organizations which were using Lifton's

assumptions and methods, and, of course, chapters of VVAW.

All these organizations later collaborated in setting up the new Vet Centers in 1979, staffing them with their now experienced "counselors" and advisors. In addition, a number of individuals connected with them became important voices in both the Vet Center movement and the writing of the *DSM-III*:

❖ *John A. Talbott* - An antiwar activist prominent at the 1970 APA convention, he lobbied both against the war and for the efforts of the Gay Liberation Front to remove homosexuality as a disorder from the *DSM-II*. With Arthur S. Blank, Jr., who is now director of the VA's Readjustment Counseling Services (RCS), he wrote and edited influential works on PTSD in the 1980s.

❖ *Jack McCloskey* - As noted above, McCloskey formed a number of rap groups in the early 1970s, and continued to counsel veterans for 23 years.<sup>17</sup> In a 1984 interview with Myra MacPherson, McCloskey referred to all Vietnam veterans as being "haunted,"

and asked the following rhetorical question: “Now, if you’re telling a nineteen-year-old kid it’s okay to waste people and he will be *rewarded* for it, what do you think *that* does to his psyche?”<sup>18</sup> Note the assumption that all the killing is “wasting,” and that the main harm to the veteran lies in his being appreciated for what he has done.

✧ *Arthur Egendorf, Jr.* - An author and influential voice in concerns and treatment of Vietnam veterans, Egendorf said in 1972: “From the time I entered the military, it became increasingly obvious that the heroes of this war were those who fought it in the streets of American cities or in the courts or in the jails or by leaving the country rather than lend their support. . . . Whatever the personal cost, all of them —exiles, deserters, and resisters of every stripe—answered to the call to fight in a senseless war with the most appropriate response—an outright refusal.”<sup>19</sup> Here again, only those who opposed the war have something to be proud of; thus, a proud veteran is demoted to the status of coward or loser.

✧ *John Wilson* - Another extensive writer and editor on Vietnam veteran issues, he began working with

Lifton and Shatan in 1976. Of his research, writing, and work in counseling, he said: “What I’m doing now is consistent with the [antiwar] commitment.”<sup>20</sup>

✧ *Charles R. Figley* - Perhaps the most influential voice in published material on PTSD during the 1980s, editing a series of essay collections and himself writing many of the essays, Figley participated in Dewey Canyon III with Lifton’s group of veterans, and later worked extensively with Lifton and Shatan in developing the *DSM-III*. In 1979, as the Vet Centers were being set up, Figley acknowledged that PTSD in Vietnam veterans was primarily a political issue among mental health professionals.<sup>21</sup>



☆ *Jack Smith* - A participant in Dewey Canyon III and instrumental both in the formation of Vet Centers and the writing of *DSM-III*, he acknowledged that most of the assumptions feeding into the definition of PTSD were based on Lifton's results in the rap groups. At the 1972 conference, he "launched into a tirade" (his own words) against a VA representative, a World War II veteran who had objected to the proceedings. In his interviews with MacPherson, he claimed that all veterans "want the country to say 'God, it was a mess—but we can acknowledge that and then go on.'" He also referred to the war as an "atrocious," and added, about his counseling of veterans as late as 1984, "What we're doing is questioning the fundamental assumption that war is just okay and noble."<sup>22</sup>

☆ *William Mahedy* - Another major influence in formulating counseling methods, he said to MacPherson, "the Vietnam veteran participated in *the* historical experience that broke down the mythology of America's 'right and might.'"<sup>23</sup>

☆ *Shad Meshad* - One of the primary sources of Vet Centers as they exist today, Meshad was called in as a

consultant by VA Director Max Cleland in 1977 because of his experience in setting up and running storefront counseling centers. His experimental system was already being used by the Brentwood VA in Los Angeles.

Meshad had been a social work officer in Vietnam, and had conducted antiwar activities while he was still working with troops in the field. As he became more and more disgruntled, he finally decided—as he tells it—to "martyr" himself by taunting authorities. He was court-martialled for this taunting, and for refusing to trim his moustache.<sup>24</sup>

Lifton, Shatan, and the others began work on the definition of PTSD in 1976, and in 1980 their definition was published in the new *DSM-III*.<sup>25</sup> It has since become almost a definition of the Vietnam veteran himself, not only in the mental health professions but in media portrayals of veterans, history textbooks, fiction, and even literary criticism. We will look more closely at some of these genre overlaps shortly.

The new definition coincided perfectly with the formation of the new counseling systems. In 1979, Congress approved and funded what were

officially called VA Outreach Centers and became popularly known as Vet Centers, storefront facilities located physically outside VA medical centers (VAMCs) and administratively outside normal reporting chains. Part of the rationale for this separate status was that:

- ★ veterans suspicious of the VA would be more likely to respond to a casual atmosphere with no trace of officialdom in evidence;

- ★ the new expertise on veterans' problems could be tapped more readily, focused on more clearly, and networked more efficiently outside the stricter guidelines of VA recruiting and training procedures for counselors; and

- ★ PTSD counseling could be combined more easily with other types of counseling, such as employment and retraining, in a structure not specifically medical.<sup>26</sup>

A number of the previously organized storefront counseling centers were absorbed into the VA's new Readjustment Counseling Services (RCS), and others were set up around the country. Veterans' organizations

that had been seeking better services for Vietnam veterans rejoiced--but perhaps prematurely.<sup>27</sup>

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*I'd say we are a mirror distribution of the attitudes of the 34 million Vietnam veterans—47 percent of whom feel we should have never gotten involved in Vietnam.*

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## The Vet Centers in Action

Arthur S. Blank, Jr., who had objected strenuously to the anti-veteran attitudes of mental health professionals in the 1970s,<sup>28</sup> was enthusiastic about the new Vet Centers, and described them glowingly in a 1985 essay as an integrated team effort to help veterans, with the veterans themselves as part of the team. He was particularly pleased by the requirement that at least two members of each four-person Vet Center team be veterans themselves, so

that clients could be assured of treatment by someone who was familiar with the war experience.<sup>29</sup> Ominously, however, he did not see any problems inherent in the groups he cited as having formed the basis of the treatment and the staffing of the early Vet Centers: VVAW, Veterans Service Project, Swords Into Plowshares, Twice Born Men, Project Return, Seattle Veterans Assistance Center, and Flower of the Dragon—all antiwar groups.<sup>30</sup>

Even more ominously, Blank—already National Director of RCS as he wrote the 1985 essay—did not seem to recognize the danger inherent in what he cited approvingly as a requirement for counselors: a “full and effective working through of the staff member’s personal history concerning the Viet Nam War” (235). As we have seen, the Lifton group had defined what constituted “effective working through” of the experiences: repudiation of the war, of one’s service in it, and of the military in general.

Furthermore, in a 1984 interview with Myra MacPherson, Blank stated: “We scrupulously avoid letting political

factors influence us in hiring. I’d say we are a mirror distribution of the attitudes of the 3.4 million Vietnam veterans—47 percent of whom feel we should have never gotten involved in Vietnam.”<sup>31</sup> In other words, almost half of RCS personnel, including Vet Center counselors, take it for granted that their clients (a) have participated in something wrong, and (b) agree that their own service was wrong.

MacPherson’s narrative suggests that the percentage of antiwar Vet Center counselors and team leaders is actually much higher than 47 percent; in fact, she states that almost every Vet Center worker she talked to was antiwar, especially those who were veterans themselves. However, even the 47% figure may be faulty when applied to the full veteran population.

It is true that the 1980 Harris survey does give a 47% “should have stayed out” response among VEVs to the question, “Do you feel, in general, that we did the right thing in getting into the fighting in Vietnam, or should we have stayed out?” However, responses to other questions in the survey suggest

that the *reasons* for this response were not disapproval of the war or of the military (see Table 3).

Obviously, the way the question is asked determines the nature of the answer. “They shouldn’t have sent us if they wouldn’t let us fight” is quite

different from “they shouldn’t have sent us because the war was wrong.” However, the problem with the counseling system goes beyond a mere statistical analysis; it lies in the very phrase Blank uses about Vet Center hiring procedures: no influence by “political factors.” To assume that

VEV Attitudes Toward the War (Rounded %)					
Attitudes	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Orther
The trouble was that our troops were asked to fight in a war we could never win (III-4)	37	22	17	23	2
The trouble was that our troops were asked to fight in a war which our political leaders in Washington would not let us win (III-4)	72	17	6	2	2
Looking back, I am glad I served my country (I-6)	71	19	4	4	1
When I was home on leave, I was always proud to wear my uniform in public (I-5g)	39	21	14	25	2
If I were asked to serve again, I would refuse (I-6)	19	10	11	56	5
I enjoyed my time in the service (I-6)	43	31	12	13	1
The United States took unfair advantage of me (I-6)	7	13	16	63	1

Table 3. VEV responses to questions about the Vietnam War and attitudes toward serving. Numbers in parentheses are tables in the Harris study, Myths and Realities (1980).

someone's attitude toward service in time of war must by definition be "political" immediately privileges only the already politicized.

