



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on January 23, 2019

Former SEAL: Drum-Pounding Indian Not a “Vietnam Veteran,” Not a “Recon Ranger”

Nathan Phillips, the bedraggled, drum-pounding “Native American elder” [who provoked](#) the now-notorious confrontation with Catholic high-school kids at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., is not, as the media reported, a Vietnam veteran.

Nor was he, as he claimed, a “recon-ranger.”

Phillips’ real background in the Marines can be seen in an [eight-minute video](#) from retired Navy SEAL Don Shipley (shown), who exposes phony Navy SEALs.



Shipley has access not only to the complete SEAL database but also other military records. Just recently, [he disclosed](#) the real story behind a former convict who claimed to have been a member of Force Marine Reconnaissance.

What do Phillips’ records show? He was a refrigerator repairman.

Claims About Phillips, and Phillips’ Claims

[The media subjected the youngsters](#) from Covington Catholic High School in Kentucky to the usual [Two-Minutes Hate](#) after a short video went viral.

But when the rest of the video surfaced, the usual suspects backtracked. They weren’t so sure about the “Native American elder” and “Vietnam veteran” whom the kids supposedly, but most definitely did not, “confront.”

Multiple news outlets reported that Phillips is a “Vietnam veteran,” a claim the [Washington Post withdrew](#) with a correction. The *Post* “story incorrectly said that Native American activist Nathan Phillips fought in the Vietnam War,” the newspaper confessed. “Phillips said he served in the U.S. Marines but was never deployed to Vietnam.”

[Speaking to CNN](#), Phillips said he was a “Vietnam times” veteran. [CNN’s own transcript](#) twice claimed he said “Vietnam veteran.”

Beyond that, *Vogue* magazine [quoted Phillips this way](#): “You know, I’m from Vietnam times. I’m what they call a recon ranger. That was my role.”

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Shipley Outs the Record

No, it wasn’t.

Shipley, [a retired senior chief](#) in the SEALs who ran [Extreme Seal Experience](#), a preparatory training program for civilians aspiring to join the SEALs or other special forces, quickly retrieved Phillips’ military records and posted a video on YouTube.

The verdict: The media blew it on Phillips’ military career.



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“Everybody keeps labeling this guy a Vietnam vet,” [Shipley observes](#) in the video. “He is not.”

“A lot of these news outlets are using that claim, Vietnam vet, to kind of beef that story up a little bit and make it look even worse, him being a Vietnam vet and getting harassed. He wasn’t a Vietnam vet.”

In fact, Nathan Phillips wasn’t Nathan Phillips when he joined the Marines. “He did not enlist under that name,” [Shipley shows](#) with the records. “The name he enlisted under was Nathaniel Richard Stanard.”

Phillips, then Stanard, enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve on August 20, 1972 and was discharged on May 5, 1976. He “served just under four years and was discharged under the exalted rank of private,” Shipley says.

“His entire military education was as a basic electrician,” and his only award was the expert rifle badge.

[Shipley shows](#) that Phillips served in the Fourth Marine Division as rifleman, but only for two days before transfer to Lincoln, Nebraska, where he served as a “refermech.” That designation is short for refer mechanic, Shipley explains, and a “refer in the Navy and Marine Corps is a refrigerator. He was a refrigerator mechanic ... in Nebraska.”

In 1975, Phillips landed in El Toro, California, Shipley shows. “He musta had a bad time there, poor guy. He went AWOL [Absent Without Leave] a few times and got his peep slapped for it.”

“Was this guy a Vietnam veteran?” [Shipley says](#). “No he was not. Did he say he was? No, I don’t really think so, but he didn’t correct that stuff. He kind of played around with that and let CNN and everyone else run with that thing to beef up that story.”

Continues Shipley, “what he did say he was a recon-ranger. I don’t think so, unless he got that training in the brig” after going AWOL.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CIXIzvyALLA>

Shifting Accounts

Beyond the bogus accounts of Phillips’ military service are Phillips’ shifting accounts of his unanticipated meeting with the Covington kids.

After blowing the story and [condemning the kids](#) and [retracting its initial take](#) on the story, [National Review put it this way](#) about Phillips: “Nathan Phillips’s Interview with CNN Is Full of Falsehoods, Inconsistencies, and Nonsense.”

The video evidence directly contradicts what [Phillips told CNN](#), David French wrote, yet the media swallowed his story whole.

Phillips “spewed falsehoods in the national media,” French wrote. “Why are so many progressives taking his word as true? Because he’s telling the story they want to hear, not because he’s telling the truth.”

Image: screenshot from [YouTube video of Don Shipley](#)



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