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Person : McCloskey, Jack
Date : 3/2/1990
Tape N# : 106A - 107A
Time code : 00:06:20:06
Subject : Technology/Vietnam

Antonello: Can you talk about war and technology?

00:06:20:06P My experience, looking at it in itself, technology is not, it's a neutral matter, basically. I think though technology can be used both, for good and bad. And in Viet Nam a lot of it was used in a very bad sense. We had everything from what we call, button bombs, which were little bombs the size of a button, spread throughout the jungle. These were dropped by American planes, and these would not kill a person as much as maim a person, wound a person to such an extent, that it would take three or four other people to manpower to take care of that person. We had everything from that to one of the bombs that was used, that I felt was very inhumane, was what they called the fleshet bomb. And the fleshet bomb was a cluster bomb of plastic pellets, these plastic pellets would not show up on an x-ray. So these people that would be hit, children, women, men, whatever, these people that would be hit with these plastic pellets would have no recourse. There was no medical knowledge that was able to take these pellets out of their bodies. So a lot of these people suffered and died horrible deaths. These plastic pellets were actually far more expensive than metal that could be detected on an x-ray. So why would they use something like this, unless it was to demoralize the whole people. Why would they use a technology that cost much more money, when they could use just as an effective job with something that was less expensive. And I think psychologically, this had an impact on the Vietnamese people. That this is the way America demoralized that whole group of people. I also look back on it and feel, that even though with all the technology that we had in Vietnam, that could not defeat the spirit of the Viet Nameese peolpe. To me, that was a very important lesson that we needed to learn over there, that the spirit of the people, no matter how long it's going to take, will overcome the technology that's used against them.

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Antonello: So, technology didn't help win the war...?

00:08:52:19P No, my experience, I was a medic over there. My job was to patch people up that got wounded. The other good aspect of technology, the one good aspect of technology over there, is the medical advances that we got through the war. Eventhough, it was being done in a very destructive manner,

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we learned so much medically, in the technological medical field. That even today some of those lessons we learned about how to treat people in Vietnam, have saved lives today back here. The technology that was developed in Viet Nam in a medical sense, is now being used to a large extent in America, well, around the world in various medical hospitals.

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Antonello: Can you tell me something about Agent Orange?

00:09:40:19P Agent Orange was a defoliant that was manufactured to get rid of shrubbery, to see where your enemy was coming from. This was done in such an extent, that there are now still existing today, in Viet Nam, in Laos and Cambodia areas that look like the face of the moon, where nothing will grow, nothing can grow, nothing will grow for hundreds to thousands of years. It also got in the bloodstream, or got in the water stream and foodchain so that today aside from the American veteran suffering, there are still people in Viet Nam...babies being born deformed, fetuses aborted very early. That the land is still, the defoliant is still in the land, that it's ungrowable, this land is ungrowable. That at one time Vietnam was one of the largest rice producing countries in the Asian world. And now a lot of this rice has to be exported because of the agent orange. You have to look at it, also not only agent orange you had agent purple, you had agent white, you had a bunch of different herbicides and defoliants that was used. At the time that it was used, I felt that they knew but didn't let the people know that this could cause human, aside from defoliant or destroying the land, this also could cause physical damage in people. And I felt that they purposely knew that and used it anyway, without considering the effects that it would have on a culture of people, and Americans themselves.

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Antonello: How come the technology was used against the american soldier?

00:11:40:07P I think of basically, by and large, I feel that the government did not care about the American soldiers over there. That we were cannon fodder, that we were used. You have to understand that most Americans that fought in Viet Nam, came from a lower middle class background, that we were the throw away society. That a lot of the Americans were third world, poor white, and in a way we were being used as experiments to test out some of this technology, this war technology. That we didn't basically count, it didn't matter

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for the American government what happened to their soldiers that they sent over there. And that was also true when we came home. The reception that we got when we came back to the United States, we were still a throw away. Society of people either looked at us as these mentally deranged, drug crazed veterans, that first of all, lost their war, and second of all, the people that they were suppose to relate to with the most, their own peer group, rejected them. And this had a great psychological impact on the veterans when they came home.

Antonello:

00:13:06:20P Well, I joined the navy in 1963, I had never heard of Viet Nam. Once I went into the navy, I wanted to become a medic. I didn't recognize at that time that the marine corp didn't have their own medical field, so when I went into the navy, went through navy boot camp, basic training, then through, went through navy medical course school and then got drafted into the marine corp, and went through five weeks of basic marine corp boot camp and then medical field service school. And then got attached to the marine corp, my first time in combat was not in Viet Nam, was in the Dominican Republic when they sent the six marines from Camp LeGuene, N. Carolina where I was stationed at the time, down to the small quote shall we say revolution in the Dominican Republic. I was only there for about a month and a half, but did see combat.

00:13:58:09P I got out of the service, started auditing some classes at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia where I grew up. Tending bar across the street met a woman who was a quaker who eventually became my wife, and when I got called, I got called back into the service, I'll never forget this. I got a telegram July, 4th, 1967, saying you have been reactivated, report to the Philadelphia naval shipyard. Your military obligation is six years, eventhough I had been in for four years, had gotten out, they called me back in which they had the legal right to do. By this time I was somewhat anti-war, by the quaker influence., was not very active politically whatsoever. Was what, 24 when I got the telegram, felt that I had to go to Viet Nam, felt it was my generation's war, there was a part of me that grew up in South Philadelphia where I grew up. Everybody went into the service, that was one of the ways we made it out of our ghettos, it was a stepping stone. And I didn't say that I went over there to fight Communism, I did go over there with a very strong catholic belief that communism was wrong, growing up very strict catholic.

00:15:19:01P When I got to Viet Nam, my thinking began to change very rapidly, as soon as I was over there in fact. I refused to carry a weapon, instead of a

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weapon, I carried in my holster that they issue with a 45, I left the 45 behind and carried battle dressing in my holster. I was older, I turned 25 in Viet Nam, and for me I not only had to be a medic, I also had to be a counselor to a lot of these guys. Guys getting "Dear John" letters, guys committing atrocities, guys seeing their buddies get hurt, I had to do a lot of counseling with these people. Personally, I started withdrawing, saying okay, I'm here, I got a job to do but I don't want to know these people. When guys got into my company, I didn't want to know where they were from, I didn't want to know anything about them. Because my way of survival was closing off my emotions.