### **The Neutrality Model**

In a 1993 expansion and update of his original article, Arthur Blank expounded on the requirement that Vet Center personnel maintain political neutrality in their dealings with veterans:

*Staff balance the advocacy-ombudsperson role with neutrality about political issues. For example, staff at all levels adhere to a nonpolitical stance about the Vietnam War out of respect for the widely differing values or attitudes about the war among the population which the Vet Centers are committed to serve and in order to be receptive to clients of all shades of opinion.*<sup>32</sup>

Charles Flora, National Associate Director of RCS, confirmed this model in an interview, further emphasizing the requirement of neutrality on the part of

counselors. Because veterans represent "the entire spectrum of political opinion on the war," he says, "counselors should avoid imposing their own political views on the client. The veteran's perspective on the war and on the military, not the counselor's perspective, is the important factor in the client's postwar readjustment. The counselor's acceptance and understanding of the veteran's military experience is the foundation on which the therapeutic alliance is built."<sup>33</sup>

That the neutrality is not often observed, we have noted before, in the citations from Vet Center counselors and team leaders given above. In fact, most of the professional literature on PTSD assumes the war to have been a meaningless bloodbath at best and an outright evil at worst. With such assumptions governing the field, counselor "neutrality" seems doomed at the outset.

Furthermore, VA counselors' willingness to articulate their antiwar and antimilitary positions in public indicates that they do not take very seriously the guidelines on neutrality.

Indeed, some counselors seem to feel so secure in imposing their antiwar stance that they annotate the imposition in their records of counseling. In one set of counseling records, written by the team leader of a statewide PTSD clinical team (PCT) under the jurisdiction of RCS, the following appears:

*[Veteran X] is strongly pro-military and perhaps overly identified with military goals and roles . . . . Veteran is very much military identified, defensive when other point of view was brought up and feels that because of this [Veteran X] cannot continue in therapy with me. [Veteran X] cannot bear to think of the military in other than as a righteous organization and did not like comments made to the contrary. [Veteran X] has therefore decided to drop out of treatment. Discharged from PCT.<sup>34</sup>*

Despite Flora's insistence that any violation of neutrality should be reported to the VA and will be dealt with severely, when the veteran reported the antimilitary comments of this counselor, the counselor's local supervisors referred to the comments as

"appropriate," and regional RCS managers did not respond to the veteran's complaint at all.

However, "neutrality" itself, even if it were observed, is a dubious term to use about a veteran's service. Prior to Vietnam, as we have noted, treatment of veterans assumed no such neutrality.

Patriotism has never before been considered only one possible "political stance" out of many equally acceptable ones, a stance not to be interfered with where it exists but certainly not to be encouraged where it does not. By making patriotism optional, the VA declares it to be of no value.

Furthermore, as we have also noted, the methods of treatment adopted by the VA system were predicated upon building the veterans'—and therefore the veteran-counselors'—"identities" on their views of the war. The views, then, are not merely "opinions," but self-identifiers, indicators of mental health. To abandon a particular view becomes an acknowledgment that one's "cure" was invalid, that one is still sick. Now let us posit a series of events, assuming for the moment that the strict neutrality

is being observed in each of the counseling situations:

1. *Veteran A*, who hates everything about the war and believes everything about it to have been evil, seeks counseling. He is encouraged to find his meaning in the fact that he recognizes the evil and will animate his guilt by educating others about the evil.

2. *Veteran B*, who served proudly but is still troubled by the deaths of his friends and his own reception on coming home, seeks counseling. He is encouraged to find his meaning in having fought in a good cause, in recognizing that his friends have heroically given their lives that others might live, and in carrying on their work of patriotism by showing renewed pride in his service.

3. *Veteran A* and *Veteran B* meet.

What will happen when the two veterans begin talking to each other? Will there be a spirited debate on “political issues”? Or will two people whose identities depend on their views of the war find each other a threat to

their respective well-being? Before we attempt to answer this question, let us posit a different third event:

4. *Veteran A* becomes *Veteran B*’s counselor.

Veteran A is now in a position of power, and Veteran B in a position of vulnerability—and yet Veteran B poses a threat to Veteran A. What we have here is a recipe for disaster, and because of the staffing history of Vet Centers, it is the recipe currently in use within the VA.

Of course, the question may be asked: What will happen if Veteran B becomes Veteran A’s counselor instead; will there not be a similar disaster? Again, we must remember that Veteran B’s position is one of pride in service, which has never before been considered a disaster. However, there may be a problem nevertheless; the scenario is predicated on a neutrality model that accepts any starting assumption without question or qualification. Even Veteran B has not learned to defend his position rationally. Both veterans have based their identities on emotion rather than

reality, and at least one of them has based his identity on an untruth. Neither has been truly “cured.”

## **And the Beating Goes On**

Another question that may be asked is: Why need we concern ourselves with only 15% of an already small subset of our national population, especially after all this time, when it may be too late to do anything for the affected group anyway? The answer is that more than the 15% have been affected, and the people who began their work on Vietnam veterans have announced their intention of extending the attack to much broader categories of citizens, and finally to American culture itself. We may trace some of the steps even from the beginning:

### *1. Shift the focus from the troubled veteran to all veterans.*

In most of the literature, the phrase “Vietnam veterans suffering from stress” quickly becomes simply “Vietnam veterans.” Although often enough this may be nothing but verbal shorthand, the effect is to imply that all

Vietnam veterans show characteristics of the 15% subset, or even of an individual patient. As we have seen, much of the shift in focus was done deliberately at the beginning: Lifton’s VVAW patients publicly projecting their own ills onto others, the admittedly “unrepresentative group” being used as a representative model.

Two examples may indicate the lingering effects of this tactic: a handbook for clinicians published by the Disabled American Veterans, and a recent best-seller on trauma. In the first, chaplain Melvin R. Jacob describes “A Pastoral Response to the Troubled Vietnam Veteran,”<sup>35</sup> but by the second page of his description, the modifier “troubled” drops from his vocabulary, and he begins defining “the Vietnam veteran” solely in terms of PTSD: coldness, a sense of futility, loss and alienation, and so on. He then makes generalizations such as the following (page numbers are given in brackets):

*The reality of Vietnam ate away at the spirit of many of its soldiers. The constant inconsistencies and incongruities, the gut-wrenching*

*absurdities, and the endless emptiness left their indelible marks on the hearts of American warriors. [52; note that even in this passage, the word “many” disappears by the second sentence and the implication is that all warriors’ hearts were marked by a “reality” that all warriors saw as dispiriting.]*

*The Vietnam veteran describes guilt and shame . . . Like a heavy yoke carried on his shoulders, guilt burdens the veteran and diminishes creative energy and vitality. [61]*

It should come as no surprise to find that most of Jacob’s evidence for the above has been drawn from Lifton.

In the second example, psychiatrist Judith Lewis Herman’s *Trauma and Recovery*, a 1992 best-seller, once again the Vietnam veteran is spoken of as a class having PTSD.<sup>36</sup> Like Jacob, Herman takes almost all her citations from Lifton; and she also agrees with Lifton on the political aspect of treatment for Vietnam veterans: “The study of war trauma becomes legitimate only in a context that challenges the sacrifice of young

men in war. . . . The moral legitimacy of the antiwar movement and the national experience of defeat in a discredited war had made it possible to recognize psychological trauma as a lasting and inevitable legacy of war.”<sup>37</sup>

*2. Shift the focus further from the veteran to the Vietnam War and then to all war and to the military in general.*

As we can see from the two examples above—and indeed from Lifton’s own early work in which he used the terms “war” and “war crimes” interchangeably—when the veteran’s service is perceived as an evil, service itself becomes an evil, and the organization that shaped the veteran for service--the military--becomes the worst evil of all.

According to the Harris survey, fully 71% of VEVs say they enjoyed their time in service, and 90% say they are glad to have served their country (see Table 3). And yet, much of the PTSD literature, including Jacob’s essay cited above, refers even to Stateside and peacetime service as “brutalizing” and

"dehumanizing." Indeed, when Herman discusses the need to have a trauma sufferer repudiate the inflicter of harm, the harming agent for the Vietnam veteran is cited not as the enemy soldier but as the American military. Still other literature refers to all military service as "the cult of war" or "the warrior myth," and demands public rejection of such a cult.<sup>38</sup> From this point, supposed concern for the veteran often becomes a vehicle for attacking the military readiness of the United States, in that any expenditure on defense supports the "cult," and any training given to troops "brutalizes" and "dehumanizes" them.

