

PewResearchCenter

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October 5, 2011

## The Military-Civilian Gap

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# War and Sacrifice in the Post-9/11 Era

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## **PREFACE**

America's post-9/11 wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are unique. Never before has this nation been engaged in conflicts for so long. And never before has it waged sustained warfare with so small a share of its population carrying the fight.

This report sets out to explore a series of questions that arise from these historical anomalies. It does so on the strength of two nationwide surveys the Pew Research Center conducted in the late summer of 2011, as the 10th anniversary of the start of the war in Afghanistan approached.

One survey was conducted among a nationally representative sample of 1,853 military veterans, including 712 who served on active duty in the period after the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. The other was among a nationally representative sample of 2,003 American adults.

The report compares and contrasts the attitudes of post-9/11 veterans, pre-9/11 veterans and the general public on a wide range of matters, including sacrifice; burden sharing; patriotism; the worth of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq; the efficiency of the military and the effectiveness of modern military tactics; the best way to fight terrorism; the desirability of a return of the military draft; the nature of America's place in the world; and the gaps in understanding between the military and civilians.

It also presents what we believe is a vivid portrait—albeit one painted exclusively in numbers—of the rewards and burdens of serving in the all-volunteer military during the past decade.

In an address to the West Point graduating class in the spring of 2011, Adm. Mike Mullen, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the time, offered some pointed remarks about the military-civilian gap, a subject that has intrigued and bedeviled soldiers, civilians, generals, political leaders and scholars since the earliest days of the republic.

“I fear they do not know us,” Adm. Mullen said of the nation's civilians. “I fear they do not comprehend the full weight of the burden we carry or the price we pay when we return from battle.”

We hope that this report will help to bridge some of these gaps in understanding. As is the case with all Center reports, our research is not designed to promote any cause, ideology or policy proposal. Our sole mission is to inform, not prescribe. We hope our readers will find this report informative.

### **About the Authors**

This report was edited by Paul Taylor, executive vice president of the Pew Research Center and director of its Social & Demographic Trends project (SDT), who also co-wrote Chapter 1. Senior editor Rich Morin led the team that drafted the veterans survey questionnaire and helped to design the sampling strategy; he also wrote Chapters 3 and 6 and co-wrote Chapter 1 with Taylor. Kim Parker, associate director of SDT, wrote Chapter 4 and supervised number-checking and copy-editing of the report. Senior writer D’Vera Cohn and Senior Researcher Cary Funk co-wrote Chapter 5. Independent consultant Mike Mokrzycki wrote Chapter 2 and helped draft the questionnaire. Research associate Wendy Wang assisted on all aspects of the research project, from questionnaire design and analysis to report writing and formatting. Research assistant Eileen Patten helped with the preparation of charts and formatted the final report. Research assistant Seth Motel and Patten number-checked the report. All members of the SDT team helped to draft the general population survey. The Pew Research Center’s director of survey research, Scott Keeter, worked with Morin to design the sampling strategy for the veterans survey and co-wrote with Senior Researcher Leah Christian and Wang the methodology report that appears in Appendix 1. They were assisted by the research staff at Social Science Research Solutions. Center President Andrew Kohut provided research and editorial guidance throughout all phases of the project. The report was copy-edited by Marcia Kramer of Kramer Editing Services.

## Acknowledgments

The Pew Research Center thanks four outside experts on the military who offered guidance during various phases of this project, from conception to execution. They are Thomas Ricks, a senior fellow at the Center for a New American Security and former military correspondent for The Washington Post; David R. Segal, professor of sociology and director of the Center for Research on Military Organization at the University of Maryland; Vivian Greentree, research and policy director for Blue Star Families; and Pamela Stokes Eggleston, director of development for Blue Star Families. Their input was enormously helpful. However, the Center is solely responsible for the research, the analysis and the presentation of findings.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report is based on two surveys conducted by the Pew Research Center: one of the nation's military veterans and one of the general public. A total of 1,853 veterans were surveyed, including 712 who served in the military after the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. The general public survey was conducted among 2,003 adult respondents. (For a detailed description of the survey methodologies, see Appendix 1.)

Here is a summary of key findings:

### **The Rewards and Burdens of Military Service**

- Veterans who served on active duty in the post-9/11 era are proud of their service (96%), and most (74%) say their military experience has helped them get ahead in life. The vast majority say their time in the military has helped them mature (93%), taught them how to work with others (90%) and helped to build self-confidence (90%). More than eight-in-ten (82%) say they would advise a young person close to them to join the military.
- At the same time, however, 44% of post-9/11 veterans say their readjustment to civilian life was difficult. By contrast, just 25% of veterans who served in earlier eras say the same. About half (48%) of all post-9/11 veterans say they have experienced strains in family relations since leaving the military, and 47% say they have had frequent outbursts of anger. One-third (32%) say there have been times where they felt they didn't care about anything.
- Nearly four-in-ten (37%) post-9/11 veterans say that, whether or not they were formally diagnosed, they believe they have suffered from post-traumatic stress (PTS). Among veterans who served prior to 9/11, just 16% say the same.
- These psychological and emotional problems are most prevalent among post-9/11 veterans who were in combat. About half of this group (49%) say they have suffered from PTS. And about half (52%) also say they had emotionally traumatic or distressing experiences while in the military. Of those who had these types of experiences, three-in-four say they are still reliving them in the form of flashbacks or nightmares.

- Overall, about one-in-six post-9/11 veterans (16%) report they were seriously injured while serving in the military, and most of these injuries were combat-related. And about half (47%) say they know and served with someone who was killed while in the military, not significantly different from the share of pre-9/11 veterans (43%) who say the same. The survey finds that post-9/11 veterans who either experienced or were exposed to casualties are more supportive than other post-9/11 veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, they also report having more difficulty re-entering civilian life.

### **The Military-Civilian Gap**

- Only about one half of one percent of the U.S. population has been on active military duty at any given time during the past decade of sustained warfare. Some 84% of post-9/11 veterans say the public does not understand the problems faced by those in the military or their families. The public agrees, though by a less lopsided majority—71%.
- Some 83% of all adults say that military personnel and their families have had to make a lot of sacrifices since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks; 43% say the same about the American people. However, even among those who acknowledge this gap in burden-sharing, only 26% describe it as unfair. Seven-in-ten (70%) consider it “just part of being in the military.”
- The public makes a sharp distinction in its view of military service members and the wars they have been fighting. More than nine-in-ten express pride in the troops and three-quarters say they thanked someone in the military. But a 45% plurality say neither of the post-9/11 wars has been worth the cost and only a quarter say they are following news of the wars closely. And half of the public say the wars have made little difference in their lives.
- At a time when the public’s confidence in most key national institutions has sagged, confidence in the military is at or near its highest level in many decades. However, just 58% believe the military operates efficiently. Among veterans of all eras, 66% say the military runs efficiently.

### **Post-9/11 Veterans and Their Wars**

- Veterans are more supportive than the general public of U.S. military efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq. Even so, they are ambivalent. Just half of all post-9/11 veterans say that, given the costs and benefits to the U.S., the war in Afghanistan has been worth fighting. A smaller share (44%) says the war in Iraq has been worth it. Only one-third (34%) say both



wars have been worth fighting, and a nearly identical share (33%) say neither has been worth the costs.

- About half of post-9/11 veterans (51%) say relying too much on military force creates hatred that leads to more terrorism, while four-in-ten endorse the opposite view: that overwhelming force is the best way to defeat terrorism. The views of the public are nearly identical: 52% say too much force leads to more terrorism, while 38% say using military force is the best approach.
- About six-in-ten post-9/11 veterans (59%) support the noncombat “nation-building” role the military has taken on in Iraq and Afghanistan. The public and pre-9/11 veterans are less enthused. Just 45% of both groups say they think this is an appropriate role for the military.
- While nation building gets mixed reviews, large majorities of veterans and the public support the use of unmanned “drone” aircraft for aerial attacks in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. Nearly nine-in-ten (86%) veterans of all eras say this is a good thing; 68% of the public agrees.
- Both the public and veterans oppose bringing back the military draft. More than eight-in-ten post-9/11 veterans and 74% of the public say the U.S. should not return to the draft at this time.

### **A Profile of Post-9/11 Veterans**

- Politically, post-9/11 veterans are more likely than adults overall to identify with the Republican Party—36% are Republicans, compared with 23% of the general public. Equal shares of these veterans and the public call themselves independents (35%), while 21% of post-9/11 veterans and 34% of the public describe themselves as Democrats.
- In their religious affiliation, veterans are roughly comparable to the general population. Post-9/11 veterans are mostly young adults, and like younger Americans overall, they are more likely than the general public to say they have no particular religious affiliation (30% vs. 18%).
- Patriotic sentiment runs high among post-9/11 veterans. Six-in-ten (61%) consider themselves more patriotic than most other people in the country. Just 37% of Americans overall say the same.

- Post-9/11 veterans are happy with their lives overall, and they express high levels of satisfaction with their family life in particular. On these two measures they do not differ significantly from the public.
- When it comes to their financial well-being, post-9/11 veterans are somewhat less satisfied than the public overall—only 20% say they are very satisfied with their personal financial situation, compared with 25% of the public. Their dissatisfaction may be linked in part to high unemployment rates (11.5% of post-9/11 veterans were unemployed at the end of 2010).

### **A Profile of Today's Active-duty Force<sup>1</sup>**

- The military in the post-9/11 era is older than the force that served a generation ago. While about two-thirds of active-duty military personnel are ages 30 or younger, the average age of enlisted personnel and officers has increased significantly since the draft ended in 1973.
- The percentage of minorities in the ranks of enlisted personnel and officers has increased significantly since 1990. In 2009, more than one-third of all active-duty personnel were minorities (36.2%), an increase from 25.4% about two decades ago. Women also comprise an increasing share of all active-duty officers and enlisted personnel.
- Today's enlisted personnel are better educated than those who served before them. Fewer are high school dropouts and more are college graduates. In 2009, 92.5% of recruits were at least high school graduates, compared with 82.8% of comparably aged civilians.
- At a time when marriage rates are declining in the broader population, the share of active-duty military personnel who are married has increased dramatically in recent decades. Today, a majority of all enlisted personnel are married (53.1%), up from 40.1% in 1973. Overall, those in the military are significantly more likely to be married than are civilians of a comparable age.

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<sup>1</sup> Figures for active-duty military personnel in this section are based on data published by the Department of Defense.

## About the Data

This report draws on data collected from multiple sources by the Pew Research Center. Findings on the attitudes and experiences of veterans are based on a Pew Research survey of military veterans that used standard sampling and telephone interviewing techniques and online interviewing with a nationally representative sample of post-9/11 veterans. Attitudes of the public are based on a nationally representative survey of the general population that asked many of the same questions that were posed to veterans. These surveys were supplemented by data from the Department of Defense.

### The Veterans Survey (V)

The attitudes of veterans reported in this study are based on a nationally representative sample of 1,853 men and women who served in the military and are no longer on active duty. The sample included 1,134 who were discharged from the military prior to Sept. 11, 2001, and 712 veterans who served after 9/11. (Seven veterans declined to answer when they served.)

The margin of sampling error for results based on the entire sample of veterans is plus or minus 3.5 percentage points; the margin of sampling error for the pre-9/11 sample is plus or minus 3.9 percentage points; and the margin of sampling error for those who served after 9/11 is plus or minus 5.7 percentage points.

Veterans were interviewed by telephone or via the internet. A total of 1,639 interviews were conducted over the telephone under the direction of Social Science Research Solutions (SSRS). Respondents had been identified as veterans in earlier surveys conducted by SSRS and the Pew Research Center and were re-contacted for the veterans survey. Of the total sample, 1,307 telephone interviews were conducted on landline telephones and 332 on cell phones. Interviewing for the telephone survey was conducted from July 28 to Sept. 4, 2011. These interviews were supplemented by 214 interviews with veterans who served after 9/11 and are part of random sample panel of households maintained by the research firm Knowledge Networks. These online interviews were collected Aug. 18-31, 2011.

The two data sets were combined and the entire sample weighted by SSRS to match known demographic characteristics of the veterans population as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau. In addition, the post-9/11 oversample was weighted back to reflect its correct proportion of the overall veterans population. A detailed explanation of the survey methodologies and weighting strategy employed in this study is in Appendix 1.

### The General Population Survey (GP)

Results reported for the general population are based on telephone interviews conducted with a nationally representative sample of 2,003 adults ages 18 or older living in the continental United States. A combination of landline and cellular random digit dial (RDD) samples was used to represent all adults in the continental United States who have access to either a landline or cellular telephone. A total of 1,203 interviews were conducted via landline and 800 on a cell phone. The interviews were conducted in English and Spanish by Princeton Data Source on Sept. 1-15, 2011. The margin of sampling error for the overall sample is plus or minus 2.5 percentage points.

### Demographic Data

The demographic profile of the active-duty military presented in Chapter 6 is primarily based on the latest available data published by the Department of Defense. Data on the characteristics of the Active Duty and Selected Reserve forces came from Demographics 2009: Profile of the Military Community. These data were supplemented by information from Population Representation in the Military Services 2009, also published by the Defense Department. Casualty data and statistics on participation in wars came from the Department of Defense web page Defense Personnel and Procurement Statistics Principal Wars in which the United States Participated-U.S. Military Personnel Serving and Casualties <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/CASUALTY/castop.htm>.



## CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW

As the United States marks the 10th anniversary of the longest period of sustained warfare in its history, the vast majority of veterans of the post-9/11 era are proud of their military service and say it has helped them mature as human beings. More than eight-in-ten would advise a young person close to them to join the military.

However, only a third (34%) of these veterans say that the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have both been worth fighting. And about half (51%) say that relying too much on military force to defeat terrorism creates hatred that leads to more terrorism.

The ambivalence that many post-9/11 veterans feel about their military mission has a parallel in the mixture of benefits and burdens they report having experienced since their return to civilian life.

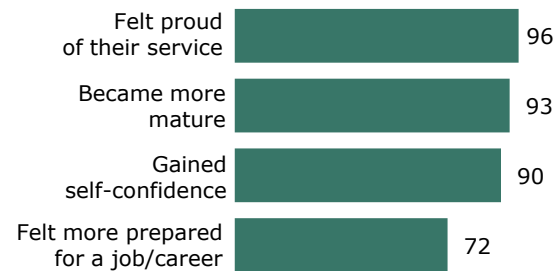
Nine-in-ten say that serving in the military has given them self-confidence; helped them mature; and taught them how to work with other people. Seven-in-ten say it has helped them prepare for a post-military career.

But a relatively large share of modern-era veterans—44%—report that they have had difficulties readjusting to civilian life. Just 25% of veterans who served on active duty in earlier eras report that they had these difficulties, according to a new Pew Research Center survey of a nationally representative sample of 1,853 veterans, including 712 who served on active duty in the post-9/11 era.<sup>3</sup>

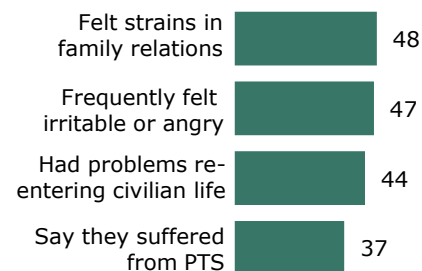
### The Rewards and Burdens of Military Service

*% of post-9/11 veterans saying that as a result of their military service, they ...*

#### Rewards



#### Burdens



Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/27,36,43,50<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Notations refer to the question numbers in the veterans (V) or general public (GP) surveys on which the graphic is based. The questionnaires with results can be found in the appendices.

<sup>3</sup> For purposes of this study a veteran is anyone who served on active duty while in the regular service or while a member of the National Guard or Reserves.

Many of the homecoming challenges faced by this era's returning veterans have an emotional or psychological component, the survey finds. Nearly half (47%) say that, since their discharge, they have experienced frequent bouts of irritability or outbursts of anger. About half (48%) say their family relations have been strained. A third (32%) say they have sometimes felt that they didn't care about anything. Nearly four-in-ten (37%) say that, whether or not they have been officially diagnosed, they believe they have suffered from post-traumatic stress.

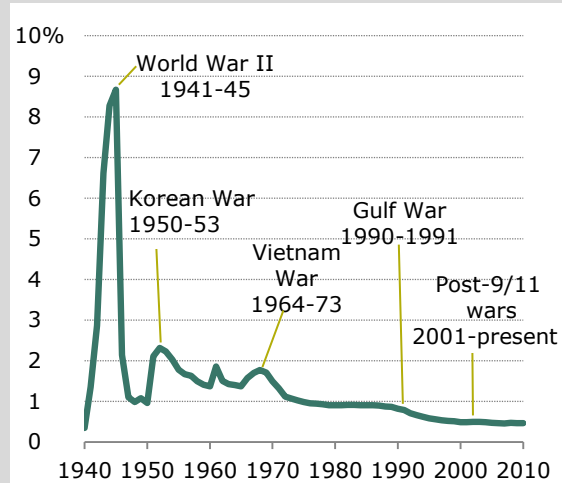
### A Military-Civilian Gap

The Pew Research survey also finds that 84% of these modern-era veterans say that the American public has little or no understanding of the problems that those in the military face. The public shares in that assessment, albeit by a less lopsided majority—71%, according to a companion Pew Research survey conducted among a nationally representative sample of 2,003 American adults ages 18 and older.

Since 1973, there has been no military draft. So unlike other U.S. wars waged in the past century, the post-9/11 conflicts have been fought exclusively by a professional military and enlisted volunteers. During this decade of sustained warfare, only about 0.5% of the American public has been on active duty at any given time. (At the height of World War II, the comparable figure was nearly 9%.) As a result of the relatively small size of the modern military, most of those who served during the past decade were deployed more than once,

### Military Participation

% of total U.S. population in the armed forces, 1940-2010

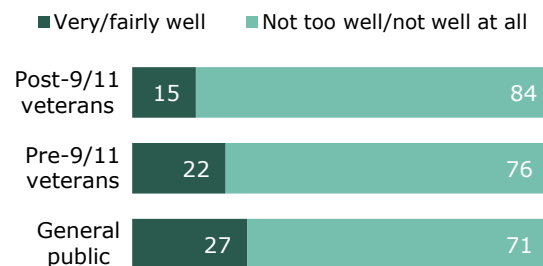


Source: Molly Clever and David R. Segal. "After Conscription: The United States and the All-Volunteer Force." *Security and Peace (Sicherheit und Frieden)*. Forthcoming.

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### Public, Veterans Agree: Americans Don't Understand Military Life

% saying the public understands the problems that those in the military face ...



Notes: "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown. Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712; pre-9/11 veterans, n=1,134; and general public, N=2,003.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/29, GP/36

and 60% were deployed to a combat zone. The American public is well aware that the sacrifices the nation was called upon to make following the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, have not been borne evenly across the military-civilian divide. More than eight-in-ten Americans (83%) say that members of the military and their families have had to make “a lot of sacrifices,” while just 43% say the same about the public as a whole.

But even among those who say the military’s sacrifices have been greater than the public’s, seven-in-ten say they see nothing unfair in this disparity. Rather, they say, it’s “just part of being in the military.”

## For Better and Worse

What has it meant to serve in the military during the post-9/11 era? Compared with their predecessors of a generation or two ago, those who serve in the modern military are fewer, older, better educated and more likely to be married. A greater share is women and minorities.

In all, more than 6,200 American troops have been killed in Iraq and Afghanistan during the past decade, and more than 46,000 have been wounded.<sup>4</sup> Tragic as these losses are, the fatality rate in the military during the post-9/11 wars is not high when measured against the human toll from other wars (see Chapter 6)—a testament to changing military tactics and advances in battlefield medical care.

<sup>4</sup> Military Casualty Information, Department of Defense Personnel & Procurement Statistics <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/CASUALTY/castop.htm>

## Sacrifices Since 9/11

*% of public saying each group has made a lot of sacrifices since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks*



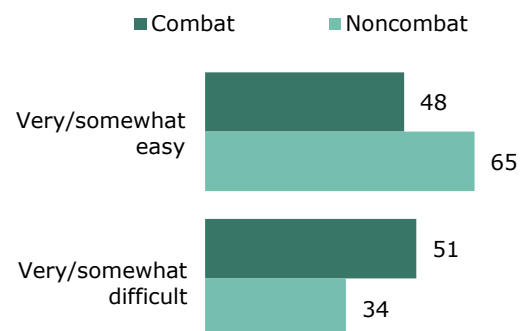
Note: Based on general public, N=2,003.

Question wording: GP/40 “Since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, do you think that people who serve in the military and their families have had to make a lot of sacrifices, some sacrifices, hardly any or none at all?”; GP/41 “And since 9/11, do you think that the American people have had to make a lot of sacrifices, some sacrifices, hardly any or none at all?”

PEW RESEARCH CENTER GP/40-41

## Re-entry to Civilian Life Hardest for Combat Veterans

*% of veterans saying after their military service, readjustment to civilian life was ...*



Notes: “Don’t know/Refused” responses not shown. Based on all post-9/11 veterans, n=712. Combat veterans are all those who served in a combat or war zone. For post-9/11, combat n=424; noncombat n=283.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/36

Overall, about one-in-six post-9/11 veterans (16%) report they were seriously injured while serving in the military, and most of these injuries were combat-related. And about half (47%) say they know and served with someone who was killed while in the military, not significantly different from the share of pre-9/11 veterans (43%) who say the same.

But there is one front where this generation's warriors appear to have been hit harder than their predecessors: the home front. As already noted, many more post-9/11 veterans (44%) than pre-9/11 veterans (25%) say that their readjustment to civilian life has been difficult.

Also, a greater share of post-9/11 veterans than pre-9/11 veterans report that they are carrying psychological and emotional scars arising from their time in the military. Some 37% of all post-9/11 veterans (and 49% of post-9/11 veterans who served in a combat zone) say they have suffered from post-traumatic stress. Among pre-9/11 veterans, the comparable figures are 16% for all and 32% for those who saw combat. Post-9/11 veterans are also much more likely than those who served in earlier times to say they know someone who suffered from PTS.<sup>5</sup>

Among post-9/11 veterans who were married during the time they served, about half (48%) say their deployments had a negative impact on their relationship with their spouse. Among veterans in previous eras who were married while they served, just 34% say the same.

