

IN-UNIFORM & VETERAN SUICIDES

Would you buy a house based strictly on the seller's agent's word of that house's suitability for you without a thorough inspection? Would you buy a car based strictly on the salesman's word of that car's suitability for you without a thorough inspection?

Vietnam: Two independent studies, since erased from the internet, agreed on the fact that in-uniform and veteran suicides ran to 150,000 as a result of the Vietnam war, while American fatal Vietnam War casualties is officially listed as 58,220. In-uniform and veteran suicides normally do not make for main stream media publication.

- Military recruiters are trained salesmen and subject to human errors. (GAO Reports of August 2006 and January 2010) Yes, a good percentage of that group (military recruiters) are honest and ethical (**if you know the right questions and IF they really know or are willing to convey the right/more honest/more complete answers**), but do you know what questions to ask, or how to —negotiate the written (disregarding ALL verbal “assurances” contract they’ll present you in the DD Form 4?
- Once you’re in basic training, it can be very difficult, and sometimes virtually impossible, to obtain a ”good” discharge (Google “Administrative” and “General” military discharges, then Note our section on “Discharges”). Even though I was also a volunteer, remembering my own feelings of “hopelessness” in my early enlisted days, it is easy to understand how, without an inner strength to survive, suicide may seem an alternative. (Ref # 38, Our officers kill more U.S. troops than the Taliban)
- A Henry Kissinger quotation (Kissinger was the Secretary of State under Richard Nixon and a Nobel Peace Prize recipient): "Military men are dumb, stupid animals."
- “Over the past nine years, more US military personnel have taken their own lives than have died in action in either the wars in Iraq or Afghanistan. These are official figures from the US Department of Defense, yet somehow they have not been deemed newsworthy to report” Reference 4
- “Suicides among active-duty soldiers hit another record high...” Reference 7 and “Air Force suicides hit a 17-year high...” Reference 8
- Veteran Problems Reference # 98 - VA: Higher Suicide Rates for Male Vets
<http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1953058,00.html#ixzz0cR99VQHZ>

The Veterans Affairs Department said Monday that preliminary data reflects that the suicide rate among 18- to 29-year-old male veterans has increased significantly. It said the rate went up 26 percent from 2005 to 2007. (Note Reference # 50 “A CBS News Investigation Uncovers A Suicide Rate For Veterans Twice That Of Other Americans”)

- **Bottom line: These 72 References spell out a problem and the problem is continuing. Even as this generation of youngsters is considerably more “aware” than those preceding them, both active duty and veteran suicide rates are alarmingly high.... We cannot afford such a talent drain for this country’s continued imperialism, or future.**

=====**References**=====

1. The Rogue Valley Peace Veterans Presents ‘Straight Talk’:

Suicide“THE PROS & CONS OF MILITARY SERVICE”

Our goal is to help you make educated decisions about your future. We encourage you to think critically, search for more information, and then make up your own minds.

2. 4 recruiter suicides lead to Army investigation

By Michelle Roberts - The Associated Press, Posted : Wednesday Dec 24, 2008 18:34:25 EST
HENDERSON, Texas — Sgt. 1st Class Patrick Henderson, a strapping Iraq combat veteran, spent the last, miserable months of his life as an Army recruiter, cold-calling dozens of people a day from his strip-mall office and sitting in strangers’ living rooms, trying to sign up their sons and daughters for an unpopular war.

He put in 13-hour days, six days a week, often encountering abuse from young people or their parents. When he and other recruiters would gripe about the pressure to meet their quotas, their superiors would snarl that they ought to be grateful they were not in Iraq, according to his widow.

Less than a year into the job, Henderson — afflicted by flashbacks and sleeplessness after his tour of battle in Iraq — went into his backyard shed, slid the chain lock in place, and hanged himself with a dog chain.

He became, at age 35, the fourth member of the Army’s Houston Recruiting Battalion to commit suicide in the past three years — something Henderson’s widow and others blame on the psychological scars of combat, combined with the pressure-cooker job of trying to sell the war.

“Over there in Iraq, you’re doing this high-intensive job you are recognized for. Then, you come back here, and one month you’re a hero, one month you’re a loser because you didn’t put anyone in,” said Staff Sgt. Amanda Henderson, herself an Iraq veteran and a former recruiter in the battalion.

The Army has 38 recruiting battalions in the United States. Patrick Henderson’s is the only one to report more than one suicide in the past six years.

3. 22 Military Veterans Commit Suicide Every Day, February 1, 2013 2:39 PM

<http://washington.cbslocal.com/2013/02/01/study-22-military-veterans-commit-suicide-every-day/>

WASHINGTON (CBSDC) - The results of a new study indicate that suicide rates among veterans in the United States are increasing.

An estimated 22 military veterans take their lives every day in America, according to the study helmed by Robert Bossarte, an epidemiologist and researcher who works with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

“While the percentage of all suicides reported as Veterans has decreased, the number of suicides has increased,” the conclusion of the study stated.

Specific trends were observed during the course of the study regarding the age and gender of veterans who most frequently committed suicide.

“A majority of Veteran suicides are among those age 50 years and older. Male Veterans who die by suicide are older than non-Veteran males who die by suicide,” the study’s findings stated.

“The age distribution of Veteran and non-Veteran women who have died from suicide is similar.”

4. A sign of empire pathology

Gulf Daily News, Manama, Bahrain, Finian Cunningham, Posted Tuesday, January 12, 2010

<http://www.gulf-daily-news.com/NewsDetails.aspx?storyid=268359>, Copyright 2010

Here is a shocking statistic that you won't hear in most western news media: over the past nine years, more US military personnel have taken their own lives than have died in action in either the wars in Iraq or Afghanistan. These are official figures from the US Department of Defence, yet somehow they have not been deemed newsworthy to report. Last year alone, more than 330 serving members of the US armed forces committed suicide - more than the 320 killed in Afghanistan and the 150 who fell in Iraq (see wsws.org).

Since 2001, when Washington launched its so-called war on terror, there has been a dramatic year-on-year increase in US military suicides, particularly in the army, which has borne the brunt of fighting abroad. Last year saw the highest total number since such records began in 1980. Prior to 2001, the suicide rate in the US military was lower than that for the general US population; now, it is nearly double the national average.

5. About 18 a Day: Letters at 3AM

About 18 U.S. veterans commit suicide on an average day

By Michael Ventura, Fri., July 1, 2011

<http://www.austinchronicle.com/columns/2011-07-01/letters-at-3am-about-18-a-day/>

"About 18 veterans commit suicide on an average day" (The New York Times, May 19, p.26).

These are young veterans mostly, some of the 1.6 million who've served in Iraq and Afghanistan. The report continues: "Benefits claims are supposed to be dealt with in days or weeks, but it takes an average of more than four years to fully adjudicate a mental health claim. When a veteran appeals a disability rating, the process bogs down drastically. The problem is an overwhelmed bureaucracy and a chronic inadequacy of resources and planning."

About 18 a day comes to about 6,570 dead veterans a year.

According to President Obama's June 22 speech, we have lost "nearly 4,500" in Iraq and "over 1,500" in Afghanistan, about 6,000 in nearly 10 years of war. I found no figures as to how long we've been losing so many vets to suicide, but just one year's count is more than a decade's dead in two wars. They're killing themselves with more speed and fury, and in greater numbers, than during 10 years of combined mayhem by Iraqis, the Taliban, and al Qaeda.

6. Accelerated Mortality Rates of Vietnam Veterans; Memorandum

S. Brian Willson - We are not worth more, they are not worth less. July 1, 1999

<http://www.brianwillson.com/memorandum-accelerated-mortality-rates-of-vietnam-veterans/>

Introduction

During the early 1980s, while first living in Franklin County, Massachusetts, I became active with other Vietnam veterans in response to the myriad physical, psychological, and social problems we seemed to be experiencing. I was active in a local Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) chapter, and subsequently became director of the state-funded Western Massachusetts Agent Orange Information Project, and later, executive director of a veterans outreach center.

Through numerous conversations and formal interviews with hundreds of veterans I began to establish an empirical substantiation of the syndrome of problems that certainly is one of the tragic legacies of the Vietnam War (i.e., the war against the Vietnamese which the Vietnamese call "the American War"). Grasping the depth of the prevailing sense of shame, malaise, and deteriorating physical and mental health, I began to understand more deeply both the burden and incredible potential wisdom of the war, not just for veterans, but for the entire American society. Both the syndrome known as PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), often delayed for a decade or more enabling the psyche time to integrate the horrible realities that the Vietnam experience possesses for many, and exposure to the most intensive application of chemical warfare in history by the Pentagon (in cahoots with seven chemical companies, including Monsanto and Dow), directly contributed to a myriad of symptoms, physical, emotional, and psychic. A pattern of extraordinary sickness and depression for this age group of young males (age 30-45 in 1984-85) is believed unprecedented in the United States.