*3. Shift the focus still further from the military to the culture that accepts the military in its midst.*

Once the American military force has been demonized, the next target of attack becomes the traditional values associated with military service. Significantly, the latest villain in much of the current literature is John Wayne, whom one writer rejects scornfully as having "indoctrinated" young men with such outmoded notions as the "values of

honor, courage, sacrifice over survival, and the resiliency of the human spirit."<sup>39</sup>

One need not be a John Wayne aficionado to note that what is being attacked here is not the actor or the oversimplifications in his films, but rather the values his films may have oversimplified. What terrible values to be "indoctrinated" with: honor, courage, and sacrifice; heaven forbid that any of our young men accept such things. And yet, this repudiation of ideals is the final step in the process that began in the 1960s and is being carried on in the VA today. Fortunately for our Nation, those who deplore such ideals are still worried about the ideals' tenacity. Surely, the writer quoted above sighs in the epilogue to his book, we should have learned better long ago, but national response to the Gulf War seems to indicate otherwise:

*One wonders if a new generation of American men and women influenced by an updated John Wayne figure—John Rambo and his romantic battlefield exploits—or the deadly "Star Wars" military hardware—dazzlingly displayed on television during the Gulf*

*War—is ready to start the cycle over again and take its own heavy heart-of-darkness journey out of innocence.*<sup>40</sup>

## **Conclusion: Where Will It End?**

The last passage quoted above is not from a psychological handbook but from a commentary on Vietnam War fiction. And here lies the greatest danger of all. The attack on patriotism begun in psychiatric circles and fostered by the VA has not been confined within the mental health professions any more than it has been confined to the 15% segment of the VEV population seeking counseling. Rather, the antiwar--and antimilitary, anti-America--message has been constantly reinforced by journalists who quote VA psychologists, VA psychologists who quote novelists and filmmakers,<sup>41</sup> VA historians who quote the journalists who have quoted VA psychologists who have quoted novelists . . . and so on, ad infinitum. No matter where the American citizen looks, whether in popular or in specialized literature, the trail leads back to Lifton and from Lifton to the VA.

Small wonder, then, that Vietnam era veterans—even those not in the often cited 15%—have had so many problems with discrimination in the workforce and on campus. The image has become pervasive, and it now threatens to spread to other veterans besides those of the Vietnam era. Consider the spate of reissues since the Gulf War: Lifton, MacPherson, Gloria Emerson's *Winners and Losers*, Frances Fitzgerald's *Fire in the Lake*—all the original antiwar tracts attacking not just the war but the patriotism of American veterans have been reprinted with introductions urging the American public to view the veterans of Grenada, Panama, and the Gulf War as the Vietnam veteran must be viewed, and to treat them the same way as well.

Nor do I use the word “treat” lightly. The VA has opened the doors of its Vet Centers to post-Vietnam veterans, and is now considering offering the same treatment services to World War II and Korean War veterans.<sup>42</sup> Soon all veterans will be afforded the chance to lose their patriotism and sense of purpose under the auspices of the VA; and if the Lifton

model continues, these veterans will then be sent forth to destroy the patriotism of their families and neighbors.

However, we have been alerted to the danger now. If there is any comfort for Vietnam veterans in all of this, it is that we are no longer alone; we are walking point for the rest of American society in the culture wars that continue in the corridors of the VA. And, as we once told the Harris survey interviewers, most of us are still proud to serve. 🇺🇸

★★

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>These figures appear in most of the sources cited below, subject to variation according to individual surveys done by the authors. It is interesting to note that the 15% figure had become so universally known and accepted by 1992 that even a popular writer, Larry Chambers, cited it in the epilogue to his memoir, *Recondo: LRRPs in the 101st Airborne* (New York: Ivy, 1992, 237-38). See the end of this article for further comments on

the cross-disciplinary nature of discussions of PTSD.

<sup>2</sup>Josefina J. Card, **Lives After Vietnam: The Personal Impact of Military Service** (Lexington, MA: Heath, 1983), extracted from Table 5-2.

<sup>3</sup>Card, 113.

<sup>4</sup>VA, **Myths and Realities: A Study of Attitudes Toward Vietnam Era Veterans** Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1980), extracted from Tables V-1 and V-2.

<sup>5</sup>See Wilbur J. Scott's description of the buildup of antiwar activism within the APA, particularly at the 1970 and 1971 conventions, in **The Politics of Readjustment: Vietnam Veterans Since the War** (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1993), 33-44.

<sup>6</sup>APA Official Actions, **American Journal of Psychiatry** 128 (1971):138-39.

<sup>7</sup>Joel Osler Brende and Erwin Randolph Parson, **Vietnam Veterans:**

**The Road to Recovery** (New York: Plenum, 1985), 175.

<sup>8</sup>In 1976, long after the fact, D.M. Davis speculated that the combination of drugs might have caused excessive drowsiness—hardly a desirable effect on troops who had to be constantly alert for ambushes and booby traps. See Davis, “Special Problems of Psychiatric Patients Evacuated from Vietnam to a Backup Hospital,” **U.S. Army Vietnam Medical Bulletin** (July/August 1976): 17-20.

<sup>9</sup>For a full discussion of such attitudes and behavior, see Arthur S. Blank, Jr., “Irrational Reactions to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Viet Nam Veterans,” in **The Trauma of War: Stress and Recovery in Vietnam Veterans**, ed. Stephen M. Sonnenberg, Arthur S. Blank, Jr., and John A. Talbott (Washington: American Psychiatric Press, 1985), 71-96. See also: Brende and Parson, **Vietnam Veterans**, 63, 74, 177-79, 205-207; Charles R. Figley and Seymour Leventman, introduction to **Strangers at Home: Viet Nam Veterans Since The War**, Ed. Figley and Leventman (New York: Praeger,

1980), xxviii-xxix; Wilbur J. Scott, **The Politics of Readjustment**, 5; John R. Smith, “Individual Therapy with Vietnam Veterans,” in **The Trauma of War**, 130-53. A particularly interesting (if horrifying) example of such attitudes is given unconsciously in **Vietnam: A Casebook**, ed. Jacob D. Lindy, et al. (New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1988), in which the anonymous therapists describing their case studies seem to take pride in feeling revulsion toward their patients. One therapist reports such antipathy in himself that he was on two occasions subject to migraine headaches and stomach upsets before returning a particular patient’s phone call; he obviously expects to be admired for this revulsion.

<sup>10</sup>Robert Jay Lifton, **Home from the War** (1973; rpt. with a new introduction about the Gulf War, Boston: Beacon, 1992), ch. 1. Throughout this first chapter, Lifton openly describes his preconceived conclusions, his deliberate choice of a biased study sample, and his

determination to politicize his subjects into public antiwar speakers who would give Lifton's agenda more credibility.

<sup>11</sup>Lifton, **Home from the War**, 159. All further references to this book will be given in brackets in the text.

<sup>12</sup>Scott, **Politics of Readjustment**, 18-19.

<sup>13</sup>Del Vecchio, Foreword to Brende and Parson, **Vietnam Veterans**, xii. The fact that a novelist was asked to write a foreword to a study by two psychologists is interesting in itself; we will look at further examples of cross-disciplinary collaboration later in this article.

<sup>14</sup>Scott, **Politics of Readjustment**, 60-62; Scott adds that the working group "drew [their] data primarily from the case histories of Vietnam veterans who had attended the New York City rap groups" (62).

<sup>15</sup>Scott, **Politics of Readjustment**, 44-45.

<sup>16</sup>For a full description of **Flower of the Dragon**, see R. W. Eisenhart, "Flower of the Dragon: An Example of Applied Humanistic Psychology," **Journal of Humanistic Psychology** 17 (1977): 3-24.

<sup>17</sup>See Margaret Benshoof-Holler's interview with McCloskey in "Post Traumatic Stress Disorder," **Vietnam** (December 1993): 38-44.

<sup>18</sup>Myra MacPherson, **Long Time Passing: Vietnam and the Haunted Generation** (1984; rpt. with new introduction on Grenada, Panama, and the Gulf War, New York: Anchor Books, 1993), 51-52. Emphasis in the original.

<sup>19</sup>MacPherson, 168.

<sup>20</sup>Scott, pp 55-57; MacPherson, 190



<sup>21</sup>Figley, "Confusing the Warrior with the War," **APA Monitor** (April 1979): 2. Note the phrasing of this title; it assumes that a soldier does not want to be associated with the war in which he has fought.

<sup>22</sup>Scott, 46; MacPherson, 47, 170, 205.

<sup>23</sup>MacPherson, 243.

<sup>24</sup>See Scott, 35-37, 63-64. Meshad's in-country activities are described in his partially fictionalized account of them, **Captain for Dark Mornings: A True Story** (Playa Del Rey, CA: Creative Image Associates, 1982).

<sup>25</sup>Since the 1980 publication of DSM-III, there have been two further revisions, DSM-III(R), and DSM-IV. In each version, the symptomology and indicators have been slightly refined or elaborated on, but the essential assumptions and definitions remain unchanged from the 1980 version.

