



Failing Our Veterans: The G.I. Bill and the Vietnam Generation

By Mark Boulton

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Returning Vietnam veterans had every reason to expect that the government would take care of their readjustment needs in the same way it had done for veterans of both World War II and Korea. But the Vietnam generation soon discovered that their G.I. Bills fell well short of what many of them believed they had earned. Mark Boulton's groundbreaking study provides the first analysis of the legislative debates surrounding the education benefits offered under the Vietnam-era G.I. Bills. Specifically, the book explores why legislators from both ends of the political spectrum failed to provide Vietnam veterans the same generous compensation offered to veterans of previous wars.

Failing Our Veterans should be essential reading to scholars of the Vietnam War, political history, or of social policy. Contemporary lawmakers should heed its historical lessons on how we ought to treat our returning veterans. Indeed, veterans wishing to fully understand their own homecoming experience will find great interest in the book's conclusions.

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Editorial Review

Review

"*Failing Our Veterans* is an outstanding legislative history of the G.I. Bill and its evolution during and after World War II. Boulton traces a clear and understandable path through a complex array of personalities and organizations involved in the public policy debate that comprised postwar veterans' policy."-*American Historical Review*

"This book fills an important niche, helping explain the difficulties encountered by those never labeled 'the Greatest Generation'."-*Choice*

"*Failing Our Veterans* is a significant contribution to our understanding of Vietnam-era veterans' benefits specifically and veterans' policies generally. Boulton highlights how leaders, even well-meaning ones, have far too often sacrificed veterans' benefits to other political or ideological goals...As a new generation of veterans returns home to America from war, contemporary lawmakers would be wise to heed the cautionary history presented in *Failing Our Veterans* and avoid making the same mistakes."-*Journal of America's Military Past*

"In *Failing Our Veterans* Mark Boulton, an assistant professor of history at Westminster College in Missouri, provides a detailed examination of the legislative history of the Veterans' Readjustment Benefits Act of 1966 and subsequent bills passed between 1967 and 1974 to explain why many veteran needs were not fulfilled...*Failing Our Veterans* ably illustrates fundamental issues remain unresolved."-*The Journal of American History*

"The book is well organized and presents convincing and compelling analysis of an extremely important issue." -*Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*

"The shoddy treatment of our veterans is one of this nation's dirtiest secrets. Mark Boulton deserves high praise for the systematic way in which he reveals how the betrayal of American veterans has been carried out through the course of numerous Presidential administrations. One can only hope that his no-holds-barred censure of callous politicians will lead to a new era, where the government that sends men and women to war acts responsibly in taking care of them once they return home. This book needs to be read by every politician who ever voted on, or ever will vote on, a veterans' rights bill, and by every American who votes those politicians into office."-Gerald Nicosia,author of *Home to War: A History of the Vietnam Veterans' Movement*

"Outstanding. . . . Boulton sees the big picture of the policy discussions, but backs up his assertions with plenty of detail. . . . Will make a valuable contribution to the scholarly literature on the Vietnam War and of the history of U.S. veterans."-Mark Van Ells,author of *To Hear Only Thunder Again : America's World War II Veterans Come Home*

"In this richly researched and finely argued book, Boulton challenges us to put aside the 'damaged goods' stereotype of the PTSD-suffering Vietnam veteran, offering in its place a portrait of hard-working, ambitious veterans hoping to climb the ladder of success by attending college. Boulton's penetrating insights into how political wrangling ultimately dashed the educational dreams of many Vietnam veterans offers a cautionary tale as the nation once again welcomes home men who have fought unpopular wars."-Jennifer D.

Keene, author of *author of Doughboys, the Great War, and the Remaking of America*

"With the country facing decades of costly health and service benefits for veterans of its 21st century wars, nothing could be more timely than Mark Boulton's look-back at the political, economic, and ideological battles that shaped public policies currently in place. He gives us a detailed but easy to read history with unsettling implications for our future."-Jerry Lembcke, Associate Professor Emeritus, College of the Holy Cross

"[...] *Failing Our Veterans* makes a valuable contribution to knowledge about the Vietnam veterans' experience – particularly useful for researchers who specialize in Vietnam veterans, education policy and veterans' readjustment – providing a context for an understanding of the relevant debates about educational benefits, and showing their connectedness to the broader history of their times."-*The Journal of the Historical Association*

About the Author

Mark Boulton is Assistant Professor of History at Westminster College (MO).

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Kenisha Perkins:

Have you spare time for the day? What do you do when you have more or little spare time? Sure, you can choose the suitable activity regarding spend your time. Any person spent their spare time to take a wander, shopping, or went to typically the Mall. How about open or perhaps read a book eligible *Failing Our Veterans: The G.I. Bill and the Vietnam Generation*? Maybe it is for being best activity for you. You understand beside you can spend your time using your favorite's book, you can better than before. Do you agree with the opinion or you have various other opinion?

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