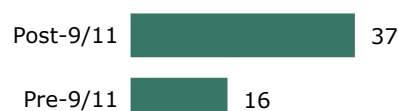
## Post-Traumatic Stress

*% of all veterans who ...*

### Knew/served with someone who had PTS



### Personally suffered from PTS

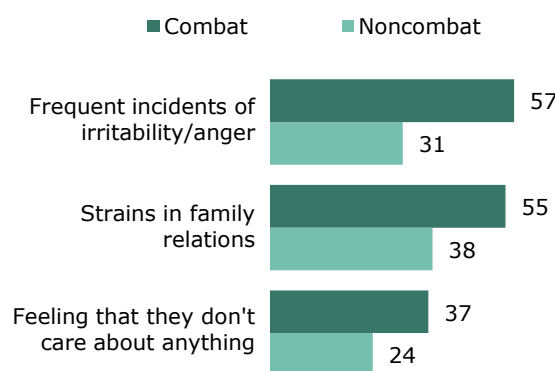


Notes: "Personally suffered from PTS" includes those who said, regardless of whether they had been diagnosed, they thought they had suffered from post-traumatic stress as a result of their experiences in the military. Based on all veterans, N=1,853.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/48,50

## The Costs of Combat

*% of post-9/11 veterans saying they have experienced each since discharge*



Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712.

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<sup>5</sup> A note of caution: These differences may be due in part to the fact that there is greater awareness about PTS now than in previous eras. Also, it is possible that the memories of post-9/11 veterans are fresher than those of older veterans.



But for this generation of homecoming veterans, the litany of problems tells only part of the story. The other part—the positive part—is also quite compelling.

Post-9/11 veterans are proud of their service (96%), appreciate life more (82%) and believe that their military service has helped them get ahead in life (74%). Large majorities say that serving in the military has been either very or fairly useful in helping them become more mature (93%); gain self-confidence (90%); learn to work with other people (90%); and prepare for a job or career (72%). Some 92% say that since they got out of the service, someone has thanked them for serving. On all these measures, there are few if any differences between pre- and post-9/11 veterans.

### Patriotic, Proud, Respected

A majority of the nation's post-9/11 veterans (61%) consider themselves more patriotic than most other Americans; just 5% say they are less patriotic (the remainder say they are about as patriotic as everyone else). When the public is asked the same question, 37% say they are more patriotic and 10% say less.

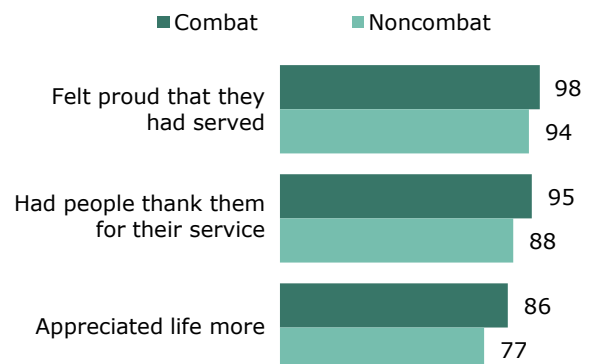
Modern-era veterans would make good military recruiters. Some 82% say they would advise a young person close to them to enlist in the military; 74% of pre-9/11 veterans say the same. The general public is much more ambivalent. Despite their great admiration for the troops, just 48% of members of the public say they would advise a young person to join the military; 41% say they would not.

Post-9/11 veterans are more likely than the general public to say the military operates efficiently (67% vs. 58%). Most (54%) say that people generally get ahead in the military based on their hard work and ability; the share of pre-9/11 veterans who feel this way is even larger—63%.

The post-9/11 veterans served at a time when the military has become the most respected institution in the nation (see Chapter 5) and veterans from earlier eras are mindful of this shift

### The Positive Side of Re-entry

*% of post-9/11 veterans saying they have experienced each since discharge*



Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/43

in public opinion. Among veterans who served before 9/11, 70% say that the American public has more respect for those who serve in the military now than it did at the time of their own service.

## Judging the Wars They Fought

Veterans who have served in the post-9/11 era have a more positive view than the general public about the overall worth of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars and the tactics the military has used to wage them. Even so, only one-third (34%) of these recent veterans say that both wars have been worth fighting; nearly as many (33%) say neither conflict has been worth the costs.

Looking at each conflict individually, 50% of post-9/11 veterans say the decade-old war in Afghanistan has been worth fighting, while 44% view the 8½-year-old conflict in Iraq the same way. In comparison, just 41% of the public says the conflict in Afghanistan has been worth the costs and just 36% hold a similarly approving view of Iraq.

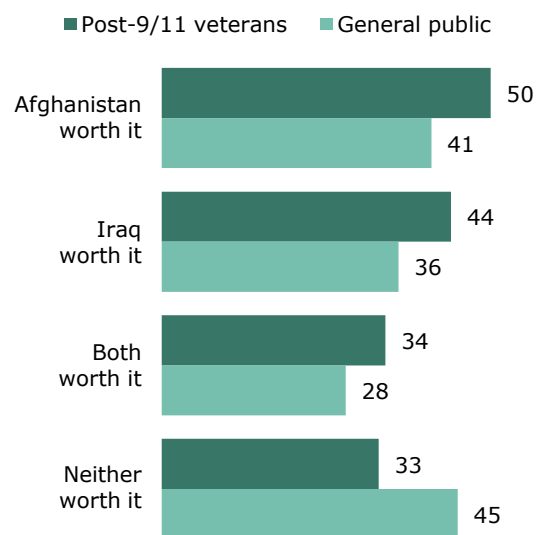
About half of post-9/11 veterans who served in combat say the war in Afghanistan has been worth fighting (54%), and nearly as many (47%) view the war in Iraq the same way.

## Understanding the Mission

Most post-9/11 veterans say they understood the missions they were assigned, though they are less likely than veterans of earlier eras to say they always understood their assignments. Majorities also view the military as an efficient, meritocratic organization where hard work and ability are rewarded.

### Wars Worth Fighting

*% saying that all in all, considering costs versus benefits to U.S. ...*



Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712, and general public, N=2,003.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/6-7, GP/31-32

Nearly eight-in-ten post-9/11 veterans say they understood their missions “all of the time” (37%) or “most of the time” (42%). One-in-five (20%) say they understood their assignments just some or none of the time. However, post-9/11 veterans are less likely than those who served in earlier eras to say they clearly understood their assignments “all of the time” (37% vs. 50%).

Overall, post-9/11 veterans are more likely than the general public to say the military operates efficiently (67% vs. 58%). A majority (54%) of post-9/11 veterans also think people generally get ahead in the military based on their hard work and ability, a proportion that rises to 63% among veterans who served before 9/11. By comparison, Americans overall are split 48%-48% on whether people generally get ahead in their job or career on the basis of hard work and ability.

## The Public’s Perspective

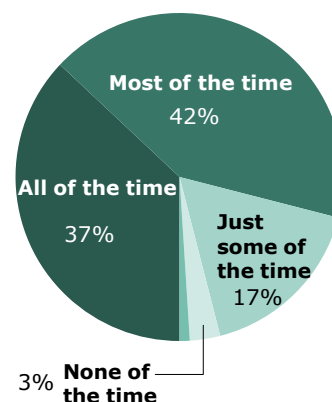
When asked to make judgments about the nation’s military in the post-9/11 era, the public draws a sharp distinction between the troops—for whom they express pride and gratitude—and the wars—about which they express increasing levels of disapproval, indifference and fatigue.

First, the positives. Since the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq began, 91% of the public say they have felt proud of the soldiers; 76% say they have personally thanked someone in the military for their service, and 58% say they’ve done something to help someone in the military or their family.

At the same time, a third (34%) say they have felt ashamed of something the military had done in Afghanistan or Iraq. And 50% say they have felt that those wars have made little difference in their life. Other Pew Research surveys

## Mission Understood?

*% of post-9/11 veterans saying they had a clear understanding of what their missions were ...*

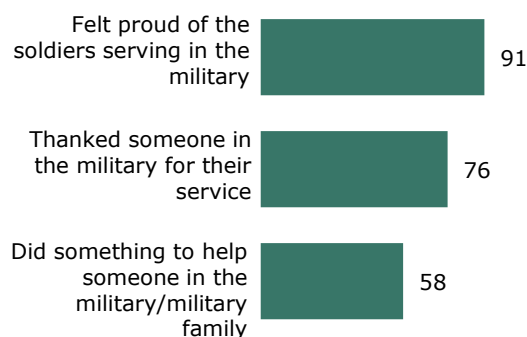


Notes: “Don’t know/Refused” responses are shown but not labeled. Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/17

## Civilians and the Post-9/11 Wars

*% saying they have done or felt the following since the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan began*



Note: Based on general public, N=2,003.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER GP/38

(see Chapter 5) suggest that some of this indifference is the result of public fatigue with a 10-year conflict that many in the public doubt will produce a clear victory. And some is the byproduct of a growing national preoccupation with the sour economy at home. The result: Only about a quarter of Americans now say they are paying close attention to the wars, well below the levels of interest recorded by Pew Research surveys earlier in the decade.

With fading interest has come fading support. At the outset, each of the two wars enjoyed widespread public approval. But in this latest Pew Research survey, a majority (57%) of the public says the war in Iraq has not been worth fighting and nearly as great a share (52%) says Afghanistan has not been worth the cost.

### Drones, Nation Building and the Draft

Almost all post-9/11 veterans approve of one new form of warfare that has come to prominence in the past decade: the use of unmanned aircraft known as “drones” for targeted aerial attacks on individual targets in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere.

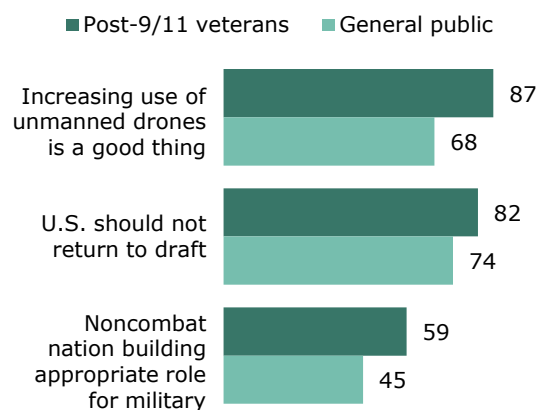
Nearly nine-in-ten—87%—say the increased use of drones by the military is a good thing. The public agrees, but by a less lopsided majority—68% approve the use of drones.

Veterans and the public are significantly less supportive of noncombat military “nation-building” missions in Iraq and Afghanistan. These assignments, designed to rebuild and strengthen key social, political and economic institutions, are viewed as “appropriate” roles for the military by 59% of all post-9/11 veterans but only 45% of the public and 45% of veterans who served before the terrorist attacks.

Both the public and veterans oppose bringing back the draft. More than two-thirds of all veterans (68%) and a larger share of the public (74%) oppose reinstating conscription. Among veterans, opposition to the draft is highest among those who have served since 9/11 and lowest among those who served before the draft was abolished in 1973 (82% vs. 61%).

#### Yes to Drones; No to the Draft; Mixed Views on Nation Building

% of each group saying ...



Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712, and general public, N=2,003.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/8-10, GP/33-35

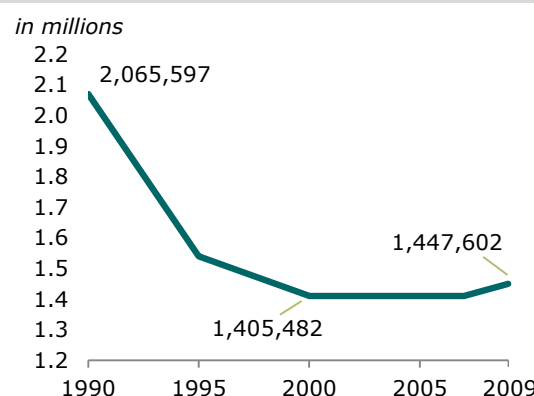
## The Changing Profile of the Military

New missions, new tactics, new technology and an all-volunteer fighting force are not the only reasons that the modern military is different from previous generations of armed forces.

Today's military is roughly 30% smaller than it was 20 years ago, when slightly more than 2 million men and women served on active duty. The military downsized at the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s and again in the aftermath of the Gulf War in 1990-91. The 9/11 terrorist attacks and the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq halted the decline, and since 2000 the overall size of the military has increased by about 40,000, to approximately 1.44 million.

### A Smaller Military

*Size of active duty force, by year*



Source: Department of Defense *Demographics 2009: Profile of the Military Community*

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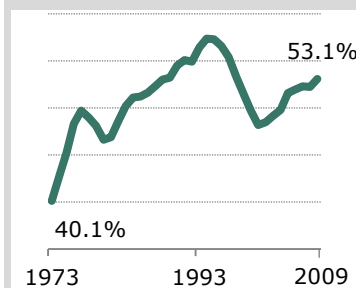
The post-9/11 military is older and more diverse than the force that served a generation or two ago. Proportionately fewer high school dropouts and more college graduates, women and minorities fill the ranks.

A service member today also is more likely to be married—about 53% are husbands or wives—and more likely to be married to someone in the military than in 2000. During the past 10 years, the annual divorce rate among married active-duty enlisted personnel has also increased, from 2.9% in 2000 to 4.0% in 2009.

Even as a higher share of the military personnel is made up of married people with families, their deployments away from home have increased in frequency and length. More than eight-in-ten post-9/11 veterans (84%) say they were deployed at least once while serving—and nearly four-in-ten (38%) say they have been deployed three times or more. Among veterans who were married while they were on active duty, nearly half say deployment had a negative impact on their relationship with their spouse (48%) and nearly as

### Married and Serving

*% of active-duty enlisted personnel who are married, by year*



Source: Department of Defense *Population Representation in the Military Services FY2009*

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many parents reported that their relationship with their children suffered when they were away (44%).

But veterans say that balancing these problems are the benefits and rewards of deployment: better pay and allowances while on deployment, improved chances for advancement and the satisfaction that they were doing important work for their country.

## Politics and Religion

Post-9/11 veterans are more likely than adults overall to identify with the Republican Party and to disapprove of the job that President Obama is doing as commander in chief.

According to the Pew Research surveys, more than a third of post-9/11 veterans (36%) say they are Republicans, compared with 23% of the general public. Equal shares of these veterans and the public call themselves independents (35%), while 21% of veterans and 34% of the public describe themselves as Democrats.

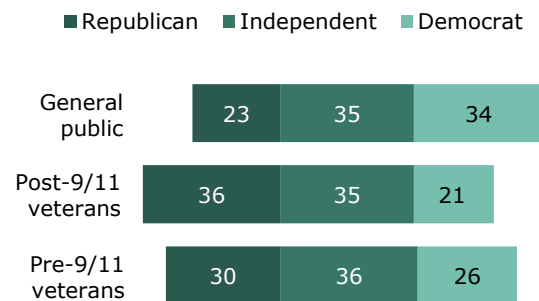
Overall, nearly half of all veterans (48%) say they are politically conservative, compared with 37% of the public. Pre-9/11 veterans are more conservative than those who have served since the terrorist attacks (49% vs. 40%). At the same time, those who served after the terrorist attacks are more inclined than pre-9/11 veterans to say they are political moderates (43% vs. 34%).

These partisan and ideological leanings largely explain why veterans are more likely than the general public to disapprove of how Obama, a Democrat, is handling his job as the nation's commander in chief.

Among the general public, 53% approve of Obama's job performance as commander in chief and 39% disapprove. The president fares worse among veterans: Nearly half of post-9/11

### Post-9/11 Veterans More Likely Than Public to Be Republican

% considering themselves ...



Notes: "No preference," "Other party" and "Don't know/Refused" voluntary responses not shown. Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712; pre-9/11 veterans, n=1,134; and general public, N=2,003.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/PARTY, GP/PARTY

veterans (47%) and a slightly larger share of those who served before the terrorist attacks (51%) are critical of the president's handling of the military.

But these differences vanish when partisanship is factored into the analysis. Eight-in-ten post-9/11 veterans (83%) who identify with the Democratic Party approve of Obama's performance as commander in chief—and so do 80% of all Democrats nationally. Similarly, three-quarters of all recent veterans (75%) who say they are Republicans disapprove of the job that the president is doing, compared with 70% of GOP partisans in the general population.

Veterans as a whole are roughly comparable to the general population in terms of religious affiliation, though there are some differences between those who served before and after 9/11.

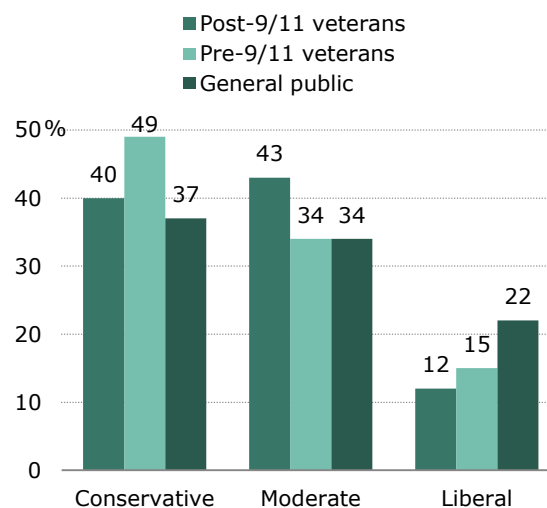
For example, post-9/11 veterans are mostly younger and, like younger Americans overall, they are more likely than pre-9/11 veterans to say they have no religion in particular (30% vs. 15% for pre-9/11 veterans and 18% for all adults). Recent veterans also are less likely than older veterans to call themselves Protestants (45% vs. 55%) or Catholics (15% vs. 23%).

Reflecting similar age differences on church attendance among the general public, post-9/11 veterans don't attend religious services as frequently as veterans from earlier eras; 28% of recent veterans do so at least weekly, compared with 38% of pre-9/11 veterans and 36% of the general public.

## Life Satisfaction

Regardless of when they served, most military veterans are at least pretty happy with their lives overall. They express high levels of satisfaction with their family life and give mixed marks to their financial situation. Post-9/11 veterans are more dissatisfied with their finances than are older veterans or the general public.

### Political Ideology of Veterans, General Public



Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712; pre-9/11 veterans, n=1,134; and general public, N=2,003.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/65; GP/IDEO



Among post-9/11 veterans, 29% say they're very happy with how things are in their lives and 59% say they're pretty happy. Just 12% say they're not too happy—a slightly smaller share than among pre-9/11 veterans (17%) and the general public (20%). Post-9/11 veterans who served as commissioned officers are far more apt (58%) to be very happy with their lives than are noncommissioned officers (34%) and enlisted service members (21%).

Veterans and the general public alike overwhelmingly report satisfaction with their family life on the whole—63% of post-9/11 veterans, 69% of earlier veterans and 67% of all adults say they are very satisfied, and most of the rest report being somewhat satisfied on this measure. No more than one-in-ten report dissatisfaction.

Veterans and other adults reported less satisfaction on the whole with their personal financial situation than with their family life. Just 20% of post-9/11 veterans say they are very satisfied with their finances, a smaller share than pre-9/11 veterans (30%) and the general public (25%). Those who served since 9/11 report greater net dissatisfaction with their finances—42%, compared with 28% of pre-9/11 veterans and 37% of all adults.

Their dissatisfaction, in part, reflects the toll that the bad economy has taken on recent veterans. The unemployment rate for post-9/11 veterans at the end of the decade stood at 11.5%, about two percentage points higher than the jobless rate for all non-veterans (9.4%) at the same time.

Younger veterans have been particularly hard hit by the recession. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2010 21.9% of male veterans ages 18-24 from the post-9/11 era were unemployed. That is about the same as the jobless rate among male non-veterans in that age group (19.7%).<sup>6</sup>

### Satisfaction with Finances

*% saying they are ... with their personal financial situation*

	<b>Post- 9/11 veterans</b>	<b>Pre- 9/11 veterans</b>	<b>General public</b>
Very satisfied	20	30	25
Somewhat satisfied	37	39	35
Somewhat dissatisfied	25	15	19
Very dissatisfied	17	14	18

Notes: "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown. Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712; pre-9/11 veterans, n=1,134; and general public, N=2,003.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/2, GP/2

<sup>6</sup> See "Employment Situation of Veterans Summary," Bureau of Labor Statistics Economic News Release, Friday, March 11, 2011. (<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/vet.nr0.htm>)



## A Road Map to the Report

The remainder of this report is organized as follows: Chapter 2 explores in more depth the attitudes of veterans on policy issues affecting the military in the post-9/11 era, including their views about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the tactics employed to fight them. Chapter 3 reports how veterans see their service; how they evaluate the rewards and burdens of military life; and what they experienced in combat. Chapter 4 tells the story of America's veterans after they left the service, including the challenges they faced re-entering civilian life, the benefits they received from their military experience and the prevalence of service-related emotional problems, including post-traumatic stress. Chapter 5 reports the results of a national survey of the public that includes many of the same questions that were asked of veterans and explores in detail similarities and differences between the two groups. Chapter 6, the final chapter, presents a demographic profile of today's military and examines the changes that have reshaped the armed forces since the draft was abolished in 1973. The appendices provide a detailed explanation of the survey methodologies and topline summaries of the survey research findings.



## CHAPTER 2: ATTITUDES OF POST-9/11 VETERANS

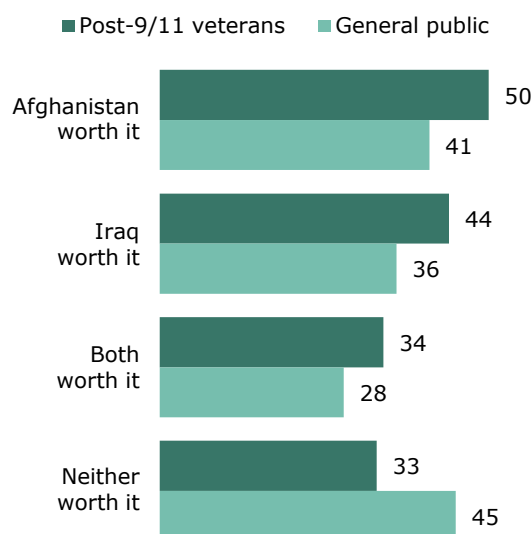
Veterans who served on active duty during the post-9/11 era consider themselves more patriotic than other Americans, and most see the military as an efficient and meritocratic institution. They have a more positive view than the general public about the overall worth of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars and the tactics the military has used to wage them. Even so, only one-third (34%) of these veterans say that both wars have been worth fighting.