7. ActiveDuty Soldiers Take Their Own Lives at Record Rate

By ELISABETH BUMILLER, January 19, 2012,

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/20/us/active-duty-army-suicides-reach-record-high.html?_r=1&nl=todaysheadlines&emc=tha23

WASHINGTON — Suicides among active-duty soldiers hit another record high in 2011, Army officials said on Thursday, although there was a slight decrease if nonmobilized Reserve and National Guard troops were included in the calculation.

Graphic

The Army also reported a sharp increase, nearly 30 percent, in violent sex crimes last year by active-duty troops. More than half of the victims were active-duty female soldiers ages 18 to 21. “This is unacceptable,” Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli, the departing vice chief of staff of the Army, said at a news conference, referring to the jump in violent sex offenses. “We have zero tolerance for this.” General Chiarelli said factors driving the increase in sex crimes were alcohol use and new barracks that offered more privacy. He said it was also possible that reporting of the offenses had increased.

8. Air Force suicide rate highest in 17 years

Stars and Stripes, By Jennifer H. Svan, Published: December 22, 2010

<http://www.stripes.com/news/air-force-suicide-rate-highest-in-17-years-1.129579>

Air Force suicides hit a 17-year high in 2010, and officials say relationship problems remain the No. 1 reason airmen decide to end their lives.

Through Tuesday, 54 active-duty airmen have committed suicide — 13 more than last year — and the highest rate since 1993.

The alarming news comes after nearly two years of efforts within the Defense Department to lower suicide numbers.

The other services are reporting slightly lower numbers among active-duty troops. In the Army, there have been 144 confirmed or suspected suicides among active-duty soldiers, compared with 162 in 2009. The Navy says its suicide rate dropped from 46 in 2009 to 33 this year, and the Marine Corps says its numbers fell from 52 last year to 46 so far in 2010.

Air Force leaders said that, in addition to relationship problems, other risk factors they evaluate include history of mental health issues, alcohol in system at time of death, financial problems and whether an airman was deployed in the past year.

9. Air Force Suicide Rate Hits 17-Year High

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<http://www.military.com/news/article/air-force-suicide-rate-hits-17-year-high.html?ESRC=airforce.nl>

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10. Air Force Suicide Rate Hits 17-Year High

by Jennifer H. Svan, Tuesday, 04 January 2011 12:05

<http://veteransforcommonsense.org/index.php/national-security/2062-jennifer-h-svan>

December 23, 2010 (Military.com) - Air Force suicides hit a 17-year high in 2010, and officials say relationship problems remain the No. 1 reason Airmen decide to end their lives. Through Tuesday, 54 active-duty Airmen have committed suicide -- 13 more than last year -- and the highest rate since 1993.

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11. Another soldier spurned by Army dies of apparent suicide

Gregg Zoroya, USA TODAY 8:07 p.m. EDT August 4, 2015

http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2015/08/04/another-soldier-spurned-army-dies-apparent-suicide/30726649/?utm_source=feedblitz&utm_medium=FeedBlitzRss&utm_campaign=usatoday-newstopstories

Elsie Florian of Munhall, PA died earlier this Spring from a superbug infection linked to a duodenoscope that was used to treat a mild intestinal problem. Her family wants people to know about the risks associated with duodenoscopes.(USA NEWS, USA TODAY)

For a U.S. Army where failures to treat soldiers with substance abuse problems have been linked to suicides, Georgia National Guard Spc. Stephen Akins was another tragedy waiting to happen. Scans of his brain showed scars, and he had a history of seizures, combat blast exposure and suicide attempts. All were indisputable evidence that the soldier needed a medical retirement —

despite erratic behavior that led to punishable infractions, his lawyer and psychiatrist argued. Such a move would offer a smooth transition from the Army to the care of the VA.

12. Army Base on the Brink

At an Army base near Seattle, soldiers are committing suicide, murdering their families—and in one case, waterboarding their own kids. Winston Ross reports from a base on the brink.

by Winston Ross | September 9, 2011 1:56 PM EDT

<http://readersupportednews.org/off-site-news-section/43-43/7386-army-base-on-the-brink>

—Back when Jonathan Gilbert was still in middle school, he attended his cousin’s graduation ceremony from the U.S. Army’s basic training, watching men in neatly pressed uniforms marching, saluting one another, and smiling.

“That was it for him,” Gilbert’s mother, Karrie Champion, tells The Daily Beast. “He knew what he wanted to do. He enlisted before he was out of high school.”

The boy had no idea what he was getting into—that he’d wind up in Iraq, driving a Stryker, watching the unit in the caravan ahead of him roll off a bridge and land upside down. Two soldiers were killed, one of them decapitated. Nineteen-year-old Jonathan helped clean up the body parts.

13. Army Recruiter Suicides Prompt Investigations

by John McChesney, npr, January 1, 2009

“How could you be over there and see some of the things he saw and dealt with, and try to hire people to go over there and do that?”

Reporter Lindsay Wise has been following the recruiter suicides for The Houston Chronicle.

Here's a selection of her stories for the newspaper.

- * May 18, 2008: A Soldier's Tragic Tale
- * Sept. 26, 2008: Houston Soldiers' Suicides Prompt Scrutiny
- * Oct. 4, 2008: Widow Pleads For Recruiting Overhaul
- * Oct. 10, 2008: Cornyn Seeking Probe Into Army Recruiter Suicides

Morning Edition, January 2, 2009 • The Army is investigating a cluster of suicides in the Houston Recruiting Battalion, where five soldiers have taken their own lives since 2001.

Nationally, 17 recruiters have committed suicide during the same period.

Back in March of 2007, Aron Andersson locked himself in the cab of his Ford 150 pickup, called home to say he was going to kill himself, shot up the dashboard radio, and then put a bullet in his head. He had threatened suicide five months earlier, and back then his father, Bob Andersson, reported him to the military.

14. Army recruiter’s apparent suicide attempt part of troubling military trend

Brockton recruiter’s apparent suicide try may be linked to push to find wartime volunteers

By Maureen Boyle, ENTERPRISE STAFF WRITER, Posted Feb 02, 2010 @ 03:18 PM

<http://www.enterpriseneews.com/news/x573995475/Army-recruiter-s-apparent-suicide-attempt-part-of-troubling-military-trend>

BROCKTON — Army recruiter Raymond Kerr was found clinging to life, gun in hand, in his car in the parking lot outside the military recruiting office on Westgate Drive on Monday morning. The 33-year-old Army sergeant was shot in the head in what appeared to be a self-inflicted wound, police said. Kerr, who most recently lived in Whitman, was flown to a Boston hospital on Monday, where he remained Tuesday afternoon.

If investigators officially rule the case an attempted suicide, it would be part of a troubling trend in the military. The U.S. Army this month reported there were 160 reported active-duty Army suicides in 2009. Of that number, 114 were confirmed and 46 were pending until the manner of death was determined. That number was up from 2008, when there were 140 suicides among active-duty soldiers. Nationally, 17 military recruiters committed suicide between 2001 and January 2009, according to npr.org.

Experts point out that the Iraq and Afghanistan wars are the longest fought by an all-volunteer military in the nation's history.

15. Army Recruiting Stand-Down Ordered for Friday

Friday 13 February 2009, by: Michelle Tan, The Army Times

<http://www.truthout.org/021309N>

Jill Bozeman (right) saved her husband's life when he came home disoriented. Wade Bozeman (in photo) is a former army recruiter. (Photo: Stephen B. Thornton / The Houston Chronicle)

A stand-down of the Army's entire recruiting force, ordered by Army Secretary Pete Geren, will take place Friday.

Geren ordered the stand-down after a wide-ranging investigation into four suicides in the Houston Recruiting Battalion. Poor command climate, failing personal relationships and long, stressful work days were factors in the suicides, the investigation found.

During the one-day stand-down, all 7,735 active Army and 1,797 Reserve recruiters will receive training on leadership, a review of the expectations of Recruiting Command's leaders, suicide prevention and resiliency training, coping skills and recruiter wellness.

Findings from the investigation, conducted by Brig. Gen. Del Turner, deputy commanding general for Accessions Command, were released Jan. 21, one week before the Army announced that suicides among soldiers across the Army increased in 2008 to 129, the highest rate in almost 30 years. In addition, the cause of death in 14 other cases was pending. That means there could have been as many as 143 suicides in 2008.

16. Army Suicide Rate Terrifying Army official: Suicides in January 'terrifying'

Barbara Starr and Mike Mount, CNN, updated 2:46 p.m. EST, Thu February 5, 2009

* Two dozen soldiers believed to have killed themselves in January, official says

* The number of likely suicides more than those killed in combat last month

* Army psychologist says long, cold months of winter might have contributed to spike

* Army takes rare step of releasing figures for month rather than waiting till end of year
WASHINGTON (CNN) -- One week after the U.S. Army announced record suicide rates among its soldiers last year, the service is worried about a spike in possible suicides in the new year. The Army said 24 soldiers are believed to have committed suicide in January alone -- six times as many as killed themselves in January 2008, according to statistics released Thursday. The Army said it already has confirmed seven suicides, with 17 additional cases pending that it believes investigators will confirm as suicides for January. If those prove true, more soldiers will have killed themselves than died in combat last month. According to Pentagon statistics, there were 16 U.S. combat deaths in Afghanistan and Iraq in January.

