

Student Essay on The Effects of the Vietnam War on Returning Veterans and the Whole Country

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Essay

During the war in Vietnam, soldiers faced intensely extreme conditions, including fatigue, hunger, disease, and of course, having to see fellow friends and soldiers die. Although our military has, and has had, better military conditions than many other countries, it would be entirely incorrect to say that our soldiers didn't have it bad.

Because of the intense conditions that soldiers in Vietnam faced, memories of the war were not easily forgotten. We are told that approximately 15 percent of the 3.3 million American soldiers who served in Vietnam were diagnosed with delayed stress syndrome, essentially extreme stress and even brain disorder caused by horrific memories of the past.

Veterans of Vietnam were not the only Americans affected by the war. Many US citizens felt that they could no longer trust their government after this war. For instance, when Americans were being assured by their president that the war would soon be over and that the enemy was steadily being eliminated, the Vietcong would soon overwhelm the US and South Vietnamese's Armies in what would later be known as the Tet offensive. Another reason Americans had to not trust their government was solely the fact that they had confidence in the war and many believed that the government "screwed up" in its handling of the war. A way to control the President's actions during war was the War Powers Act, which stated that the president must inform congress within 48 hours if US forces are sent into a hostile area without a declaration of war.

Many lessons have been learned from the war in Vietnam, and we as Americans can only learn from the mistakes made and do better in the next situation that comes our way.