Looking at the conflicts individually, 50% of post-9/11 veterans say the decade-old war in Afghanistan has been worth fighting and 44% view the 8½-year-old conflict in Iraq the same way—approval levels that are nine and eight percentage points higher, respectively, than among the general public. Post-9/11 veterans also assess these wars somewhat more favorably than do veterans who served prior to the terrorist attacks a decade ago.

Post-9/11 veterans are more apt than the general public to say the military operates efficiently—67% vs. 58%. A majority (54%) of post-9/11 veterans think people generally get ahead in the military based on their hard work and ability, though veterans who served before 9/11 are more likely to say this (63%). By comparison, Americans overall are split 48%-48% on whether people generally get ahead in their job or career on the basis of hard work and ability.

### Wars Worth Fighting?

*% saying that all in all, considering costs versus benefits to U.S. ...*



Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712, and general public, N=2,003.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/6-7, GP/31-32

Patriotic sentiment runs far stronger among post-9/11 veterans, 61% of whom say they are more patriotic than most other people in the country, than it does among the general public (37%). Among pre-9/11 veterans, 55% say they are more patriotic than most other Americans.

Those who have served since 9/11—for whom a part of their mission has been to try to rebuild social, political and economic institutions in Afghanistan and Iraq—are much more likely than

the general public (by 59% to 45%) and veterans who served in earlier eras (also 45%) to view such noncombat “nation building” as an appropriate role for U.S. armed forces.

At the same time, however, many post-9/11 veterans have isolationist inclinations, with about six-in-ten saying the United States should pay less attention to problems overseas and concentrate on problems here at home. In a Pew survey conducted earlier this year, a similar share of the general public (58%) agreed.

Moreover, half (51%) of post-9/11 veterans say that overreliance on military force creates hatred that breeds more terrorism, while just four-in-ten say overwhelming military force is the best way to defeat terrorism. In the early 2011 Pew Research survey, the public divides in a nearly identical way on this question (52% vs. 38%).

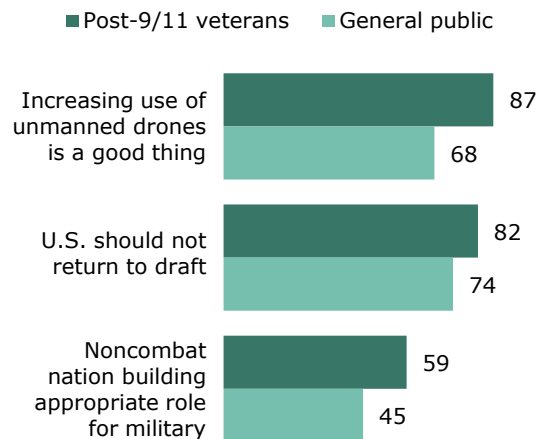
On a related matter, 87% of post-9/11 veterans say the U.S. military’s increasing use of unmanned “drone” aircraft for aerial attacks on individual enemy targets is a good thing. A smaller share of the general public (68%) agrees.

Asked their views on a long-abandoned method of staffing the military, 82% of post-9/11 veterans oppose reinstatement of the draft, which was abolished in 1973—though the new Pew survey of all adults hints at slightly softening opposition to the draft among all adults, at 74%, down 11 points from its high in an identical Gallup poll question in 2004.

Veterans are more likely than the general public to describe themselves as Republican (31% of all veterans, including 36% of those who served after 9/11, compared with 23% of all adults). And veterans overall are more apt to consider themselves conservative (48%) than are Americans overall (37%), although veterans who served after 9/11 do not differ significantly from the public in this regard (40% say they are conservative). In line with these partisan differences, fewer post-9/11 veterans (44%) than Americans overall (53% in the new Pew survey) approve of the way Obama is handling his duties as commander in chief.

### Yes to “Drones”; No to the Draft

% of each group saying ...



Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712, and general public, N=2,003.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/8-10, GP/33-35

The remainder of this chapter examines in greater detail how veterans and the general public judge the U.S. military and the wars it has been fighting in the post-9/11 era.

## Approval of Afghanistan and Iraq Wars

Veterans who have served since Vietnam, including post-9/11 veterans, are more likely than the general public and older veterans to approve of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. But skepticism remains substantial across the board.

Among all adults in the new Pew survey, 41% say that, considering the costs versus the benefits to the United States, the war in Afghanistan has been worth fighting, while 52% say it has not. Of the war in Iraq, 36% of Americans say it has been worth it and 57% say it has not. Fewer than three-in-ten Americans, 28%, say both wars have been worth fighting; 45% say neither has been worth it.

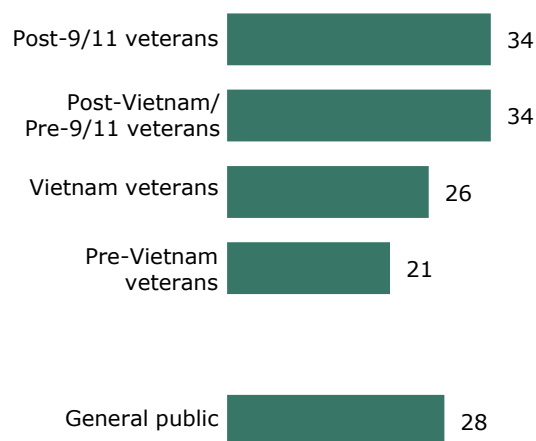
As noted, half of post-9/11 veterans (50%) say the war in Afghanistan has been worth fighting; 42% say it has not. And 50% of that group says Iraq has not been worth it, compared with 44% who view it positively. About as many post-9/11 veterans say neither war has been worth fighting (33%) as view both as being worthwhile (34%).

Veterans who served after Vietnam but before 9/11 hold similar views to the post-9/11 veterans, except somewhat fewer of the older veterans express no opinion one way or the other: 50% say Afghanistan has been worth it, 47% disagree and 3% don't know; 45% say Iraq has been worth fighting, 53% say it has not and 2% don't know. That leaves 34% of the post-Vietnam and pre-9/11 veterans saying both wars have been worth fighting and 37% saying neither war has been worthwhile.

Older veterans voice less approval of the effort in Afghanistan; just 33% who served before Vietnam say that war has been worth fighting,

### Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq Worth Fighting?

*% saying both Afghanistan and Iraq have been worth fighting considering costs versus benefits to U.S.*



Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712; post-Vietnam/pre-9/11 veterans, n=198; Vietnam veterans, n=522; pre-Vietnam veterans, n=413; and general public, N=2,003.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/6-7, GP/31-32

as do 39% of Vietnam veterans. By contrast, half of those who served subsequently say the Afghanistan War has been worth it. Nearly six-in-ten who served before and during Vietnam say Afghanistan has not been worth fighting (59% and 58%, respectively).

The Iraq War also gets less approval from older veterans; 35% who served before Vietnam and 36% who served during it say Iraq has been worth fighting, compared with 44% of all who have served in the military since Vietnam.

Among pre-Vietnam veterans, just one-in-five (21%) say both the Afghanistan and Iraq wars have been worth fighting, while more than twice as many, 47%, say neither has been worth it; the comparable figures for Vietnam-era veterans are 26% and 49% (and again, for the general public, 28% and 45%).

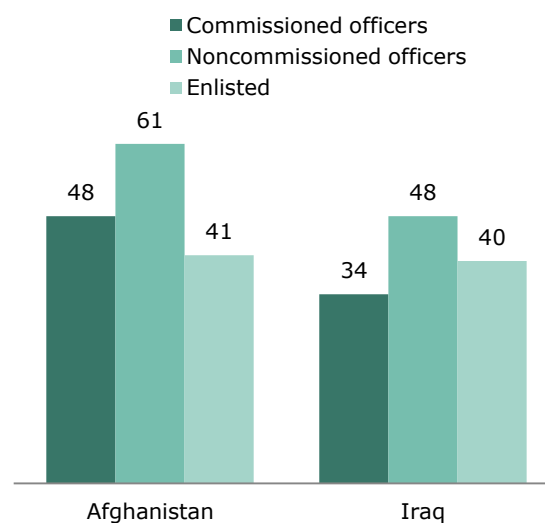
### Views of Wars by Rank, Service in Theater, Casualties

Among post-9/11 veterans, noncommissioned officers view the war in Afghanistan more approvingly (61% say it's been worth fighting) than commissioned officers (48%) and enlisted service members (41%).<sup>7</sup> Evaluations by rank regarding views of Iraq follow a similar pattern: 48% of noncommissioned officers say that war has been worth fighting, compared with 40% of enlisted service members and 34% of commissioned officers.

Veterans who served in or off the coast of Iraq or who flew missions over the country at any time since the war began in March 2003 are more likely—by 52% to 41%—to say that war has been worth fighting; 59% of post-9/11 veterans who did not deploy to the Iraqi theater say that war has not been worth

### Wars Worth Fighting, by Rank

Among post-9/11 veterans, % saying ... has been worth fighting



Notes: Noncommissioned officers include corporals, sergeants, petty officers and warrant officers. Based on post-9/11 veterans who at the time of their discharge or retirement were commissioned officers, n=143; noncommissioned officers, n=285; enlisted service members, n=254.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/6-7

<sup>7</sup> Noncommissioned officers (also called NCOs) include corporals, sergeants, petty officers and warrant officers. A commissioned officer is anyone who holds the rank of lieutenant or higher in the Army, Marines and Air Force, and ensign or higher in the Navy and Coast Guard.

fighting. Views of the Afghanistan War differed little between those who were and were not deployed in that theater (53% who had been deployed view that war approvingly, versus 50% who did not serve in Afghanistan). And the perceived worth of either war did not differ significantly between post-9/11 veterans who served with someone who was seriously wounded or killed in combat and those without exposure to such serious casualties.

## How the U.S. Engages with the World

Back in the 1960s, President Lyndon Johnson emphasized the importance of winning “hearts and minds” of the people of Vietnam as a part of U.S. military objectives there. Today, “nation building” is a major component of the post-9/11 wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, as Americans not only wage battle but also try to rebuild the war-ravaged countries and their social, political and economic institutions. The new Pew survey finds that post-9/11 veterans are more likely than the general public and those who served during earlier wars—including in the Vietnam era—to consider it appropriate for the military to engage in such noncombat work.

Six-in-ten post-9/11 veterans (59%) say nation building is an appropriate role for the military, compared with just 45% of all those who served earlier and 45% of the general public.

Approval for this noncombat role for the military varies slightly from about four-in-ten among World War II, Korean War

and pre-Vietnam era veterans to 49% among Vietnam veterans. Among those who served after Vietnam but before 9/11, 44% say nation building is an appropriate role for the military.

Post-9/11 veterans see limits in how effective military force can be in combating global terrorism, as do most Americans. Asked which of two statements comes closer to their own views, 51% of post-9/11 veterans say that relying too much on military

### Use of Military Force; Engagement in World Affairs

*Among military veterans by era and all American adults, % saying ...*

	Post-9/11 veterans	Pre-9/11 veterans	General public
<i>Which is closer to your own view?</i>			
Best for future of our country to be active in world affairs	35	31	33
We should pay less attention to problems overseas & concentrate on problems here at home	59	61	58
<i>Which is closer to your own view?</i>			
Overwhelming military force best way to defeat terrorism worldwide	40	48	38
Too much military force creates hatred, leads to more terrorism	51	44	52

Notes: “Neither/both equally” and “Don’t know/Refused” responses not shown. Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712, and pre-9/11 veterans, n=1,134. General public data are from Pew Research Center surveys in February and March 2011, N=1,504 adults for first pair of statements, 3,029 for second pair.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/4

force to defeat terrorism creates hatred that leads to more terrorism, while 40% say that using overwhelming military force is the best way to defeat terrorism. Those figures are similar to the 52%-to-38% findings in a Pew Research survey of the general public earlier this year and are virtually unchanged from a December 2004 Pew Research survey.

Attitudes on this question are related to partisanship and ideology. Overwhelming force is preferred by 57% of post-9/11 veterans who consider themselves Republicans, 56% who call themselves conservative and 66% who say they're both. By comparison, among post-9/11 veterans, 56% of Democrats say overreliance on force is counterproductive in fighting terrorism. (There were too few self-described liberals among this group of veterans to analyze with statistical reliability.)

A majority of post-9/11 veterans say the United States should be more inward-looking. Asked which of a pair of balanced alternatives comes closer to their own views, 59% said this country should pay less attention to problems overseas and concentrate on problems here at home, while 35% said it's best for the future of the country to be active in world affairs.

Pre-9/11 veterans split similarly on this question, as did Americans overall in the Pew Research polling earlier this year (58% to 33%)—though that marked a shift among the general public from a December 2004 poll, conducted shortly after George W. Bush won a second term as president, when just 49% took the more isolationist position and 44% preferred a more active role for this country in world affairs.

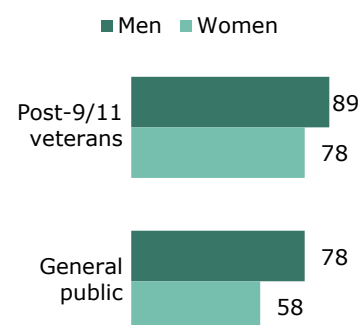
## Drones and the Draft

Almost all post-9/11 veterans approve of the use of unmanned aircraft known as “drones” for aerial attacks in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere. Nearly nine-in-ten—87%—say the increased use of drones by the military is a good thing. The public agrees, but by a less lopsided margin—68% say it's a good thing.

There's a gap in opinion on this issue by gender: 89% of post-9/11 male veterans say the increased use of drones is a good thing, compared with 78% of female veterans. And among all adults, 78% of men but just 58% of women favor this tactic.

## Different Views on Using Unmanned Drones in Attacks

*% saying increased U.S. use of unmanned drones for aerial attacks is a good thing*



Notes: Sample sizes for post-9/11 veterans are n=577 men, 135 women. For general public n=910 men, 1,093 women.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/9, GP/34



Veterans and the broader population both oppose bringing back the military draft. Among veterans, opposition to reinstating conscription is highest among those who served after 1973, when it was abolished—79% of all post-Vietnam veterans, including 82% who served since 9/11, say the United States should not return to the draft at this time. That compares with 61% of veterans who served while a draft was still in effect.

About three-quarters of U.S. adults (74%) oppose a return of the draft, while 20% favor it. The Gallup poll, using the same question wording, had found post-9/11 opposition to conscription increased from 69% in January 2003, shortly before the U.S. invasion of Iraq, to 85% in October 2004. Gallup last asked the question in August 2007, when opposition slipped slightly, to 80%.

## Military Efficiency and Meritocracy

Although the wars it has waged in the past decade draw mixed reviews, the U.S. military gets high marks from its veterans for operating efficiently—67% of all veterans say that, with no difference overall by the era in which they served. A smaller share of the general public, 58%, shares that view.

Among post-9/11 veterans, 66% of veterans who were enlisted when they were discharged perceive the military as efficient, as do 71% of those who had been promoted to become noncommissioned officers. Just 50% of commissioned officers agree. Among pre-9/11 veterans, 60% of the enlisted personnel, 73% of noncommissioned officers and 64% of commissioned officers viewed the military as efficient.

There are wide differences among post-9/11 veterans on this measure depending on how many times they were deployed away from their permanent duty station. Some 50% of those who never deployed, 75% who were

### U.S. Military: Efficiency and Opportunity

*Among post-9/11 veterans, % saying ...*

	<b>Military operates efficiently</b>	<b>People get ahead in military based on hard work/ability</b>
All	67	54
Commissioned officers	50	67
Noncommissioned officers	71	55
Enlisted	66	46
<i>Served in...</i>		
Afghanistan	69	44
Iraq	72	54
Neither	63	56
<i>Deployed...</i>		
Never	50	48
Once	75	54
More than once	69	55

Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/5b,5c

deployed once and 69% of those deployed multiple times view the military as efficient (the comparable shares of pre-9/11 veterans: 60%, 64% and 71%).

The military also gets largely positive grades for being a meritocracy, though less so from post-9/11 veterans. More than six-in-ten (63%) of pre-9/11 veterans say that generally speaking, people get ahead in the military based on their hard work and ability; 54% of post-9/11 veterans say that.

Among post-9/11 veterans who rose in rank to become noncommissioned or warrant officers, 55% view the military as a meritocracy. Some 46% of those who remained enlisted personnel agree with this assessment. Commissioned officers are more likely than either group to say the military is a meritocracy (67%).

In the survey of the general public, respondents were asked if they believed that throughout society as a whole, employees advanced on the basis of merit. They were less generous in their assessment. The public split evenly, 48%-48%, on whether people get ahead in their job or career based on hard work and ability.

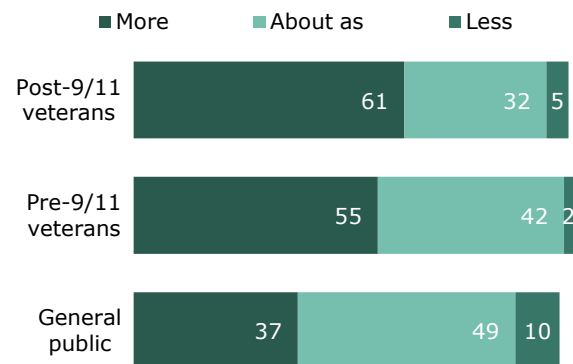
## Patriotism

Six-in-ten post-9/11 veterans (61%) consider themselves more patriotic than most other people in the country. Just 37% of Americans overall say that. A plurality of Americans (49%) say they are about as patriotic as most people in the country.

Among the most recent homecoming veterans, patriotism was felt especially strongly by those who served in Afghanistan (69%) or Iraq (68%), compared with 57% who served in neither.

## Patriotic Feelings Among Veterans, the Public

*% saying they are ... patriotic, compared with most other people in this country*



Notes: "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown. Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712; pre-9/11 veterans, n=1,134; and general public, N=2,003.

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## Obama as Commander in Chief

Post-9/11 veterans give lower ratings than Americans overall to the way Obama is handling his duties as commander in chief—44% of those veterans approve and 47% disapprove, compared with a 53%-39% positive tilt among the general public. The views of pre-9/11 veterans are similar to those of post-9/11 veterans: 40% approve and 51% disapprove of the way the president is handling this aspect of his job.

Partisanship and ideology help explain these views; among post-9/11 veterans, 75% of Republicans and 65% of self-described conservatives disapprove, while 83% of Democrats approve of Obama's handling of his commander in chief duties.

Post-9/11 veterans who disapprove of Obama as commander in chief also differ from those who approve in some views of how the country and military conduct their affairs in the world:

- 64% who disapprove, compared with 52% who approve, say this country should pay less attention to problems overseas and concentrate more on problems at home.
- Those who disapprove split fairly evenly on the use of force to defeat terrorism; 47% say using overwhelming military force is the best way to defeat terrorism and 46% say it can create hatred that breeds more terrorism. By contrast, post-9/11 veterans who approve of Obama as commander in chief are more inclined to say force can breed more terrorism; 60% feel this way.
- Those who disapprove (53%) are less likely than those who approve (63%) to view noncombat nation building as an appropriate role for the military.
- Post-9/11 veterans who view Obama negatively as commander in chief are more likely than their peers who rate him positively to say the war in Iraq has been worth fighting, by 51% to 37%. Regarding Afghanistan, however, there is no significant difference between these two groups: 53% of those who approve of Obama as commander in chief say that the war has been worth fighting, and 41% say it has not (6% don't know); 51% of those who disapprove of Obama as commander in chief say Afghanistan has been worth fighting, and 46% say it has not (3% don't know).



## CHAPTER 3: FIGHTING A DECADE-LONG WAR

Americans who have served in the armed forces during the decade since the 9/11 attacks have experienced the best and worst of what military life has to offer. An overwhelming majority of veterans are proud of their service (96%) and eight-in-ten feel they did important work for their country, according to the Pew Research survey of 1,853 veterans, including 712 who served after 9/11.

At the same time, wars in two countries and ongoing military commitments elsewhere in the world have required service members to be deployed longer and more frequently than in the past. These deployments have often put them directly in harm's way: Six-in-ten veterans who served since 9/11 were deployed at least once to Iraq or Afghanistan or another combat zone.

Nearly half (47%) report that someone they knew and served with was killed in the line of duty. Six-in-ten say a comrade was seriously injured. One-in-six (16%) report they themselves were badly hurt while serving.

Back on the home front, nearly half (48%) say deployments have strained their relationship with their spouses and nearly as many have had problems with their children, according to the survey. At the same time, a majority (60%) say they and their families benefited financially from the extra pay and allowances that can come with a deployment.

### In Their Own Words: Experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan

*Responses of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans when asked what single word best describes their experience in those countries. Size of the word is proportional to the number of times it was volunteered.*



Notes: A total of 262 of 336 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans volunteered 304 words. Veterans who served in both countries could give a word to describe each experience.

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This mixed balance sheet of sacrifices and benefits snaps vividly into focus when veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were asked in the survey for the single word that best characterizes their experiences. Among the most frequently mentioned responses: “rewarding,” “nightmare,” “life-changing,” “lousy,” “interesting” and, of course, “hot.”

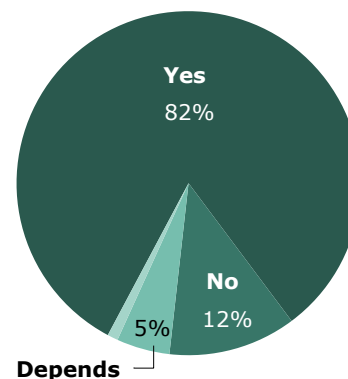
While they report that their fellow citizens have thanked them for their service, these veterans also know that most Americans have a poor understanding of military life. More than seven-in-ten recent veterans believe the public knows little of the rewards of their service, and 84% say Americans are largely unaware of the problems they and their families face. (For the most part, the public agrees: As noted elsewhere in this report, substantial majorities say Americans do not understand military life and nearly as many say they sometimes feel that the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan do not affect them.)

Do the rewards of military service outweigh the risks and hardships they encountered in the post-9/11 era? The responses to another survey question suggest the answer is “yes.” More than eight-in-ten recent veterans (82%) say they would advise a young person to enlist—more than the 74% of pre-9/11 veterans who say they would offer the same advice.

This chapter examines the attitudes and experiences of post-9/11 veterans and compares them with the experiences of previous generations of veterans. The first section looks at why these young men and women joined the military. The next section examines the impacts of deployment. The final section examines exposure to combat and the risks of war, and how being seriously injured or serving with someone who was badly hurt or killed in the line of duty affects views on the military and other issues.