17. US Army suicides hit new high for 2008

By David Morgan, Thu Jan 29, 2009 5:51pm EST

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Suicides in the U.S. Army jumped 11 percent to a all-time high in 2008, as the stress of ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan took a greater toll on U.S. soldiers, the armed service said Thursday.

Preliminary figures, which showed the Army's suicide rate for the first time eclipsing the comparable suicide rate for U.S. civilians, prompted Army leaders to announce a new training and prevention campaign to identify soldiers at risk.

But Army officials acknowledged that the rising suicide trends that have occurred among active duty soldiers and reservists since 2004 have largely eluded efforts to understand and reverse the deadly phenomenon.

"This is a challenge of the highest order for us," U.S. Army Secretary Pete Geren told reporters. "Why do the numbers keep going up? We cannot tell you. But we can tell you that across the Army, we're committed to doing everything we can to address the problem," he said.

18. Army Suicides in January 09 'terrifying'

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<http://www.cnn.com/2009/US/02/05/army.suicides/>

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19. Baffling Rise in Suicides Plagues the US Military

By JAMES DAO and ANDREW W. LEHREN, May 15, 2013

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/16/us/baffling-rise-in-suicides-plagues-us-military.html?nl=todaysheadlines&emc=edit_th_20130516

After Specialist Freddy Hook, a medic with the Army's 82nd Airborne Division, killed himself in 2010, the trail of possible causes seemed long.

He had used illegal drugs: Was it the demons of addiction? His rocky relationship with his fiancée? A wrenching deployment to earthquake-ravaged Haiti or the prospect of an impending tour in Afghanistan?

As with most of suicides plaguing the military today, no one will know for sure.

"There are so many factors," said his mother, Theresa Taylor, of Lafayette, La. "Everything that was important to him was having problems."

Of the crises facing American troops today, suicide ranks among the most emotionally wrenching — and baffling. Over the course of nearly 12 years and two wars, suicide among active-duty troops has risen steadily, hitting a record of 350 in 2012. That total was twice as many as a decade before and surpassed not only the number of American troops killed in Afghanistan but also the number who died in transportation accidents last year.

20. Broken Soldiers and a Broken System

Senator Edwards' Letter to Editor: Broken Soldiers and a Broken System

John Edwards, New York Times, Apr 08, 2008

To the Editor, New York Times:

In "For Wounded Veterans and Their Families, a Journey Without Maps" (Editorial Observer, March 24), Lawrence Downes missed an important opportunity to explain why both the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs are unprepared to care for the service members who have been hurt in the Iraq war.

The reason is that the frequently reported number of the wounded in action (29,320 as of March 1) does not include everyone who's been hurt.

21. Carrying a Backpack of Sorrow ... Soldiers on the Edge of Suicide

Carrying a Backpack of Sorrow ... Soldiers on the Edge of Suicide *r u t h o u t*, Op-Ed | Nadya Williams, Thursday 01 April 2010

<http://www.truthout.org/carrying-a-backpack-sorrow-soldiers-edge-suicide58208>

More of our young soldiers are now killing themselves than are being killed in our wars in the Middle East. The sad statistics are at the end of this article, but the following poem by a 24-year-

old former Marine, who slashed his wrists twice after four years of duty and two tours of combat, tells it all.

You fell off the seat as the handlebars turned sharp left, throwing your body onto the hot coals of Ramadi pavement, intertwining your legs within your bicycle. Lifeless eyes looking to the sky, neck muscles twitched turning your head towards us. Nothing escaped your lips except for the blood in the left corner of your mouth that briefly moistened them until the sand and dust dried them out. The blood trail went behind the stone wall where your body was placed, weighed down by your blue bicycle and we laughed. I used to fall asleep to the pictures and now I can't even bear to get a glimpse. -Excerpted from "The Bicycle" by Jon Michael Turner

22. Four suicides in a week stun Fort Hood

Washington Post, By Ann Gerhart, Staff Writer, Friday, October 1, 2010; 10:31 AM

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/09/30/AR2010093006646.html?wpisrc=nl_pmheadline

Fort Hood's leaders have tried nearly everything to stop the suicides. There are support groups and hotlines, counseling sessions and Reiki healing therapies, and strict assessment guidelines for commanders.

But the soldiers keep killing themselves. This past weekend, four more were dead at the Texas post, all of them decorated veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, three of them sergeants, two of them fathers of young children.

All four appear to have shot themselves, according to preliminary reports gathered for the Army's Suicide Prevention Task Force. Their deaths, which did not appear to be related, came within a few days of a visit from the Army's vice chief of staff, who reiterated his urgent plea for hurting soldiers to seek help.

"Every one of these is tragic," said Maj. Gen. William Grimsley, who commands Fort Hood, the nation's largest Army post. "It's personally and professionally frustrating as a leader."

23. Despite Efforts, Troop Suicide Rate Up

McClatchy Newspapers, January 18, 2010,

<http://www.military.com/news/article/despite-efforts-troop-suicide-rate-up.html>

WASHINGTON --- Eight years of war in Afghanistan and Iraq have etched indelible scars on the psyches of many of the nation's service members, and the U.S. military is losing a battle to stem an epidemic of suicides in its ranks.

Despite calls by top Pentagon officials for a sea change in attitudes about mental health, millions of dollars in new suicide-prevention programming and thousands of hours spent helping Soldiers suffering from what often are euphemistically dubbed "invisible wounds," the military is losing ground.

The Department of Defense Friday reported that there were 160 reported active-duty Army suicides in 2009, up from 140 in 2008. Of these, 114 have been confirmed, while the manner of death in the remaining 46 remains to be determined.

"There's no question that 2009 was a painful year for the Army when it came to suicides," said Col. Christopher Philbrick, the deputy director of the Army Suicide Prevention Task Force, in a statement, despite what he called "wide-ranging measures last year to confront the problem."

24. Guard And Reserve Suicide Rates Climbing

Knight Ridder, July 26, 2010

<http://www.military.com/news/article/guard-and-reserve-suicide-rates-skyrocket.html?ESRC=airforce.nl>

WASHINGTON - Suicides among Army and Air National Guard and Reserve troops have spiked this year, and the military is at a loss to explain why.

Sixty-five members of the Guard and Reserve took their own lives during the first six months of 2010, compared with 42 for the same period in 2009. The grim tally is further evidence that suicides continue to plague the military even though it's stepped up prevention efforts through counseling and mental health awareness programs.

"Suicides among military personnel and veterans are at an epidemic rate, and it's getting worse," said Tim Embree, a former Marine who served two tours in Iraq and is now a legislative associate for Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, an advocacy group.

25. Hood, Army suicides hit record mark

At least 22 confirmed last year in and around Fort Hood, doubling the post's total from 2009.

By Sig Christenson / Sigc@express-news.net, Published: 01:46 a.m., Thursday, January 20, 2011

<http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/military/article/Hood-Army-suicides-hit-record-mark-966320.php>

KILLEEN — Sgt. 1st Class Gregory Eugene Giger was a "tall quiet Texan" even after his wife filed for divorce while he was in Iraq, his mom says.

Still, he was devastated.

"The only thing that I know is when she sued for divorce, she charged him with \$2,000-a-month child support and insisted that he pay half of the house," said Helen Giger, 71, of Chandler, east of Dallas. "And by the time she got through charging him with various things, he had very little money left over, not even hardly enough to pay for his rent."

Authorities found Giger, 42, of Houston dead in his apartment near Fort Hood, hanging by necktie. He was one of at least 22 GIs from the post to commit suicide in 2010.

The Fort Hood mark is a new record for the post and contributed to the Army's worst year for suicides. There was, however, a sign of hope in the grim tally. Slightly fewer active-duty soldiers died by their own hand compared with 2009. But there was bad news, too: The number of suicides in the National Guard and Army Reserve rose sharply.

26. How Many Suicides by Vietnam Vets?

Published: March 07, 1991,

<http://www.nytimes.com/1991/03/07/opinion/1-how-many-suicides-by-vietnam-vets-841091.html>

To the Editor:

Although the case Tom Brokaw cites in "Michael Creamer, a Casualty of Two Wars" (Op-Ed, Feb. 18) is tragic, a study of suicides among Vietnam veterans would be in order.

"Postservice Mortality Among Vietnam Veterans," a Centers for Disease Control study (Journal of the American Medical Association, Feb. 13, 1987, pages 790-95), indicated 1.7 suicides among Vietnam veterans for every one suicide by non-Vietnam veterans for the first five years after discharge. Beyond five years, there were fewer suicides in the Vietnam veterans' group than in the non-Vietnam veterans' group.

"Proportionate Mortality Study of U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps Veterans of the Vietnam War" by Breslan, Kang, Lee and others (Journal of Occupational Medicine, May 1988, pages 412-19) found that suicides were not higher among Vietnam veterans compared with non-Vietnam veterans.