<sup>26</sup>Arthur S. Blank, Jr., describes the rationale at greater length in "The

Veterans Administration's Viet Nam Outreach and Counseling Centers," in **The Trauma of War**, passim.

<sup>27</sup>Although I concentrate on Vet Centers in the remainder of this discussion, we should note that most of the assumptions and methods used in the Vet Centers are used throughout the rest of the VA, including inpatient care in VAMCs. Brende and Parson describe phase-one treatment in VA Inpatient Specialized Treatment Units (ISTUs) as "using selected behavioral procedures, education about Vietnam and PTSD symptoms, and if needed, medication." (**Vietnam Veterans**, 237) We can only imagine what the "education about Vietnam" may consist of, given what we know about the background of the educators.

<sup>28</sup>Blank, "Irrational Reactions," passim.

<sup>29</sup>Blank, "The Veteran Administration's Viet Nam Veterans Outreach and Counseling Centers," in **The Trauma of War**, 227-38.

<sup>30</sup>Blank, "VA Outreach," 233.

<sup>31</sup>MacPherson, **Long Time Passing**, 239.

<sup>32</sup>Blank, "Vet Centers: A New Paradigm in Delivery of Services for Victims and Survivors of Traumatic Stress," **International Handbook of Traumatic Stress Syndromes**, ed. John P. Wilson and Beverley Raphael (New York: Plenum Press, 1993), 920.

<sup>33</sup>Flora, personal interview, Washington, D.C., 10 November 1993.

<sup>34</sup>Because of the confidential nature of these records, from which I quote with permission of the veteran, I cannot give any identifying citations.

<sup>35</sup>Jacob, "A Pastoral Response to the Troubled Vietnam Veteran," in **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders: A Handbook for Clinicians** (Cincinnati: DAV Press, 1987), 51-74.

<sup>36</sup>Herman, **Trauma and Recovery** (New York: BasicBooks, 1992).

<sup>37</sup>Herman, 9, 27.

<sup>38</sup>This reference to cult and myth begins as early as Lifton's statement, in **Home from the War**, that the "transformation [of the veteran] depends directly upon exposing the filth beneath the warrior's claim to purity of mission, upon subverting much that is fundamental to American warrior mythology" (159); it continues in such recent works as Herman's **Trauma and Recovery** and the Herzog study cited below.

<sup>39</sup>Tobey C. Herzog, **Vietnam War Stories: Innocence Lost** (New York: Routledge, 1992), 114.

<sup>40</sup>Herzog, 215.

<sup>41</sup>See especially the Lindy study, as well as the studies by Jacob, MacPherson, and Herzog.

<sup>42</sup>"VA Mental Health: Improve It and They Will Come," **DAV Magazine** (September 1993): 2-3. The mental health of the VA, considering what we have seen of it in action, may indeed be in need of improvement.



# Honor for Veterans Helps to Fund Memorials and Museums Artist Tom Nielson of VVI Reports



ashington—The contribution made by military personnel in pursuit of international stability was fully acknowledged by Congress last fall with the passage of legislation that encouraged the honoring of, and repayment to, American veterans.

That legislation results in the issue(July 29, 1994) of three commemorative silver dollars honoring prisoners of war, Vietnam veterans and military women. It now provides a constructive means for these veterans to receive the highest tribute of all: *remembrance*.

Each of the silver dollars issued by the United States Mint includes a \$10 surcharge and surcharge proceeds will directly benefit three memorial projects, which will serve as permanent legacies for future generations. The projects are repairs to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the creation of a POW museum, and the establishment of a memorial to military women.

In accordance with the authorizing legislation, only 500,000 of each silver dollar will be produced and no coins will be minted after April 30, 1995. A three-coin set and individual coins may be ordered beginning July 29, and discounted prices are valid on orders post-marked on or before September 9, 1994.

The U.S. Veterans Commemorative Silver Dollars may be purchased by calling 1-800-777-VETS or by writing: Customer Service Center, United States Mint, 10001 Aerospace Road, Lanham, Md. 20706.

## The Vietnam Veterans Memorial

Since the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was completed 12 years ago, it has been visited by more than 2.5 million people per year, making it one of the most frequented memorials in the Nation's capital. It is estimated that 80 percent of the visitors to The Wall are moved to touch the names on its polished black surface.

The Memorial, truly unique in its exposed accessible design, is susceptible to a unique set of conservation problems. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund(VVMF) is currently involved in an extensive effort to provide funds for reparations, long-term maintenance, and to ensure that the record of names continues to be updated.

*Continued next page*

*The Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Continued*

Cracks have appeared in a number of the black granite panels. Extensive research is needed in order to confirm the cause of the cracks and to recommend action to remedy any damage and deterioration. To date, theories about the cracks conflict. Possible causes range from pressure exerted by the ground behind the memorial to the condition and placement of the support anchors.

New names to The Wall are being added as appropriate. The additions record those individuals who have died as a direct result of war injuries incurred in Vietnam. Changes in status from missing in action to killed in action are made as remains are returned from the war zone.

Additional granite panels will be purchased to allow for the replacement of damaged or vandalized sections. The panels need to be stored in special frames enabling them to weather consistently with the existing memorial. The granite is mined in Bangalore, India

and fabricated and cut to size in Barre, Vt.

Repairs to the cobblestone walkways and lighting system are continually needed due to extensive foot traffic.

Funding for the Memorial's reparations and additions is not available through the U.S Park Service due to budget limitations and must be raised entirely from private sources.

Surcharges raised from 500,000 Vietnam Veterans Memorial Commemorative Silver Dollars will contribute a maximum of \$5 million to the repair and long-term maintenance of the Memorial.

For more information on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, please contact **Jan C. Scruggs**, Esq. at (202) 393-0090. Mr. Scruggs is a decorated infantry veteran of the Vietnam War and is a founder and President of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund.



## The Women in Military Service for America Memorial

Authorized by Congress in 1986, the Women in Military Service for America Memorial will document the history of American servicewomen. The memorial will provide an unprecedented tribute to military women, at the same time encouraging Americans of all ages to learn about the women who have defended America throughout history.

The Women In Military Service for America Memorial Foundation (WIMSA) has taken on the task of raising the funds required to build the memorial, which according to legislation must be built without federal funds. To date, WIMSA has nearly \$11 million available for the memorial, but an additional \$5 million is needed before construction can begin. The

memorial is to be built at the gateway to Arlington National Cemetery.

The exterior will incorporate the existing 1930s neo-classical hemicycle, which serves as the ornamental gateway to Arlington National Cemetery. Restoration and adaptation will allow for a memorial structure above ground and an educational center below.

The terrace will feature an arc of glass "pages" inscribed with quotations about or from servicewomen. Acting as skylights, the glass panels will dramatically reflect the quotations on the walls of the gallery below.

The Court of Honor will center around a waterfall and reflecting pool. A continuous stream of water will gather to form a waterfall, and from there flow into a narrow channel leading to a circular reflecting pool. The flow of water will symbolize the "singular voices" of American servicewomen coming together as a "chorus of voices."

Visitors will be able to access a computer register that will feature the name and picture of each registered

servicewoman with service details and their most memorable experience. To date 100,000 women have registered and WIMSA expects to register an additional 400,000 by the time the memorial is dedicated.

Surcharges from the 500,000 Women In Military Service For America Memorial Commemorative Silver Dollars will contribute a maximum of \$5 million toward construction.

For additional information on the Women In Military Service For America Memorial or to arrange for an interview with one of the most decorated women in U.S. military history, Foundation President, Brigadier General Wilma L. Vaught, USAF,



*Coin designed by Mr. Nielson of VVI*



## **The National Prisoner of War Museum**

The National Prisoner of War Museum, to be built in Andersonville, Ga., aims to communicate the prisoner of war (POW) experience regardless of when, where, why or how the individual was captured or imprisoned. For the first time, hundreds of POW artifacts and documents will be used to help visitors understand the horrors, stress and suffering of those denied their freedom during periods of war. The museum will provide a long awaited tribute to American POWs from the American Revolution to the recent Somalian peace-keeping efforts.

The American Ex-Prisoners of war and the National Park Service have joined together to make the museum a reality. Funds raised since 1984 have enabled groundbreaking and will pay

for the installation of utilities in the summer of 1994, while the state of Georgia is funding access roads and signage.

The museum's location will be the grounds of the largest prisoner of war camp operated during the Civil War, where nearly 13,000 of the 45,000

Living Conditions, Communications, Privation, Morale and Friendships, and finally, Freedom. A special section entitled "Those Who Wait" will convey the devotion and suffering of family members and friends.

Visitors will exit through the Commemorative Courtyard, allowing




*Prisoner of War Museum*

imprisoned soldiers died during 14 months of operation.

