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(760 words)

Turning points can be dramatic, confounding and confusing. They can affect a thousand people or just one person. But all turning points leave a lasting impression on the people who experienced them. For John Douglas Marshall, his turning point was when he chose to leave the military due to his personal beliefs. This turning point is the best example of a turning point in Vietnam because not only does it represent the casualty of war, but it also represents the war within those in the military who felt compelled to fight but then came to find that decision was not the right decision for them. Throughout the term many stories have been studied from the soldiers, stories of ideals destroyed, changes from being a soldier to a protestor and stories of lives lost.

great intro

Marshall was the grandson of a famous brigadier general in the Army Reserves, a man he adored, a man who was deeply woven into the military he had so loved. But Marshall found himself going through the motions when he was in the ROTC and studying the works of peacekeepers, changing his mind about war and violence while waiting to be sent to Vietnam. Going against his family and his history, Marshall appealed to the Army to leave as a conscientious objector. His request was approved and he received an honorable discharge. This was a momentous turning point for John Marshall, and an even bigger one because once his beloved grandfather found out about it, he was disowned. His grandfather found him to be a traitor. This turning point was one that a lot of families experienced during the war – families at odds about the importance of war, some feeling it necessary to serve their country while others believed peace was the answer and that violence would solve nothing. Families were destroyed by the war, not only through the trauma of death and dismemberment, but from the emotional wounds that were caused by beliefs that did not align with others. This was true for John Marshall and his grandfather and was an important turning point in his life and in the Vietnam War.

nic job.

Christmas Eve 1994, almost thirty years after he left Vietnam as an American soldier, Wayne Karlin returned for a meeting of Vietnamese writers, all veterans of the war. Karlin had not been back to Vietnam since he was a helicopter crewman in 1967. But 1967 was not the end of the war for Karlin, as it isn't for most veterans. The war didn't end just because they left Vietnam, were discharged from the military and went home to their families and friends. The

war continued to rage on within their souls and for some, ^{it} still does. They don't talk about it, don't want to relive it, don't even want to think about it. But in 1994, Karlin did all of those things. He sat down with the Vietnamese veterans and they began to talk about the war, where they were in the war and what year. As the men talked and drank throughout the evening, Karlin and others found themselves reliving moments of the war, getting caught up in the emotion of the situation. At one point Karlin found himself with images of the POW's being marched through Hanoi and at that moment he began to lose it. The veterans surrounded him, protecting him and helped him continue up a hill they were all climbing. This was the beginning of the end of the war for Karlin. It was the beginning of his healing. He stated "There are so many things that aren't finished, the hard truths and damage that need to be faced and acknowledge... on the other hand, being with those guys who just pulled me up the hill, I felt like that's what it takes to start." (p. 548)

Even though this was almost thirty years later, this is Karlin's end of the war. For many veterans, they may never find an end to the Vietnam War. They will be haunted until they take their last breath and so it is hard to say where the end of the war truly is. For the government, those who didn't serve and those who weren't even born yet, the war ended almost 40 years ago. But for the soldiers who served on both sides, the war rages on and finding an ending is as much work as being in the rice paddies.

Best paper
I've read to
for.
1st time
has closer
for part 2 in
the past 5 years.
well done Jennifer!