27. Iraq Vet Accuses Bush-Obama Of War Crimes In Suicide Note

=Educate! Wars and Militarism , By Eric London, www.wsws.org, November 14th, 2013

<http://www.popularresistance.org/iraq-vet-accuses-bush-obama-of-war-crimes-in-suicide-note/>

Above: From Gawker, "I am sorry it has come to this: A soldier's last words. By Getty Premium. "I was made to participate in things, the enormity of which is hard to describe... to move on would be the mark of a sociopath."

On Tuesday, the New York Times published the suicide note of Daniel Somers, a 30-year-old war veteran from Phoenix, Arizona who shot himself in the head on June 10, four years after the end of his second deployment in Iraq. The young man is a casualty of an American war machine that has claimed the lives of over one million people in the last decade alone. Somers' note (see below) is a chilling indictment of the Bush and Obama administrations, which have waged a series of wars of aggression, devastating the lives of thousands of soldiers, having ordered them to commit unconscionable war crimes.

"The simple truth is this," the note reads, "During my first deployment, I was made to participate in things, the enormity of which is hard to describe. War crimes, crimes against humanity.

Though I did not participate willingly, and made what I thought was my best effort to stop these events, there are some things that a person simply cannot come back from... to move on in life after being part of such a thing would be the mark of a sociopath in my mind. These things go far beyond what most are even aware of.

28. Local veteran's suicide reflects troubling trend

Local veteran's suicide reflects troubling trend

Seattle Times, by Hal Bernton, staff reporter, July 5, 2010

http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2012287375_ orrin06m.html

In July of 2005, near the end of his time in Afghanistan, Orrin Gorman McClellan wrote a bitter ode to military recruiters:

"take your pleasantries

your generalizations, good intentions,

**sweet words, and half truths,
put them in a box.
drape a flag over it.
and bury it with the rest of the dead."**

Orrin Gorman McClellan is among the war casualties that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has just begun to track — young men and women who served in the post-9/11 military, and killed themselves after struggles with post-traumatic stress disorder and other war wounds.

Perry McClellan and Judith Gorman put a flagpole in front of their home to commemorate their son's life and service. A talented artist, he helped his parents create a new veterans center on Whidbey Island before taking his life in May.

Orrin Gorman McClellan had a passion for photography, and the images he captured and brought home from his deployment to Afghanistan in 2005 and 2006 reflect the physical and emotional grind of war. They are provided by his parents, who plan to use them in a book to raise money for their Veterans Resource Center project on Whidbey Island.

29. Maltreated and hazed, one soldier is driven to take his own life

Megan McCloskey, stripes.com, June 7th 2011

<http://www.stripes.com/news/special-reports/suicide-in-the-military/maltreated-and-hazed-one-soldier-is-driven-to-take-his-own-life-1.145941>

See Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0jsxw4Y21fY>

Also see: <http://www.stripes.com/news/special-reports/suicide-in-the-military>

For Army Spc. Brushaun Anderson, there was no escaping his torment.

The senior noncommissioned officers who ruled his life at a remote patrol base in Iraq ordered him to wear a plastic trash bag because they said he was “dirty.”

They forced him to perform excessive physical exercises in his body armor over and over again.

They made him build a sandbag wall that served no military purpose.

Anderson seemed to take it all in stride. Until New Year's Day 2010, when the once-eager 20-year-old soldier locked himself inside a portable toilet, picked up his M4 rifle, aimed the barrel at his forehead and pulled the trigger.

30. “Mass Casualties:” The Dark Underbelly of Occupation, an Army Medic's Account

by: Dahr Jamail, t r u t h o u t | Thursday 18 February 2010

<http://www.truthout.org/mass-casualties-the-dark-underbelly-occupation-army-medics-account56992>

"Look around," the drill sergeant said. "In a few years, or even a few months, several of you will be dead. Some of you will be severely wounded or so badly mutilated that your own mother can't stand the sight of you. And for the real unlucky ones, you will come home so emotionally disfigured that you wish you had died over there."

"It was Week 7 of basic training ... eighteen years old and I was preparing myself to die," said Michael Anthony in "Mass Casualties: A Young Medic's True Story of Death, Deception and Dishonor in Iraq." The book is more than a simple memoir about a difficult experience. It is an insider's scathing testimony of an ongoing illegal and unethical military action in a distant, once-sovereign state, by the US. Perhaps, this fresh account will raise some outcry over an issue that has all but dropped out of the American public's radar.

Following the family legacy of military service, Anthony enlisted in the military at 17. The image he had nurtured of the idealism of military life, however, ran aground upon his arrival in Iraq, where he served as a medic in an operating room (OR) at a US military base.

31. Military Investigates West Point Suicides

Military Investigates West Point Suicides Deaths Come as Overall Army Rate Jumps

By Ann Scott Tyson, Washington Post Staff Writer, Friday, January 30, 2009

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/01/29/AR2009012904135_pf.html

Two West Point cadets have committed suicide since December and two others attempted suicide in the past two weeks, prompting the military academy's leaders to summon an Army surgeon general's suicide team to the campus today to investigate the causes.

The suicides are the first since at least 2005. The academy is passing out prevention cards, putting up posters and reviewing its procedures, and it has ordered fresh suicide-prevention training to be completed by today, said Col. Bryan Hilferty, spokesman for the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y.

Some West Point students blamed the problem on the high stress of life at the academy as well as hazing and said there have been as many as five suicide attempts since November. Officials said the two cadets who died had psychological conditions.

"This is a stressful place. It's the United States Military Academy," Hilferty said, but he added that "nothing is more stressful here than it has been."

32. Misc. Suicide Stats

<http://primal-page.com/suicide.htm>:

"1,100 servicemen and women committed suicide in 2005 to 2009 -- one suicide every day and a half. The Army's suicide rate doubled in that time." --Defense Health Board

<http://www.veteranstoday.com/2010/02/28/war-military-suicides-and-civilian-casualties/>

February 28, 2010: "Last month, the Defense Department reported that there were 160 reported active-duty Army suicides in 2009, up from 140 in 2008. Of these, 114 have been confirmed, while the cause of death in the remaining 46 has yet to be determined."

http://www.thewe.cc/weplanet/news/armed_force/us_soldiers_committing_suicide_vietnam_iraq.html:

... the military brass were horrified at the low "firing rates" and anemic "kill ratios" of U.S. soldiery. They immediately set about trying to break the next generation of recruits of their natural resistance to slaughtering their own kind.

Incorporating the latest techniques for psychological manipulation, new training programs were designed to brutalize the mind and habituate soldiers to the idea of killing automatically, by reflex, without the intervention of any of those "inefficient" scruples displayed by their illustrious predecessors.

And it worked.

33. More US Soldiers Committed Suicide Than Died in Combat

<http://www.projectcensored.org/top-stories/articles/1-more-us-soldiers-committed-suicide-than-died-in-combat/>

For the second year (2010) in a row, more US soldiers killed themselves (468) than died in combat (462). "If you... know the one thing that causes people to commit suicide, please let us know," General Peter Chiarelli told the Army Times, "because we don't know." Suicide is a tragic but predictable human reaction to being asked to kill – and watch your friends be killed – particularly when it's for a war based on lies. Perhaps being required to bag the mangled flesh of fellow soldiers could be another reason that some are committing suicide.

Body Bagging... ever heard the term? Marines in the Corps's Mortuary Affairs unit at Camp Al Taqaddum, Iraq, are assigned the job of collecting and cataloging the bodies of dead Marines. They sift through the remains and effects, from prom photos to suicide notes and love letters, and put them into a bag, then into a metal box and then into a refrigerator to await the flight home. One soldier, Jess Goodell, recounts a Marine brought into the unit still breathing. She frantically called to her superiors, who replied simply, "Wait." She watched while he died. When she returned to the US, Goodell, like many others, was diagnosed with deep depression, substance abuse, PTSD and anxiety.

34. National Veterans Art Museum Display

On Mon, Jan 27, 2014 at 8:12 PM, Monica Gurak wrote:

As you know, I don't often forward anything anywhere political, religious, etc. But, this is an exception. And, it is really not a political statement. It is a remembrance.

This is a sight you have probably never seen. This is a rare and beautiful memorial to our veterans who were killed in the Vietnam War. It hangs in the National Veteran's Art Museum, Chicago , Illinois . Did not know this existed?

When visitors first enter the museum, they will hear a sound like wind chimes coming from above them and their attention will be drawn upward 24 feet to the ceiling of the two-story high atrium.

Dog tags of the more than 58,000 service men and women who died in the Vietnam War hang from the ceiling of the National Vietnam Veterans Art Museum in Chicago on Veterans Day, November 11, 2010. The 10-by-40-foot sculpture, entitled Above and Beyond, was designed by Ned Broderick and Richard Stein

The tens of thousands of metal dog tags are suspended 24 feet in the air, 1 inch apart, from fine lines that allow them to move and chime with shifting air currents. Museum employees using a kiosk and laser pointer help visitors locate the exact dog tag with the imprinted name of their lost friend or relative.

35. Nearly 1 in 5 had mental illness before enlisting in Army, study says

By Alan Zarembo, March 3, 2014, 9:01 p.m.

