

Abstract for LEAP Presentation, October 17, 2014

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“Identity as Self”

My internship forced me to think about the self. I interned at the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation in Hanoi, Vietnam. I studied the political divide between Vietnamese nationalism and colonial truth. I was amidst a duality of sameness (the West) and of otherness (the East) in which I found my self-certainty in question. I grew up in the United States speaking the Vietnamese language, where I experienced cultural exchange and societal assimilation. I lived in sameness. While I walked through the bustling, motorcycle-riddled streets in Hanoi, I was a foreigner in my own homeland. I lived in otherness. My presentation will discuss not only the work that I did as a research intern, but it will also highlight my collision with alienation. My narrative will also delve into how Vietnam's history further shaped my own notion of self.