

## Tony Velez Interview

- 00:00:03-00:00:29 -Introductions
- 00:00:42-00:00:55 -"I'm not scientist, I can only speak from personal experience..."
- 00:00:56-00:01:27 -about Brother Henry, also a Vietnam Veteran, MD, worked in NJ through an Agent Orange commission
- 00:01:28-00:03:31 -commission was paid for by the state of NJ  
-controlled scientific study included Peter Kahn and Brother Henry  
-conducted at St. Joseph's Hospital in Patterson, NJ  
-bloodwork analyzed in Houston, Texas and Sweden
- 00:03:31-00:04:26 -Procedure: steel rod inserted into the buttocks of men to extract fat tissue, which contains traces of all chemical substances taken in by the body→search for specific dioxins used in Agent Orange
- 00:04:26-00:04:50 -Results: tested positive for dioxins in Agent Orange
- 00:04:51-00:04:55 -further research with Brother Henry
- 00:05:00-00:05:21 -first learnt about Agent Orange by reading about it in newspapers  
-side-effects of Agent Orange
- 00:05:25-00:06:34 -lawsuit against chemical company  
-Agent Orange was sprayed alongside the rivers and patrol-boats  
-John Kerry and General Zumalt
- 00:06:35-00:06:54 -personal involvement in the research project as a photographer
- 00:06:55-00:08:52 -tested for Protein Specific Antigen (PSA), numbers were high  
-6 months later the numbers doubled and 2 weeks later it was a definite positive for effects of Agent Orange
- 00:08:52-00:10:13 -finding out about having cancer during a festive family gathering  
-meeting with doctor and undergoing surgery
- 00:10:14-00:13:00 -finding out about having cancer 7 years later when the numbers started to rise again, meeting with oncologist
- 00:13:12-00:14:07 -information on prostate cancer
- 00:14:08-00:14:40 -measure the aggressiveness of his cancer on a scale
- 00:14:52-00:16:30 -living with the emotions is what one is ultimately left with  
-his daughter, Sophia, struggles the most with the thought of losing her father
- 00:16:31-00:17:05 -sense of riding a rollercoaster, feeds his inner anger
- 00:17:07-00:17:51 -further familial entanglements in the Vietnam War and the consequences
- 00:17:55-00:18:48 -struggle to receive compensation
- 00:18:50-00:20:58 -people of America are hoodwinked into supporting the wars of the government, yet the veterans are not taken care of upon their arrival  
-veterans of WWII received better benefits in comparison to recent veterans
- 00:20:59-00:21:11 -financial struggle to attend college
- 00:21:12-00:21:38 -the Vietnam War has made him very political, anti-war
- 00:21:20-00:22:00 -Agent Orange is only one consequence of the war, there are more
- 00:22:01-00:23:08 -return to radiation after 7 years, but it was a failure  
-constant visits to Sloan Kettering
- 00:23:14-00:25:30 -return to taking medication, Casodex  
-side-effects of the pill  
-future radiation if legions begin to grow, no surgeries on the horizon
- 00:25:31-00:27:06 -description of restricted diet, exercise, lower stress levels  
-difficult because he is a chef, an ongoing struggle for everyday life

00:27:08-00:27:04 -sense of depression, demise  
-story of his father's horrible death because of bladder cancer

00:27:06-00:28:53 -all about the strength of the human spirit

00:28:54-00:33:20 -about bleeding blood right this morning while going to the bathroom  
-incident of returning from the university and being unable to use the bathroom and then having to go to the emergency room  
-repeated need for irrigation if not enough water is consumed  
-chances of future problems, having to go back and forth, uncertainty

00:33:30-00:35:04 -coping with the illness by talking about it, bouncing right on back

00:35:08-00:35:11 -"I'm an optimist, how about that?"

00:35:20-00:36:27 -explanation of irrigation through the use of a catheter  
-restrictions of living with a catheter

00:35:39-00:38:05 -believes himself to be blessed because he has medical insurance and lives in a great country, but others are much less fortunate

00:38:07-00:38:24 -immigrants have not been able to assimilate into this country and are returning back to their countries, the Bush administration has not helped to solve this problem

00:38:26-00:41:29 -a part of his is conflicted about his tour of duty  
-the entire nation runs on a lottery system and only few can reap the actual benefits

00:41:30-00:43:19 -Agent Orange does not fit into a capitalistic country where only those at the top who own have any say  
-diagnosis of PTSD at 70%  
-hope in the Obama administration, Republicans wanted to deny veterans their rights and lower the pay of current soldiers  
-difficult for immigrants to progress, but he himself has been successful

00:43:20-00:45:53 -current Iraqi soldiers will have a difficult time receiving their benefits  
-exit interviews are given to soldiers and if they have any trauma in their past, they are denied compensation  
-problem of bureaucracy, time of great contradictions

00:46:00-00:47:12 -law regarding Agent Orange passed in the early 1990s  
-President Bill Clinton signed a bill to help veterans receive compensation, but it still took him 6 years  
-a mixed bag of is there or isn't there regarding Agent Orange

00:47:00-00:47:42 -similar incident with the victims of 9/11 who are now being denied their compensation

00:47:43-00:52:00 -in this country, one needs to fight for everything  
-the ones receiving welfare, affirmative action, and tax breaks are actually the wealthy  
-50 million people without medical insurance, 36 million unemployed  
-denial of people their rights, but it is more obvious in case of veterans  
-working people are the ones fighting the wars  
-workmen's compensation in the state of New York

00:52:01-00:55:27 -anecdote about his mother to not trust Republicans  
-choice to be active in the government and be aware of current events  
-always remember where you came from  
-personal background about his father, growing up in the projects, and buying the lie of going to war

00:55:30-00:57:05 -Big Picture: get a vision of the world and then make a statement with it  
-path he has taken as a veteran, teacher, and educator

00:57:07-00:57:36 -about Joe Giannini and how he was also battered by the system

00:57:48-01:01:41 -experiences after he came back home, arrived in Fort Tacoma in Washington  
for a physical examination, steak dinner, new uniform, and flight back home  
-welcome back home  
-difficult to fit back home, feeling of numbness, unable to express anything  
-fortunate to get a photography job as soon as he returned back home, as if  
nothing had happened

01:01:42-01:01:59 -WWII veterans had everything open for them but Vietnam veterans were  
expected to slide back into society

01:02:00-01:03:14 -watching tv to find his cavalry  
-breakout of the Tet offense  
-disconnection with friends for going on decades now

01:03:15-01:05:45 -hatred towards the anti-war movement because they did not really understand  
the veterans  
-pro-war supporters wanted the war to continue because they believed it was a  
sense of honor and the US needed to win

01:05:46-01:07:43 -“I also left God behind in Vietnam...”  
-realized the absence of God while walking over dead bodies, there is only the  
government and generals  
-indiscriminate shooting and killing