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/la-me-army-mental-illness-20140304,0,3410236.story#axzz2v1tv1ire>

The study raises questions about the military's screening of recruits. Another study looks at rising suicide rates among soldiers.

Nearly 1 in 5 U.S. soldiers had a common mental illness before enlisting in the Army, according to a new study that raises questions about the military's assessment and screening of recruits. Nearly 1 in 5 U.S. soldiers had a common mental illness, such as depression, panic disorder or ADHD, before enlisting in the Army, according to a new study that raises questions about the military's assessment and screening of recruits.

36. New Study on Student Veterans and Suicide

Written by Allie Grasgreen

Friday, 05 August 2011 07:42

<http://www.veteransforcommonsense.org/index.php/veterans-category-articles/2468-allie-grasgreen>

August 5, 2011 (Inside Higher Ed) - A greater proportion of student veterans have considered and attempted suicide compared to their non-veteran peers, and the difference is particularly stark in some areas, according to a study released Thursday at an American Psychological Association meeting in Washington.

Nearly half of student veterans – 46 percent – said they have experienced suicidal thoughts, 20 percent said they have planned a suicide, and 10.4 percent reported suicidal thinking on a frequent basis. (These responses are not mutually exclusive.)

A straight comparison of the data to those for the general student population is difficult because the format and phrasing of the most comparable source, the American College Health Association's National College Health Assessment, is differ somewhat from the veterans' study. The former asks only two questions about suicide – have you ever “seriously considered” it and have you ever attempted it -- and in both cases, how recently.

37. Our officers kill more US troops than the Taliban

Record suicides prove our right to refuse to fight

By Michael Prysner

The author is a former corporal in the U.S. Army and a veteran of the Iraq war.

The U.S. Army revealed that July yielded the highest number of active-duty soldier suicides on record, with 38 in just a single month (this number does not include other branches of service, or Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who commit suicide once they get out of the military). In the same month, 30 U.S. soldiers were killed in Afghanistan, the highest number in a single month so far this year, who should have never been sent to their deaths in the first place. Suicides outpacing combat deaths has been a reality for years. In 2008, 2009 and 2010 there were more suicides in the active-duty Army than there were killed in Afghanistan.

38. RECORD US MILITARY SUICIDES IN 2012

Our officers kill more U.S. troops than the Taliban

http://www2.answercoalition.org/site/MessageViewer?em_id=91745.0&dlv_id=83126

Only we can stop the senseless death of our fellow service members.

The following article was published in August 2012 after July was revealed to be the highest month for U.S. Army suicides on record. We are republishing it today as the U.S. military has revealed 349 active-duty suicides in 2012, the highest number on record. In that same year, there were 295 U.S. combat deaths in Afghanistan.

March Forward! and Veterans For Peace are working to battle the suicide epidemic within the ranks of the U.S. military itself with the Our Lives Our Rights campaign. Please click here to support this important effort.

The U.S. Army revealed that July yielded the highest number of active-duty soldier suicides on record, with 38 in just a single month (this number does not include other branches of service, or Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who commit suicide once they get out of the military).

39. Army Recruiter Suicides Prompt Investigations

by John McChesney, npr, Morning Edition, January 2, 2009

“How could you be over there and see some of the things he saw and dealt with, and try to hire people to go over there and do that?”

More On Recruiter Suicides

Reporter Lindsay Wise has been following the recruiter suicides for The Houston Chronicle.

Here's a selection of her stories for the newspaper.

- May 18, 2008: A Soldier's Tragic Tale,
<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/side2/5788103.html>
- Sept. 26, 2008: Houston Soldiers' Suicides Prompt Scrutiny,
<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/side2/6023927.html>
- Oct. 4, 2008: Widow Pleads For Recruiting Overhaul,
<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/side2/6039267.html>
- Oct. 10, 2008: Cornyn Seeking Probe Into Army Recruiter Suicides,
<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/side2/6050284.html>

The Army is investigating a cluster of suicides in the Houston Recruiting Battalion, where five soldiers have taken their own lives since 2001. Nationally, 17 recruiters have committed suicide during the same period.

Back in March of 2007, Aron Andersson locked himself in the cab of his Ford 150 pickup, called home to say he was going to kill himself, shot up the dashboard radio, and then put a bullet in his head. He had threatened suicide five months earlier, and back then his father, Bob Andersson, reported him to the military.

40. Research Identifies Suicide Rate Among Young Women Veterans Almost 3X That of Civilians

OHSU, PSU Research Identifies Suicide Rate Among Young Women Veterans More Than Twice That of Civilians

12/01/10 Portland, Ore.

http://www.ohsu.edu/xd/about/news_events/news/2010/2010-12-01-high-suicide-rate-a.cfm

Young women veterans are nearly three times as likely as civilians to commit suicide, according to new research published by researchers at Portland State University (PSU) and Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU).

The paper, “Self-Inflicted Deaths Among Women With U.S. Military Service: A Hidden Epidemic?” appears in the December 2010 issue of *Psychiatric Services*, a journal published by the American Psychiatric Association. This work is the first general population study of current suicide risk among women who’ve served in the U.S. military.

According to the data, female veterans aged 18 to 34 are at highest risk.

“Women veterans are more likely to complete suicide than nonveteran women,” said Bentson McFarland, M.D., Ph.D., a professor of psychiatry in the OHSU School of Medicine. McFarland co-authored the paper with Mark Kaplan, Dr.P.H., and Nathalie Huguet, Ph.D., of Portland State University.

41. Retired military officers’ letter seeks to amend gun law to help battle suicides

By Steve Vogel, Published: December 2, 2012

http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/retired-military-officers-letter-seeks-to-amend-law-on-guns-to-help-battle-suicides/2012/12/02/e903be32-3c9d-11e2-ae43-cf491b837f7b_story.html?wpisrc=nl_headlines

A group of senior retired generals and admirals are calling for Congress to amend a recent law that they say “dangerously interferes” with the ability of commanders to battle the epidemic of suicides among members of the military.

Legislation added to the 2011 defense authorization bill at the urging of gun-rights advocates prohibits commanders from collecting any information about weapons privately owned by troops. Critics say the law prevents commanders from being able to talk to service members about their privately owned weapons — such as encouraging the use of a gunlock or temporary

storage away from their homes — even in cases when the commanding officer thinks the service member is at risk for suicide.

42. Senator Murray: States Should Track Veteran Suicides

Written by Adam Ashton , Friday, 05 August 2011 07:37

<http://www.veteransforcommonsense.org/index.php/veterans-category-articles/2467-adam-ashton>

August 4, 2011, Tacoma, Washington (News Tribune) - United States Senator Patty Murray, Chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, on Wednesday encouraged state governments to start tallying veteran suicides, as Washington already does.

Her goal is to quantify an under-reported number that could help health agencies improve their outreach to service members who have fought in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Department of Veterans Affairs has an incomplete picture of suicide among former service members because it doesn't count the deaths of veterans not enrolled in VA care.

“One of the most significant obstacles to understanding veteran suicide is the lack of information available regarding these individuals,” Murray wrote with two of her Democratic colleagues in a letter to the National Governors Association.

43. Shady Cove couple found dead

Sahdy Cove murder-suicide leaves community in shock

By Ryan Pfeil, Mail Tribune, November 23, 2011

<http://www.mailtribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20111123/NEWS/111230321>

Investigators secure a crime scene in the 20000 block of Highway 62 in Shady Cove, where a mother and father of four were found dead from gunshot wounds in an apparent murder-suicide.

SHADY COVE — Four children are orphans after an apparent murder-suicide claimed their parents' lives early Tuesday morning, Jackson County Sheriff's Department officials said.

Deputies and Eagle Point police responded to a report of shots fired at about 2:30 a.m. in the 20000 block of Highway 62. They found Makiala Lynn Upton, 30, dead from a gunshot wound inside the home, officials said.

A SWAT team was summoned to look for the shooter. Police then found the body of Upton's husband, Dewayne Garrett Upton, 36, near the Rogue River with a small-caliber handgun near his body. Sheriff'

44. Soldier Suicides at Record Level

Increase Linked to Long Wars, Lack of Army Resources

By Dana Priest, Washington Post Staff Writer, Thursday, January 31, 2008

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/01/30/AR2008013003106.html?referrer=emailarticle>

Lt. Elizabeth Whiteside, a psychiatric outpatient at Walter Reed Army Medical Center who was waiting for the Army to decide whether to court-martial her for endangering another soldier and

turning a gun on herself last year in Iraq, attempted to kill herself Monday evening. (Audio slide show at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/gallery/2007/12/01/GA2007120101697.html?sid=ST2008013003145>.)

In so doing, the 25-year-old Army reservist joined a record number of soldiers who have committed or tried to commit suicide after serving in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Beyond Walter Reed

Army 1st Lt. Elizabeth Whiteside (picture at right) was judged by her superiors to be a model officer. But after suffering a psychiatric breakdown in Iraq, she has found herself facing criminal charges for attempted suicide and endangering the life of another soldier. Her story shows that the Army continues to grapple with soldiers who suffer mental trauma in a combat zone.

