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Displaced Identity and Humiliation in Children of Vietnam Veterans

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My discussion will focus on the issue of violent conflict and its relevance to Humiliation and Displaced Identity in children of Vietnam Veterans. I will also discuss how the relevance of violent conflict has directly impacted the identity these children. My research asks the question “Did children of Vietnam Veterans experience humiliation, and if so, was it transmitted to them as a result of the humiliation associated with their fathers return from war? Also, if humiliation was in fact transmitted to these now adult children, then how may this violent conflict have also displaced their social and personal identity?

1. Violent conflict and humiliation is relevant to children whose fathers fought in the Vietnam War it is critical for many of these children to understand the shame they sometimes experience in identifying with the violent conflict of their war fathers.
2. Transgenerational Transmission of Trauma is an area of my research, which I hope will give insight into how humiliation and violent conflict may have been transmitted to children of Vietnam Veterans from their father.
3. My definition of Displaced Identity is when the description of ones identity is hinged upon the described identity of another. I propose that the identity of children Vietnam Veterans have been displaced in that many of them are not able to describe their own identity separate from that of their fathers. At the same time they are not fully able to describe their father’s identity separate from their own.

The importance of this topic discussion is to better understand how the human navigational process becomes hindered by violent conflict and humiliation. . I hope that this discussion will generate support to children of Vietnam Veterans and their fathers.

Annette Anderson-Engler is a doctoral student in Conflict Analysis and Resolution at Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Her research focuses on humiliation and displaced identity in children of Vietnam Veterans. She is currently researching the link between children of Vietnam Veterans and humiliation as it relates to the displacement of their identity. This research will critically examine the issue of transgenerational transmission of trauma between the identity of post war combat soldiers and their children.

Prior to continuing on to the Ph.D. program at Nova Southeastern University, Annette was first awarded her Masters degree in Conflict Analysis and Resolution. She also received her BSW in social work from the University of North Texas. She is currently a member of Association of Conflict Resolution and Amnesty International.