### To Join or Not to Join?

*Post-9/11 veterans on whether they would advise a young person to join the military or not*



Notes: “Don’t know/Refused” responses are shown but not labeled. For post-9/11 veterans, n=712.

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## Why They Joined

Ask veterans of any era why they joined, and the answer is usually the same: to serve their country. Nearly nine-in-ten post-9/11 veterans (88%) and a slightly larger share of those who served before the terrorist attacks (93%) say that serving their country was an important reason they joined the military.

Recent veterans are more likely than those from earlier eras to say they joined to get educational benefits (75% vs. 55% say it was an important reason). They also were more likely than earlier generations of veterans to have enlisted to see more of the world (65% vs. 53%). For those who joined on or after 9/11, nearly six-in-ten (58%) say the terrorist attacks were an important reason they volunteered.

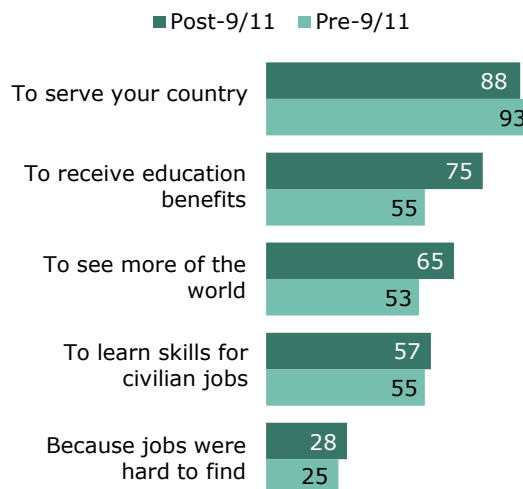
Other reasons for joining the military are somewhat less important. Slightly more than half of all veterans say a big reason they joined the military was to acquire skills for civilian jobs, a view shared by 57% of post-9/11 veterans and 55% of those who served in an earlier era.

And while some see the military as an employer of last resort, only about a quarter of pre- and post-9/11 veterans say an important reason they enlisted was that jobs were scarce (28% and 25%, respectively). However, enlisted men and women are more likely than officers to have joined the military because of the lack of civilian jobs (26% vs. 14%).

Enlisted personnel also are significantly more likely than officers to cite education benefits as an important reason they joined the military (61% vs. 42%), in large part because commissioned officers are more likely to have completed college.

## Reasons for Joining

*% saying each reason was important*

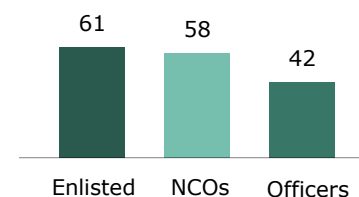


Notes: Veterans who enlisted before 1973, the year the draft was abolished, were asked this question only if they enlisted voluntarily. For post-9/11 veterans, n=697; for pre-9/11 veterans, n=886.

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## Enlisted Personnel More Likely to Join for Education Benefits

*% in each group saying an important reason they enlisted was for the education benefits*



Notes: NCOs (noncommissioned officers) include corporals, sergeants, petty officers and warrant officers. Based on all veterans who enlisted after 1973 or who enlisted voluntarily before 1973, n=1,583.

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## Deployments

Veterans who served after 9/11 are more likely to have been deployed from their home bases during their service careers than earlier generations of military. And for six-in-ten recent veterans, at least one of these deployments was to Iraq, Afghanistan or another combat zone.

The new Pew Research Center survey also found that more than eight-in-ten recent veterans (84%) say they were deployed at least once while serving—and nearly four-in-ten (38%) say they have been deployed three times or more. Only 16% say they have never been deployed, with about half of these having served on active duty for less than three years.

In contrast, about three-in-ten pre-9/11 veterans report they were never deployed, double the proportion of recent veterans (31% vs. 16%). Even among those who served during the Vietnam War, nearly three-in-ten (28%) say they never received orders to deploy.

Still, multiple deployments have been relatively frequent in past wars. Four-in-ten Vietnam-era veterans (42%) and about a third of all surviving veterans of the Korean War and World War II (35%) say they were deployed three times or more during their military careers.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> This analysis may understate the burden of deployments on the 9/11 veterans because it does not take into account the average length of deployments, which have increased in the post-9/11 era. For example, in 2007 the Army extended deployments from 12 months to 15 months for all troops in the Middle East, Central Asia and the Horn of Africa as well as those deploying there.

## Impacts of Deployment

% saying deployment had a positive, negative or neutral impact on ...

■ Positive Impact ■ No Impact ■ Negative Impact

### Chances for promotion and advancement



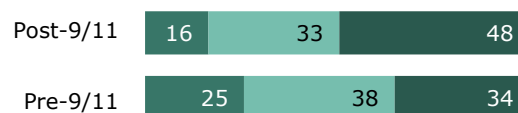
### Financial situation



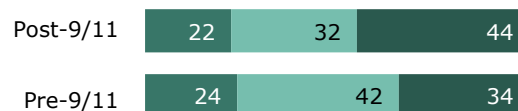
### Health



### Relationship with spouse



### Relationship with children



Notes: Relationship with spouse/children asked only of those who were married/had children while on active duty. "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown. Based on veterans deployed at least once, n=1,323. For post-9/11 veterans, n=599; for pre-9/11 veterans, n=723.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/22



The survey found that deployments bring extra rewards—and greater hardships. Among the benefits most frequently cited by post-9/11 veterans: additional pay, enhanced opportunities for promotion and the sense they were doing something important for their country.

At the same time, these recent veterans acknowledged the hazards of deployment: strains on their marriage and families and the greater likelihood that they could be killed or injured or have to face other health-related hazards.

### The Benefits of Deployment

Among all veterans who had been deployed, the post-9/11 veterans are nearly twice as likely as earlier generations of military to say their deployment has had a positive impact on their financial situation (60% vs. 32%).

In particular, recent veterans who served in combat zones report they had benefited financially from deployments. Among these combat veterans, about two-thirds of all post-9/11 veterans (67%) say deployments have helped them financially. In contrast, about four-in-ten (43%) of those who have not been in combat say their deployments have positively affected their finances.

It's not surprising that service members say they got a financial boost from deployments. Depending where they are sent, troops can qualify to receive Hazardous Duty Incentive Pay, Imminent Danger or Hostile Fire Pay and a cash bonus if they re-enlist while serving in a combat zone. In addition, they do not have to pay federal income tax on their military earnings while serving in a combat zone.

Deployments benefit service members in more ways than just in their pocketbooks. Regardless of when they served, veterans agree that deployments are the fast track to promotion in the military. A majority (57%) of post-9/11 veterans say their deployments had a positive impact on their chances for advancement in the military, a view shared by 58% of deployed veterans who served before 9/11.

### What is a deployment?

For the men and women who serve in the armed forces, deployments away from home are a fact of life. After completing basic training, each member is assigned to their first "permanent duty station" in the United States or somewhere around the world. Personnel are temporarily deployed from their permanent duty station, as needed, to serve elsewhere. Deployments can range from 90 days to 15 months and vary depending on the branch. The typical deployment in the Air Force is three months, while Army soldiers can expect to be deployed for a year and sometimes longer before returning home. Personnel return to their permanent duty station after their deployment ends. They can later be deployed again. Active-duty military personnel are often transferred to a new permanent duty station and can expect to be assigned to several over the course of their military careers.

Regardless of era, veterans also agree that deployments made them feel they were doing something important for their country, a view expressed by 80% of all post-9/11 veterans and 84% of those who served earlier.

Even recent veterans who have not been deployed to the front lines felt they were doing something significant: 78% of those sent to noncombat areas say their deployments made them feel like they were engaged in work vital to the nation's interests, a feeling shared by 81% of those who served in combat zones.

## Negative Impacts of Deployments

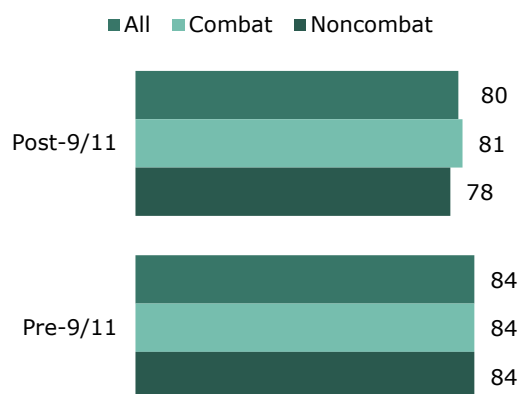
The burdens of deployment in the post-9/11 era have fallen particularly hard on married service members.

Nearly half of all recent veterans (48%) who were married while in the military say their deployments put a strain on their marriages, compared with 34% of married veterans in previous eras. An additional 16% of post-9/11 veterans say the impact of long separations on their marriages was positive; 33% report no impact.

Deployment to a combat zone may be linked to higher levels of family discord among post-9/11 veterans. Among those who served in a war zone, about half (51%) say that their deployments hurt their marriages, compared with 41% of those posted only to noncombat areas. However, the small sample size makes it difficult to draw a firm conclusion about the impact that serving in combat has on marital relations.<sup>9</sup>

## Proud of Their Service

*% saying their deployment made them feel they were doing something important for the country*



Notes: Based on veterans deployed at least once, n=1,323. For post-9/11 veterans, n=599; for pre-9/11 veterans, n=723.

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<sup>9</sup> One other factor complicates the analysis: Length of deployments varies by branch of service. In the Army, the standard deployment for most of the post-9/11 period has been a year, while in the Air Force deployments typically last three months.

Deployments also have had a negative impact on the relationship between many military parents and their children, recent veterans say. Among post-9/11 veterans who were parents while they served, slightly more than four-in-ten veterans (44%) report that their deployments had hurt their relationship with their children, compared to 34% of parents who served before 9/11. These strains were felt in roughly equal proportions by post-9/11 parents who served in combat zones (45%) and in noncombat areas (41%).

Deployments place additional burdens on those who serve. Among all veterans who had been deployed at least once, four-in-ten post-9/11 veterans (40%) say their health suffered from these assignments, compared with 18% of those who served in earlier eras.

Not surprisingly, recent veterans who served in battle areas are significantly more likely than veterans who had been sent to noncombat areas to say their deployments have had a negative impact on their health (44% vs. 31%), in part because of the greater likelihood of being badly hurt in combat. But this is not the whole explanation: about four-in-ten recent veterans (39%) who were not seriously injured while serving in a battle zone say their health suffered from the deployment.

A different question produces corroborating evidence that deployments may be hazardous to a veteran's health. When post-9/11 veterans were asked to rate their current health, about a third (34%) of those who had not been deployed to a combat zone say it is "excellent," compared with 21% of those who had served in a battle area.

### Defining the Eras

Two survey questions were used to classify veterans by the era in which they served: the date they entered the service, and the length of time that they were in the military. Based on these two pieces of information and the official starting and ending dates of major U.S. conflicts, veterans were assigned to one of five eras:

**World War II/Korea** (1941-53) consists of all those who served in the military between the start of U.S. involvement in World War II and the end of the Korean War. Sample size: 269.

**Post-Korea/Pre-Vietnam** (1954-63) includes those who entered service after the Korean War and were discharged before the start of the Vietnam War. Sample size: 144.

**Vietnam** (1964-73) includes those who served in the Vietnam. Sample size: 522.

**Post-Vietnam/Pre-9/11** (1974 until Sept. 11, 2001) includes those who entered the military after the Vietnam War and were discharged before 9/11. Sample size: 198.

**Post-9/11** (2001-) includes those who have served at any point after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, regardless of when they enlisted. Sample size: 712.

## Understanding the Military

America's veterans agree: The public just doesn't understand the military. Seven-in-ten veterans say the public has an incomplete appreciation of the rewards and benefits of military service. And about eight-in-ten say the public does not understand the problems faced by those in the military or their families.

The belief that the public knows little about military life is broadly shared by veterans of all eras. An overwhelming 73% majority of those who served after 9/11 say the public understands the rewards and benefits of military service either "not too well" (49%) or "not well at all" (23%).<sup>10</sup> A similar proportion of other veterans agree (69%).

A somewhat larger proportion of post-9/11 veterans (84%) believe that Americans have little awareness of the problems faced by those in the military, a view shared by a somewhat smaller share of those who served before the terrorist attacks (76%).

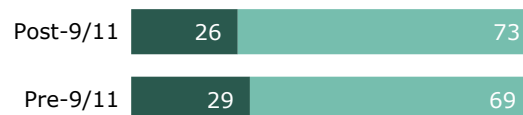
Those with recent, personal exposure to combat and its harsh consequences feel most strongly that the public does not understand the burdens of service. Among post-9/11 veterans who knew and served with someone who was seriously injured, nearly half (46%) say the public understands their problems "not well at all." Among post-9/11 veterans who did not know anyone who was injured, three-in-ten (30%) express this view.

### Public Doesn't Understand Rewards, Problems of Military

% of veterans by era saying the public understands ...

■ Very/fairly well ■ Not too well/not well at all

#### The benefits and rewards of military service



#### The problems that those in the military face



Notes: "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown. Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712, and pre-9/11 veterans, n=1,134.

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<sup>10</sup> When the exact percentages of those who answered "not too well" and "not well at all" are added together, the total rounds up to 73%.

## Respecting the Military

Judged by national surveys, Americans hold the military in high regard. A recent Gallup survey in June found that the military topped the list of America's most trusted institutions. Nearly eight-in-ten (78%) expressed confidence in the armed forces—fully 30 percentage points higher than the share that had similar trust in organized religion and at least double the proportion that had similar faith in the medical system, the Supreme Court or the presidency.<sup>11</sup>

The new Pew Research survey asked veterans of different eras if they thought the public had more or less respect for the military today than it did when they served.

The answers are revealing. Overall, about seven-in-ten say the public has “a lot more respect” (47%) or “a little more respect” (24%) for the military now than when they served. But results sharply differ by era of service.

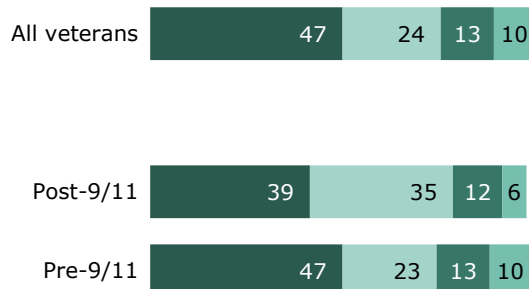
Overall, majorities or pluralities of veterans regardless of era believe today's veterans are respected more than when they served, including 81% of Vietnam-era veterans, 74% of those who entered the service before 9/11 and served at least briefly after the terrorist attacks,<sup>12</sup> and 46% of all Korean War and World War II-era veterans.

The oldest and youngest generation of veterans see only modest differences in the way the public respects the military today compared with the views of the country when they served. Among those who served during World War II or the Korean War, nearly three-in-ten (28%) say today's veterans are respected “a lot more” than they were.

### Respect for the Military

*% saying the military today is respected ... than when they served*

■ A lot more ■ A little more ■ A little less ■ A lot less



Notes: “About the same” and “Don’t know/Refused” responses not shown. Based on veterans who entered the service before 2001. For post-9/11 veterans, n=502; for pre-9/11 veterans, n=1,133.

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<sup>11</sup> Based on a national survey of 1,020 adults conducted June 9-12, 2011, by the Gallup Organization.

<sup>12</sup> Only those who entered the service before 9/11 were asked this question, n=1,635. This includes 502 veterans who entered the service before 2001 and served after the attacks.

The youngest veterans—those who joined the military before 9/11 but served after the terrorist attacks—also see relatively small changes in the way the public views their service: about a third (39%) say respect has increased “a lot” since they served.

Together, these findings likely reflect the relatively high regard that the military enjoyed during the World War II era and again today.

A different story emerges from the findings on this question among the Vietnam-era veterans. About six-in-ten veterans who served in Vietnam (59%) say today’s armed forces are respected “a lot more” than the military was when they served.

These judgments are in sync with contemporaneous survey data from that era. A Gallup poll conducted in May 1975<sup>13</sup> found that 58% of the public expressed confidence in the military. That is fully 20 percentage points below Gallup’s finding in June of this year.

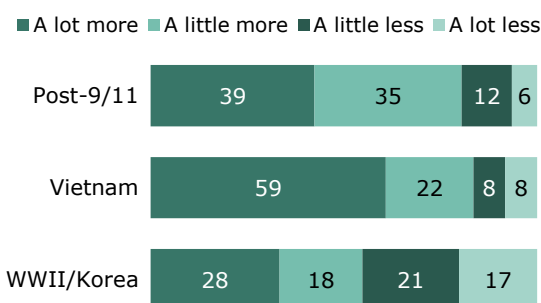
## Injuries, Casualties and Combat

Six-in-ten post-9/11 veterans (60%) say they served in a combat zone, compared with 54% of those who were in the military during the Vietnam era and 53% of surviving veterans of the Korean War and World War II.<sup>14</sup>

Overall, about one-in-six post-9/11 veterans (16%) report they were seriously injured while serving in the military, and most of these injuries were combat-related. One-in-ten pre-9/11 veterans was seriously injured (10%), but a higher proportion was hurt in combat (75% vs. 60% among recent veterans).

### Vietnam Veterans Say Military More Respected Now

*% in each era saying military today is respected ... than when they served*



Notes: “About the same” and “Don’t know/Refused” responses not shown. Based on veterans who entered the service before 2001. For post-9/11 veterans, n=502; Vietnam veterans, n=521; WWII/Korea veterans, n=269.

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<sup>13</sup> Based on a national survey of 1,626 adults conducted May 30-June 2, 1975, by the Gallup Organization.

<sup>14</sup> These numbers might suggest a higher rate of exposure to combat among post-9/11 group. But age differences, as well as the difference in survival rates during each of these four major wars, make it impossible to draw any conclusion about combat exposure or risk of injury from these data. Caution also is urged when making comparisons between post-9/11 veterans and those who served in earlier conflicts.

The higher rate of serious injuries in the post-9/11 era (16% vs. 10% for other veterans) should be interpreted cautiously. But it does mirror a larger truth: According to Department of Defense statistics, those fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq are dying at a significantly lower rate than their comrades-in-arms who fought in Vietnam, Korea or World War II. Advances in medical treatment mean that more injured troops in the post-9/11 era are surviving what were once fatal wounds. While serving in the military is still risky, it is less lethal now on and off the battlefield than it was in previous war eras. (A complete analysis of casualties in Iraq and Afghanistan compared with previous conflicts can be found in Chapter 6.)

## Exposure to Casualties

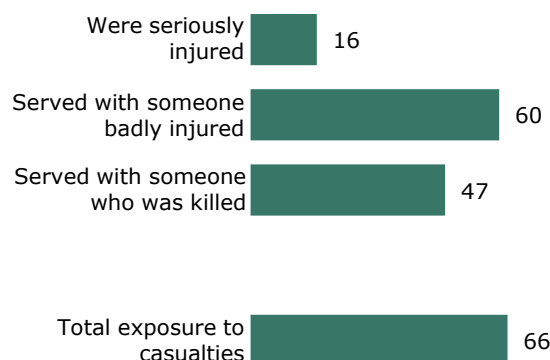
Despite technological and medical advances, war is still hell for the men and women who are asked to fight. Six-in-ten say they knew and served with someone who was seriously injured. About half served with someone who was killed. And as noted earlier, about one-in-six were themselves seriously injured in the line of duty.

When these individual findings are combined, the result is an overall measure of exposure to the casualties of war in the 9/11 era. According to the survey, two-thirds of all recent veterans say they were seriously injured, knew someone who was injured or lost a comrade in the line of duty—a proportion that increases to 73% among combat veterans in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The survey found that about seven-in-ten of those who served in combat say someone they knew and served with was seriously injured. Nearly half of all recent veterans (47%) say someone they knew or served with was killed while on duty, a proportion that rises to 62% among those who were in combat.

### Casualties in the Post-9/11 Era

% of post-9/11 veterans who ...



Notes: "Total exposure to casualties" includes those who were injured or knew and served with someone who was injured or killed. Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712.

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Casualties also can occur away from the battlefield.<sup>15</sup> Among post-9/11 veterans who never served in a combat zone, about one-in-six (16%) were seriously injured in training accidents or while performing other military-related duties. In addition, about half (49%) of recent veterans who were never in combat say they knew and served with someone who was badly injured, and 26% report they served with someone who was killed while serving.

Overall, post-9/11 veterans give high marks to the medical treatment that injured armed forces personnel receive in military hospitals. Nearly three-quarters (74%) rate the care as either “excellent” (22%) or “good” (52%).

Among recent veterans who were seriously injured or knew someone who was, nearly as many (72%) gave high marks to stateside medical care of wounded military personnel. And veterans who served in previous eras were just as approving: 70% rate the treatment as excellent or good.

## The Consequences of Casualties

Personal experiences with war casualties strongly shape the way 9/11 veterans view some elements of their service as well as their attitudes toward the military.

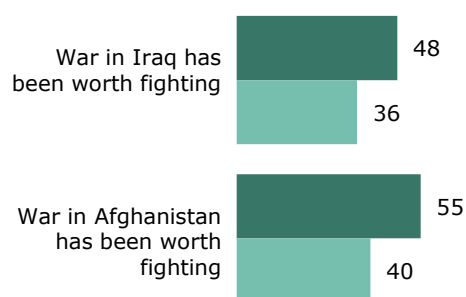
Exposure to casualties has a larger impact on how veterans view the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as their judgments about the importance of their own service.

Service members who were seriously wounded or knew someone who was killed or seriously wounded were more likely to say the war in Iraq is worth fighting than those who had no personal exposure to casualties (48% vs. 36%).

### Exposure to Casualties and Attitudes toward the Wars

% of post-9/11 veterans saying ...

■ Exposed to casualties ■ Not exposed to casualties



Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712.

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Exposure to casualties had an even larger impact on attitudes toward the war in Afghanistan: 55% of those exposed to casualties say Afghanistan has been worth the cost to the United

<sup>15</sup> For example, more than 6,200 U.S. military personnel have died in Iraq and Afghanistan since 9/11, including more than 1,200 the Department of Defense classifies as non-battlefield fatalities.



States. In contrast, about four-in-ten (40%) post-9/11 veterans not exposed to casualties say Afghanistan has been worth it.