"I'm very disappointed with the Army," Whiteside wrote in a note before swallowing dozens of antidepressants and other pills. "Hopefully this will help other soldiers." She was taken to the emergency room early Tuesday. Whiteside, who is now in stable physical condition, learned yesterday that the charges against her had been dismissed.

45. Soldiers at Fort Lewis Fed Up With Mistreatment

<http://www.coffeestrong.org/>

November 2, 2010 JOINT BASE LEWIS MCHORD, WASHINGTON – An anonymous group of soldiers in 4-9 Infantry Brigade have released a statement detailing how the Army drove one soldier to suicide. It details the humiliation that soldiers who seek help for mental problems face from their superiors. This comes on the heels of a rash of incidents involving soldiers from JBLM who had untreated mental issues, including one soldier who shot a police officer in Salt Lake City, UT. The letter reads:

“On March 17, 2010, Spc. Kirkland returned home from his second deployment to Iraq. Three days later he was dead—killed by the Army. Spc. Kirkland was sent home from Iraq because the burden of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder became too great—so much that he wanted to take his own life. Many of us also struggle with the effects of PTSD, which is a completely natural, human response to what we are exposed to overseas. It is not a sign of weakness or cowardice, but the inevitable result of serving in combat. It is a burden we all share, and we all deserve adequate treatment and understanding for the sacrifices we have made.

46. Soldiers hospitalized for suicidal thoughts increased 7000 percent over past five years: study

By Nina Mandell, NY DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER, Friday, May 6th 2011, 12:22 PM

http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/2011/05/06/2011-05-06_soldiers_hospitalized_for_suicidal_thoughts_increased_7000_percent_over_past_fiv.html#ixzz1LtiM0yH3

The rate of soldiers hospitalized for having suicidal thoughts has soared a staggering 7,000% in the last five years, a new Pentagon report says.

The report, which covers the period from the fourth year troops were in Afghanistan and the third year they were in Iraq, is the latest troubling survey on potential suicides in the military.

* The Army reported last month there in March had been eight reported potential suicides involving soldiers who were not on active duty, and seven potential suicides among active duty soldiers.

* A study released in March found the suicide rate for female soldiers tripled while at war between 2004 and 2009 compared to soldiers who were not overseas.

47. Still in gear: Injuries don't stop veterans on 100-day bike trek

Cross-country mission called attention to military suicides, other veterans' issues

By Laura T. Coffey, TODAY.com contributor, 5/25/2012

http://today.msnbc.msn.com/id/47559262/ns/today-today_news/#.T8Eb88XcgYt_walltowallbicycleride.com

This photo was captured in Tehachapi, Calif., on day two of a 100-day cross-country bike ride to raise awareness about veteran suicides. Jeremy Staat, 35, a U.S. Marine veteran, is pictured in front, and Wesley Barrientos, 27, a U.S. Army veteran who is a three-time Purple Heart recipient and a double amputee, is using the hand-cranked bicycle. They are accompanied by supporters. They knew it would be hard. They even likened it to a mini-deployment. But what these fired-up veterans didn't expect was that their cross-country bike ride would involve so much injury — and would still be so rejuvenating.

Back in February, three war veterans — Jeremy Staat, 35, Wesley Barrientos, 27, and Dale Porter, 65 — set out to traverse the United States by bicycle in 100 days. Their goal was to make it from the Wall of Valor in Bakersfield, Calif., to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C., by Memorial Day weekend.

48. Study to Seek Clues to Soldier Suicides

By Steve Vogel, Washington Post Staff Writer, Monday, August 10, 2009

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/08/09/AR2009080902086.html?wpisrc=newsletter>

Doctors leading the largest study ever of suicide and mental health in the military are developing intensive soldier surveys that they hope will provide clues as to why suicide rates among Army personnel have grown dramatically in recent years.

The study, a collaboration between the National Institute of Mental Health and the Army, will seek data from every soldier recruited into the Army over the next three years as well as from about 90,000 soldiers already in the service, and the project could eventually involve half a million participants.

The soldiers will be asked on a volunteer basis for personal information that can be used to make psychological assessments. Family members might be contacted for further information. In some cases, saliva and blood samples will be collected for genetic and neurobiological studies.

The information will serve as an "ongoing natural laboratory," officials said, as researchers follow these soldiers for years, looking for common strands as to which individuals are more likely to commit suicide.

49. Suicidal vets find lifeline on social Web sites

Effort to help ramps up against suicides, trauma

HOUSTON CHRONICLE, By LINDSAY WISE, Nov. 27, 2010, 7:14AM,

<http://www.source.ly/10AZn>

RESOURCES FOR VETERANS

Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, www.iava.org/

Lone Star Veterans Association, www.lonestarveterans.org/

VA on Facebook, www.facebook.com/VeteransAffairs

VA suicide prevention hotline: 800-273-TALK (8255), press 1

VA online chat: www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/Veterans/Default.aspx

It was 4 a.m. on a weekday when the first person posted a suicidal threat on the Department of Veterans Affairs' Facebook page.

By the time VA director of new media Brandon Friedman woke up at 6 a.m., he already had several e-mails in his inbox alerting him to the note posted by a distraught veteran. Friedman hadn't even showered yet.

"It was like a deer in the headlights moment," said Friedman, an Army veteran of Iraq and Afghanistan who had been hired to promote VA services on Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube.

The possibility that a veteran might use one of the social media sites to express intention for self-harm had never occurred to Friedman.

"We were not in good shape in terms of preparing for something like that, so it was a huge lesson for us," he said of the incident in April. "We handled it. Everything turned out OK. ... I was determined not to have somebody end their own life on my watch."

50. Suicide Epidemic Among Veterans

A CBS News Investigation Uncovers A Suicide Rate For Veterans Twice That Of Other Americans

By Armen Keteyian, NEW YORK, Nov. 13, 2007

A five-month investigation found vets were more than twice as likely to take their own lives than Americans who never served. Armen Keteyian reports.

Soldiers returning from war are at risk of suicide linked to post-traumatic stress disorder. Some victims' families talk about their loss.

Basic training to learn all about America's fighting force.

E-mail Armen Keteyian and the investigation team with your story ideas.

(CBS) They are the casualties of wars you don't often hear about - soldiers who die of self-inflicted wounds. Little is known about the true scope of suicides among those who have served in the military.

51. Suicide 'epidemic' in Army: July was worst month, Pentagon says

Even as the Afghanistan war winds down, suicides among troops are on the rise. Among all branches, the number is up 22 percent from a year ago, and July was the Army's worst month.

By Anna Mulrine, Staff writer / August 17, 2012

<http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Military/2012/0817/Suicide-epidemic-in-Army-July-was-worst-month-Pentagon-says>

Cheryl Ecker wears a bracelet made from the laces of her son Michael's army boots in Champion, Ohio, in April. On a warm summer afternoon in Champion, Michael Ecker, a 25-year-old Iraq war veteran, called out to his father from a leafy spot in their backyard. Then, as the two stood just steps apart, Michael saluted, raised a gun to his head and pulled the trigger.

Jason Cohn/Reuters

WASHINGTON

It is perhaps the greatest source of frustration and heartache within the US military, even as the war in Afghanistan winds down: the continuing rise of the suicide rate among troops.

July was the worst month on record since the Army began tracking suicide rates: 38 soldiers took their own lives, according to figures released Thursday by the Pentagon.

52. Suicide numbers likely to top 2011, Army says

Posted : Thursday Dec 13, 2012 17:15:16 EST

<http://www.armytimes.com/news/2012/12/army-suicide-numbers-likely-to-top-2011-121312w/>

As many as 12 active-duty soldiers committed suicide in November, pushing the Army above last year's record number of suicides with one month left to go in the year, officials said today. With the deaths in November, of which one has been confirmed as suicide, the Army has now had 177 suspected suicides among active-duty soldiers this year. Last year's total of confirmed suicides was 165.

Of the deaths this year, 113 have been confirmed and 64 deaths are still under investigation.

Typically, about 90 percent of suspected suicides are confirmed.

Also in November, there were as many as 15 suicides among reserve component soldiers who were not on active duty. Of those, 12 were from the Army National Guard and three from the Army Reserve. Two of the deaths are confirmed as suicides and the others remain under investigation.

53. Suicide of Falklands veterans

by ALUN REES, Friday, Mar 23 2012

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-94492/Suicide-Falklands-veterans.html#>

A shocking little-known toll of the Falklands War is revealed today, 20 years on.

More veterans have taken their own lives since the South Atlantic conflict ended than the number of Servicemen killed in action.

The alarming statistic emerged in the wake of the horrifying suicide of Charles 'Nish' Bruce, an SAS hero of the Falklands and one of the world's top freefall experts, who leapt to his death from a light aircraft last week.

And with allegations that the Ministry of Defence has tried to ignore the issue of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) which leaves many sufferers emotionally scarred and unable to work, The Mail on Sunday can reveal that a High Court case brought by 260 former Servicemen against the MoD will begin on March 1.