00:16:22:11P When I came back from Viet Nam, being wounded there twice, being decorated for bravery, I still came back very much against the war. I had been back less than two weeks, went to the first anti-war march, large antiwar march here in San Francisco in October of 1968, had been back from Viet Nam less than two weeks. Remember marching and getting up by the podium and hear the speakers all saying, " killer, killer, killer," that got to me. I was very much for peace, I could not join the peace movement in America, I started going to school, going back to back college, noticing at demonstrations, still going to demonstrations, but noticing at demonstrations a lot of guys that were a little bit older had a certain look about them. And started talking with them and formed a group called Veterans for peace, which eventually became a chapter of Viet Nam Veterans against the War, and I became a national organizer and then the national president of Viet Nam Veterans Against the War. My way of dealing with that experience in Viet Nam was, being very political, by organizing veterans. After a while though, I noticed that coming to these meetings guys were coming drunk, guys were coming high, stoned, a lot of heroin, a lot of other various drugs that they were taking. And I started withdrawing from political activity and started doing counseling, although I remained very political, still going to demonstrations. I wasn't spending all of my time just doing political organizing, I started doing counseling with veterans.

00:18:05:07P Formed a group, from Viet Nam Vets Against the War we formed a group called Twice Born Men, which we got from a catholic priest here in America, Father Barrigan, that talked about when he was underground, that people that go through the military system, people that go through the prison system, facing and working through their fears is being "Twice Born." And that's what we felt we were, not with the religious connotation of the word, but that we went through a horrible experience, we took this experience and instead of using our experience in destructive ways, we started

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using them in positive ways. At the same time, a lot of these guys that were doing this work were leading very self destructive lives themselves. From there I cofounded a group here in San Francisco called Swords to Ploughshares which is a veterans rights organization. For the last seventeen years, and then got hired by the veterans I used to..it was ironic I was leading a demonstration at the veterans' hospital against agent orange, and why the VA was not recognizing it and doing anything about it. And a week later, the veterans' administration hired me as a consultant to set up a program nationwide to deal with the psychological readjustment problems of Viet Nam Veterans. I quit working there in 1984, working for the veterans' administration, because I felt it was lying to the veterans, I felt it became part of the bureaucracy that was keeping veterans down.

00:19:49:07p The program

worked very well for three years. The first three years we had an existence, we had it set up in neighborhoods, we did not want the free adjustment counseling going on in the VA hospitals because of the veterans' feelings about the Veterans' Administration. So we had these neighborhood, what we called neighborhood centers and it worked well. The problem was that it was working so well, it was showing up the veterans' administration. I knew the end was coming when I got a phone call, a national phone call, a national conference phone call, when they were saying to us play down the question of agent orange, don't talk to these guys about agent orange. When they started saying to us, you can no longer go into the bars, the pool halls or the street corners where these veterans hang out, that you can only work 9-5, I knew then that a program that I took a great deal of pride in in the beginning was becoming a bureaucratic nightmare, because it was working so well.

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Antonello: What do you mean by, "the duty of your generation was Vietnam?"

00:21:01:06p You have to understand that my generation was raised on the second world war. That I remember as a kid, sitting around listening to my uncles, my father talking about their experiences in the second world war. That there was that feeling of patriotism that America had after the second world war. Watching John Wayne movies, watching all of these movies on tv, Combat and things like that, that part of my generation, especially if you were a male, you wanted to go into the service. You wanted to see your war, you wanted to prove yourself, could I have done what my father had done? Was I a coward? I grew up with... the only two feelings in South Philadelphia, basically, that I grew up with, that a

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man was allowed to show either being horny or angry, other feelings we were not allowed to develop. And I think that carried a lot of us to Viet Nam, that we joined because of our wanting to see if we could do what our fathers did. I joined in because of the whole political arena here at the time that, here with this country and if we don't fight it there it will be here. So a lot of us joined..raised, also raised very anti communist. So the patriotism that we formed as children carried over and we did join the service. A lot of us went to Viet Nam believing in it, a lot of us came home very disillusioned, not believing in it. At the same time, though, I feel that we were very patriotic.

00:22:42:19P The anger

that a Viet Nam veteran feels, the alienation that a lot of us felt, the frustration a lot of us felt. To me are signs of sanity, not insanity. How else can you come from that experience not feeling these things, the problem is, you need a setting to help yourself work through these problems. I still have difficulties myself with my experience in Viet Nam. Sometimes it's easier for me to deal with my physical wounds that still disable me today, than it is with the psychological wounds I felt that I got from that war. I...still have a nightmare when I get very stressed out, and what that nightmare is, that I reach into my medic bag, my medic and I pull out a battle dressing, and as I open this battle dressing it turns into a body bag, and a body bag is where we put the dead people. And this comes back to me when I'm very stressed out. I don't think anybody, whether it's from Viet Nam or any war that really saw combat, will ever forget it. I think the difference is that not only did the Viet Nam veterans see more combat than its second world war2 counterpart, we actually did see more combat. We also faced combat when we came home, my father came back to a country that accepted him. He also came back via a troop ship, where he had enough time to talk about his experiences, to work through some of these experiences. He also went into the service trained as a unit, fought as a unit and returned as a unit, unless he was wounded.

00:24:30:22P My generation went to Viet Nam as an individual which had a psychological impact on you, especially if you were assigned to a combat unit, because people would not accept you right away, until you have "proven" yourself, because their survival depended on that. Most importantly though, is the nature of the war itself, the technology of the weapons that we used were so destructive. The way that we were taught to treat the Vietnamese people, as if they were not human. Then the most important thing, I think, is when we came back. Seventy two hours before, I was literally in combat in Viet Nam, seventy two hours later, I'm on the streets of San Francisco. And for me, what my survival instincts and my survival mechanism

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were in Vietnam, were definitely not the type of things you need in a "civilized society" back here. I had a very difficult problem readjusting to that, readjusting to American society. There was a part of me that felt, I had all these dreams when I was in Vietnam of returning home and what I would receive. All these dreams turned out to be lies, as the Viet Nam war turned out to be a lie.

00:25:41:13P I still

have bitterness, I still have resentment, not against the American people as much as against my government. I think my government wasted a lot of people for nothing, one of the things that angers most, is that three times the number of people that served in Viet Nam have died since they were released to civilian life, than were actually killed in combat. That angers me. The number of Viet Nam veterans in prisons today, angers me, although I want to say, not all.. there are people that have made it back here. "Made it," meaning, having a full time job, working. A lot of us were able to go to school. I know that for me, if it had not been for the service, I would have never gone to college. I'm the first one in my generation to go to university, and I think it was because of my Viet Nam experience. I feel that the lessons we learned from Viet Nam, we've lost today. I think if you look at Grenada, if you look at Panama, we've not learned a thing. I think we're, this country, is still based on greed, that our government is still based on greed. I think that country uses the technology that we had in Viet Nam and even though it may be not used back here, it is sold to third world countries. I think we are a basic military industrial complex, and that's where the money in this country is made. And I feel that the younger generation are somewhat apathetic, that they have not applied themselves. I think there's a lot of things going on in this country that people should be involved in. Problems like the homeless, a problem like working conditions and I feel that people want to go out and make a buck, and that's it.