The exhibits have been designed to take visitors on a journey through the life of the POW, from the trauma of initial capture to the time of liberation or repatriation. The different aspects of the POW's existence to be highlighted are: Capture, Physical Environment,

them to reflect on the experience and history just witnessed. Fresh water, a highly valued commodity for all POWs, will run through the courtyard featuring a bronze statue which is symbolic of all POWs attempting to drink from the stream.

Proceeds from the Prisoner of War Commemorative Silver Dollar will contribute significantly to the millions needed for the National POW Museum. The first \$3 million raised is designated for the museum's construction; the next million will create an endowment fund for maintenance; and the final one million will go to maintaining national Veterans Administration cemeteries.

For more information on the American Ex-Prisoners of War or to arrange for an interview with their National Commander **William E. Bearisto**, please contact **Mary Rolen**, at The National Capital Office (202) 208-1800 or (202) 208-1492. Commander Bearisto was a prisoner of war during World War II. 





Discrimination

# A Special Feature

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## **Tim Lomperis Leaves Duke University**

*This in-depth report explores discrimination against a particular Vietnam veteran in great detail. Many thanks to those who allowed us to republish their work in this controversy.*

**Politics at Duke**

*from the Wall Street Journal*

**Interview with Tim Lomperis**

*from The Duke Review*

**Vietnam Service and My Work as a Scholar**

*by Tom Lomperis*



Discrimination

# *at Duke* Politics

## *Politics at Duke<sup>1</sup>*

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**W**e hope that when the executive committee of Duke University's board of trustees meets tomorrow, it will find time to discuss an important issue raised by senior Bethany Barratt. In the school's official campus newspaper, the *Chronicle*, Ms. Barratt thoughtfully expressed her concern about problems that "are symptomatic of much that is deeply wrong at Duke and in the academy in general."

The proximate cause of her comment was the extraordinary tenure battle of Duke political science professor Timothy Lomperis. Duke's trustees probably don't want to hear about it, but parents being asked to commit upward of \$100,000 to one of these institutions may find the Lomperis case interesting and instructive.

Mr. Lomperis (pronounced Lom-PAIR-is) was one of Duke's most popular professors. His courses were always oversubscribed; at one point his "Elements of International Relations" was the largest class at Duke. And he's about to leave.



Back in 1991, by an 8-6-1 vote, the university's political science department denied him tenure. Thereupon, students and faculty of all political stripes waged a two-and-a-half-year battle to keep him. The administration says it gave Mr. Lomperis's case a "substantive and procedural review above and beyond" the normal evaluation and then deemed the department decision a correct one. Mr. Lomperis's friends say the university reneged on a promise to rehear his case in full. Even as all this was happening, Duke's admissions officers were still trying to tempt in prospective students by trotting them around to hear Mr. Lomperis on Vietnam, Bosnia, and the Gulf War. What's going on here?

Some of Mr. Lomperis's political science department colleagues complained about the ideological content of his scholarship. In a 1984 work on Vietnam, titled "The War Everyone Lost—and Won," Mr. Lomperis argued that despite military losses, the U.S. effort in Vietnam helped to retain and, eventually, push back communism. But beyond the usual P.C.

problem lies a phenomenon that we suspect most admissions officers would prefer parents not learn too much about: Mr. Lomperis's colleagues felt he was popular with Duke's students for the wrong reasons.

They complain that his writings and pedagogy are too short on the kind of abstruse and numbers-laden methodology now typical of many political science departments. Speaking for the university, senior vice president John F. Burness said Mr. Lomperis didn't have the kind of "original scholarship" a teaching institution would require. "At the very best universities, what you're looking for is someone who is the very best in his or her field."

Fashions come and go, we guess: The year his doctoral dissertation was presented, it beat out a Duke colleague's to win the American Political Science Association's award for best dissertation in international relations.

In 1991, Mr. Lomperis was invited to the University of Kentucky on a job visit. There, according to a letter

to Mr. Lomperis's lawyer from Vince Davis, director of Kentucky's Patterson School of Diplomacy, opposition to Mr. Lomperis was expressed by two groups: those who "objected to Lomperis on the grounds that his research failed to make extensive use of the fashionable newer mathematical, statistical and computer-based procedures" and those "who objected to Lomperis on the grounds that he had served as a military officer in Vietnam and later wrote a book which failed to castigate all aspects of the American effort in that bitter struggle."

Then something that Prof. Davis calls "uniquely odious" happened. At least one unnamed Lomperis colleague at Duke phoned friends at Kentucky to allege—without evidence—that Mr. Lomperis was "sexist" and "racist" toward Asians. When the department chairman asked for substantiating facts, none was forthcoming. It was, said Prof. Davis, "scurrilous character assassination."


"This was the equivalent of being charged with child molesting," says Ole Holsti, a Duke colleague and Lomperis

supporter. Despite the absence of evidence, the charges were, colleagues argue, enough to tip the Kentucky vote of Mr. Lomperis toward defeat.

William Lyons and Karen Mingst of Kentucky's department wrote corroborating letters of protest. Telephone records collected by Duke from the time indeed indicate a large volume of phone calls from Duke's political science department to Kentucky. Prof. Holsti's rage is focused on the Duke administration: He charges it with neglect of the matter that he views as "beyond the pale." (Duke's higher officers countered that they did review this issue sufficiently.)

Tenure battles can get ugly, but we have a sense of what is going on here. Duke has the look one of those schools that wants to be viewed as among the truly first-tier American universities. And the presumed proof of one's seriousness is an austere commitment to the latest, trendy turn in academic research and publishing, a trend also increasingly evident in many "research" oriented history and English departments.

Ms. Barratt, the Duke senior, is correct that the Lomperis saga reflects much that is wrong generally with academia. However, none of the college guides for debt-burdened parents attempts disclosure of whether a school's departments are filling courses with tenure-trendy numbers crunchers or real teachers. The absence of such

information sounds like a market opportunity to us. 

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<sup>1</sup> First published in *The Wall Street Journal* Thursday, 9 June 1994 in the Review and Outlook Column. Reprinted with permission.



# Discrimination

# An Interview

with  
**Tim Lomperis,**  
**Ph.D.<sup>1</sup>**

**D**uke Review: Can you talk a little bit about the ideological or methodological differences in your department?

**TL:** The point is that ideology and methodology are tangled. They're tangled in ways that they really are not separated. They're tangled in part because political science as a discipline is at war with itself between those who are pushing a sort of new scientism around rational choice and more mathematical and quantitative understandings of the development of theory versus those who see political science as more driven by issues and questions and research that sheds light in new and interesting ways on all of

these issues and questions that does not require one certain methodology over another to shed this light. This second method is a big tent with room for many different kinds of scholarship, and if you're good at what you do, that's fine.

That's really the big struggle between what I call the tolerance and the intolerance. In that dispute is a inextricable mix of ideology and methodology. To give you a classic example, in the area where I study—Third World, Third World development, Third World strife and insurgency—you have two rational choice political economist methodologists in our department, Bob Bates and Peter Lange, who are genuinely committed to this new methodology because they think that it gets at political phenomenon more precisely than the more thick description (ideographic is the term) scholarship of the past. In particular, in the 1970s, the Social Science Research Council sponsored something called nation-building, which emphasized what

is called macro, that is, large societal-level analysis of countries as they sought to modernize.

They emphasized political culture, which is a little more amorphous, and in general they looked more to sociology and psychology for their methodological principles and ideas. Now Bob Bates in particular was very explicit in a piece that he wrote that not only was he trained in this same Social Science Research Council approach, but he basically felt that it was this nation-building political/cultural school that provided the support for the Vietnam War. It was a task of nation-building that government planners saw themselves doing when they went to Vietnam to try to create a non-communist state.

So for people like Bob Bates and Peter Lange, who were opponents of the Vietnam War, it was the scholars and the Social Science Research Council and nation-building which were the big enemy, not just methodologically. It was inextricable. It was ideological as well.

Now, when they get to talking about tenure and evaluating candidates, are they ever going to piously breathe a word as naked and subjective as "ideology"? No.

So when I claim there's an ideological bias and they say, "Show me in the record where anything was said ideologically against you," well of course there's nothing in a formal setting. If you could have put microphones around water fountains and around the men's room and around the Hideaway or the Faculty Commons, you would have heard *a lot of* ideological remarks here, but you can hide it.

A classic proof of the pudding is the fate of Samuel Huntington and the fate of one of his students here. Samuel Huntington was denied a place in the National Academy of Sciences by a mathematician who said he was using "soft science," and so he didn't get a position. There was a *New York Times* article that basically laid out the fact that what was really driving it here was that this mathematician was a radical anti-war professor here in the Vietnam

era who despised Kissinger and Huntington for their pro-war views, and that became the real animus here.