54. Suicide Rivals The Battlefield In Toll On U.S. Military

by Jamie Tarabay, June 17, 2010

This is the first in an occasional series of stories on the problem of suicides in the military.

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=127860466>

Nearly as many American troops at home and abroad have committed suicide this year as have been killed in combat in Afghanistan. Alarmed at the growing rate of soldiers taking their own lives, the Army has begun investigating its mental health and suicide prevention programs. But the tougher challenge is changing a culture that is very much about "manning up" when things get difficult.

The Case Of Stephen Colley (picture at right)

Stephen Colley, 22, killed himself in May 2007, six months after returning from a tour in Iraq. Military veteran Edward Colley served in the Air Force and the Army. Three of his children also served in the military, and his son-in-law was awarded a Purple Heart after being wounded in Iraq.

55. Suicides among US troops averaging one a day in 2012

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/military/story/2012-06-07/military-troops-suicide/55453990/1>

WASHINGTON (AP), June 8, 2012— Suicides are surging among America's troops, averaging nearly one a day this year — the fastest pace in the nation's decade of war.

According to Pentagon statistics, the number of suicides for active-duty troops this year is about 50% greater than the number of U.S. forces killed in action in Afghanistan.

By Rafiq Maqbool, AP

According to Pentagon statistics, the number of suicides for active-duty troops this year is about 50% greater than the number of U.S. forces killed in action in Afghanistan.

The 154 suicides for active-duty troops in the first 155 days of the year far outdistance the U.S. forces killed in action in Afghanistan — about 50% more — according to Pentagon statistics obtained by the Associated Press.

56. Suicides Outpacing War Deaths for Troops

By TIMOTHY WILLIAMS, Published: June 8, 2012

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/09/us/suicides-eclipse-war-deaths-for-us-troops.html?_r=1

The suicide rate among the nation's active-duty military personnel has spiked this year, eclipsing the number of troops dying in battle and on pace to set a record annual high since the start of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan more than a decade ago, the Pentagon said Friday.

Suicides have increased even as the United States military has withdrawn from Iraq and stepped up efforts to provide mental health, drug and alcohol, and financial counseling services.

The military said Friday that there had been 154 suicides among active-duty troops through Thursday, a rate of nearly one each day this year. The figures were first reported this week by The Associated Press.

57. Support the troops? Read veteran Daniel Somers' viral suicide note

Thursday, June 27, 2013 - Citizen Warrior by Tiffany Madison

<http://communities.washingtontimes.com/neighborhood/citizen-warrior/2013/jun/27/support-troops-then-read-veteran-daniel-somers-sui/>

The Suicide of Daniel Somers'; His viral suicide note

DALLAS, June 25, 2013 - On June 10, 2013, Daniel Somers, 30, a seasoned veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom wrote a chilling, heartbreaking address to his family before ending his life. His last words swept the Internet this week. Every American, particularly those that supported the wars of the last decade, should read it.

According to Gawker, Somers operated in over 400 combat missions. He worked with Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) where he ran the Northern Iraq Intelligence Center as a senior analyst. Daniel suffered greatly from Traumatic Brain Injury and Post Traumatic Stress. In the full letter, which can be found to the left, Somers explains that his self-termination was "a mercy killing" to free him from a tortured soul and broken body. Emotionally catatonic, joy and sorrow was not possible for him. He longed for the freedom and peace death offered.

58. THE SAGA OF THE AMERICAN GI

Join the Army – Kill Overseas – Become a "Hero"— and then Kill Yourself

December 14, 2010

http://www.progressiveavenues.org/The_GI_Saga.html

"More than 1,000 troops have killed themselves over the past five years in a suicidal wave. The steepest hikes have been in the Army and Marine Corps, the two services providing most of the troops for nation's two wars. A recent independent report ordered by Congress found the Pentagon's suicide prevention efforts inadequate."

-- MARK THOMPSON, "Top Admiral: Military Suicides Will Keep Rising," Time Magazine, 9-30-10

<http://swampland.blogs.time.com/2010/09/30/top-general-military-suicides-will-keep-rising/>

Given the high number of military suicides, it is important to understand the context for these tragic deaths.

The holidays frequently evoke symptoms of depression and an escalating sense of hopelessness with marital, economic, or other personal problems. So, as the holidays approach, a joyous time of year with family gatherings, Chanukkah candles, dreidels, Christmas trees, snow falling, wreaths, and Kwanzaa celebrations, reflect on the fact that it is also the time of year when more Americans and especially American service members and veterans commit suicide than any other time of the year. The numbers of those who will end their lives this season will be high as Americans face foreclosures, high rents, loss of jobs, recession, no food, and strong consumer sale pitches to spend, spend, spend.

59. US officials launch new strategy to prevent suicide

The last major U.S. plan tackling suicide was in 2001

By Susan Heavey, Reuters Monday September 10, 2012 1:04 PM

<http://www.source.ly/10RiN#.UE-fd1HAHU0>

A new nationwide strategy to prevent suicides, especially among U.S. military veterans and younger Americans, will tap Facebook Inc as part of a community-driven push to report concerns before someone takes their own life.

The new Facebook service will allow users to report suicidal comments they see online from friends. The website will then send the potential victim an email urging them to call the hotline as well as chat confidentially online with a counselor.

“All too often, people in crisis do not know how - or who - to ask for help,” Facebook Global Vice President for Public Policy Marne Levine said in a statement. “We have a unique opportunity to provide the right resources to our users in distress, when and where they need them most.”

60. VA: Higher Suicide Rates for Male Vets

By AP / KIMBERLY HEFLING Tuesday, Jan. 12, 2010

<http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1953058,00.html#ixzz0cR99VQHZ>

(WASHINGTON) — Home from war and out of the military, young male veterans appear to be committing suicide at a higher rate.

See “Suicide in the Recruiters' Ranks”

<http://www.time.com/time/photogallery/0,29307,1889200,00.html>

The Veterans Affairs Department said Monday that preliminary data reflects that the suicide rate among 18- to 29-year-old male veterans has increased significantly. It said the rate went up 26 percent from 2005 to 2007. VA officials said they assume that most of the veterans in this age group served in Iraq or Afghanistan. (See pictures of an Army town's struggle with PTSD.)

If there is a bright spot in the data, it's that in 2007 veterans in the group who used VA health care were less likely to commit suicide than those who did not. That's a change from 2005.

In recent years, the VA has hired thousands of new mental health professionals and established a suicide hot line credited with "rescues" of nearly 6,000 veterans and military members in distress.

61. VA Hid Suicide Risk, Internal E-Mails Show

April 21, 2008(CBS)

http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2008/04/21/cbsnews_investigates/main4032921.shtml

The Department of Veterans Affairs came under fire again Monday, this time in California federal court where it's facing a national lawsuit by veterans rights groups accusing the agency of not doing enough to stem a looming mental health crisis among veterans. As part of the lawsuit, internal e-mails raise questions as to whether top officials deliberately deceived the American public about the number of veterans attempting and committing suicide. CBS News chief investigative correspondent Armen Keteyian reports.

In San Francisco federal court Monday, attorneys for veterans' rights groups accused the U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs of nothing less than a cover-up - deliberately concealing the real risk of suicide among veterans.

"The system is in crisis and unfortunately the VA is in denial," said veterans rights attorney Gordon Erspamer.

62. Veteran Suicide

p. 10: "... post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) may affect as many as 20 percent of combat veterans from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan."

Veteran Suicide, p. 11:

Editorial by the Register-Guard Originally published Aug. 17, 2016 Reprinted with permission Two years ago, the Oregon Health Authority released a study of suicide among military veterans in the state.

The findings were shocking: Suicide was the leading cause of death among veterans under 45 years of age. Veterans made up 8.7 percent of Oregon's population but accounted for approximately 23 percent of suicides. Even when the number of veterans in Oregon declined between 2001 and 2012, the number of suicides among veterans remained steady. The suicide rate varied from county to county, with Lane County being higher than the statewide average. Today, many veterans still have significant needs that are not being met when it comes to suicide prevention.

A national study released earlier this month by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs found that the risk of suicide for veterans nationally is 21 percent higher than for adults who have never served in the armed forces, averaging 20 per day for veterans. These differences were particularly noticeable in the younger — ages 18 to 39 — and older — 50 to 69 and 80 and up — age groups, with veterans having significantly higher rates.

And the suicide risk for veterans may be higher than the studies show. These statistics do not capture, for example, deaths by drug overdoses or high-risk behavior that can in themselves be a form of suicide

63. Veteran Suicides: How We Got The Numbers

NEW YORK, Dec. 4, 2007(CBS)

http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/11/13/cbsnews_investigates/main3498625.shtml

Since CBS News first aired our veteran suicide report on November 13, we have received several questions from viewers wanting more information. In order to provide as much information as possible and to fully answer all questions, this is a summary of the methodology and results of the data we presented.

When CBS News began looking into veteran suicide, we found that no federal organization or agency tracks the number of veteran suicides nationally. To our knowledge, no one is keeping count. We wanted to know how many veterans are committing suicide nationwide and how the rate of suicide for veterans compares to non-veterans.

