

Enduring Loss: THE COSTS OF WAR

ANONYMOUS
VIETNAM VETERAN

LETTER LEFT AT THE VIETNAM
VETERANS MEMORIAL IN
WASHINGTON, D.C., 1990s



The things that I am going to say in this letter are about twenty years and a whole lifetime late, but maybe that won't matter once they've been said.

A lot of the guys who were there say they feel like they lost something in-country. I know what I lost. I've always said that when you died, it was like killing the other half of myself. Maybe that's not necessarily true. What I did lose was youth. . . all of the idealism, trust, self-confidence, and personal power that we had, either inside or drilled into us. . . I've never been able to get close to anyone since you died. . . I live in the past, 'cause today hurts too much. . . I've come to this monument to have a little memorial service and to say goodbye and to let you go. I'll never forget you, don't worry about that. . .

Photo credit: Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington, D.C., photo by Andrew Carroll

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