However, the survey found that wartime experiences had little, if any, impact on ratings of President Obama's performance as commander in chief. Slightly more than four-in-ten (42%) of those who had personal experience with casualties approve of the job that Obama is doing as commander in chief, compared with 47% of those with no exposure.

Exposure to casualties also has a profound impact on a veteran's emotional well-being, the survey found. Predictably, recent veterans exposed to casualties while in the service were more than twice likely as those who were not exposed to say they experienced an emotionally traumatic or distressing event while serving (54% vs. 22%).

Veterans who had been exposed to casualties are also more likely to say they suffered from post-traumatic stress as a result of their experiences in the military (42% vs. 27%).

Perhaps as a consequence, post-9/11 veterans who had been exposed to casualties had a more difficult time rejoining civilian life once they left the military. Fully half (50%) say their readjustment to life after the military was difficult, compared with less than a third (32%) of those who were not exposed to casualties.

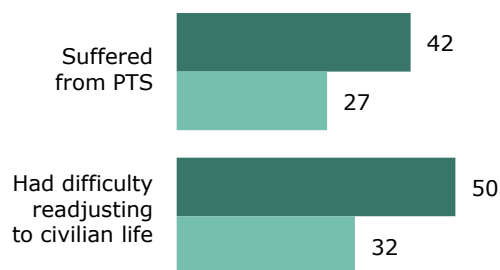
In key ways, today's veterans are reliving some of the same difficulties that confronted earlier generations of soldiers. For example, 37% of those who were exposed to casualties in Vietnam report they had a hard time adjusting to civilian life, compared with only 5% of those who were not.

Yet exposure to the bloody side of war did not seem to change how post-9/11 veterans felt about their military experience: More than nine-in-ten of both groups say they were proud of their service, regardless of whether they had been injured in the line of duty or had served with someone who was seriously injured or killed.

### Readjusting to Life After the Military

*% of post-9/11 veterans who experienced each problem, by exposure to casualties*

■ Exposed to casualties ■ Not exposed to casualties



Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/36,50

## The Fog of War

Most of the men and women of the military understand the missions they are assigned to undertake. About eight-in-ten post-9/11 veterans say they understood their missions “all of the time” (37%) or “most of the time” (42%). Only about one-in-five (20%) say they had a full understanding of their assignments just some or none of the time.

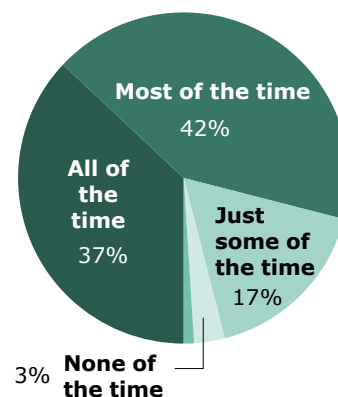
At the same time, post-9/11 veterans are less likely than those who served in earlier eras to say they always had a clear understanding their assigned missions and the role they would play in it (37% vs. 50%).

But this “understanding gap” narrows dramatically when the comparison is made only between those personnel who served in combat. Nearly four-in-ten combat veterans in the post-9/11 era (38%) say they understood all of their missions, roughly similar to the 42% of pre-9/11 veterans who served in combat areas and virtually identical to the 37% of recent veterans who were in not in combat.

The similarities in mission awareness between combat and noncombat troops in the post-9/11 period represent a change from previous eras. Among all pre-9/11 veterans, the majority (56%) of those who were not in combat understood all of their assignments, compared with only 42% of combat veterans. For example, among all noncombat veterans of the Vietnam era, 54% fully understood their missions, compared with 35% of those who were in combat.

## Mission Understood

*% of post-9/11 veterans saying they had a clear understanding of their missions ...*

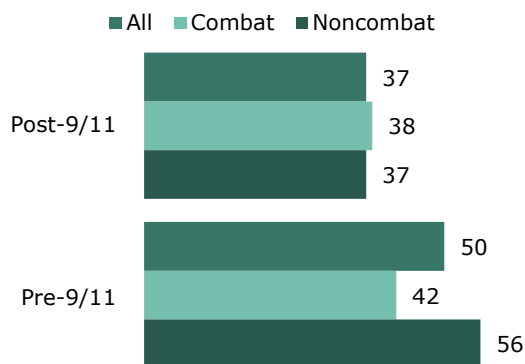


Notes: “Don’t know/Refused” responses are shown but not labeled. Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712.

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## Understanding the Mission

*% saying they had a clear understanding of their mission all of the time*



Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712, and pre-9/11 veterans, n=1,134.

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In the post-9/11 era, noncommissioned officers—a classification that includes corporals, sergeants, warrant officers and petty officers—are somewhat more likely than enlisted personnel to say they understood all their missions (43% vs. 31%), a view shared by 39% of commissioned officers.

Rank mattered even more in earlier eras: Nearly two-thirds of the pre-9/11 officers (63%) but only 45% of enlisted personnel say they always had a clear understanding of their missions.

### Advice to the Young about Joining the Military

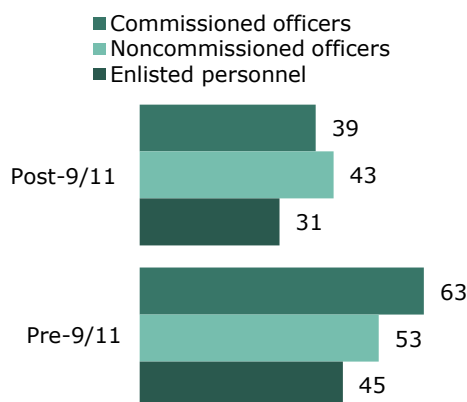
Should a young person today serve in the military? America's veterans agree the answer is "yes," a view that substantial majorities share regardless of the era they served, their combat experience or direct exposure to casualties.

More than eight-in-ten post-9/11 veterans (82%) say they would advise a young person close to them to join the military. Only 12% would answer no and 5% say it depends on the individual. These views cross the generations: 74% of those who served before the terrorist attacks would advise enlisting, including an identical proportion of Vietnam-era veterans.

This endorsement of the military remains solid when a veteran's experiences in the service are taken into account. For example, 84% of all post-9/11 veterans who served in a war zone would advise a young person to join—as would

### Officers Better Understand Missions

*% saying they understood their mission all of the time*



Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712, and pre-9/11 veterans, n=1,134.

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### Negative Experiences in Service Don't Sour Veterans on Military Life

*% of veterans who would advise a young person to enlist, by military-related experiences*



Note: Based on all veterans, n=1,853, except for the "Served in Vietnam" result, which is based on those who served in that war, n=522.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/28,32,34,44,50

80% of those who completed their service in less dangerous areas.

Exposure to casualties may strongly shape other views but has only slight impact on a recommendation to enlist. Similar proportions of post-9/11 veterans exposed to casualties and those who were not would advise enlisting (82% vs. 79%), as would 78% majorities of those who think the wars in Afghanistan or Iraq are not worth the cost.

Perhaps the most striking endorsement of military service comes from veterans of any era who were seriously injured while serving. Among this group, about seven-in-ten (69%) say they would urge a young person to enlist, compared with 76% of those who were not injured.

### In their Own Words

A different kind of survey question asked veterans to express in their own words what it was like to serve on the front lines in Iraq and Afghanistan. A total of 262 of 336 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans volunteered 304 words.

Taken together, these veterans offered a mixed view of their service. A total of 19 say their experience was rewarding, beneficial or worthwhile. Thirteen say it was a “nightmare,” “horrificing” or simply “hell.” Among the other most frequently used words: “hot” (18), “interesting” (15), “eye-opening” (12) and “educational/knowledgeable” (12).

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### Iraq and Afghanistan, in a Word

*Most frequently mentioned words volunteered by Iraq and Afghanistan veterans to describe their experience*

Worthwhile/beneficial/rewarding/fulfilling	19
Hot	18
Bad/lousy/terrible/horrible/miserable	16
Interesting	15
Hell/nightmare/horrifying	13
Eye-opening	13
Educational/knowledgeable	12
Life-changing	11
Challenging	10

Notes: A total of 262 of 336 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans volunteered 304 words. The total number of words exceeds the number of veterans who offered a word because some veterans who served in both conflicts volunteered different words to describe their experiences in each country.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/16

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## CHAPTER 4: RE-ENTRY TO CIVILIAN LIFE

The risks and rewards of military service carry over into civilian life. When servicemen and women retire or are discharged from the military, they leave with skills, knowledge and experiences that can help them advance in the future. Yet many also carry with them deep and enduring scars.

Large majorities of veterans—pre- and post-9/11—say the military helped them get ahead in life. They stress the character-building aspects of their experience: learning to work with other people, building self-confidence and growing as a person. Most veterans say their readjustment to civilian life was easy. However, a significant share (44% among post-9/11 veterans) say it was difficult.

The burdens of re-entry have been particularly acute for America's combat veterans. Among post-9/11 veterans who served in combat, 76% say their military experience helped them get ahead, yet half (51%) say they had some difficulty readjusting to civilian life. Majorities of these combat veterans report strained family relations and frequent incidents of irritability or anger. Fully half (49%) say they have likely suffered from post-traumatic stress. And many question whether the government has done all it should to support them. Still, they express a deep sense of pride in their service and an increased appreciation for life.

### The Advantages of Military Service

Overall, veterans report that their military experience has helped them get ahead in life. Two-thirds say it has helped them a lot, and 14% say it has helped a little. An additional 16% say their military experience hasn't made a difference in terms of getting ahead in life. Only 3% say the experience was detrimental.

Within the veteran community, this sense of being helped by virtue of serving in the military is nearly universal. Among men and women, young and old, blacks, whites and Hispanics, strong majorities say their military experience has helped them get ahead in life. Additionally,

### Post-9/11 Veterans Weigh the Impact of their Service

% saying ...

#### Military experience helped them get ahead in life



#### Readjustment to civilian life has been difficult



Notes: Combat veterans include all those who served in a combat or war zone. Based on all post-9/11 veterans, n=712. For combat n=424; noncombat n=283.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/26,36

veterans across military eras agree that their service was beneficial. Whether they served in a prior war, during the relative peacetime after Vietnam and before 9/11, or during the past decade, veterans are likely to say having served in the military gave them an advantage in life.

Among post-9/11 veterans, those who served five or more years in the military are more likely to see a benefit from their service. Two-thirds of those who served at least five years say the experience helped them a lot in terms of getting ahead in life. This compares with only half (52%) of those who served for less than five years.

Officers—both commissioned and noncommissioned—are much more likely than enlisted personnel to say that their military service helped them get ahead. Roughly two-thirds of officers say their military experience helped them a lot, versus only 49% of veterans who were among the rank-and-file enlisted personnel.

Not only do veterans feel the military helped them get ahead in life, but they also see specific benefits from their service. Among all post-9/11 veterans, 71% say their military experience was very useful in helping them grow and mature as a person; an additional 21% say it was fairly useful. Nearly as many (65%) say their time in the military was very useful in teaching them how to work together with other people (25% say fairly useful). And 61% say it was very useful in giving them self-confidence (29% fairly useful).

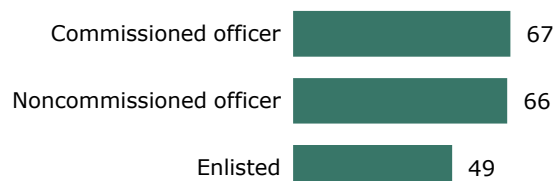
## Did Your Military Service Help You Get Ahead in Life?

*% of post-9/11 veterans saying it helped a lot*

### Years of service



### Rank



Notes: Noncommissioned officers include corporals, sergeants, petty officers and warrant officers. Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/26

Veterans are less likely to report that their time in the military helped them get a job in the civilian world. Only 41% of post-9/11 veterans say their military experience was very useful in preparing them for a job or career. An additional 31% say it was fairly useful, and 27% say their military experience was not useful in this regard.

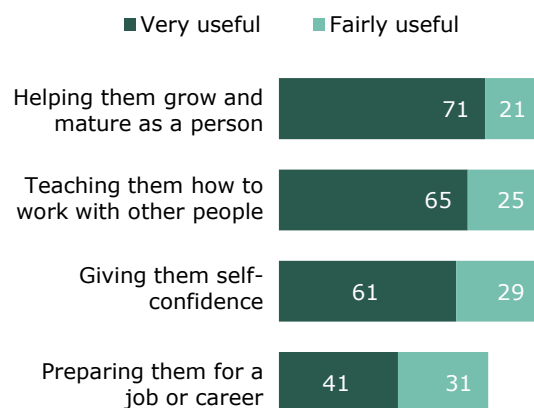
## Re-entering Civilian Life

For many veterans of all eras, readjusting to civilian life after their military service has not been particularly difficult. More than seven-in-ten say their readjustment was very (43%) or somewhat (29%) easy. Still, more than one-in-four (27%) report that they had at least some difficulty readjusting.

The re-entry process has been more difficult for post-9/11 veterans than it was for those who served prior to 9/11. More than four-in-ten post-9/11 veterans (44%) say they had difficulty readjusting to civilian life, compared with 25% of pre-9/11 veterans. This may be due in part to the fact that post-9/11 veterans are much more likely than those who served before them to have seen combat. Among post-9/11 veterans who served in combat, half (51%) say they had difficulty readjusting to civilian life. This compares with 34% of post-9/11 veterans who did not see combat.

## How Useful Was Your Military Experience?

*% of post-9/11 veterans saying military service was useful in ...*

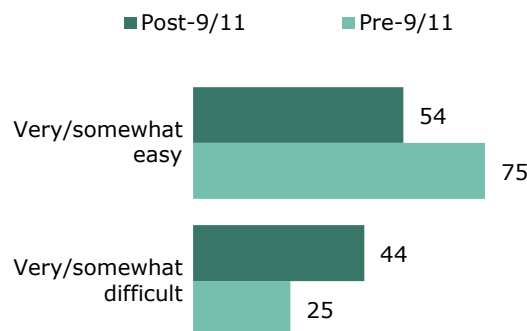


Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712.

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## The Re-entry Process

*% saying after their military service, readjustment to civilian life was ...*



Notes: "Don't know/ Refused" voluntary responses not shown. Based on post-9/11, n=712, and pre-9/11 veterans, n=1,134.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/36

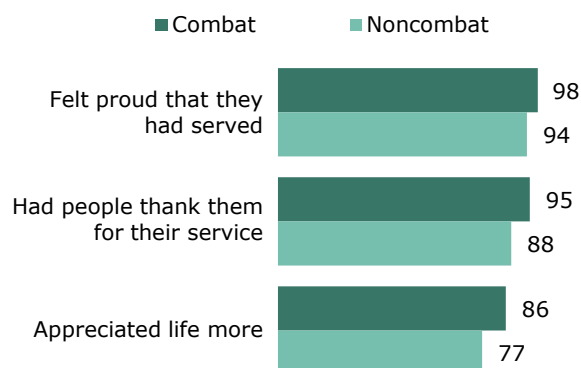
The combat experience clearly shapes an individual's re-entry into civilian life. Post-9/11 veterans were asked whether they had experienced a range of things—some positive, some negative—since they were discharged from the service. In nearly every case, combat veterans had different experiences than veterans who did not serve in combat.

Virtually all post-9/11 combat veterans (98%) say that since they were discharged from the service, they have felt proud that they served in the military. Among veterans who did not serve in combat, the share is nearly as high (94%). Fully 95% of post-9/11 combat veterans say that since they got out of the military, people have thanked them for their service. This experience has been somewhat less prevalent among noncombat veterans (88%). A strong majority of all post-9/11 veterans say that since they left the military, they have felt a greater appreciation for life. This is true of 86% of combat veterans and 77% of those who were not in combat.

Veterans were also asked about some negative experiences that they may have had since leaving the military. Here the gaps between combat and noncombat veterans are much larger. Nearly six-in-ten post-9/11 combat veterans (57%) say that since being discharged from the military, they have experienced frequent incidents of irritability or outbursts of anger. By contrast, only 31% of noncombat veterans say the same. Nearly as many combat veterans (55%) say they have experienced strains in family relations. This compares with 38% of noncombat veterans. This compares with 38% of noncombat veterans.

## The Positive Side of Re-entry

*% of post-9/11 veterans saying they have experienced each since discharge*

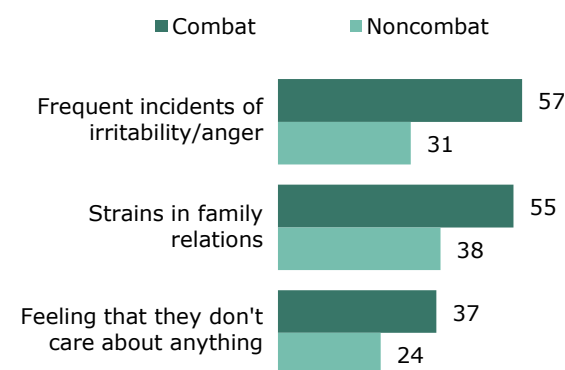


Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/43

## The Costs of Combat

*% of post-9/11 veterans saying they have experienced each since discharge*



Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/43



Nearly four-in-ten combat veterans (37%) say that they have gone through periods when they felt as if they didn't care about anything. Only 24% of noncombat veterans report feeling this way since leaving the military.

Veterans who retired as commissioned officers are much less likely than noncommissioned officers or rank-and-file enlisted personnel to say they have faced these types of emotional challenges. While 21% of commissioned officers say they have experienced frequent bouts of irritability or anger, fully half of noncommissioned officers (NCOs) and formerly enlisted veterans say they have had these experiences. Similarly, 13% of commissioned officers say they have felt that they didn't care about anything, while the share among NCOs and enlisted personnel is more than twice as high.

Not surprisingly, veterans who had young children during the time they served on active duty are more likely than non-parents to say they have experienced strains in family relations since leaving the military (57% vs. 43%).

## Emotional Trauma and Its Aftermath

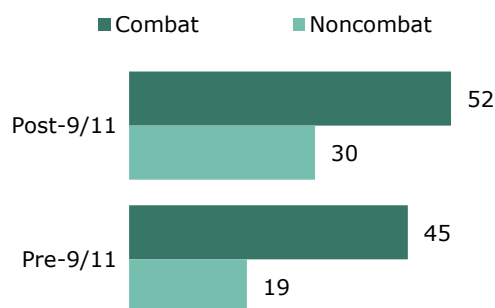
The challenges veterans face upon returning to civilian life are often linked to experiences they had in combat. Among post-9/11 combat veterans, more than half (52%) say that during their military service, they had experiences that were emotionally traumatic or distressing.

Noncombat veterans are less likely to report having these types of experiences, though they are not immune. Among post-9/11 veterans who did not serve in combat, 30% say they had traumatic or distressing experiences over the course of their military service.

Certain characteristics of war cut across generations and military eras, and trauma is one of them. Veterans who served in combat prior to 9/11 are nearly as likely as post-9/11 veterans to report that they had traumatic or distressing experiences during their military service (45%). Among pre-9/11 veterans who did not serve in combat, only one-in-five (19%) say they had these types of experiences.

### Combat and Trauma

*% saying they had emotionally traumatic or distressing experiences while in the military*



Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712, and pre-9/11 veterans, n=1,134.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/44

The challenge for many veterans is dealing with the aftereffects of these experiences. Among all post-9/11 veterans who report having had traumatic experiences during their time in the military, more than seven-in-ten (72%) say they have had flashbacks, repeated distressing memories or recurring dreams of those incidents. Among post-9/11 combat veterans, the share is slightly higher—75% of those who say they had traumatic experiences while they were in the service also say they've had flashbacks or nightmares related to those incidents. The experience has been similar for veterans who came before them. Among pre-9/11 combat veterans who had traumatic experiences in the military, 69% suffered from flashbacks, distressing memories or recurring dreams.

Noncombat veterans don't seem to relive their traumatic experiences to nearly the same extent as combat veterans. Among all noncombat veterans who had emotionally traumatic experiences, only 32% report having flashbacks, repeated memories or recurring dreams.

There is a strong link between traumatic wartime experiences and difficulties readjusting to civilian life. Post-9/11 combat veterans who had these types of experiences report having had a much more difficult time transitioning to civilian life, and many say they have faced specific challenges in their day-to-day lives since leaving the military.

Two-thirds (67%) of post-9/11 combat veterans who had traumatic experiences say their readjustment to civilian life after leaving the military was difficult (with 25% describing it as *very* difficult). Among veterans who did not have these types of experiences, only three-in-ten (31%) say their re-entry to civilian life was difficult.

Similarly, post-9/11 combat veterans who lived through traumatic events during their service are more than twice as likely as veterans who did not have traumatic experiences to say they

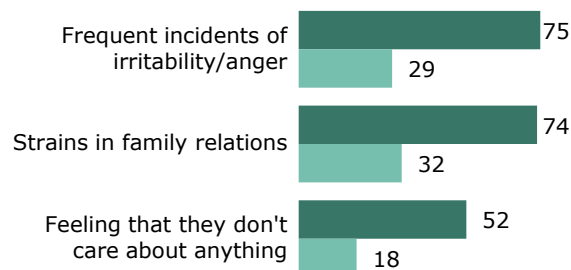
## War, Trauma and Re-entry

% of post-9/11 veterans

- Combat veterans who had traumatic experiences
- Veterans who did not have traumatic experiences



### Since leaving military, have experienced ...



Notes: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712. Combat veterans who had traumatic experiences include those who said there were specific experiences related to their military service that they found to be emotionally traumatic or distressing, n=224. For veterans who did not have traumatic experiences, n=395.

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have suffered from frequent incidents of irritability or anger (75% vs. 29%), strains in family relations (74% vs. 32%), and feelings of despondence and hopelessness (52% vs. 18%).

## Post-Traumatic Stress

Some of the specific challenges veterans face after leaving the military—flashbacks, nightmares, outbursts of anger, feelings of hopelessness—are often associated with post-traumatic stress (PTS). Among the post-9/11 veterans included in this survey, more than one-third (37%) say—regardless of whether they have been formally diagnosed—that they think they have suffered from PTS as a result of their experiences in the military. And nearly six-in-ten (58%) say they knew and served with someone who suffered from PTS.

Among combat veterans who have served since 9/11, roughly half (49%) say they have likely suffered from PTS and 70% say they served with someone who had PTS.

