
Post-Memory and Layered Memories of Vietnamese Americans

Post-memory

Post-memory refers to the generational transmission of memories about events. It entails a generation living to memorize the experiences of the past generation that witnessed the event and working to pass on the memories to the next generation.

Vietnamese Americans and Layered Memories

Vietnamese Americans have experienced layered memories of the US-Vietnam war for a long time. Generations have learned about the war and have used what they learn to build memories about the events that surrounded the conflict. Vietnamese Americans learn from their elders about the war and use the message to build memories of the conflict. For instance, children are told about their relatives that died during the war as a way of helping them connect to the events of the war. By knowing that they lost relatives during the war, children tend to develop a sense of direct impact that the war left on their families (Espiritu 89). Parents show children pictures of the relatives that were killed during the war to make them realize the reality of the deaths that happened during the war. For instance, Espiritu gives an example of how he used a picture to learn about his uncle who was killed during the war (121). The experiences of the survivors of the Vietnam War are also used to build generational memories that are acquired by Vietnamese Americans. The Vietnamese Americans have come terms with the outcomes of the war by being conditioned that the Vietnamese population that suffered was defending the country from invasion.

Contribution of Post-Memory

The generational transfer of memories concerning Vietnam War helps in connecting the Vietnamese Americans to their country. Refugee studies use these memories to show how refugees want to live in their country but conflicts prevent them from going back. Refugee studies can use the case of Vietnamese Americans to make suggestions regarding the need to return refugees to their country since they are connected to their culture and memories and that they will find it easy to resettle.

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