



POMFRET

S C H O O L

July 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

Most stories of war do not last. Some stories are told and retold and become part of history. Other stories - most stories - vanish when those who fought are gone.

When I was a boy, my father did not speak of fighting in the South Pacific during World War II. On only two occasions can I remember him describing any thing about being a soldier, going out on patrol, being wounded, almost dying. These life-altering events were largely hidden and kept at a distance as I grew up. As a teenager and young man, my curiosity about the war was only fleeting at best. When I reached middle age and my interest in those times grew, my father had been dead for many years.

My Father's Vietnam is one filmmaker's attempt to seize a story of war before it disappears, before the names of three men are all but forgotten. This tightly focused documentary unfolds the experience, the pain, and the legacy of this divisive war in highly personal terms. By being so specific, *My Father's Vietnam* achieves an immediate and lasting impact that is rare in the large and sprawling history of a war that many would like to forget.

In 2012, I adapted the letters of a soldier who died in Vietnam into a play called *70lbs of Books*, and he is also one of the principal subjects of *My Father's Vietnam*. During the premiere of the play and for several months after, I was surprised by how many people reached out and thanked me for telling this story. I sensed from each of them that there were still chapters missing in their lives, and this play about one man and the horrific circumstances in which he found himself somehow began to fill in those gaps. *My Father's Vietnam* goes about the same business—filling in the missing chapters that so easily could have been left unwritten.

It is not the policies, the politics, or even the history of war that have any significant purchase on our memory. It is the people of war who have stories to tell.

Are we listening?

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