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Antonello: When and how did you realize that you had been cheated?

00:00:44:03P Well, I felt cheated in two ways. First of all, I felt cheated in the sense that, what I learned as a kid, turned out to be not true, that my country can be wrong. I felt cheated that way. I also felt cheated with the, what I felt was tremendous waste of lives. Unlike our other wars where you go in and gain so much ground; Viet Nam, we would go in, we would fight, then we would withdraw. And all these lives being wasted, both American and Vietnamese lives, I began to feel cheated then. That, if we're here to win this war,

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why are we doing these type of things, why aren't we winning it? I felt cheated in the sense that, some of the battles I was in, I would pick up a Stars & Stripe, which was the newspaper in Viet Nam and read about this battle. And they were saying we had light casualties, and half my company got wiped out. I felt cheated in the sense that, there was no sense to the whole thing, there was no reasoning behind it, it was just destructive waste of life. When you have a society that creates things like, free fire zones, where anything that lives in that zone is fair game. When you have a society that invents plastic pellets that cannot show up in x-rays, when you have a society where you are taught that these people that you are fighting are non-human, that they are gooks, slopeheads, then you have a sick society. And I believed in America from the beginning, I believed that my country was perfect, that it was our job to go over and to defend other people. It was our job to show the world, "how to do the right thing."

00:02:41:20P What I found out from the Viet

Namese people is that America can be wrong. I felt cheated that way, but I still feel myself being very patriotic because I still love my country today, except, I want my country to be, "what it says it is in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights." I feel cheated in that sense, both morally and physically cheated. one of the things I felt cheated about when I came home, was the inability to be able to run with my children, because physically I got shot through my knee and I have a bad leg. And I felt cheated in that sense. That's not to say if it were a just war, which I don't feel any war is just today. That's not to say that it would be easier to live, where you feel cheated is that you know those Americans died over there, died for nothing. You know the Americans that came back and the treatment they got was for nothing, you feel cheated in this way. You feel cheated in a sense, that here you have given your all, you've given everything, including your blood and you come back to a country that's corrupt. You come back to a country that treats its veterans as if they were throw away garbage, you come back to a country that's still lying to create more Viet Nams. I feel cheated that way, I feel cheated because i see a new generation of Americans going into the service not understanding, not being able to question why, I feel cheated that way. Because I feel, this generation, especially from the experience of Viet Nam veterans, needs to question their country. My generation never questioned our country and I feel this generation needs to, that's how I feel cheated. I feel cheated that the whole experience in VIet Nam in the school system is nothing, is not taught, is glorified; I feel cheated that way, that our country glorifies war. And no war is glorification.

00:04:49:07P I still have

feelings of pride, that I want my country to be right, I still have feelings of pride that my country has accomplished a lot. At the same time I feel cheated because all this technology that my country developed is not being used for good, for the good of mankind, I think it's still being used for war and destruction, and that's where I feel cheated. You've got to understand, as I've made promises to dead people, that this would never happen again. And when a new generation does not go out and start seeing what happened over there, twenty years later, thirty years later we are going to create the same type of situation. More people are going to go in, more people are going to die, more people back here, the big wigs will make a lot of money. And for what? For what? I feel cheated that way.

Antonello: It was the American Dream going.....

00:05:56:15P Yes. I think for me Viet Nam was the shattering of the American dream. That I totally believed in the American dream, that in some extent I still believe in the American dream. But the Vietnam experience itself, especially, if you were a white male that fought over there. I think for us that was the shattering of the American dream. I think if you were Latino or Black over there, and fought, it wasn't that type of shattering that it did for the White person, because that Black person or that Latin person grew up in a society that was racist to begin with. For the American White male, our American dream was to go into the service to better ourselves, our American dream was that my country couldn't do any wrong. And for that, for some of that experience, that American dream was shattered. And when any dream is shattered, I think you have a sense of being cheated, a sense of loss.

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Antonello: what is the reality of war?

00:07:45:15P The reality of war is, that once you get shot in a real war, you don't get up as you do in the movies and make another movie. The reality of war is when you step on a landmine. I remember the first guy I ever treated was an 18, 19 year old marine, and he had stepped in a landmine, and I ran up to him and he said, " Doc, Doc, I'm going to live, ain't I?" And I remember him dying, and I remember me crying. I remember me crying at the next one, and I remember me crying at the next one, so I got to a point, where for me to cry, for me to feel anymore, would have meant my own survival. So I had to shut down all my emotion, I felt cheated that way. Where you have kids screaming for their moms as they're

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dying, that's the reality of war. Where you have people that are maimed for life, that are psychologically damaged for life, that's the reality of war. War is not pretty, war is not a glorification, and i feel that's what people need to look at. I feel, even today, with the movies coming out, even the movies Born on the Fourth of July, which I just saw, there's still parts of that that glorify war. And I feel that war does not need to be glorified.

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Antonello: What were you taught before going to Vietnam?

00:09:14:05P They taught me to believe in my country. That if my country called me to go, they taught me that we were the best country in the world, that we were in fact, the most superior country in the world, and it was our duty to take us throughout the world. They taught me that it was okay to fight. What they didn't teach me, that once you fought, a lot of your feelings would die inside you, and it would take a long time for these feelings to come back. What they didn't teach me, that once you got wounded, it was for life and not just for that period of the war you were in. What they didn't teach me, is that children today don't understand that. I feel it's my generation that fought the war, it is my generations' duty as it was my duty to go then, my duty now is to tell people to question why. That's the legacy that I feel I have to leave to my children, to not buy anything at face value anymore, to question why. That way, I think it will appease within my own soul, my feelings of what I did in Viet Nam.

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Antonello: What kind of technical training did you receive before going to Vietnam?