64. Veteran Suicides Outnumber US Military Deaths in Iraq and Afghanistan

by: Nadia Prupis, t r u t h o u t | Report, Friday 22 October 2010

<http://www.truth-out.org/veteran-suicides-outnumber-us-military-deaths-iraq-and-afghanistan64433>

More than 1,000 veterans in California under 35 died after returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan between 2005 and 2008 - three times as many California service members who were killed in conflict overseas, according to a recently published Bay Citizen report.

Investigative journalist Aaron Glantz studied the cases of Reuben Paul Santos, Alex Lowenstein and Elijah Warren to shed light on a growing trend among Afghanistan and Iraq veterans who have died through high-risk behavior and suicide after being discharged. In particular, veterans who returned home to California died through motorcycle and motor vehicle accidents and unintentional poisoning; in addition, veterans were two and a half times as likely to commit suicide as Californians of the same age who had not served in the military.

Glantz, who has reported on the Iraq and Afghanistan wars since 2005, decided to focus on veterans in California because "it's important to look at our own community. [Santos] was this young man that was from a community that was literally right down the street. That's how silent this epidemic is."

65. Veteran Suicides: How We Got The Numbers

NEW YORK, Dec. 4, 2007(CBS) (Below: VA report for 2006.)

http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/11/13/cbsnews_investigates/main3498625.shtml

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66. Wars Elite Tough Guys Hesitant to Seek Healing

By THOM SHANKER and RICHARD A. OPPEL Jr. JUNE 5, 2014

http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/06/us/politics/wars-elite-tough-guys-hesitant-to-seek-healing.html?emc=edit_th_20140606&nl=todaysheadlines&nid=65263693

He Was a Different Person

Susan Ullman has worked for better support services for Special Operations troops after her husband, a sergeant in the Army Special Forces, committed suicide.

After his fourth combat tour, to Afghanistan in 2011, Sgt. First Class Michael B. Lube, a proud member of the Army Special Forces, came home alienated and angry. Once a rock-solid sergeant and devoted husband, he became sullen, took to drinking, got in trouble with his commanders and started beating his wife.

“He would put this mask on, but behind it was a shattered version of the man I knew,” said his wife, Susan Ullman. She begged him to get help, but he refused, telling her: “I’ll lose my security clearance. I’ll get thrown out.” When she quietly reached out to his superior officers for guidance, she said, she was told: “Keep it in the family. Deal with it.”

67. WHAT IS A VIET NAM VETERAN

http://www.capveterans.com/caprd_004.htm

I am your neighbor. I am your mailman. I'm your local policeman. I'm your local fireman. I'm homeless. I'm messed up! I'm an attorney. I'm a doctor. I'm a chief executive. I'm any man, every man. I'm every American! I'm a Vietnam Veteran, and damn proud of it!

We're legion - and some of us have forgotten our pride. We left these shores thinking various thoughts. Some of us were looking for adventure and excitement. Some of us were "running away" from things at home. Many of us were hoping to grow up.

Some of us never had the opportunity. Others of us squandered that chance. And most of us accomplished our individual goals. We are proud Americans, regardless of the outcome that politicians dictated for Vietnam.

WHAT IS A VIET NAM VETERAN

This is a question often asked by the generation of today. It is not an easy question to adequately answer because not all Viet Nam Vets will fall into a description given by one person.

Let me begin by stating some facts about the Viet Nam Vet and then you will understand the complexity of trying to accurately describe him or her.

68. What They Died For

Peter Van Buren, Sunday, 29 June 2014 00:00 By Truthout | News Analysis

<http://truth-out.org/news/item/24583-what-they-died-for>

US soldiers provided security at the refinery in Baiji, northwest of Baghdad, in 2008. The facility at Baiji, Iraq's biggest oil refinery, fell to Islamic extremists Wednesday morning, June 18, 2014.

(Photo: Eros Hoagland / The New York Times)Of the 4,486 American military deaths in Iraq, 911 were considered "non-combat related," that is, non-accidents, suicides. In some years, more soldiers died by their own hand than in combat. They died of the war, but not in the war. What for?

I think of it now all the time as I see the images of Iraq's unfolding civil war. Sometimes, I think I even recognize a place I had been, having spent a year in the midst of the United States' occupation there, 2009 to 2010. I was a State Department civilian, embedded with an Army brigade of some 3,000 men and women far from the embassy and the pronouncements of victory and whatever bright lights Iraq might have had. I grow weary now of hearing people talk about the United States' sacrifices, our investment, the need for troops or air strikes, our blood and treasure spent to free Iraq, or whatever it was we were supposed to have gone there to do.

69. While the Army Stands Down Suicide Rates Are Still Up

Paul Rieckhoff, Founder, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, 09/28/2012 10:47 am
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/paul-rieckhoff/military-suicide-rates_b_1922693.html

Yesterday, against the backdrop of the Army's service-wide stand down for suicide prevention, the Army released its suicide numbers for August.

It's not good news.

They reported 25 potential suicides: 16 among active duty soldiers and nine in the reserve component. So far in 2012, the Army has reported 211 potential suicides among active duty and reserve members -- 211 too many.

The Army-wide suicide stand down, the first since 2009, aimed to familiarize soldiers with health services, suicide prevention and soldier fitness resources available and was part of Suicide Prevention Month. Other commendable efforts focused on reducing the stigma associated with seeking mental health care and emphasizing that every service member and veteran is responsible for the well-being of the men and women to their left and right.

70. Why Are Army Recruiters Killing Themselves?

By MARK THOMPSON, Time/CNN, Thursday, Apr. 02, 2009

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1889152,00.html>

When Army Staff Sergeant Amanda Henderson ran into Staff Sergeant Larry Flores in their Texas recruiting station last August, she was shocked by the dark circles under his eyes and his ragged appearance. "Are you O.K.?" she asked the normally squared-away soldier. "Sergeant Henderson, I am just really tired," he replied. "I had such a bad, long week, it was ridiculous." The previous Saturday, Flores' commanders had berated him for poor performance. He had worked every day since from 6:30 a.m. to 10 p.m., trying to persuade the youth of Nacogdoches to wear Army green. "But I'm O.K.," he told her.

No, he wasn't. Later that night, Flores hanged himself in his garage with an extension cord. Henderson and her husband Patrick, both Army recruiters, were stunned. "I'll never forget sitting there at Sergeant Flores' memorial service with my husband and seeing his wife crying,"

Amanda recalls. "I remember looking over at Patrick and going, 'Why did he do this to her? Why did he do this to his children?' " Patrick didn't say anything, and Amanda now says Flores' suicide "triggered" something in her husband. Six weeks later, Patrick hanged himself with a dog chain in their backyard shed. (See pictures of suicide in recruiters' ranks.)

71. Army program aims to predict soldiers' resiliency

By Rebecca Ruiz, 3 Apr 2012

http://vitals.msnbc.msn.com/_news/2012/04/03/10875400-army-program-aims-to-predict-soldiers-resiliency?lite

In the weeks since Army Staff Sgt. Robert Bales was first accused of going on a shooting rampage in an Afghanistan village, military officials and the media have combed through his life for warning signs or anything that could have predicted what may have been to come.

While the 11-year Army veteran, who was formally charged with 17 counts of murder, had recent financial troubles, professional disappointments and combat-related injuries, his family and friends say they never anticipated that he might experience a catastrophic breakdown. Bales' lawyers suspect undiagnosed post-traumatic stress disorder is partly to blame, though experts say there is no evidence linking PTSD to the kind of violence he allegedly committed.

The mystery of what may have gone wrong in his mind has drawn new attention to PTSD and the mental health of U.S. combat soldiers. The Army hopes that a study currently under way may be able to eventually identify groups of soldiers whose mental health is most fragile based on an algorithm or formula of factors.

72. Army Recruiting Stand-Down Ordered for Friday

Friday 13 February 2009, by: Michelle Tan, The Army Times

<http://www.truthout.org/021309N>

Jill Bozeman (right) saved her husband's life when he came home disoriented. Wade Bozeman (in photo) is a former army recruiter. (Photo: Stephen B. Thornton / The Houston Chronicle) A stand-down of the Army's entire recruiting force, ordered by Army Secretary Pete Geren, will take place Friday.

Geren ordered the stand-down after a wide-ranging investigation into four suicides in the Houston Recruiting Battalion. Poor command climate, failing personal relationships and long, stressful work days were factors in the suicides, the investigation found.

During the one-day stand-down, all 7,735 active Army and 1,797 Reserve recruiters will receive training on leadership, a review of the expectations of Recruiting Command's leaders, suicide prevention and resiliency training, coping skills and recruiter wellness.

Findings from the investigation, conducted by Brig. Gen. Del Turner, deputy commanding general for Accessions Command, were released Jan. 21, one week before the Army announced that suicides among soldiers across the Army increased in 2008 to

129, the highest rate in almost 30 years. In addition, the cause of death in 14 other cases was pending. That means there could have been as many as 143 suicides in 2008.