Post-9/11 veterans are much more likely than those who served prior to 9/11 to have exposure to PTS. This may be in part because more post-9/11 veterans served in combat and in part because there is greater awareness about PTS now than in previous eras. Among veterans from the pre-9/11 era, only 16% say they have suffered from PTS, and 35% say they knew someone who did.

Post-traumatic stress affects veterans from all walks of life. Among post-9/11 veterans, roughly equivalent shares of men and women, whites, blacks and Hispanics, young and old say they have likely suffered from PTS. That said, certain segments of the military report much higher rates of PTS than others. Fully half (51%) of all Army veterans surveyed from the post-9/11 era say they have suffered from PTS. This compares with roughly one-in-five Air Force and Navy veterans. Among veterans of the Marines, 39% say they have suffered from PTS.

Service rank also seems to have an impact on rates of PTS. Among post-9/11 veterans, those who served as commissioned officers are much less likely than others to say they have suffered

## Post-Traumatic Stress

*% of all veterans who ...*

### Knew/served with someone who had PTS



### Personally suffered from PTS



Notes: "Personally suffered from PTS" includes those who said, regardless of whether they had been diagnosed, they thought they had suffered from post-traumatic stress as a result of their experiences in the military. Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712, and pre-9/11 veterans, n=1,134.

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from PTS (22%). Those who were NCOs are among the most likely to say they've had PTS (46%). Veterans who were rank-and-file enlisted personnel are slightly less likely than NCOs to say they have suffered from PTS (35%), though the difference is not statistically significant.

PTS affects more than emotional health. It can have a significant impact on a veteran's quality of life more generally. Among post-9/11 veterans who say they've suffered from PTS as a result of their military experience, only 15% say they are very happy with their life overall. This compares with 37% of veterans who have not suffered from PTS.

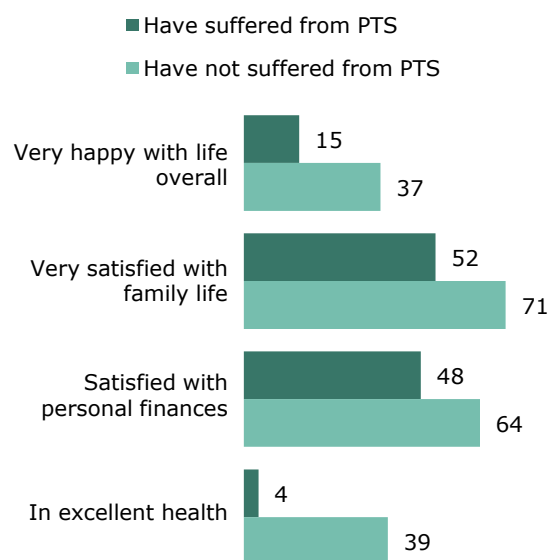
Post-9/11 veterans with PTS are also less likely than others to be satisfied with their family life. While 52% of veterans who have had PTS say they are very satisfied with their family life, 71% of those who have not had PTS say the same. Veterans with PTS are also more downbeat about their financial situations: 48% say they are satisfied with their personal financial situation, compared with 64% who have not had PTS.

Perhaps the most dramatic gap is on veterans' ratings of their overall health. Only 4% of veterans who have suffered from PTS say they are currently in excellent health. This compares with 39% of their fellow veterans who have not faced this challenge.

If there is any good news in this part of the story, it may be that today's veterans say they felt comfortable seeking help if and when they needed it. Nearly seven-in-ten post-9/11 veterans (69%) say their superiors made them and others who served with them feel comfortable about seeking help with emotional issues resulting from their military service. Fewer than one-in-four (23%) say they were made to feel uncomfortable. This marks a significant break from the past. Only half of pre-9/11 veterans (51%) say their superiors made them feel comfortable seeking help for emotional issues.

## How Post-Traumatic Stress Affects the Lives of Veterans

% of post-9/11 veterans who are ...



Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/1,2,42

Among post-9/11 veterans the level of comfort with seeking help for emotional issues is largely consistent across rank and service branch. However, those who say they have actually suffered from PTS are among the *least* likely to say their superiors made them feel comfortable seeking help if they needed it (62% vs. 75% among those who have not suffered from PTS).

### The Government's Role in Re-entry

The federal government gets mixed ratings for the role it has played in helping veterans readjust to civilian life and in providing support and services to veterans in need. Some 51% of post-9/11 veterans say the government has given them personally all the help they think it should, while 47% say it has not.

Veterans who served in the pre-9/11 era, particularly those who served prior to the Vietnam War, have a more positive view of the role government has played in their lives. Among veterans from the pre-Vietnam era, 73% say government has given them all the help it should. Among those who served during Vietnam and prior to 9/11, 58% share this view.

Among post-9/11 veterans, commissioned officers give the government higher ratings than do NCOs or other enlisted personnel. Two-thirds of commissioned officers (66%) say the government has done all it should for them. Only 43% of NCOs and 52% of rank-in-file enlisted personnel agree with this assessment.

Whether or not a veteran served in combat does not have a significant influence on that individual's overall rating of the job government has done in supporting veterans. Some 48%

### Reaching Out for Help

*% saying superiors made them/others feel comfortable seeking help for emotional issues*

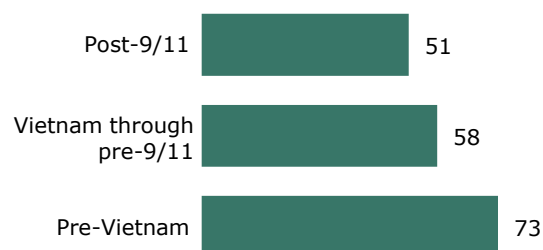


Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712, and pre-9/11 veterans, n=1,134

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### Government Help for Veterans

*% saying the government has given them all the help it should*



Note: Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712; Vietnam through pre-9/11 veterans, n=720, and pre-Vietnam veterans, n=413.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/39

of post-9/11 combat veterans and 56% of noncombat veterans say the government has done all it should to help them personally. However, what a veteran experienced in combat does seem to affect evaluations of government. Among post-9/11 veterans who say they have suffered from PTS as a result of their experiences in the military, only 30% say the government has done all it should to help them. Among those who have not suffered from PTS, 63% give the government positive marks.

Respondents were also asked to rate the job the Veterans Administration (VA) is doing today to meet the needs of military veterans.<sup>16</sup> Among all post-9/11 veterans, 12% say the VA is doing an excellent job in this regard, and 39% say it's doing a good job. More than one-third (35%) say the VA is doing only a fair job meeting the needs of today's veterans, and 9% say it's doing a poor job. The ratings the VA receives from pre-9/11 veterans are not significantly different.

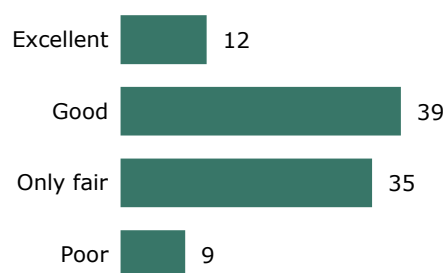
Post-9/11 combat veterans who had traumatic experiences during their military service or have suffered from PTS are more critical of the VA. Among those who say they have suffered from PTS, a majority (56%) say the VA is doing only a fair or poor job meeting the needs of today's veterans, compared with 43% who say it's doing an excellent or good job. Among those who have not suffered from PTS, 57% give the VA high marks while 37% say it's doing a fair or poor job.

More than six-in-ten post-9/11 veterans (62%) say they have received benefits from the VA. Those who have served in combat are more likely than those who have not to say they have received VA benefits (68% vs. 54%). Veterans who served prior to 9/11 are somewhat less likely to say they received benefits from the VA (54%).

Among post-9/11 veterans who say they've received benefits from the VA, 60% give the agency excellent or good marks for meeting the needs of today's veterans. The VA receives lower

### Ratings for the VA

*% of post-9/11 veterans rating the job the VA is doing today to meet the needs of military veterans as ...*



Notes: "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown. Based on post-9/11 veterans, n=712.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER V/37

<sup>16</sup> When the Veterans Administration was established as a Cabinet-level position in 1989, the name was changed to the Department of Veterans Affairs. Survey respondents were asked to rate the "Veterans Administration."

ratings from those who have not received benefits (only 39% rated the agency excellent or good).

## Work-Life after the Military

After leaving the military, most veterans still have years if not decades left in their working life.<sup>17</sup> Many also pursue more education. Among those under age 30, more than one-third (37%) are full-time students, and 8% go to school part time. Among post-9/11 veterans, noncommissioned officers and rank-and-file enlisted personnel are more likely than commissioned officers to be enrolled in school. This is presumably because commissioned officers already have at least a four-year college degree.

As the national unemployment rate hovers between 9 and 10 percent, the unemployment rate among post-9/11 veterans has been well past that threshold. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported that in 2010 the unemployment rate for post-9/11 veterans was 11.5%. This is higher than the jobless rate for veterans from all eras combined (8.7% in 2010) and for non-veterans (9.4%). Unemployment is particularly high among young veterans from the post-9/11 era. According to the BLS, 21.9% of male veterans ages 18-24 from the post-9/11 era were unemployed in 2010. This is not statistically different from the share of male non-veterans in that same age group, 19.7% of who were unemployed in 2010.<sup>18</sup>

While most veterans acquired certain skills and knowledge in the military, they can also face unique challenges in the civilian job market. Some have physical injuries and disabilities; some carry with them the emotional scars of war. Most post-9/11 veterans say their military experience was useful in preparing them for a job or career. However, only 41% say it was very useful. Post-9/11 veterans who say the military helped prepare them for civilian work are much more likely to be gainfully employed than those who do not believe the military prepared them. Among those who say the military was very helpful in preparing them for a job, 64% are now employed full time. This compares with less than half who say the military was not helpful in preparing them for a civilian career.

Among the post-9/11 veterans included in this survey, employment status differs somewhat across military rank. While 74% of retired commissioned officers are employed full time, only 57% of NCOs and 51% of rank-and-file enlisted personnel are working full time.

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<sup>17</sup> According to a 2006 Congressional Research Service Report, the average nondisabled enlisted member retiring from an active-duty military career in FY 2004 was 41; the average officer was 45. See CRS Issue Brief for Congress "Military Retirement: Major Legislative Issues," Updated March 14, 2006. (<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/IB85159.pdf>)

<sup>18</sup> See "Employment Situation of Veterans Summary," Bureau of Labor Statistics Economic News Release, Friday, March 11, 2011. (<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/vet.nr0.htm>)

Post-9/11 veterans who carry with them emotional scars from their service are among the least likely to be working full time. Among those who say they had traumatic experiences in the military, only 48% are working full time. This compares with 62% of those who did not have these types of experiences.



## CHAPTER 5: THE PUBLIC AND THE MILITARY

When it comes to their armed forces, most Americans in the post-9/11 era have feelings of pride, gratitude and confidence. At the same time, most Americans acknowledge they know little about the realities of military service. And, in increasing numbers, they disapprove of or do not pay attention to the wars the military is currently fighting.

Fully nine-in-ten Americans say they have felt proud of the troops in Afghanistan and Iraq since those two wars began. But a large majority (71%) of this same public says most Americans have little or no understanding of the problems faced by those in the military.

The public is aware that since the 9/11 attacks, members of the military and their families have carried greater burdens than the American people. More than eight-in-ten (83%) say that members of the military and their families have had to make a lot of sacrifices, while only 43% say so about the American public. But among those whose responses rate the military's sacrifice as greater than the public's (47% of respondents), seven-in-ten see nothing unfair in this disparity. Rather, they agree that "it's just part of being in the military."

In another indication of the distance many Americans feel from the troops, half of the public says the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have had little impact on their own lives. Also, most Americans accept the status quo of an all-volunteer fighting force and disapprove of reinstating a compulsory draft that would expand the pool of potential soldiers more broadly throughout society.

Even as they express pride in the troops, most Americans have soured on the post-9/11 wars. A majority (57%) says the war in Iraq has not been worth fighting, and nearly as many (52%) say the same about the war in Afghanistan. This marks a change of heart from when each of these wars began. Other survey data show the public is paying far less attention to both conflicts now than at earlier stages of the fighting.

### Who Has Made Sacrifices Since 9/11?

*% of public saying the ... have had to make a lot of sacrifices*



Note: Based on general public, N=2,003.

Question wording: GP/40 "Since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, do you think that people who serve in the military and their families have had to make a lot of sacrifices, some sacrifices, hardly any or none at all?"; GP/41 "And since 9/11, do you think that the American people have had to make a lot of sacrifices, some sacrifices, hardly any or none at all?"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER GP/40-41

Americans are evenly divided (45% favor, 48% oppose) about whether the military should be engaged in “nation-building” activities, which focus on improving the physical, political and social infrastructure of Afghanistan and Iraq. However, the public is strongly supportive of the military’s other major military tactical innovation of the post-9/11 wars—the use of unmanned “drone” aircraft for aerial strikes against individual enemy targets. About two-thirds (68%) of the public say increased use of drones is a good thing (and an even larger share of veterans supports their use).

Americans hold a very favorable opinion of the military as an organization. At a time when the public’s confidence in most key national institutions has sagged, confidence in the military is at or near its highest level in many decades. Most people also say they believe the military operates efficiently.

But confidence is one thing; the inclination to encourage young people to join is another. Only about half of Americans (48%) say they would advise a young person to join the military, well below the share of post-9/11 veterans (82%) or pre-9/11 veterans (74%) who say they would give the same advice.

This chapter analyzes public attitudes on a variety of fronts about the nation’s troops, the military as an institution and the current wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. It is based mainly on a survey of 2,003 Americans taken Sept. 1-15, 2011. On some findings, it compares the public’s attitudes with those of veterans, using surveys conducted July 18-Sept. 4, 2011, among 1,853 Americans who have served in the military.

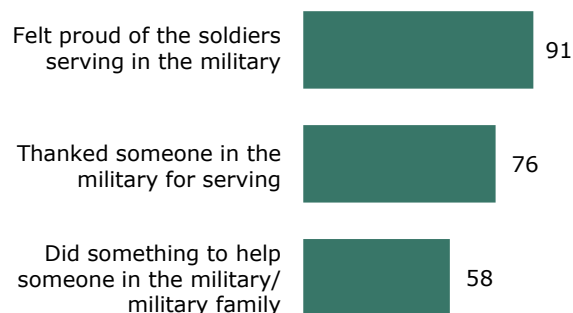
## Public Views of the Military

Whatever their views about the wars themselves, Americans have a high opinion of the troops serving in Afghanistan and Iraq. Nine-in-ten Americans (91%) say they have felt proud of the soldiers serving in the military since those two wars began. In this, they match the attitudes of post-9/11 veterans themselves, 96% of whom say they felt proud to serve.

A majority of Americans say they have expressed their admiration directly. Three-quarters (76%) say that since those wars

## Civilians and the Post-9/11 Wars

*% saying they have done or felt the following since the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan began*



Note: Based on general public, N=2,003.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER GP/38

began, they have thanked someone in the military for serving. Looking at this question from the troops' perspective, nearly all veterans of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq (92%) say someone has thanked them for their service since they were discharged.

More than half of Americans (58%) say they have done something to help someone in the military or to help a military family. They are particularly likely to say so (71%) if they also say they have a family member or close friend who served in Afghanistan or Iraq.

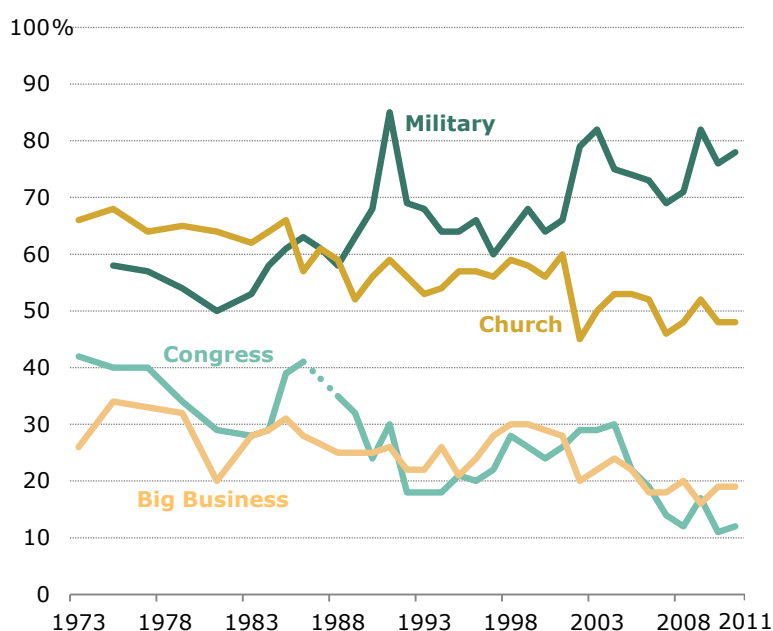
These findings fit a broader pattern of high public confidence in the U.S. military. As other institutions have lost favor in American public opinion, the standing of the military has grown.

In a 2011 Gallup survey, the share of Americans who say they have "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in the military was 78%. The military got the highest rating among 16 institutions tested, among them the church or organized religion (48%), big business (19%) and Congress (12%).

Of the institutions tested in the Gallup series, which began in the 1970s, the military is the only one that has had a notable gain in public confidence. Public confidence in the military surpassed confidence in religious organizations in the late 1980s and has stayed there ever since. Among other institutions losing stature since then are banks, public schools and organized labor. A few institutions, including the police, small business and health maintenance organizations, for which confidence questions have been asked since the 1990s, have neither

### Confidence in Institutions, 1973-2011

% saying they have a great deal or quite a lot of confidence



Note: Data not available for Congress in 1987.

Question wording: "Now I am going to read you a list of institutions in American society. Please tell me how much confidence you, yourself, have in each one – a great deal, quite a lot, some, or very little?"

Source: Gallup New Service Survey, conducted June 9-12, 2011. Based telephone interviews of a national sample of 1,020 adults.

<http://www.gallup.com/poll/148178/Confidence-Institutions-PDF.aspx>

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gained nor lost. The criminal justice system has gained some public confidence since the early 1990s.

In another demonstration of public approval of the military, when Americans were asked in a 2009 Pew Research Center survey about the contributions of various groups to society, 84% said members of the military contribute a lot. By comparison, 77% said so about teachers, 70% about scientists and 69% about medical doctors.<sup>19</sup>

Overall, Americans perceive the all-volunteer military as operating efficiently. A 58% majority says the military operates efficiently, while a third (32%) says it operates inefficiently.

Blacks (74%) and Hispanics (69%) are more likely than whites (55%) to see the military as operating efficiently; women (61%) are more likely than men (56%) to say the same. Democrats are more likely than either Republicans or independents to say the same.

### Military Operates Efficiently

% saying the military operates ...



Notes: "Both/Neither" and "Don't know/Refused" volunteered responses not shown. Based on general public, N=2,003.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER GP/30

Despite positive views of the military as an organization, some Americans have mixed feelings about the military's conduct in Afghanistan and Iraq. About a third (34%) say they have felt ashamed of something the military had done in Afghanistan or Iraq. The question did not mention any specific incidents.

Young adults ages 18-29 (42%) are more likely than Americans ages 50-64 (33%) or ages 65 and older (27%) to say so. By education level, college graduates (45%) are the most likely to say they have felt ashamed of something the military has done. By party affiliation, Democrats (40%) and independents (37%) are more likely to say so than Republicans (24%).

<sup>19</sup> See "Public Praises Science; Scientists Fault Public, Media," Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, July 9, 2009 (<http://people-press.org/2009/07/09/section-1-public-views-of-science-and-scientists/>).

## Military and Public Sacrifice

Overwhelmingly, the public sees that members of the armed forces and military families have made a lot of sacrifices since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Less than half believes that the American people have had to make a lot of sacrifices. But most of those who say veterans and their families have sacrificed more than the public say the disparity is part of military life.

Eight-in-ten Americans (83%) say veterans and military families have made a lot of sacrifices since 9/11, and 14% say they have made some sacrifices.

By contrast, only four-in-ten (43%) say the American people have made a lot of sacrifices and 39% say they have made some sacrifices. Blacks (51%) and Hispanics (61%) are notably more likely than whites (38%) to say the American people have made a lot of sacrifices.

Nearly one-in-five people (18%) say the American public has made hardly any or no sacrifices. Whites (22%) are more likely to voice this view than blacks (6%) or Hispanics (9%). Adults 65 and older (22%) are more likely to say so than young adults 18-29 (14%).

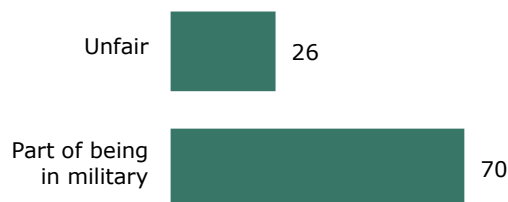
However, among those whose responses rated the military's sacrifice as higher than the American public's sacrifice—47% of those surveyed—most do not think it unfair. Seven-in-ten say that is “just part of being in the military,” while 26% say it is unfair that the military has sacrificed more. Men (75%) are more likely than women (65%) to say it is part of being in the military. Women (31%) are more likely than men (21%) to say it is unfair.

## War Fatigue

The view that Americans have not had to sacrifice a lot since the 9/11 attacks is matched by Americans' assessment of the impact of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars on their own lives. Half of Americans (50%) say the two wars have made little difference in their lives.

### Are Military Sacrifices Unfair?

*Among those whose responses rated military sacrifices as higher than public sacrifices, % saying the greater military sacrifices are ...*



Notes: “Both” and “Don’t know/Refused” volunteered responses not shown. Based on general public for those who respond to Q.40 (level of military sacrifice since 9/11) with a higher rating than to Q.41 (level of sacrifice of American people), n=1031.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER GP/42

This finding meshes with other Pew Research Center survey data indicating that the American public has turned its gaze away from the two wars. Only 36% say Iraq or Afghanistan comes up in conversation with family or friends, compared with 68% who say the economy comes up in conversation. And in the past two years, only about a quarter of Americans have said they pay close attention to either war. By comparison, half followed news about Iraq very closely in 2002-2003, and 40% or more paid very close attention to news about Afghanistan in 2001-2002.<sup>20</sup>

## Public Understanding of the Military

Although they admire the military, most Americans acknowledge that the public has a poor understanding of the rewards or the challenges of serving in the armed forces. Veterans share that opinion.