We had a student of Sam Huntington's come down here for a Chinese politics position, and this guy

In this last book of mine, when people say it is based on antiquated scholarship and not the latest methods, there's something screwy about that, because in the theoretical parts of this book and in a very explicit appendix, I basically am asserting that here's what

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*He said, Tim, forget it. It's not just that she's married to Bob, but she's linked in with this whole group of idealist liberal scholarship that hates everything I do, and unfortunately by extension you, because you do not hide your relationship with me at an awkward time like tenure."*

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did a great job, I thought. I really liked what he did methodologically, I liked his range of questions, but boy, in the department meeting, it was Sam Huntington's ghost that slew this person's job chances.

Ironically enough, this person very quickly went on and got a job at Princeton. Now, you tell me there isn't something screwy going on here. I saw in that, in my own very close association with Sam Huntington, my epitaph.

the new rational choice political science says, and I don't think it's useful. I think the old school is much better for this.

It's not because I was out of it or out-of-date, but because the whole thrust of my book is to show that the old scholarship is much better over questions that are centrally driven by moral factors rather than cost-benefit economic factors, so it's an assault on the new methodology. It's not a work that's unaware of it. But since I don't use the new methodology, they say it's



outmoded. That in a sense is an ideological attack, almost by nature.

So when the department piously asserts in [political science professor Michael] Gillespie's article that it was the scholarship that was my decision, it was the scholarship, yes, but it was the scholarship heavily tinged with ideology, and it's really inseparable but you'll never find a trace of that on the record. I haven't read any on the department reports on my scholarship because I'm not allowed to, but I'll bet it's all couched in methodological terms, just as the refusal to hire Ming Shen Pai written report was couched in methodological terms, just as the drumming out of Sam Huntington from the National Academy of Sciences was all couched in methodological terms.

But ideological struggles are rife in political science, and they do tragically affect decisions, and I will just blatantly assert that it certainly affected my decision.

**DR:** Can you talk about the role of President Keohane and her husband in your tenure case?

**TL:** Well let me just say that Sam Huntington came down to Duke last fall and presented his "clash of civilizations" thesis to a Duke audience, in which he made no reference to other scholars of his at Harvard except in a favorable reference. He mentioned his colleague Joe Nye with a favorable mention of his book *Soft Power* and mentioned some other colleagues without criticism.

Bob Keohane came down and gave his alternative scheme of the international system and went out of his way time and time again in his address to pillory Sam Huntington's earlier treatise on the subject.

At the time of Sam's talk, I had dinner with Sam, and we talked about my tenure case. I thought that Nan would be fair and above this. He said, "Tim, forget it. It's not just that she's married to Bob, but she's linked in with this whole group of idealist liberal scholarship that hates everything I do, and unfortunately by extension you, because you do not hide your relationship with me at an awkward

time like tenure.” He didn’t think that I would get the time of day.

When I was at Harvard, first working out this book, I presented the framework of it to Bob Keohane for his reaction. He did read over it, and the only thing he had to say about the structure of my work was ideological: “Tim, all this is is a conservative structure to justify incumbent regimes.” I was dumbfounded by that remark; this is a so-called neutral scholar whose one look at my methodology was to dismiss it with an ideological comment. Period.

I was extremely disappointed with the President’s handling of my case. I was looking to someone who was fair-minded, and if she chose to insert herself in my case—and it was a complicated case—she should have looked at things pretty carefully, and she did not. When she was given the Faculty Hearing Committee’s report and asked to accept it and to see that the remedy was carried out, her decision was that she lacked the authority to do this.

According to the by-laws, whenever a president makes a decision, she’s required to state her reasons. She decided not to make a decision. She said she lacked the authority and said this matter should be judged by the trustees. That’s where her letter should have stopped: on page two. But it went on to a page three, a long, additional page. She said, “Since this is an important matter, here are my comments.” And she proceeded to offer her opinion, which was to support the provost and say that the provost is right; the FHC overstepped its jurisdiction, and whenever it is doubtful like this, the rule of thumb is to deny them tenure rather than to grant it.

This sort of violates a whole canon of Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence; you give the person the benefit of the doubt. It’s the *code civil* in France where somebody is guilty until proven innocent. Here she’s using a very contrary principle.

And she was also basically wrong on the facts of my case. She said, “There’s additional material that Tim submitted that gave him an unfair



advantage.” That, unfortunately, is a blatant lie. In her case, that was, I think, born of sloppiness. I’m surprised that having decided to enter into my case that she wasn’t careful, because my case is very complicated. You need to be really careful about jumping into it like this because this unevaluated manuscript—unevaluated by AP&T and by the provost—which she said was additional material, was in fact given to AP&T a month before their deliberations. It was not additional material. She just had her facts wrong.


But then to have offered her opinion like that as a part of a statement that went to the trustees is, as my lawyer said, poisoning the well; she was creating a prejudicial atmosphere. If this were a court of law, they would have transferred the court to another venue because of her basically saying, “I can’t do this, but I want you to do my dirty work for me.”

In other words, she was casting a very clear signal to the trustees as to what her wishes were. What I feel so bad about is that she couched this in power terms to support her. It’s me,

your president, or Tim, this little insect of an assistant professor that you have to choose between. She put it into a him-or-me contest, which powered me out. I had expected an even hand from the President, and I did not get an even hand from the President.

I’m not angry with her; I don’t know her. I am *extremely* disappointed in her.

**DR:** Dr. Lomperis, you’ve been nominated various times for the Duke Alumni Undergraduate Teaching Award, you’ve received consistently high marks in the *Teacher Course Evaluation Book*. Why is that?

**TL:** Those are sort of questions you like to have other people say rather than you, you don’t want to put words and phrases in your own mouth. . . 

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<sup>1</sup> Reprinted here with permission are excerpts from a long interview published in **The Duke Review** (Summer 1994):14(6).

# David Kennedy, a Senior at Duke University, writes about . . .

## Using Tenure to Enforce Ideology<sup>1</sup>

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*David Kennedy*

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**P**rofessor Timothy Lomperis's academic accomplishments are impressive—so impressive, in fact, that they would ensure the Duke assistant professor tenure without debate at most universities in the country.

But some faculty in Duke University's Political Science Department have held Lomperis to a different standard, a standard based on politics and personality, a standard to which his credentials can never measure

up. They constitute a faction that, for almost two years, has maneuvered to block the awarding of tenure to Lomperis. Now, as Lomperis exhausts his final appeal, this faction appears on the verge of successfully ousting him.

The Lomperis case has proven so controversial and divisive within the political science department that it has shattered the traditional facade of collegiality one finds in academic departments. Lomperis and his supporters contend that his opponents are motivated not by academic concerns but rather by personal animus, ideology, and methodological bias. As Lomperis observed, "There has been ideological bias in two respects. First, National Security studies are anathema to the mind-set emanating from the liberal center of gravity of an academic

establishment. Second, many social science scholars...were weaned on the milk of the anti-war movement. Hence, they find it hard to accept reasoned and

inspirational teacher they have had at Duke. He consistently receives very high rankings in student course evaluations and has been nominated

*Just who is Timothy Lomperis and why has he encountered such virulent opposition from some of his colleagues?*

balanced scholarship on the Viet Nam War.”

“There have been people in this department who have been out to get Tim for years,” said Dr. Ole Holsti, George V. Allen Professor of Political Science and a supporter of Lomperis. “I think [the whole Lomperis affair] is a scandal. Some of my colleagues have behaved absolutely abominably—so abominably that I have a hard time understanding what could possibly motivate them. This is my thirty-first year of teaching and I have never seen anything like it.”

Lomperis is acclaimed by friend and foe alike as an outstanding teacher. His international relations courses are continually over-subscribed, and many students laud him as the finest and most

three times for the Duke Alumni Undergraduate Distinguished Teaching Award. Dr. Holsti, also the Dean of Undergraduate Studies in the department, has said, “He’s the only guy in the department that I’m willing to say, point-blank, is a better teacher than I am.”

Just who is Timothy Lomperis and why has he encountered such virulent opposition from some of his colleagues?

Lomperis works in international relations, specializing in Asian historical and political studies. His keen interest in Asia stems from his service in the Viet Nam War, where he spent two tours and worked as an intelligence analyst for the Defense Intelligence Agency. Receiving his doctorate from

Duke in 1981, he taught at Louisiana State University for three years.

In 1984, due largely to critical acclaim for his first book, *The War Everyone Lost—and Won: America's Intervention in Viet Nam's Twin Struggles*, Lomperis was brought to Duke in a tenure track position. He was later awarded a postdoctoral fellowship at Harvard and has since had two other award-winning books published. *The Odyssey of the Soul from the Upanishads to Plato* and *Reading the Wind*. His fourth book was accepted last summer by Yale University Press, perhaps the most prestigious publisher in the field of international relations. The 800-page manuscript, focusing on revolution and insurgency, has received praise for its originality and breadth. Dick Rowson, the former director of the Duke University Press and the current publisher of the Woodrow Wilson Center Press, said in the *Durham Herald-Sun* that "the current manuscript, work which I have examined, is first-class."

