

**Proposed project:** Photojournalism/Documentary video story focusing on the experiences of soldiers and their families, during and after deployment, as told in their words and on their terms. I hope to find 1-3 soldiers willing to work with me on sharing their stories and experiences – no agendas, just real life.

I would like to put the stories on a webpage dedicated to the project, with links to community organizations and resources for soldiers and families.

**Purpose:** The goal of this project is to (1) share the experience of 1-3 soldiers, their friends and families in their own words, and (2) help promote awareness about what it is really like to be a soldier, and what challenges they, and their families, face after deployment (especially if the soldier has been injured - PTSD, concussion, traumatic brain injury, etc.).

Ultimately, the hope is that the project will serve as a support/resource to help people better understand and offer greater support.

**Why I want to document this story:** My grandfather was a marine who fought in the Korean War at Inchon. He survived, but his best friend did not. When he returned home, he struggled with memories of the war his whole life. No one knew about PTSD back then, and as far as I know he never got any treatment or support. Today I wonder if things might have been different for him.

There are a lot of soldiers coming home today, and I think it's important for family, friends, and communities to better understand their soldiers' experiences and what each sacrifices. Documentary is one of the best ways I know of sharing an important story or issue with others.

**About the photographer:** My name is Vanessa Patchett and I am a graduate student at UNC-CH specializing in documentary. I have an undergraduate degree in anthropology. Between degrees I worked for NC-based non-profits for 3 years, in the field of children's health and trauma-treatment.

If you have any questions, concerns, or would just like more information, please feel free to contact me:

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**Links to examples of my work:** I have done short documentary videos on subjects varying from cancer survivors, social stigma, boxing, and fishing.

<http://vimeo.com/34766386> (Password: boxing)

<http://carolinaphotojournalism.org/cpjw/uwharries/a-fish-story/>

<http://reframingmexico.org/en/featured-story/?story-id=disability>

<http://vimeo.com/31439019>

### **Additional Contacts:**

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