00:10:48:01P Oh, I had, I had very good training in the medical field, although it was very intensive. This time, when I went through medical training there was no war, "it was not a big thing." So I had extensive training for a long long time. They taught me everything of how to suture somebody, I performed on the battle field what they call, traechotomies, to sewing people right up right on the battle field. I felt my medical training was very good, the problem was that there was not enough of us. I was there during the year the heaviest fighting, the Tet Offensive of 1968. I was with the marine company that retook Way, and we had a lot of casualties and a lot of medics were being wounded or killed themselves, so we didn't have enough medics to go around. The other

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training was the first time I went through marine corp training, I learned how to shoot a weapon, both a 45 and an M1. The second time when I got called back in, I refused to pick up a weapon, so I got a lot of hassle from people that way. I also was taught, I remember the second time going through this, "mini marine boot camp," what they called field medical service school, we had an Asian fellow with us. And him being brought up in front of the company, and they said, "this is what a gook looks like, this is what your enemy looks like." And here this person was American, so I imagine what he felt being up there in front of all these people.

00:12:36:18P They taught me how to be racist, which is something that i felt that my family at least didn't teach me. They taught me how to be racist in a sense that these people we were fighting, they were always subjected to the.. you were told that they were non human. You were told that their value of life wasn't the same as yours. You were told that these people didn't really care, and yet when I went to Viet Nam I felt that those people cared just as much about their sons and daughters as we felt about ours. I was taught ... I was taught that war was right, that's what i was taught. And all throughout my training, from day 1 when I joined the navy all my medical training through field service corps training, to advanced infantry training, I was taught war was right. And that's a belief system that in a way I went to Viet Nam with, eventhough I didn't carry a weapon, I still wanted to see if i could make it, if i could face combat and do my job without being a coward, or without freezing under fire. And I proved to myself that I could do that, but to what avail. I feel the other thing that I was taught was, now that I can question, that's, to me, that's the most important lesson. That now I can question, that I will never buy anything at face value again that my country has told me.

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Antonello: What about fear?

00:14:30:06P Fear.....I'm not laughing at the question, I feel..fear can be very addictive in a way, that adrenaline rush that you get, which is brought on by fear, is a feeling I've never experienced before in my life or after since I went to Viet Nam, since I've been home. In fact, ny first few months back to the United States, I would go down to the tenderloin area of San Francisco, three four o'clock in the morning, to walk around just to feel that adrenaline rush again. Fear can be an aphrodisiac, I mean, what fear does to you, all your senses become so vivid and so real, your sense of smell, you

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have a sixth sense of looking at things. And I think this is because of your survival instinct, and I think fear kept some people alive. I mean, you have to look at fear for what it is, fear made me not take stupid chances. Fear also made me take some risk, there's a difference between risk and stupid chances. I know today, I don't have any fear of dying, that doesn't phase me. I have a fear that it's going to happen again, that bothers me, that we haven't learned. Fear is...the first time I was in combat and shot at, I literally pissed my pants, that's how afraid i was. But I kept going, I kept going because I felt I had to do that, so..it wasn't as much as that I wanted to, it was that I didn't want people to consider me a coward. So that feeling overrode the fear, eventhough I was very afraid of being hurt or being killed. I had to go out and continue what i was doing because I didn't want people to think that i couldn't hack it or couldn't make it.

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Antonello: Does fear cause soldiers to shoot their own...?

00:17:08:12p I have seen experiences where Americans have killed other Americans through fear, this is because, you have to understand that once you're in combat, if you hear a noise, you're going to turn around and spray that area. And I've seen our own people shoot our own people because of fear of being hurt themselves. But I don't think this is, I think this is true in every war that that happens. Fear makes you do things that you're ashamed of doing also. I know that right before I left Vietnam, I was so afraid of being hurt, that we had gone into a vill, we would sleep in the vill, we got opened up once and we returned fire ourselves and some women and children were hurt, and I had two weeks left to go and I hid behind a rock. Because i was not going to go out into that battle zone, and I'm very ashamed of that today, but fear made me do that. That I did not want to expose myself, I had had enough by that time.

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Antonello: How were you taught to kill other human beings?

00:18:32:22p First of all they teach you that these other people are not human beings, that their quality of life is not the samer as yours. Therefore, they are not human beings. You kill because you don't want to be killed yourself; and it's easier to kill somebody if that person is not considered human. So psychologically, you are prepared that these people are animals, you are taught that they are not human.

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So you will kill them, you will kill them any way you can.
And the more that you kill of them, the better it is
supposedly for you. That's your training.

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Antonello: What happened to you when you started killing people?

00:19:17:14P The people that I killed were Americans, I didn't kill any
Vietnamese, I didn't carry a weapon, but I did kill
Americans because we had people wounded sometimes during the
middle of the night, especially with a gut wound, that I
know would suffer all night, we couldn't get him a medivac out of
there, and I OD'd them on morphine. I killed them myself
with morphine, and I don't think any of them would have made
it, but it still doesn't feel good with me today. Sometimes
I look at their faces, sometimes they asked me to do it,
sometimes I did it on my own because I didn't want to see
them suffering, I knew they wouldn't. I felt that they
wouldn't live throughout the night. So my killing, if you
want to say it's mercy killing, I don't consider it mercy
killing. I think killing is killing, period. But my killing
was killing of other Americans, and I feel cheated that I
had to do that.

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Antonello: There was racism against the Japanese in WWII...

00:20:59:04P When they are animals, when they are subhuman, when you
destroy their culture. One of the things that we did in Viet
Nam was, we would take people, you have to realize that the
Viet Nameese believe in ancestral worship, which means that
their land and their ancestors, where they're buried, that
is their ground, that is where they stay. What we did in
Viet Nam, is we gathered people from the small villages, put
them into what we call relocation zones, what we did is we
ripped them off of their culture. We relocated them from,
where they had been living for thousands and thousands of
years, where their belief system was in that land, where it
was handed down from generation to generation to generation.
And we destroyed that land, plus we moved these people
from it, ad we couldn't understand why, later they had such
a resentment against us, we couldn't understand why we they
would look at us with hatred. That happens when you have a
truckload of marines going down the road, taking hard cans
of food and seeing the Viet Nameese children begging for this
food, and people actually throwing it as hard as they could,
trying to score a hit to hurt one of these kids. And what
kind of behaviour is that? And the reason we did that type

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of behaviour, was again, we were taught that these people were not human.

00:20:59:04P When they are animals, when they are subhuman, when you destroy their culture. One of the things that we did in Viet Nam was, we would take people, you have to realize that the Viet Nameese believe in ancestral worship, which means that their land and their ancestors, where they're buried, that is their ground, that is where they stay. What we did in Viet Nam, is we gathered people from the small villages, put them into what we call relocation zones, what we did is we ripped them off of their culture. We relocated them from, where they had been living for thousands and thousands of years, where their belief system was in that land, where it was handed down from generation to generation to generation. And we destroyed that land, plus we moved these people from it, ad we couldn't understand why, later they had such a resentment against us, we couldn't understand why we they would look at us with hatred. That happens when you have a truckload of marines going down the road, taking hard cans of food and seeing the Viet Nameese children begging for this food, and people actually throwing it as hard as they could, trying to score a hit to hurt one of these kids. And what kind of behaviour is that? And the reason we did that type of behaviour, was again, we were taught that these people were not human.