While Lomperis's tenure ordeal began officially in November of 1990 at

the time of the department's first consideration of the case, it had actually been simmering for much longer. Dr. Holsti related two incidents that demonstrate the deep-seated animosity of Lomperis's opponents.

Several years ago, a three-member committee of which Lomperis was a member was considering a candidate for the department from outside Duke. The chairman and the other member voted to recommend the appointment, but Lomperis voted against it. He had researched the matter, read the applicant's work, and explained his reservations in a minority report. The rest of the political science department accepted this report and voted 17-4 not to offer the candidate the position. The chairman of the committee was incensed, and Holsti paraphrased the chairman's comments to Lomperis: "I don't believe in all that democracy bullshit. You ought to know that assistant professors who make waves don't become associate professors." Holsti noted, "The gentleman in question, if that's the proper word, has spent the last years making sure that his prophecy is carried out."

The second incident occurred two years ago when Dr. Lomperis was invited to apply for a job at the University of Kentucky. Some of Lomperis's opponents called the school and made a variety of allegations about Lomperis, including a claim that he was a racist.

Thus, the stage was set for November, 1990, when a department subcommittee reviewed his case, judged his current manuscript, and recommended to the department that Lomperis be granted tenure. Although committee decisions are traditionally given deference, the department decided not to consider his case. Rather, the department decided to postpone the decision for a year, telling Lomperis that to receive tenure he was to finish his manuscript and have it accepted for publication. His request for time off to complete his work, however, was denied.

In the ensuing year, Lomperis extensively revised his manuscript, but at the time of the second vote in February, 1992, Yale Press had not yet accepted the work; teaching a full

course load for both semesters, he had delayed in submitting the manuscript to them. The department committee, the composition of which had changed since the first vote, was critical of the manuscript and voted to deny him tenure.

After the Lomperis case became public, Dr. Jerry Hough, a James B. Duke Professor of Political Science, explained in a letter to *The Chronicle*, Duke's student newspaper, that the denial of tenure was based on the quality of Lomperis's research. Hough said that Lomperis chose not to do research on the "frontiers" of his field and that "when outsiders in international relations were asked to rank him with other people of his generation in international relations, he tended to be off the scope."

Dr. Ole Holsti disagreed.

"It's just incomprehensible that anybody would argue that somehow his research hasn't met the standard," said Holsti. "I don't know of any case where an assistant professor has written

four scholarly books and somehow that has been deemed insufficient.”

Not surprisingly, Lomperis suspected that something was amiss, that behind-the-scenes maneuverings may have influenced what should have been a cut-and-dried decision. With the support of the dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Lomperis appealed the decision to the Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure Committee (A.P.&T.). When the A.P.&T. Committee declined to reverse the decision, Lomperis last summer took his appeal all the way to Duke University President H. Keith H. Brodie. In December, the *Durham Herald-Sun* quoted Lomperis as saying that Brodie told him if his new book was accepted by the Yale press and received favorable reviews, “Then we’re in business.”


Lomperis’s opponents neither challenged his right to appeal to Brodie nor Brodie’s right to overturn the department’s decision—until it appeared that Brodie might actually do so. Upon hearing that he did, indeed, intend to grant Lomperis tenure, the anti-

Lomperis faction challenged the president’s authority on the basis of a procedural ambiguity in Duke’s bylaws. Because of the pressure exerted by the opponents in the political science department and on advice from the Duke legal department, President Brodie backed down, passing the Lomperis appeal down to Duke Provost Thomas Langford for resolution.

#### *Appeal denied*

“That’s one of my major points of grievance,” said Lomperis. “You don’t let someone run an appeals process under a certain set of rules, and then after he wins, say you can’t play it that way. That just isn’t kosher.”

Such procedural shenanigans have been the staple of Lomperis’s opponents since Yale University Press accepted his latest work. Yale’s action rattled them and left them scrambling to explain their negative tenure decision. Stripped of the “poor scholarship” argument, their explanations tended to the procedural rather than the substantive. Dr. Peter Lange said in the November 24, 1992 edition of the *Durham Herald-Sun*, “A




decision by one of the strongest departments in the university, taken with a great deal of deliberation and discussion, deserves respect."

But that decision has been contested by a great many people both inside and outside the political science department. Concerned alumni have written letters, undergraduate students formed a group to petition Duke's Board of Trustees, and distinguished scholars, including Harvard's Samuel P. Huntington, M.I.T.'s Lucien Pye, and Yale's James C. Scott, have come to his defense.

The Timothy Lomperis case at Duke University is truly unfortunate because it involves more than the all-too-common decision to deny a great teacher tenure—it also includes

malicious colleagues, back-room maneuverings, the enshrinement of poor departmental judgment as some kind of holy writ, and the unwillingness of an administration to overturn an egregious error.

The case is now in limbo as Dr. Lomperis awaits the results of a final appeals process being conducted by the university ombudsman. Supporters have established a legal defense fund to aid Lomperis as he prepares to take his case to court. 

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<sup>1</sup> Repinted here with permission of the Intercollegiate Student Institute publisher of **Campus** (Spring 1993):7,16

# Dr. Lomperis tells . . .



## How the Vietnam experience helped his scholarship

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*Timothy J. Lomperis*

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**I** arrived at Bien Hoa Air Base on March 10, 1972 with a tennis racket over my shoulder. I was hoping someone would see that my shoulder was already occupied, and there wasn't room for a rifle. I was sent to Saigon and a holding company where I met two former OCS classmates at a swimming pool. They got me a job as briefing officer on General Creighton Abrams' staff. I served for a year on this staff. I stayed on for a second tour from March to August 1973 as a U.S. Defense Attaché Office intelligence

liaison officer with the Joint General Staff of the South Vietnamese Army.

Though I never got to use my tennis racket, my tours in Vietnam afforded me the opportunity, rare for a lieutenant, of a theater-level perspective on the war. This direct experience made three contributions to my subsequent career as a professor.

First, it gave me a feel for this war. There was an intersection when its history was also my history. I was there for the Easter Invasion, the Christmas Bombing, the Paris Peace Agreement, and the start of the unravelling of South Vietnam. For my students, I have something authentic to say about the politics of war.



Second, whatever the larger course of the war in which the North engulfed the South, there was a valid southern side to this struggle. I never would have appreciated this without my Vietnamese language training and all of the intense conversations with the Vietnamese I met when I was "over there". This Vietnamese focus to my scholarship is somewhat unique among academics.

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*For my students, I have something authentic to say about the politics of war.*

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Finally, as I briefed generals and ambassadors, I became painfully aware that in those secret rooms were some very good men, fighting a war with the best of intentions, who were seething with frustration over the political mysteries that lifted the prize of victory always just beyond their reach. As a

scholar, I have been driven by a passion — like a knight on a quest — to crack those mysteries. I have written three books on this quest, and the prize is still elusive, out of reach for me as well. But I have taken with me a lot of students in their classrooms and readers in their homes. It is a quest of questioning, first about Vietnam and later about their lives. These new intersections — like my first one in Vietnam — always bring new perspectives and insights.

My journey as a student, teacher, and scholar began at Bien Hoa, and I remain grateful for the opportunity my service in Vietnam gave me to use it as a path for others as well — even though I still haven't found time to use that tennis racket.



## In Memoriam

# Lewis Puller, Jr. (1946-1994)



*—A Prominent Marine, son of a prominent Marine father, and father figure is gone.—*

**Lewis Puller was  
no stereotypical  
Vietnam vet:  
Author-hero  
symbolized his  
peers' creative  
leadership**

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*John Wheeler*

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**W**hen Lewis Puller Jr.,  
who was buried  
Monday, killed

himself last week, he became a symbol  
of the tragedy of the Vietnam War. But  
he also symbolizes strength and love.  
He symbolizes the best in America's  
vets.

Last August he visited Vietnam,

where in 1968 he lost both legs to a  
booby trap. He told me how excited he  
was, that the trip meant healing and  
closure. On returning, he worried about  
Vietnam's poverty and fast-growing  
population.

He decided to help by building  
elementary schools, meeting the needs  
beyond the capacity of the Vietnamese  
government, foreign aid and World  
Bank loans. Amazingly, he got  
permission, with the first school to go in  
Vietnam's poorest province, Quang Tri,  
in the area known a generation ago as  
the DMZ—the no man's land of the  
Vietnam War. With a letter from the  
parents in Quang Tri, he was just  
beginning to raise funds.