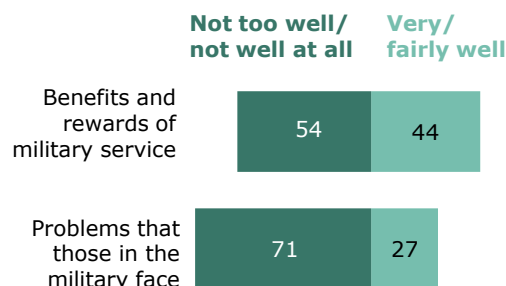
Less than half of Americans say the public understands the benefits and rewards of military service very well (12%) or even fairly well (32%). The share of veterans who say so is even lower—only 5% of veterans say the public understands the positive side of military service very well, and 24% say fairly well.

Asked how well the American people understand the problems that those in the military face, only 8% say they do so very well and 19% say they do so fairly well. The shares of veterans who say so are 3% for very well and 18% for fairly well.

Blacks (40%) and Hispanics (44%) are more likely than whites (22%) to say the American people understand the problems faced by those in the military. Blacks (49%) and Hispanics (59%) also are more likely than whites (41%) to say the public understands the rewards and benefits of military service.

### How Well Do You Think the American People Understand ...?

% saying ...



Notes: "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown. Based on general public, N=2,003.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER GP/36

<sup>20</sup> See "Public, Media Track Oil Spill, Diverge on Elections," May 26, 2010: <http://people-press.org/2010/05/26/public-media-track-oil-spill-diverge-on-elections/> and also the topline trends in the Sept. 1-4, 2011, News Interest Index: <http://people-press.org/files/legacy-questionnaires/09-07-11%20NII%20Topline%20for%20Release.pdf>

## Public's Advice about a Military Career

Americans are ambivalent about whether they would advise a young person close to them to join the military: 48% say they would, and 41% say they would not. Veterans, by comparison, are more enthusiastic: Three-quarters say they would, including 74% of those who served before the 9/11 attacks and 82% of those who have served since 9/11.

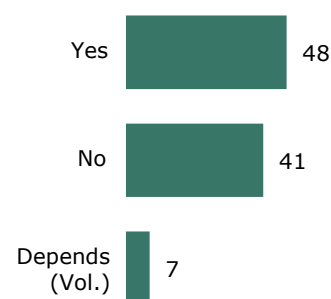
There are notable differences by gender, region and political party. Men (53%) are more likely than women (43%) to recommend a military career, and Republicans (64%) are more likely than Democrats (42%). The South is the only region where more than half (53%) say they would recommend a military career to a young person they know.

There also are notable gender differences among those who live in the South: 60% of Southern men but only 47% of Southern women say they would recommend a military career to a young person they know. A similar split exists among Republicans: 72% of Republican men but only 56% of Republican women would recommend a military career.

By age group, young adults ages 18-29 (51%) are more likely than other age groups to recommend against joining the military. Those who say they have a family member or close friend who served in Afghanistan or Iraq also are more likely (54%) to advise a military career.

### Advise a Young Person to Join?

*% saying they would/would not advise a young person close to them to join the military*



Notes: "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown. Based on general public, N=2,003.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER GP/45

## Contact with Veterans

Nearly six-in-ten Americans (57%) report that they have a close friend or family member who served in the wars in either Iraq or Afghanistan.

In addition, about six-in-ten (61%) survey respondents say they have at least one immediate family member (a parent, sibling, child or spouse) who has served in the military at some point in the past. Older adults are more likely to have an immediate family member who served in the military. About eight-in-ten adults (79%) ages 50 to 64 have an immediate family member who has served; by comparison, about a third of adults ages 18 to 29 (33%) have an immediate family member who has served in the military. Republicans (73%) are more likely than either Democrats (59%) or independents (56%) to have a veteran in their immediate family.

About eight-in-ten adults (79%) have a more distant relative (a grandparent, uncle, aunt, nephew, or niece) who has served in the military.

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## Friends and Family of Veterans

*% of public who ...*

Have a close friend or family member who has served in Iraq or Afghanistan	57
--	----

Have an immediate family member who is a veteran from any era	61
---	----

Have a more distant relative who is a veteran from any era	79
--	----

*Among married adults:*

Spouse is a veteran	18
---------------------	----

Notes: "Immediate family member" includes a parent, sibling, child or spouse. "More distant relative" includes grandparent, uncle or aunt, nephew or niece. Based on general public, N=2,003.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER GP/43,44

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## Public Views of Military Policy and Performance

A majority of the public sees the military as operating efficiently and approves of the job President Obama is doing as commander in chief. At the same time, however, most Americans do not see either the war in Afghanistan or in Iraq as worth fighting.

### Commander in Chief

A majority of Americans give Obama positive marks for his performance as commander in chief; 53% approve of his performance in this regard while about four-in-ten (39%) disapprove. Opinion of the president's performance as commander in chief is more positive than ratings of his overall job performance. In an August 2011 Pew Research survey, 43% of Americans approved of the president's job performance and 49% disapproved.<sup>21</sup>

The groups most supportive of Obama's performance as commander in chief include

African-Americans, Hispanics, and Democrats. Fully eight-in-ten (80%) Democrats approve of Obama's performance as the head of the military. Republicans take the opposite view, with seven-in-ten (70%) disapproving of Obama's performance. Independents are narrowly divided; 48% approve and 43% disapprove.

Younger adults tend to be more positive than older adults about Obama's performance in this regard. Adults under age 50, by 57% to 35%, approve of Obama's performance as head of the military. Those ages 50 and older are more narrowly divided; 48% approve and 43% disapprove. Men and women are equally likely to approve of the president's performance.

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### Obama as Commander in Chief

*% saying they ... of the way Obama is handling duties as commander in chief of the military*

	<b>Approve</b>	<b>Disapprove</b>	<b>DK/Ref. (VOL.)</b>
All adults	53	39	8
Republicans	23	70	7
Democrats	80	15	6
Independents	48	43	9

Notes: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. Based on general public, N=2,003.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER GP/27

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<sup>21</sup> See "Obama Leadership Image Takes a Hit, GOP Ratings Decline," Aug. 25, 2011: <http://people-press.org/files/legacy-pdf/8-25-11%20Political%20Release.pdf>

## Post-9/11 Wars: Afghanistan and Iraq

Ten years into the conflict in Afghanistan, the American public questions the war's value. All told, 41% of Americans say the war in Afghanistan has been worth fighting, while a 52% majority says it has not. Opinion varies along partisan lines. A majority of Republicans (56%) say the Afghanistan War has been worth fighting. Among Democrats and independents, a majority takes the opposite stance (59% and 58%, respectively).

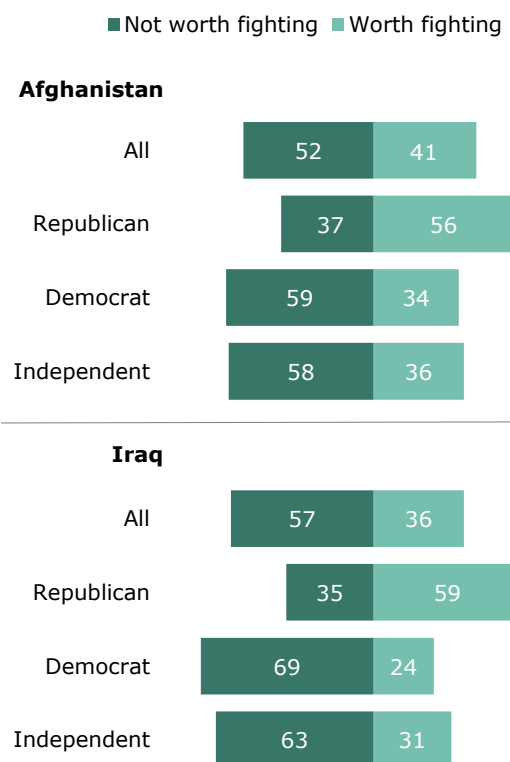
This “has-it-been-worth-it?” question yields a more downbeat assessment from the public than has been the case with differently worded questions about Afghanistan that the Pew Research Center has asked over the years. For example, surveys taken from 2006 to 2011 found a majority of respondents believed the U.S. made the right decision to use force in Afghanistan. And 58% of Americans believed the U.S. would either definitely or probably meet its goals in Afghanistan, according to a June 2011 Pew Research survey.<sup>22</sup>

Opinion about the war in Iraq has the same tenor. About six-in-ten (57%) Americans say in this new Pew Research survey that the war in Iraq has not been worth fighting, while 36% say it has been.

The majority view that the Iraq War has not been worth fighting holds across gender, race and ethnicity, age, education, and region. The exception is political party. Democrats and Republicans are on opposite sides of this issue. About six-in-ten (59%) Republicans say the war in Iraq has been worth fighting. In contrast, about seven-in-ten (69%) Democrats and 63% of independents say the war has not been worth fighting.

### Are These Wars Worth Fighting?

% saying that all in all, considering costs versus benefits to U.S. ...



Notes: “Don’t know/Refused” responses not shown. Based on general public, N=2,003.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER GP/31-32

<sup>22</sup> See “Record Number Favors Removing U.S. Troops from Afghanistan,” June 21, 2011: <http://people-press.org/files/legacy-pdf/6-21-11%20Afghanistan%20Release.pdf>

Assessments of the Iraq War today are in keeping with the public's past judgments about U.S. military involvement in Iraq. Within five years of the start of conflict in Iraq, a majority of the public called the use of force in Iraq the "wrong decision" and the public was evenly divided over how well the war was going.<sup>23</sup>

Today, Americans appear skeptical that either war has improved national security in this country. In a recent Pew Research survey, 31% said U.S. involvement in Iraq has increased the chances of another terrorist attack at home, 26% said it has lessened the chances and 39% said it has made no difference. Evaluations of the war in Afghanistan were similar—37% said it has increased chances of another terrorist attack in the U.S., 25% said it has lessened the chances and 34% said it has not made a difference.<sup>24</sup>

Asked which of two statements comes closer to their own views, a Pew Research survey found that 52% of Americans say that relying too much on military force to defeat terrorism creates hatred that leads to more terrorism, while 38% say that using overwhelming military force is the best way to defeat terrorism.<sup>25</sup> Post-9/11 veterans hold similar views, with 51% saying that relying too much on military force creates hatred that leads to more terrorism and 40% saying that overwhelming military force is the best way to defeat terrorism.

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<sup>23</sup> See "Public Attitudes Toward the War in Iraq: 2003-2008," March 19, 2008: <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/770/iraq-war-five-year-anniversary>

<sup>24</sup> See "United in Remembrance, Divided over Policies," Sept. 1, 2011: <http://people-press.org/2011/09/01/united-in-remembrance-divided-over-policies/>

<sup>25</sup> See Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, survey conducted February and March 2011, N=3,029; <http://people-press.org/files/2011/05/Political-Typology-Topline.pdf>.

## Military Tactics

The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have been notable for the heavy emphasis the military has placed on noncombat “nation-building” objectives, such as infrastructure reconstruction and efforts to strengthen political and economic institutions.

The public is closely divided over whether such roles are appropriate (45%) or inappropriate (48%) for the military.

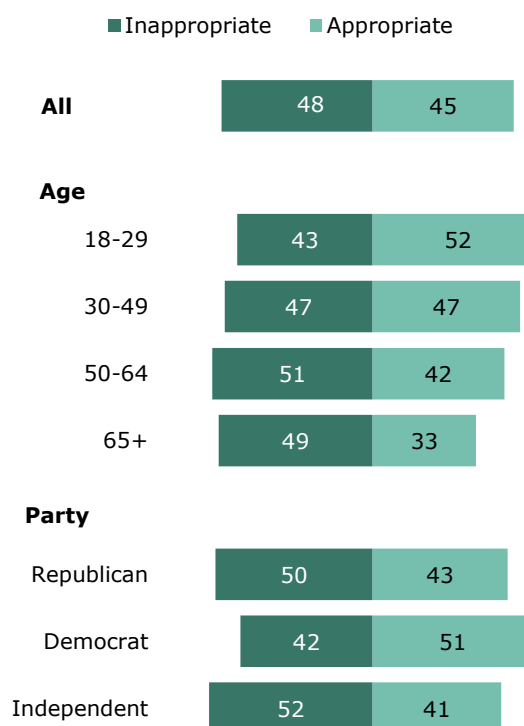
Younger adults tend to be more supportive than older adults of such activities. A majority (52%) of younger adults, ages 18 to 29, consider nation-building activities appropriate. A narrow majority of those ages 50 and older take the opposite stance. Among those ages 65 and older, 33% say nation-building roles are appropriate for the military and 49% say they are not.

Republicans tend to say that nation-building activities are not appropriate for the military, while Democrats tend to say they are appropriate. However, neither partisan group shows strong consensus on this issue.

Views about nation building are closely aligned with opinion about whether or not the post-9/11 wars have been worth fighting. Not surprisingly, those who consider nation-building activities inappropriate are especially likely to believe the wars in Afghanistan and in Iraq have not been worth fighting.

## Nation Building

% saying nation-building roles for the military are ...



Notes: “Don’t know/Refused” responses not shown. Based on general public, N=2,003.

Question wording: GP/33 “In Afghanistan and Iraq, the military has been asked to engage in noncombat missions like reconstruction and operations designed to strengthen the country’s social, political and economic institutions, sometimes called “nation building.” Do you think these are appropriate roles or inappropriate roles for the military?”

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Another military tactic associated with these wars—the use of drones for aerial strikes aimed at al Qaeda or other enemy targets—draws much more favorable reviews from the public. More than two-thirds (68%) of Americans consider the use of drones in the U.S. military a good thing; just 19% say it is a bad thing.

This balance of opinion holds across gender, race and ethnicity, age, education, region and even political party. A majority of Republicans, Democrats and independents all consider the use of unmanned aircraft for airstrikes to be a good thing. Post-9/11 veterans consider the increased use of drones by the military a good thing by an even wider margin (87% to 7%).

## Keep It Volunteer

More than 35 years after the end of military conscription in 1973, three-quarters (74%) of the public opposes reinstating a draft, while one-fifth (20%) favor a return to the draft.

The majority-disapproval of returning to a draft holds across gender, race and ethnicity, age, education, region, and political party. However, there are notable differences among some groups.

Men, for example, are somewhat more likely than women to favor a return to a military draft (23% to 16%). By age group, Americans ages 65 and older (29%) are more likely than younger groups to favor a military draft; only 14% of young adults ages 18-29 do so. Whites (78%) and blacks (71%) are more likely than Hispanics (58%) to oppose reinstating military conscription.

## Drone Airstrikes

*% saying increasing use of unmanned drones is a ...*

Good thing	68
Bad thing	19
Neither/No difference (VOL.)	2
Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	11

Note: Based on general public, N=2,003.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER GP/34

## Go Back to Draft?

*% saying the U.S. should ...*

**Return to draft**      **Keep as is**



Notes: "Don't know/Refused" responses not shown. Based on general public, N=2,003.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER GP/35



## CHAPTER 6: A PROFILE OF THE MODERN MILITARY

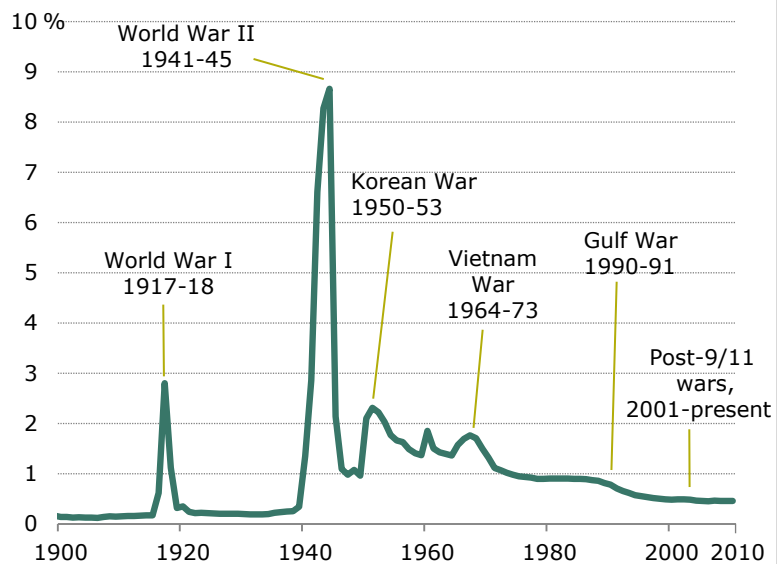
Today's military is smaller, older, more diverse and more likely to be married than the force that served a generation or two ago. A larger proportion of minorities and women serve as officers and enlisted personnel. Proportionately fewer high school dropouts and more college graduates fill the enlisted ranks. Since the military draft was abolished in 1973, more of America's fighting forces are husbands or wives—and a growing proportion is married to someone else who serves in the military.<sup>26</sup>

At the same time, America's wars are being fought by a dwindling share of its population. The 9/11 attacks ushered in the longest period of sustained conflict in the nation's history. Yet during this period the military participation rate fell below 0.5%. Not since the peacetime years between World War I and World War II has a smaller share of Americans served in the armed forces.

With the ranks of the modern military so small by historic standards, members of the National Guard and Reserves have been called upon to play an increasing role in the post-9/11 conflicts. And deployments for all forces—regular duty, National Guard and reservists—have become frequent and of longer duration.

### Military Participation

*% of total U.S. population in the armed forces, 1900-2010*



Source: Molly Clever and David R. Segal. "After Conscription: The United States and the All-Volunteer Force." *Security and Peace (Sicherheit und Frieden)*. Forthcoming.

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<sup>26</sup> Unlike the rest of this report, the data presented in this chapter is drawn primarily from Department of Defense statistical profiles.

If today's military is different, so, too, are some of the key battlefield experiences. For example, advances in emergency medicine and quick access to state-of-the-art medical facilities have dramatically increased the chances that a soldier will survive a battlefield wound.

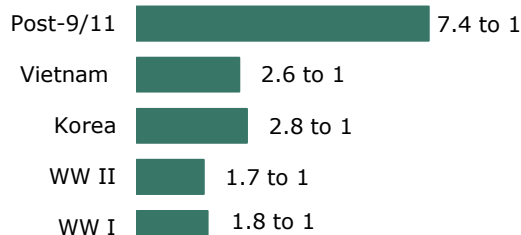
The “wounded-to-killed ratio,” which compares the number of service members wounded in action to the number who died, currently stands at 7.4 to 1 for the post-9/11 conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. In Vietnam the wounded-to-killed ratio was 2.6 to 1, and in World War II the ratio was 1.7 to 1.

Expressed in a different way, troops fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan survive nearly 90% of all combat injuries, compared with 72% in Vietnam and 63% in World War II.

However, these medical miracles go only so far. Wounds that are not fatal can often be disabling. The ratio of wounded but not amputated-to-amputations in post-9/11 combat is virtually unchanged from Vietnam. Significantly fewer wounded soldiers underwent amputations in World War II because more died of their battlefield injuries, according to researchers Anne Leland and Mari-Jana Oboroceanu of the Congressional Research Service in a 2010 report to Congress.<sup>27</sup>

## More Troops Surviving Combat Wounds ...

*More than seven injured soldiers survive for each one who dies from combat injuries in the post-9/11 era*



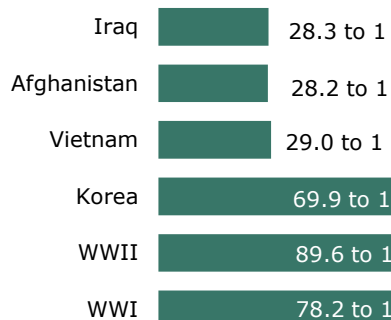
Note: The Gulf War, which lasted seven months, is not included in this chart because it produced comparatively few U.S. casualties: 383 deaths (148 in battle) and 467 nonfatal wounds.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of Military Casualty Information, Department of Defense Personnel & Procurement Statistics

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## ... But Proportionally More Disabling Injuries

*The ratio of wounded who did not require amputation to those who did, by conflict*



Source: Congressional Research Service

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<sup>27</sup> American War and Military Operations Casualties: Lists and Statistics by Anne Leland and Mari-Jana “MJ” Oboroceanu, Feb. 26, 2010. Congressional Research Service. Amputation information provided by Dr. Michael Carino of the Office of the Surgeon General, U.S. Army.

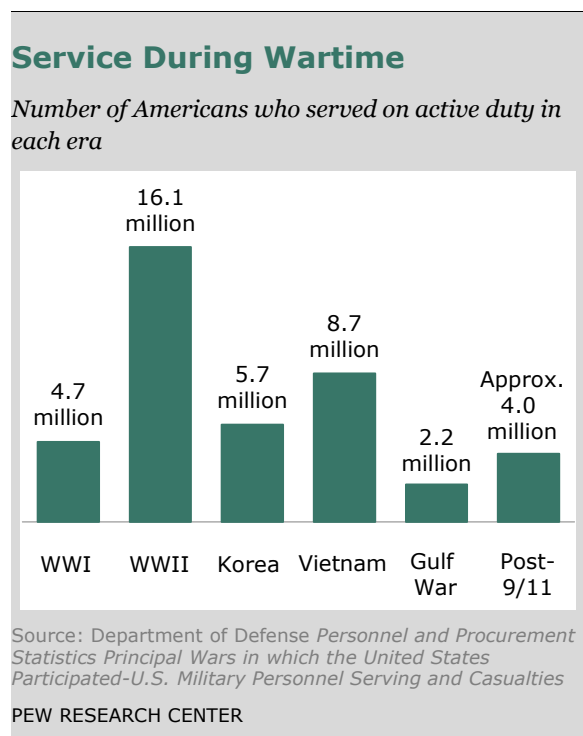


Citing data from the Office of the Surgeon General, Leland and Oboroceanu reported that the ratio of amputations-to-wounded stood at 28.3 to 1 in Iraq and Afghanistan. That means that for every 29 service members wounded in combat, one required amputation. In Vietnam, that ratio was slightly higher (29.0 to 1), while in World War II, it stood at 69.9 to 1.

Not all of the wounds suffered by members of the armed forces are physical. A significant minority of veterans and those who are currently serving report frequent nightmares, recurring flashbacks to emotionally disturbing incidents, outbursts of uncontrolled or inappropriate anger, and other symptoms of post-traumatic stress.