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Antonello: ...soldiers of WWII were sending souvenirs home...?

00:23:04:17P Oh, we did that...we had in Viet nam, marines that would cut off the ears of tha people they killed and would make necklaces out of these ears. And wear these ears around their necks on this necklace until they actually rotted off. We hadwe desecrated dead bodies, that's not the same to say the Viet Nameese didn't do it to us also, but it was very common in the Marine corp, we would leave, say, a calling mark. A card or something, we would torture people we would take peope up in helicopters, we had maybe five Viet Nameese that were suspected Vietcong or NVA, and we would take five of these people up in a helicopter. And I actually saw this happen. Where we would ask the first one to give this information, he wouldn't give us information, we'd throw him out of the helicopter, eventually one of them would give us information. Again, this is because our belief system was that these people weren't human, that was racist. There also was racism within the American army itself, you had a lot of the blacks and other veterans of color, the majority of them were on the front line with the poor whites. They made up a larger majority of the casualties in

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the people killed. That was racism. In the back, in the field, in my grunt company, grunt meaning combat company, we were infantry company, there was no racism in the field. We came back to the, from the bush, we came back to what they called a sitdown or a standdown area, there would be confederate flags flying. The Blacks would congregate one place, the Latins another place, the Whites another place. We have what we called the juicers and the heads, the juicers were the older guys who use to drink all the time, and the heads were the younger guys that, we used to smoke a lot of pot and do other drugs right in Viet Nam.

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Antonello: What about the the behavior and relationship between...?

00:25:23:06P There was, you have to understand that Viet Nam was, in actuality, three wars. You had when the first troops went over in 64, 65, where America still believed in it. My war was during 67, we'd say from 67-69, where we back home, we began to question the war. The latter part of the war, 71 up to 75, is where you would have whole companies of men refusing to fight, basically saying, we're not going to go, we're not going out there....

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Antonello: What was the relationship between the officers and the men?

00:26:19:06P Viet Nam was the first war that invented a word called fragging; fragging was when you had an officer or a noncombedioned officer that was giving you a lot of "shit," that either put your life in jeopardy by stupidity, or harassed you when you were not fighting. And a lot of these people were killed by their own people, there was a basic mistrust of your higher authority, in Viet Nam in the field itself. If your officer was good, your platoon commander was good, he went along with the men, he could not give "orders, okay let's go in here and do this and that," because he's not going to make it himself. And the ones that made it, learned that very quickly. There were fraggings over there, they especially happened in the rear. After you've been in combat, you come back, you want to just relax you don't want to have to put up with a lot of crap. There was a basic mistrust because we felt that the higher authorities were lying to us, we knew what was going on. And yet, we would be fed this other story. Again, this would be like, my company took light casualties, when half my company was wiped out. This is what was told to the general public at large, by higher authorities. So there was a basic mistrust of higher

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authorities. It was ironic, when we would come back from the field, there was this place called China Beach, which is right outside of Denang, and here would be all these officers living in air conditioned huts and sort of houses. Where they had cold beer all the time, where they had clubs that they could go to, where they had steak every night, where we were in the bush eating whatever we could get our hands on basically. So there was a lot of mistrust, because the technology that kept the war going also provided a lot of comfort for people that was not actually fighting. So you saw that dichotomy almost, of here these people were, living in the rear, living a life of leisure, when basically, we were in the jungle with our uniforms rotting off of us, and it was unequal that way. The corruption that went on over there, that the higher ups had their own system. We again, I felt, were the cannon fodder, we were not given anything. So you build up feelings that goes along with this type of behavior. And a basic feeling is that you are not going to trust anybody up there telling you what to do. You're not going to trust that person until you feel you can. You're not going to just go in and do things because somebody tells you to do them. And that's why I feel fragging was, did happen too. In the latter stages of the Viet Nam war a lot of men, American soldiers were killing their own officers, were maiming their own officers. And that was because of the conditions. Who wants to be the last person to die for nothing?

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Antonello: officers in the Vietnam war...?

00:02:12:17P Well, you have what they call the lifers, these are people that made a career out of the military. These were people that would do things like, have their men rush a machine gun nest, because they wanted to get a medal. These were people that, their careers came first over human life, and the more "kills" that their company got, the better their career would advance. And they would waste lives for their because of their stupidity. We began to realize that, we meaning the average grunt, the average soldier began to realize that, and started saying, no we're not going to let you put our lives in jeopardy anymore. And started reacting to it, and their reaction was sometimes killing these people. I'm not going to say that that was right because it wasn't, but at the same time I'm going to say, perhaps some of them needed not to be in that situation, perhaps some of them learned a lesson before it was too late. Some of them didn't, some of them were killed.

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Antonello: Did the officers have a public relations dept as they did in WWII?

00:03:52:22P Well, i think General Westmoreland did the same thing. I think he also had what they call your five o'clock folly. You have to recognize that I feel a lot of the war correspondence during the second world war, actually went out into the bush with the people, with the men. I don't think that happened to that extent in Viet Nam. I think most of the people lived in Saigon or Di Nang, and would have the five o'clock follies. There were certain people that did go out in the field, but I feel by and large, the media was fed a line and bought it, hook, line and sinker. I don't think it was until, actually, the media back here, in America started to expose the war. I mean, it wasn't exposed by the media that were actually in Viet Nam. The Pentagon Papers, Seymour Hirsch about the My Lai incident, these were all things that happened back here in the US. The media I felt, should have known and should have been able to report a more accurate dicription of what was going on in Viet Nam, And I think what they did, was buy right into the military and "in a way, again, glorified the war." I mean, they tried to do the same, that one shot at it, ...I always remember one of the things that made me go into the service, was watching that shot of the marines putting up a flag in Iwo Jima, that was an image that a lot of us grew up with. And I think the media in Viet Nam tried to portray the Kayson(?) incident, here these guys under all this trememndous pressure and stress and being bombed everyday, and still holding out, I think tried to create that same situation that they did in Imogima. The problem was it didn't work in Viet Nam. I felt that most of the media over there were young, and for them that was their generation, they wanted to see what it was like as a correspondent. I don't feel they did a very good job of it. I also feel, that people say that the media was censored in Viet Nam, I don't agree with that. I think the media censored themselves, that it wasn't the governmemnt that censored them as much as the media themselves, censored themselves, about what was really going on over there. I think if the media from the beginning had been telling the truth, perhaps that war would not have lasted as long.