Because of his popular  
autobiography, *Fortunate Son*, Lew also  
got many calls for help. He helped

Vietnam vets Larry Joyce and James Smith, whose sons Casey and Jamie were Army Rangers killed in Somalia: The Senate and President Clinton were breaking their promises of open hearings and a full report on the Mogadishu incident. Two days after his death, the first hearing was held and the fathers were suddenly invited to the White House where Clinton promised White House witnesses for the next hearing on Somalia.

Lew also spoke on CNN and NPR about his concern that the president has appointed so few Vietnam veterans. Fifty percent of male senators ages 39-59 (the Vietnam generation) are military alumni, as are 50% of male representatives and 43% of the total male population in that bracket. But on 18% of Clinton's Senate-confirmed appointees and 8% of senior White House staff in that group are veterans. Lew and I had campaigned for Clinton. In March, Lew told fellow vets he felt "used" by Clinton and that the White House was trying to "co-opt" him. He turned down two White House job offers.

He worked on in spite of depression and pain from his

amputations. News coverage of Lew's death has unfortunately resurrected the false stereotype that has plagued all Vietnam vets: that vets are victims, people to feel sorry for. The opposite is true. Look at Lew's accomplishments. Look at Fred Smith, founder of Federal Express; Pete Dawkins, chairman of Primerica Insurance; Jim Kimsey, founder of America Online. Vets conceived and built the Wall in Washington, D.C., and gave it to our country. We will keep on giving.

Let's remember Lew as a symbol of the goodness embodied in America's vets and honor him by fulfilling his dreams—a school in Quang Tri, helping parents of fallen soldiers learn the truth, and making sure the Clinton administration "looks like America" when it comes to military alumni.

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*John Wheeler, formerly chairman for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, is president of the Vietnamese Memorial Association, the organization co-founded by Lewis Puller Jr. to build schools in Vietnam; for further information, write P.O. Box 26176, Alexandria, VA 22313.*

# **VIETNAM VETERANS INSTITUTE CONFERENCE FOR 1994**

## **“The History and Legacy of Those Who Served and The Implications for Future Generations”**

(All seminars and talks will be conducted at the Business College auditorium,  
Univ. of Baltimore, Royale and Charles Sts.)

### **November 7**

5:30-7:00 Black tie reception. General W.C. Westmoreland is honored guest.

### **November 8**

9:30-11:00. **Hollywood's Image of The Vietnam Veteran** Dr. Peter C. Rollins and Adrian Cronauer, J.D. Moderator: Dr. J. Shorr, English, University of Baltimore

11:15-12:15 Introduction: Dr. Peter C. Rollins, Vietnam Veterans Institute  
*Keynote:* General W.C. Westmoreland, **“America's International Stature in the 1990s: The Result of Sacrifice by Our Citizen Soldiers.”**

1:45-3:30 **Vietnam Oral Histories: The Personal Experiences**, J. Eldon Yates, Chair, Vietnam Veterans Institute, Moderator: Dr. Tom Jacklin, Div. of Legal, Ethical, and Historical Studies, University of Baltimore

3:45-5:30 **Employment Disparities and The Vietnam Veteran**, Dr. Ron Trewyn; Dr. James Stever; William E. Weber, Esq.

## Day Two of The Conference: November 9th

9:30-10:45 **Censorship In Time of War: The Vietnam Legacy**, Adrian Cronauer, J.D., Moderator: Prof. Bill Weston, School of Law, University of Baltimore

11:00-12:15 Hon. Bill Hendon, “**Evidence of Living American Prisoners,**” Moderator: Dr. Richard Swaim, Dept. of Gov., University of Baltimore

*12:15-1:45 Lunch break*

1:45-2:45 **The Pow Experience—Personal Stories**, Colonel Norman McDaniel and other POWS

3:00-5:00 *Keynote Address:* and *Colloquium: Scholarship and The Pow Experience*, Moderator: Prof. Randall Beirne, Colonel, US Army, Ret. Joe P. Dunn, Department of History, Converse College, “**A Brief Survey of the Scholarship**”

*Keynote address:* Robert Doyle, “**Voices From Captivity; Interpreting The American Pow Narrative**” (UP of KS, 1994) Discussion of Doyle’s book, but also to explore this very controversial issue as fact, literary form, and as myth. This is a very timely issue. We can get scholars reading the variety of items and focusing not just on POWs, but on the ways in which we “read” Vietnam history.

*Senators Robert C. Byrd, John McCain, Larry Pressler, Bob Smith;  
Congressmen Newt Gingrich, Jim Bunning; and Lieutenant General  
Daniel O. Graham, Honorary Co-Chairmen,*

*Cordially invite you to the*

*Fifth Annual*  
***Patriot's Ball***  
*A Celebration of Service to Country!*

*Black-Tie or Military Dress preferred*

*November 10, 1994; 6 pm - midnight*

*Capital Hilton Hotel, 16th & K Streets, NW, Washington, DC*

*(202) 393-1000*

*Staring*

***The Drifters***

*Reception and Open Bar, Capital Terrace - 6:00 - 7:15 pm*

*Dinner and Dancing, Presidential Ballroom - 7:15 - 8:30 pm*

*Program 8:30 - 9:10 pm*

*Show and Dancing - 9:10 pm - midnight*

***Program***

*Award for Life Service to Veterans*

*A 3/4 life-size oil portrait by Vietnam Veteran artist, **Tom Nielsen**, will be unveiled  
Remarks by the Recipient*

*Tickets are \$60 per person and include open bar reception, dinner, and dancing.*

*Corporate Sponsorship - \$2,000 per table. For more information on corporate sponsorship or  
attendance, write the Vietnam Veterans Institute, The John Deere Building, Box 386, Timonium,  
Maryland 21094. Vietnam Veterans Institute - (410) 494 9381*

*Center for the Study of Veterans in Society*  
18 Laurelwood Drive  
Milford, Ohio 45150

## **Military Veterans: Attention!**

Disabled veterans and Vietnam-era veterans are granted affirmative action employment rights under Federal Law (38 USC 4212), but these rights are routinely denied to veterans by America's colleges and universities. Veterans in Society needs your help to restore honor and respect for military service on the college campus. Please write to the president of your alma mater to request copies of the one-page VETS-100 reports filed annually by the institution,\* then furnish the reports to Veterans in Society. The VETS-100 quantifies veterans' employment. With that data, we will be able to expedite our investigation of the problem facing veterans. The following sample letter is provided for your consideration:

Dear President \_\_\_\_\_ :

As an alumni member of \_\_\_\_\_ University, class of 19\_\_\_\_, I would like to request your assistance. You are no doubt aware that disabled veterans and Vietnam-era veterans are granted affirmative actions rights under the 1974 Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act (38 USC 4212). Included among the Department of Labor enabling regulations is a requirements for federal contractors to file a VETS-100 report annually (41 CFR 61-250); a stipulation that has been in place since 1988. In that regard:

•Would you please provide me with copies of the VETS-100 reports submitted by \_\_\_\_\_ University for the years 1987 to the present, and

•Would you provide a copy of the most recent EEO-6 report [Form IPEDS-S (10/25/93)] submitted as required by the Civil Rights and Higher Education Acts.

Your assistance in this matter is most appreciated. Thank you.

The reason for requesting the EEO-6 report in addition to the VETS-100 is that the data collection required for the VETS-100 is flawed, i.e., information regarding the university's total work force is not included. That data is provided as part of the biennial EEO-6 report, compiled to evaluate affirmative action for women and minorities.

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*Appallingly, the data are indicative of discrimination against veterans in far too many instances.*

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Veterans in Society has discovered that many colleges and universities fail to file the required VETS-100 report and that other institutions refused to provide affirmative action to veterans as mandated by federal law. This information has been submitted in testimony to the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Veterans Affairs (copies available upon request). Appallingly, the data are indicative of discrimination against veterans in far too many instances. You can help to ensure that such discrimination does not occur at your alma mater by participating in this important study.

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*(\*The service academies, covered by 38 USC 4214, are not required to file the VETS-100 Report.)*

# **The Vietnam Veterans Institute**

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*Since the Vietnam War ended, its veterans have struggled to come to grips with their experience, and society in turn has struggled to come to terms with them and with its involvement in the war. These struggles have been compounded by an enormous amount of misunderstanding about the war, those who fought it, and the reaction to it.*

**Mission** – *To develop and foster legislative, public policy, and educational initiatives that positively address issues of importance to Vietnam veterans and veterans, per se. VVI also promotes legislative initiatives on issues in support of our active duty armed forces and, domestically, the values upon which our nation was founded.*

**Organization** – *Founded in 1981, the Vietnam Veterans Institute is an incorporated, tax exempt, not-for-profit organization governed by the active Board of Directors and Trustees. It is an independent Education, Research, and Public Policy Institution.*

**Educational Programs** – *VVI develops symposia in conjunction with universities and other institutions, utilizing VVI Directors and Trustees as faculty and keynote speakers.*

**Publication** – *Journal of the Vietnam Veterans Institute*

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