

# Ptsd in the vietnam war assignment

[History](#)



They classified it as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. (National) The psychological burdens of war, such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, have substantial effects on soldiers in the armed forces making reentry into civilian life challenging. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is defined as an anxiety disorder that can occur after being exposed to a traumatic experience like combat, terrorist attack, or child/sexual abuse. (National) Most times that PITS is developed are in the time of war.

The reason it is developed more during the time of war is because these people are exposed to most of the types of trauma that will cause P T SD. Not every person involved in the war develops p T SD though because the development of PITS depends on how intense the trauma was, how long it lasted, if the person was injured, if they lost someone important, or how much support they received after the event. (National) After an event has happened, the person involved is given a screening exam to see if they have PITS. The main things the doctors look for in the exam are symptoms of P T SD.

Some of the symptoms of PITS include, reliving the event, avoiding situations that resemble the event, feeling numb, and feeling keyed up. (National) Along with the PITS, some other problems may occur. These problems include feelings of hopelessness, depression, and drinking or drug problems. There are treatments available for PITS and in some cases have completely diminished the thoughts. The treatments are psychotherapy, and medication. Most of the time though, the treatment does not work and the people are left with this awful disease. (National) The Vietnam War started with the United States planting their first ground troops in Vietnam in March <https://assignbuster.com/ptsd-in-the-vietnam-war-assignment/>

of 1965. The whole idea for entering Vietnam was that President Johnson wanted to support South Vietnamese troops until they were strong enough to take over. (Rosenberg) Life in the jungle was tough for American troops due to the fact that America has never fought in a war that was in a jungle. There were plentiful amounts of deadly insects and reptiles around but that was the least of soldiers' worries. Americans were fighting against the Viet Cong, who were supreme at guerilla warfare.

They would attack in ambushes, set up booby traps, and had a complex network of underground tunnels to escape from battle. (Rosenberg) The hardest part for American troops was finding their enemy. Since they had a tunnel system and the jungle was covered in dense brush, it was extremely hard to find the Viet Cong bases. (Rosenberg) During the war, Americans did not agree with the fighting that was going on. They believed that there was no reason for us to be engaged in the war. Also, they knew that there was no way we were going to win the war so they revolted. (Rosenberg) Numerous amounts of rallies and anti-war protests broke out. It was at a time when our country did not believe in our armed forces. American soldiers were classified as the enemy when they returned to their homeland. When troops would return from the AR, they were thrown into a civilization that despised them for fighting. In a song called "The Rooster" written by Alice in Chains, the one lyric reads "walking tall machine gun man, they spit on me in my homeland." (Rooster) This is a reference to what soldiers were dealing with when they would return home from war.

They would come back to their towns on buses and would have bottles, food, and other things thrown at them. Meanwhile they were the ones protecting

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the people that were throwing things. (Rosenberg) In an article written by Bill Hunt, he recites a vivid experience of him returning home. He said “ I was met at the airport by my Korean War brother, and I remember being silent and bitter after he made an innocent comment. He noted in jest that I was now home and no longer surrounded by the Viet Congo and all that jazz. (Hunt) To hunt it sounded as he Korean War brother did not believe that war was a real war at all. (Hunt) But to Hunt it was a real war, in fact he said “ I felt the whole time that I was there that I was indeed surrounded by a hostile force. ” ( Hunt) The short story “ The Things They Carried”, written by Tim O’Brien, is a vivid look into how soldiers during the Vietnam War dealt with their PITS by using mom of the things they carried with them. One of the first examples O’Brien gives us is the Lieutenant who misses his “ lover” and spends hours at night staring at her picture. O’Brien 632) O’Brien said “ Almost everyone humped photographs. In his wallet, Lieutenant Cross carried two photographs Of Martha. ” Another scene the story presents is a man named Norman Booker who carried a dead Viet Gong’s thumb. (O’Brien 636) We find this out on page 636 when O’Brien says, “ The thumb was dark brown, rubbery to the touch, and weighed four ounces at the most. It had been cut from a dead PVC corpse, boy of fifteen or sixteen. ” The reason for taking the thumb was to show that there were no morals in a war like this. (O’Brien 636) The last thing that was carried was drugs.

O’Brien tells us about how his platoon would smoke high amounts of marijuana to try and cope with the burdens of war. (O’Brien 641) He tells us about the one time they smoked heavily and could not do anything because they were so inebriated. He said, “ I’m sorry, motherless, but I’m out of it,

I'm goofed, I'm on a space cruise, I'm gone! " (O'Brien 641 ) The Vietnam War was a brutal fight not only between Americans and Viet Cong, but also between Americans and themselves. There are endless counts of men who suffered not only at the hands of the enemy, but at the hands of themselves.

Also, it did not help that at the time of the war most Americans did not believe that we should even be in the war. Soldiers that were fighting would come home to a country that did not love them. PTSD is a serious disease that brought these soldiers to their knees, and sometimes took them over the edge. Barbarian's short story offers us tales of men trying to cope with their PTSD by using things that they carried on themselves around the jungle. These things ranged from drugs, bibles, pictures, and even a dead Viet Cong's thumb.