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Antonello: Were there contradictions between what the media was writing and the war as you knew it?

00:06:48:01P What I was experiencing and what in actuality came out in the media, was totally two different things, two different worlds. I would read, again, I would read about a battle,

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and saying that we got light casualties, when i know half my company were wiped out. The portrayal in "the official paper," that was given to the servicemen in Viet Nam, the Stars and Stripe, made it look as if we were winning this war. One of the proudest moments that I feel I have, is when Viet Nam veterans against the war did demonstrations in this country, and one of the things we did, is we took over the statue of liberty. And I was with a group of veterans that took over the South Viet Nameese consulate here in San Francisco, and we had a teletype going straight to Viet Nam saying, stop the war, stop the war, stop the war. But we also were able because of the pressure we were being able to put on the media here, we were able to get published in the paper in Viet Nam, in the Stars and Stripes, about these demonstrations being done by Viet Nam veterans against the war. They actually had shots of the guys holding the Statue of Liberty, occupying the Statue of Liberty. And that was one of our demands, that unless we were able to show the soldiers that were a group of veterans back here that had been there in Viet Nam, had fought, came home and said your war is wrong. That we had some influence on the media that way.

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Antonello: What films were shown to the soldiers while you wre in Vietnam?

00:08:36:11P Well, when I was in the service, the film that was shown most was called The Sands of Iwo Jima. This is in during my marine training, this was a John Wayne film. Sargeant Striker going out, he gets killed of course at the end. But all these war films were shown. This was part of our upbringing, and when we went into the military, they were shown too. And then you had the actual propaganda film shown by the services themselves. That, war is good, war is right and war is blah blah blah, and these films, you would always see this clean cut American male being portrayed as this super entity, super person, when you know in reality that was bullshit. You don't come out of a battlefield looking that clean, that you saw some of these guys coming out of these films that they were showing, not being dirty, not being raggedy looking, I mean, they would be coming out looking like they were coming out of a recruitment station. And that was not the reality of how we looked or felt when we came out of combat. You know, you would see these guys coming back from a mission or some operation with smiles on their face. Very rarely did I or the people that I was with come back from the bush after fighting in the jungle, had a smile on their face, at all.

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Antonello: Were you watching these films while you were in Vietnam?

00:10:18:18P We were in, when we would come back from the bush in De Nang, we would have an area that we'd go to. They have a big movie screen, we would be shown films like COMBAT, the tv series; you have to remember there was tv in Viet Nam. And we were shown films like combat, we were shown films like Sands of Iwo Jima, Green Beret, I mean, that was hilarious, watching Green Beret when you're in Viet Nam. That was hilarious, it was so funny. Yet these were shown right in the country itself while we were out there fighting.

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Antonello: What was the soldiers' reactions to these kinds of films?

00:11:00:03P We were laughing, because we knew that it wasn't real. We were actually laughing, it was funny to us, to watch COMBAT and to watch Sands of Iwo Jima and Green Beret, were funny to us. Because that was not the reality we were seeing everyday.

Antonello: What about Show Business coming to Vietnam?

00:11:25:14P I remember Bob Hope and Martha Raye coming there. Martha Raye doing Hello Dolly, and I remember Bob Hope coming and I was, we were with what they call the reactionary force, and we were watching Bob Hope on the stage and my battalion got called out, to go back out and fight. And I remember us all getting up and throwing our beer cans on the stage at Bob Hope. And we felt it was ridiculous, they would,..it was very sexist too, they would bring all these women out with these scanty attire, dancing all around. And these guys with all the ga ga eyes, lusting after these, it was very sexist. Yet, you know, Bob Hope made millions and millions of dollars from Viet Nam. He would do, they would film him doing all these productions, then they would show it back here in the US, and I personally have an intense dislike for Bob Hope. I think he used war to make his own image better, he used war to make money off of, make money off of us. I think that a lot of the people that went over, were just as naive as the soldiers, I think a lot of the women that went over there, the USO troops, I think they were just as naive as the soldiers. In a sense they were also being used, they believed that they had to go over and "cheer up" the troops. But when you look back on it, when I look back on it now, I think they were just as used as we were.

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Antonello: What about sex and drinking? How were these used by the army?

00:13:14:04P It depended on where you were. Most GI's used prostitutes. There was a difference between the type of "prostitute" I would see when I came back or right in the bush than the people that were in the rear. You had all these bars in the cities, where you had these bar girls working. Most of the women working in these establishments were people from the peasant background, and that was the way they were supporting their family. So they were exploited too. Sex in any war is something that becomes mentally masturbating yourself almost, you would use another human body to relieve your own tensions sexually. But it meant nothing to you, it meant nothing to you, but it was human nature to try and satisfy these needs. There were areas where the prostitutes were given medical check ups, to see that they didn't have venereal disease, this is very common over there. Of medics going in, checking them out and seeing that they didn't have a venereal disease. There were areas where there were "whorehouses" that were just for officers and just for enlisted men.

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Antonello: What about class. Were officers from the upper classes...?

00:15:10:23P I think , yeah, basically the person from the upper class, either didn't go, had ways to get out of going or went, if they did go, got a job that did not expose them to that much combat unless they wanted that. For every person that was in the field fighting, there were four technicians behind them, doing radar, that type of thing. These were the people that were, the educated people, that either got drafted or went into the service on their own. These are the people that wound up doing jobs that would not expose them that much to combat. Most of the people that actually fought, came from a lower middle class background or lower class background. And again, that was our society, that's how we were raised, that, we wanted to go in. That was one of the ways for my class to get out of that area, or that way that we grew up. We were taught that going into the service was advancement, that we had to do this, that perhaps some of this training would help us when we got out of the service. I know, again for me, I would never have been able to go to college without going into the service. Because of the GI Bill which was very inadequate when I came home, but also I felt, there's an exposure when you are put in with various people from various backgrounds, that helps you think . I had never been exposed to people from the south before until I went

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into the service, I had not been exposed to people of color that much before, until I went into the service. There was a comradeship that built up, especially in a combat unit, that knew no class, that knew no color. And one of the things I found very ironic to me, was coming back, and a friend of mine Angel, that lives in Spanish Harlem, if I wanted to go see him, he would have to take me into Spanish Harlem, because I'm white. If he wanted to go see me in South Philly, I'd have to take him, because he's Puerto Rican. You understand what I'm saying? That there was that no color barrier in Viet Nam, yet back in our own country, there was still a color barrier and a racism back here.

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Antonello: Would you call this feeling class solidarity?

00:17:51:05P Yes, I think it was class solidarity from the aspect of survival, also. That you were thrown in with these people. These people became you family, these people are basically, no matter where they were from, were not that much different from you. In a sense of education, background; so there was a class of itself. There was a class of itself right in Viet Nam, you have what we called REMFs, which were what we called Rear Echelon Mother Fucks. These were guys who didn't see combat. Then you had the Grunts; these grunts were the guys that actually did the fighting. There was a whole disparity between these two groups of people. We would come back, and we couldn't believe the conditions that people in the rear were living in, it was unbelievable for us, that they would have cold beer, they would have refrigerators, they would have air conditioning, this was unbelievable for us. And that was sometimes hard to take itself. I had to get a pair of jungle boots on the black market because I have a small foot, and I couldn't get any through my battalion, because we just didn't have any in my size. So I had to go down to the small vill and get a pair on the black market.

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Antonello: Did you ever hear of american planes bombing american soldiers?

00:19:34:16P I think by accident that happened, yes. I think what more happened, American soldiers being killed by their own American artillery, that somebody would mess up and not give the right coordinates. Or somebody wouldn't say there was a patrol out there at night, and somebody else, another outfit will see movement and call an airstrike or call in artillery. What's ironic about that, these people are not

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considered casualties, if they are killed by their own artillery, that's considered Friendly Fire, and they are not considered casualties of the war. I find that very ironic.

Antonello: In incidents like that what did the army say happened?

00:20:22:02P They would say it was an accidental death.

00:20:36:18P They did not say..no..that's the thing they did not say. They did not say your son died in combat, they said your son died in an accident. There was a very excellent book called Friendly Fire, of a woman who got, whose son was killed by friendly fire. And she couldn't understand so she did a whole investigation, because they were trying to tell her it was an accident, and she did a whole investigation to find out it was our own people that killed him.

Antonello: Did you feel like you were only a number?

00:21:26:20P We were a number, we were cannon fodder, we were, almost as if we were, in fact, we were coming off the assembly line. And when we were used up, the wings would come over to take our place, it was like an assembly line production, that here you had a group of young men that went, believed in it, when they were used up, they sent another group over. It was in that way an assembly line, assembly line of death.

00:22:01:09P It was, you got to realize that, it was only when numbers of people being killed started coming from the small town, the countryside that it had an impact on America. The persons like myself, from the inner cities, we would come back, literally by the thousands in boxes and that didn't matter. Because we were throwaway, the throw away society. We were the ghetto kids, we were the ones that didn't count. It was when that white middle class American started dying in greater numbers over there, that I feel America, Middle America itself began to question the war. As long as it was third world or poor whites coming home in those boxes, it really didn't matter.

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Antonello: How did you feel when movies like Rambo came out?

00:23:05:09P First of all, I laughed. I know that Stallone during the war himself was in Sweden studying to be a minister, to get out of the war, so I laugh at it. I'm also frightened by it, because I see these young 18, 19 year old or 14, 15, 16, 17 year old kids looking at a movie like this, and seeing this

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guy doing all of this heroic stuff and not getting hurt at all. Come on, yet, this is going to brainwash a person into going into the service. I think most of the movies that I've seen about war, even those "anti war movies," still glorify war. I still speak at high schools against going into the service. And it's invariable that you always have a young kid that comes up to you after you, after you've spoken and asks you, what was it really like in combat, what was it really like? Did you ever kill anybody? What was it really like, and you feel frustrated because it sometimes seems that your point is not gotten across. What's gotten across, what is getting across is only "that you were in combat and you survived." That's frightening to me, these movies just set up another generation of people to go into the service.

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Antonello: How easy is it to go crazy in a war?

00:24:48:01P What do you call crazy? What is crazy?it's crazy to be in war. I have seen people "go berserk," meaning losing control and shooting themselves or shooting other Americans, because they totally freaked out, I have seen that, yes. But I think that happens in any war, that happens to an individual.

Antonello: to freak out.....etc?

00:26:15:08P They say that Viet Nam produced fewer psychiatric casualties than any other war, and I feel that had to do with the survival. That the bonding that went on in Viet Nam, you became very close to your people even though you wanted, didn't want to be, you became very close. So you would look out for each other, and if you saw somebody going off the deep end, you would try and pull him back and you would protect that person until he was over that period. Because all of us went through that, you know there were times when I was so depressed over there, I felt I was going off the deep end and people would protect me. There were other times when I would have to protect them. I did see people go insane, yes. That we had to medivac out tied down on a stretcher, because they were totally gone. Their minds were so devastated, so shattered by that, they were no longer with us mentally. That was few and far between, I saw few people do that though. I think most of us went crazy one time or another over Viet Nam, but we helped each other to pull ourselves through that period of time. The ones that we had to medivac out were the ones that were gone probably forever. That these people would never come back, that their mind was so shattered by it.

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Antonello: What about drinking and drugs?

00:27:49:00P Again, I'm laughing, because you had two categories in Viet Nam, you had the lifers and the juicers, the heads and the juicers, and the juicers were the guys that used to drink a lot, they were mostly the lifer. The younger guys, a lot of us smoked a lot of dope over there, yes. You could get any drug you wanted in Viet Nam. Incredible what you could get in Viet Nam, you could get anything from pot to heroin to cocaine, to any drug you wanted, speed. I remember part of my job as being a medic, I had to give out amphetamines to the marines going out on night patrol, as part of my medic job, so that they would not fall asleep when they were out on an ambush. And this was legal for me to do, it was sanctioned for me to give these guys the speed. But you could get any drug you wanted over there. In my company there was very very little use of drugs when you were actually in the bush, when you came back to the rear, yes there was a lot of use of drugs. But you would have, you would have say, one hooch over here where all the booze was, guys would go in there and just drink. And you'd have another hooch over here, where guys would just be sitting there smoking a joint all the time, it was a psychedelic war. It was the first psychedelic war. I remember sometimes, we'd get stoned and I'd sit up on top of this bunker when we were in the rear and we would watch Puff the Magic Dragon. Puff the Magic Dragon was this gun ship that would shoot bullets so fast, that it would be like a light show. And we would sit there stoned to the max, watching this gun shift go in and do an operation. And farout, look at this, look at that, look at the lights in that one, and that was craziness too. That was crazy, but you know, you have to look...you have to look whether it was drugs or alcohol, a lot of people used those things to hide the pain that they were facing right then. That they used it as a way to go through what they had to go through. I personally used morphine, that was my way of dealing with it. I haven't used morphine since I've come back here, but when I was in Viet Nam, being a medic, I had an unlimited supply of it and I used it, to relieve my own pain. Somehow it made it easier; I didn't use it in the bush, but when I came back to the rear, I definitely shot up. Never mainline, but always in my ass cheek or in my arm or in my leg, because that created a dream world where I wouldn't have to face my buddies or I wouldn't think about some of my buddies that were killed. Or I wouldn't think about the next day, going back out. So it was a way of relieving pain, and that happened a lot in Viet Nam, drugs were used to relieve pain or alcohol was used to

relieve pain.

Antonello: So the army knew about it?

00:31:00:21P The army would give you the booze, that was no question. You would be able to go into a, the M Club and get the booze, buy...you know, a beer would cost you a nickel, fifteen cents. The drugs it was somewhat hidden. The army knew about it. The services knew it was being used. But a lot of times it was overlooked.

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Antonello:

00:00:42:11P I think Viet Nam produced more insanity for the veterans once they came home, than actually produced in Viet Nam itself. I know over the years of my counseling people, I know at least ten guys that have committed suicide. One of them pulled a gun out in front of me and said, "thanks doc, I know you tried," and blew his brains out in front of me, because he couldn't handle it. I knew other guys that OD'd on morphine or on heroin since they came home, because they couldn't handle it, that's insanity. When you go through an experience that it devastates you so much that you will take your own life because you feel nothing matters anymore, where you can't help yourself anymore. And that's the insanity that happens to a lot of veterans when they return. What's more insane, is the way that that organization, the veterans' administration, is supposed to treat these veterans, and doesn't. What's more insane, is how they are considered by their older generation, I remember trying to talk to my father saying, my war was wrong, and my father saying to me, you were losers, how can you say that? Because the generation of the second world war2 veterans booked it up as losers, that creates insanity. Even though we fought just as hard, we bled just as much, we were not accepted by the older generation, we were not accepted by our own peer group, that causes insanity. What happens when you feel guilt about killing women and children? What happens when you feel guilt for surviving? That's insanity. What happens when there's no way for you to talk out these emotions, and when you do, you're laughed at That's insanity. You have to understand that my father's generation was able to readjust, my generation was not. And i think that's because of the nature of the different wars, I think that's because of the nature of the society that my generation came back to. That there was a big difference.

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Antonello: Are you saying that everyone who went to Vietnam had 2 shocks. The first one was to realize what the war was about and the 2nd was to return to the US?

00:03:30:11P The first one was to realize what war was about, the reality of war, that it was not glorification, that you really got hurt, that you really killed people. The second reality was, when you came home and you felt that it was for nothing, that nobody really gave a shit after and they would let it continue. Those types of reality change your whole perspective on life.

Antonello: Do you think that people today have a different view on war because of Vietnam?

00:04:11:12P No I don't. I feel, I feel Viet Nam is a war that most Americans want to forget about. And it's only within the last five years or so, that anything has ever come out, the movies, the books. I think it's a war that wants to be hidden and shoved under the rug. At the same time, the veteran that fought there is also being shoved under the rug. I feel it's a war that divided this country, that the wounds are still open, that this country has not healed itself. That this country won't heal itself until it recognizes that perhaps it was wrong. I feel that, my fear again is that that Viet Nam experience will be used to create another one, to create another young generation of men to go over, to kill and be killed for nothing, that's what I see happening. I don't feel that America has learned from the Vietnam experience, no.

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Antonello: What's the difference between the Korean and the Vietnam war?

00:05:30:04P Well, I think in some ways the Korean veterans are more forgotten than the Viet Nam veterans, for one thing. I think the biggest difference is that the Viet Nam war went on for such a long time, the actual combat in itself in Korea, was not like Viet Nam, in the fact that you would go in and you would fight for so many miles today, so many miles tomorrow. You know, you would fight for this ground that ground, in Viet Nam, again you would go in and you would see your buddies get wasted. You would kill a lot of Viet Nameese and then a day later, you would pull out of that area, maybe go back in three months later. So there was no sense of reason for why you were fighting, and that became very obvious once you were there in country, and what became more obvious is that you would do anything possible to survive. And I feel that was the difference; in Korea the veteran went over again as a unit and fought as a unit. Again, in Viet Nam we

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went over as an individual, returned as an individual, and that had a bigger psychological impact. I think, you know, Korea was a mini Vietnam in that sense. I mean, when you looked at it and back on it in the historical perspective, it was the same, you know, there was no accomplishment.

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Antonello: Because of your own experiences do you have a different understanding of WWII and the dropping of the bombs in Japan?

00:07:15:00P I feel that Hitler should have been stopped. I feel that he was very bad, an evil person. I feel just as evil was us dropping the atomic bomb, I feel that that type of technology just leads us on a further path of destruction. I don't think it was, I don't think we should have used it to begin with, I think it was wrong. It was cruel, it was, again, how come we didn't use the atomic bomb in Europe? To me it was also very racist that we used it on Japan, because again our feeling was that these people were not human. So it's okay to go drop a big bomb that's going to destroy them, but we wouldn't do it on white people. So, I feel the use of the atomic bomb was very evil. I really don't see that it saved many lives, you know, they say we used it because if we had invaded Japan, they would have fought inch by inch by inch. Well, historically if you look back now, they were about to surrender then, without the use of the bomb. And I think we used the bomb to see what it could do, not because it would end the war as much as we wanted to see what kind of technology we had developed then, how that could be used, and what it could do.

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Antonello: What happened to the veterans when they returned to US?

00:09:16:13P I'd say, when I came back and even to today, twenty, twenty one years later, that I'm still fighting my war. That there hasn't been a day since I came back from Viet Nam that at least I haven't thought about it. And I don't want to be a Vietnam veteran for the rest of my life, I would like that part of me to go away. I try today very hard for that part of me to go away, but it was so devastating that it's still in my mind and probably will be there forever. And I don't like that.

Antonello: Do you have anything that you would like to say?

00:10:06:22P I don't feel, I feel the world is too sophisticated today to have war. I wish there were a way that we could settle our

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differences without war. I feel that at least for me, no war can be justified. That's not to say that people don't need to defend themselves, I just say, that no war can be justified. That the world has become too small to break down into warfare and this is what we're doing, you look around the world today and you see all these different ethnic factions fighting each other, and I think to me that's insane. That we've got to somehow learn that you can't send whole generations of young men, and raise whole generations of young men to go over and fight for a God or for a flag, that is ridiculous and it's stupid. And I feel that people need to learn from war, that it doesn't need to happen again, that somehow, we've got to stop it, before it becomes too late.