While comparative data are difficult to obtain, a 2008 study by the RAND Corp. found that 13.8% of those who had served in Iraq or Afghanistan suffered from PTS. That compares with 10.1% among those who served in the 1991 Gulf War and, depending on the study, about two to four times the estimated rate of PTS in the population as a whole.

One large-sample government study of Vietnam veterans in the mid-1980s found that 15.2% of all men and 8.1% of women who had served in Vietnam were diagnosed with PTS at the time the study was conducted. (See Chapter 4 for a detailed analysis of veterans' experiences with PTS and other emotional issues.)



Whether or not they came home with battle scars, many young veterans have had a difficult return to civilian life for other reasons. In the wake of the Great Recession, the unemployment rate in 2010 for veterans who served since 9/11 stood at 11.5%, about two percentage points higher than the jobless rate for the country as a whole at the same time.

The sour economy has hit young people particularly hard, and veterans of the post-9/11 era have not been spared. More than one-in-five male veterans ages 18 to 24 were unemployed (21.9%) in 2010, not statistically different than the rate among similarly aged non-veterans (19.7%).

## 4 Million Have Served in the Post-9/11 Period

Approximately 4 million men and women have served in the active-duty military at some point in the 10 years since 9/11, and thousands more join their ranks each month. By comparison, about twice as many (8.7 million) were in the armed forces during the nine years of the Vietnam War (1964 to 1973).

Even though U.S. involvement in World War II lasted for less than four years (1941-45), a total of 16.1 million Americans served in that conflict. At the height of the war in 1945, nearly 9 percent of the population was in the military.

Today's military is roughly 30% smaller than it was 20 years ago, when slightly more than 2 million men and women served on active duty. Currently a total of 1,447,602 men and women serve on active duty in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines or Coast Guard.

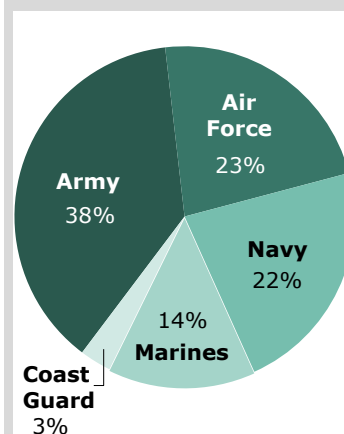
The military downsized in the aftermath of the Gulf War in 1991 and the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s. By 2000, the size of the active-duty force had fallen to just about 1.4 million. The 9/11 terrorist attacks and the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq halted the decline, and since 2000 the overall size of the military has increased by about 40,000.

The Army is the largest branch of the service. Nearly 550,000 men and women serve in the Army, or 38% of all those on active duty. Roughly 325,000 each are in the Air Force and Navy and slightly more than 200,000 are Marines. An additional 42,000 serve in the Coast Guard.

Since 9/11, the Army and Marines have added personnel while the Navy and Air Force have remained below pre-9/11 levels. In the past decade the size of the Army active-duty force has increased by roughly 70,000, with most of the growth (approximately 60,000) occurring in the past five years. The Marines have added about 30,000 to their ranks since 9/11. At the same time, the Air Force and Navy active-duty force each shrank between 20,000 and 45,000.

### Active-duty Service by Branch

*A total of 1,447,602 men and women serve on active duty*



Source: Department of Defense Demographics 2009: Profile of the Military Community

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## Reserves

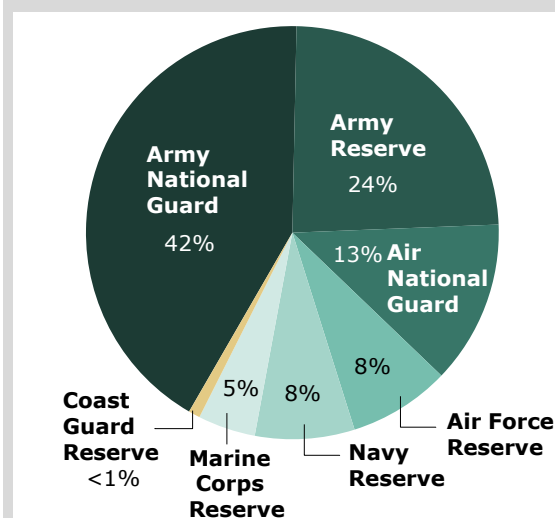
Supplementing the regular active-duty force and often fighting alongside them in Iraq and Afghanistan are America's "citizen-soldiers": the National Guard and Reserves.

An additional 853,581 are members of the Selected Reserve, which is composed of the National Guard and Reserves and is available to be called to active duty. These forces drill regularly and participate in active-duty training exercises. An additional 226,046 in the Inactive National Guard and Individual Ready Reserve do not engage in regular training or active-duty drills.

The Army National Guard and Army Reserve make up two-thirds of the Selected Reserve. An additional 21% are members of the Air National Guard or Air Force Reserve. While estimates vary, more than seven-in-ten currently serving Selected Reserve personnel have been called to serve on active duty in the regular armed forces.<sup>28</sup> In recent years, these active-duty tours frequently have come between call-ups by the governors of their home states to deal with local emergencies such as hurricanes, floods or wildfires, the traditional role of the National Guard.

### The "Selected Reserve"

A total of 853,581 men and women serve in the Reserves and National Guard\*



Note: An additional 226,046 are members of the Inactive National Guard and the Individual Ready Reserve. These individuals do not train regularly and do not participate in active-duty training exercises with members of the Selected Reserve.

Source: Department of Defense *Demographics 2009: Profile of the Military Community*

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<sup>28</sup> Defense Manpower Data Center analysis prepared July 29, 2011

## A Snapshot of Today's Military

At first glance today's armed forces resembles the military of a generation or two ago. Men outnumber women nearly 6-to-1. About two-thirds of those who serve are 30 years old or younger. Whites still comprise the bulk of America's fighting forces. About eight-in-ten active-duty military personnel have less than a college degree. A majority (56%) are married, and a majority do not have children (56%).

But some of the same demographic changes that have reordered society as a whole in recent decades have also reshaped today's armed forces. Since the draft was abolished in 1973, a growing share of the military is composed of women, minorities, high school and college graduates, parents, and married men and women.

The remainder of this chapter will examine some of the key demographic changes that are reshaping today's armed forces.

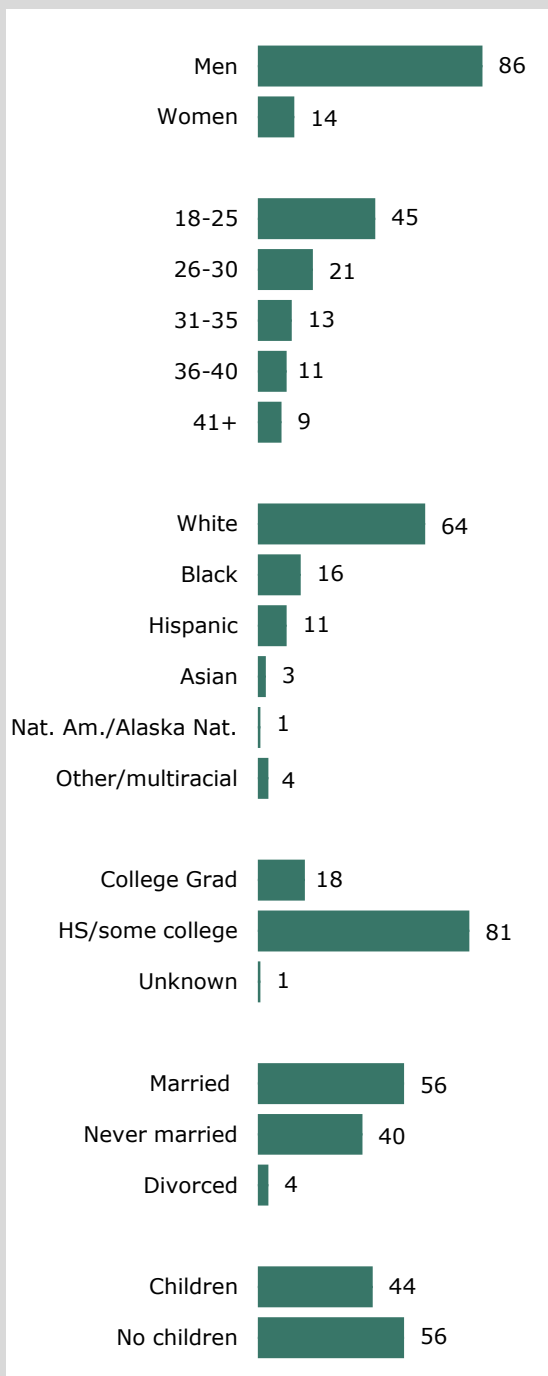
## An Older Military, Serving Longer

Young people still fight America's wars. In 2009, slightly less than half of all active-duty military personnel were younger than 26 (45%) while about two-thirds were 30 or younger. Only about one-in-ten military personnel are older than 40.

However, the military has been getting older since the draft ended in 1973. In 2009 the age of the average enlisted personnel was slightly more than 27, up from 25 years old in 1973.

## Who Serves

% of active-duty military who are ...



Source: Department of Defense *Demographics 2009: Profile of the Military Community*

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Similarly, the average age of officers has increased from 32 to slightly less than 35 years.

Despite these changes, the age gap between officers and the troops they lead has remained largely unchanged. In 1973, the average officer was 7.1 years older than the average enlisted man or woman; in 2009, the gap stood at 7.3 years.

Today's military also is serving somewhat longer than its counterparts a generation or two ago. The average officer in 2009 had been in the military nearly 11 years, slightly more than a year longer than the average in 1973.

The pattern among enlisted personnel is more complicated. The average length of service for enlisted personnel rose from 5.8 years in 1973 to a peak of 7.5 in 1994 and 1996, but then began drifting downward and now stands at 6.7 years.

### More Women Serving

Women comprise an increasing share of all active-duty officers and enlisted personnel. Overall, about one-in-seven active-duty military personnel are women (14.3%), up from about 11% in 1990 but down slightly from a high of 14.7% in 2000.

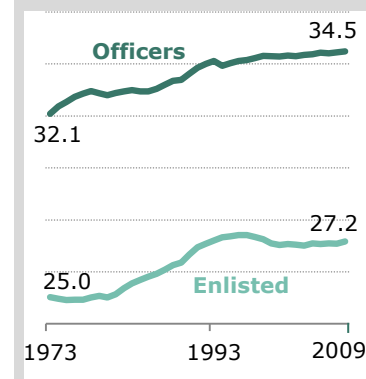
In 2009, nearly 21% of new officers and 14% of newly enlisted personnel were female. Women comprised 15.5% of all officers in 2009, compared with 11.5% in 1990. The share of women enlisted members also rose, from 10.9% in 1990 to 14.1% in 2009.

The share of women in the ranks varies significantly by service branch. Women comprise nearly one-in-five officers and enlisted members in the Air Force (19.5%) but only 6.4% of all Marines. Women make up 15.4% of the Navy and 13.4% of the Army.

Women comprise a slightly larger share of the National Guard and Reserves. In 2009, about 17.8% of all Selected Reserve

### An Older Military ...

*Average age of active-duty military, 1973-2009*



Source: Department of Defense  
Population Representation in the  
Military Services FY2009

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### ... and a Longer-Serving Military

*Average years in the military, 1973-2009*



Source: Department of Defense  
Population Representation in the  
Military Services FY2009

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personnel were female: 17.8% enlisted personnel and 18.1% of all Guard and Reserve officers.

A quarter of all Air Force reservists (25%) were women, compared with 14% of the Army National Guard, 23.7% of the Army Reserve, 19.8% of the Navy Reserve, 18.5% of the Air National Guard and 4.9% of all Marine Corps reservists.

Women represent a much smaller proportion of the military relative to their share in the civilian workforce. More than half (54.4%) of the U.S. civilian work force 16 years old and older was female in 2009, nearly four times the share of women in the military

## Minorities a Growing Share of Military

The percentage of racial minorities in the ranks of officers and enlisted personnel has increased significantly since 1990. In 2009, more than a third of all active-duty personnel were minorities (36.2%), an increase from 25.4% about two decades ago.

The proportion of racial minorities who are serving in the officer corps has more than doubled in the past two decades. In 1990, minorities were underrepresented in the officer corps: Only about 5% of all minorities were officers, even though officers constituted about 15% of all active-duty personnel. Currently 12% of all minorities serve as officers—double the proportion in 1990—while officers make up about 16% of the active-duty force.

## Women a Growing Presence in the Military

*Share of women among new officer and active-duty enlistees, 1970-2010*



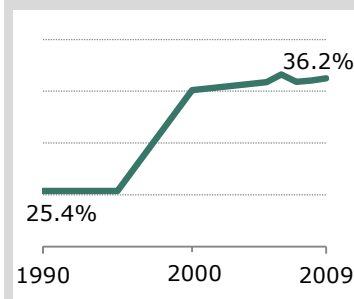
Note: 1970-72 data for officers not published.

Source: Department of Defense *Population Representation in the Military Services FY2009*

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## Minorities a Growing Percentage of Military

*% of minorities enlisted, 1990-2009*



Note: Minorities include racial minorities and Hispanics.

Source, Department of Defense *Demographics 2009: Profile of the Military Community*

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Whites, including white Hispanics, make up 70.3% of the military. About 17% of all active-duty personnel report that they are black. Asians constitute 3.6% of the active-duty force. Smaller shares say they are Native Americans or Alaska natives (1.7%), or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders (0.6%). An additional 5.2% of the military say they are a member of another racial group or do not specify their race and 1.6% report they are “multiracial.”

Analyzing recent trends in minority service is complicated. Beginning in 2009, to conform to the latest Office of Management and Budget directives, the Department of Defense no longer considers Hispanics to be a minority designation. Instead, minority status is based only on an individual’s race, which means white Latinos are no longer considered minorities for purposes of data collection and reporting. Instead, Latinos of any race are analyzed separately as an ethnic minority group.

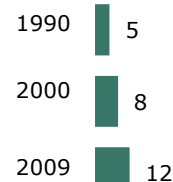
More than one-in-ten (10.7%) of active-duty personnel in 2009 reported they were of Hispanic ethnicity, with white Hispanics making up about six-in-ten of all Latinos on active-duty service.

As a result of this change in definition, the Department of Defense reported in its Fiscal Year 2009 Demographic Profile that the share of minorities in the military declined from 36.0% in 2008 to 29.7% in 2009. When Latinos are included in the calculation, the percentage of racial and ethnic minorities on active-duty service increased slightly to 36.2% in 2009.

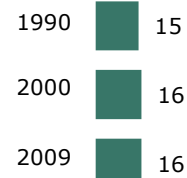
Whites make up a slightly larger share of the Selected Reserve. About three-quarters of all reservists and National Guard personnel are white (76.0%), compared with 70.3% of the active-duty force. At the same time, blacks comprise a slightly smaller share of all Guard and Reserves (14.9% of the Selected Reserves vs. 17.0% for the active-duty force). Similar to the pattern among active-duty personnel, minorities now comprise a larger share of the Selected Reserve than they did in 1990 (30.4% vs. 25.6%).

### A Larger Share of Minorities are Officers

*% of minorities who are officers rises ...*



*... as the % of officers in the military remains about the same.*



Note: Minorities only include racial minorities. Data for white Hispanics were not available.

Source: Department of Defense Demographics 2009: Profile of the Military Community

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## Marital Status

The growing presence of married men and women in the enlisted ranks is among the more striking changes in the military since the end of the draft in 1973.

Today, a majority of all enlisted personnel are married (53.1%). In 1973 married men and women comprised only about four-in-ten active-duty enlisted personnel (40.1%). Married personnel were an even larger share of the enlisted force in 1995, when they constituted 57.3% of the armed forces.

These trends are in direct contrast with changes in marriage rates in the broader society. In 1960, 72% of all U.S. adults ages 18 and older were married; by 2008, that share had fallen to 52%.<sup>29</sup>

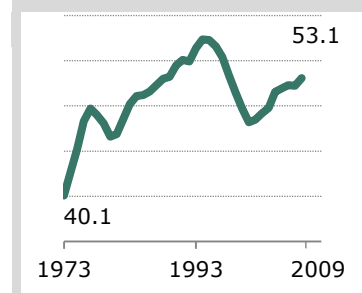
Officers are older than enlisted personnel and, predictably, a significantly larger share (70.1%) of officers are married. Overall, those in the military are significantly more likely to be married than are civilians of a comparable age (55.8% vs. 47.7% of all adults younger than 45).<sup>30</sup>

Marriage rates differ significantly between the Marines and the other three large branches of the military. In 2009, majorities of Air Force (59.3%), Army (58.0%) and Navy (54.2%) personnel were married, compared with less than half of all Marines (46.9%).

About 7% of all military personnel are married to someone else in the service. About 12% of all Air Force active-duty personnel are married to another service member—nearly triple the percentage of Marines (4.0%) and more than double the proportion in the Navy (5.4%) and Army (5.1%).

### Married and Serving

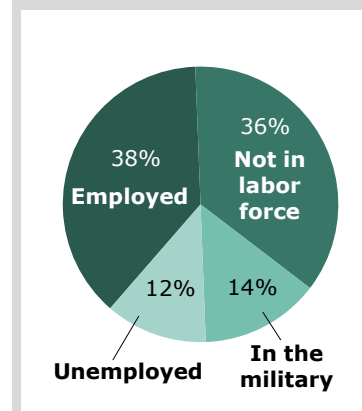
% of active-duty enlisted personnel who are married, 1973-2009



Source: Department of Defense Population Representation in the Military Services FY2009

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### Employment Status of Military Spouses



Source: Department of Defense Population Representation in the Military Services FY2009

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<sup>29</sup> Pew Research Center, "The Decline of Marriage and Rise of New Families." 2010.

<sup>30</sup> 2009 Current Population Surveys conducted by the U.S. Census



Expressed a slightly different way, about one-in-seven (14%) of all husbands and wives in the military are married to someone else in the service. About four-in-ten military spouses (38%) are employed outside the armed forces, while 12% are unemployed and looking for work. The remainder—36%—are not in the labor force, a group composed of stay-at-home mothers, individuals caring for a sick or disabled family member, those who are physically unable to work and retirees.

### Divorce Rate Increases since 9/11

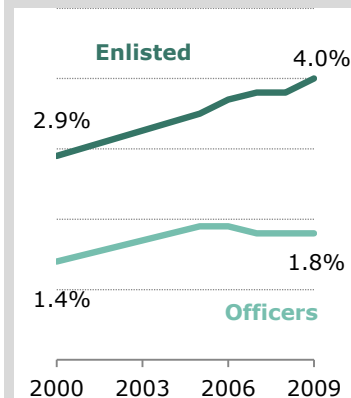
While divorce has become less common in recent years among all adults, the divorce rate among all military personnel has grown. The overall divorce rate (share of marriages that end in divorce in a given year) among all married officers and enlisted personnel stood at 3.6% in 2009, or virtually identical to the percentage among similarly aged adults in the civilian population.

However, the divorce rate among enlisted personnel is more than double the rate among officers (4.0% vs. 1.8%). The enlisted divorce rate also is growing faster than the rate among officers, increasing from 2.9% in 2000 to 4.0% in 2009. The share of divorces among married officers increased from 1.4% in 2000 to 1.8% in 2009.

About half (48.5%) of all members of the National Guard and Reserves components of the Selected Reserve are married, while 44.0% are single and 7.2% are divorced. In the past nine years, the proportion of Reservists and Guard personnel who are married has declined nearly 5 percentage points while the proportion of active-duty members who are married has increased by about 3 percentage points.

### Military Divorces on the Rise

*Share of married active-duty personnel who divorced during each fiscal year, 2000-2009*



Source: Department of Defense Population Representation in the Military Services FY2009

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## More Parents

More than four-in-ten active-duty military personnel are fathers or mothers (43.7%), up slightly from 1990 but a decline from 1995, when nearly half (47.5%) were parents. About four-in-ten active-duty military personnel are married with children (38.4%), and 5.3% are single parents.

The military does not report detailed breakdowns of all children of active-duty military personnel. However, the Department of Defense does monitor the number of dependent children claimed by service members. In order to qualify as a dependent, the child must be 20 or younger, or be 21 to 22 and enrolled as a full-time student. Children older than 22 cannot be claimed as dependents.

More than half of all dependent children (53.4%) are younger than eight years old. Four-in-ten (42.0%) are five or younger. Only about 4% of all dependents are 19 to 22 years old.

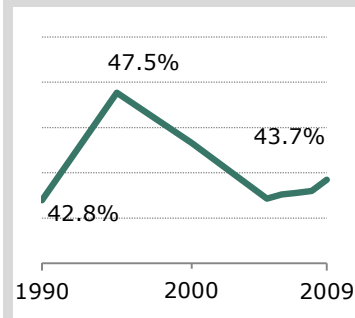
## Education Levels

About eight-in-ten active-duty military personnel are high school graduates or have completed at least a year of college or other postsecondary training. Nearly two-in-ten (17.9%) are college graduates or have an advanced degree, while only 0.6% never finished high school.

Officers are far better educated than the typical enlisted man or woman. More than eight-in-ten officers are college graduates (51.3%) or have an advanced degree (34.7%), while 9.3% have less than a bachelor's degree. (In comparison, only 29.5% of the population aged 25 or older has a college or advanced degree in 2009, according to Census Bureau data.)

### Military Dads and Moms

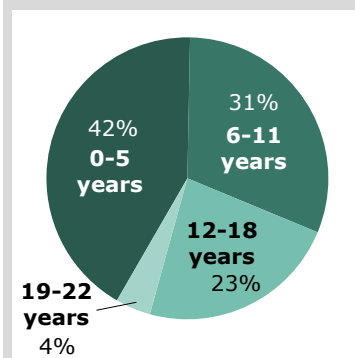
Share of active-duty military personnel who are parents, 1990-2009



Source: Department of Defense Demographics 2009: Profile of the Military Community

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### Children of Active-Duty Military, by Age



Note: Children ages 21-22 are qualified as dependents only if they are full-time students.

Source: Department of Defense Demographics 2009: Profile of the Military Community

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Relatively few enlisted men and women are college graduates (4.1%) or have an advanced degree (0.5%). More than nine-in-ten (94.0%) are high school graduates and some of them have attended some college. Taken together, more than 98% of the enlisted force has at least a high school diploma, compared with 86.7% of the U.S. civilian population aged 25 or older.

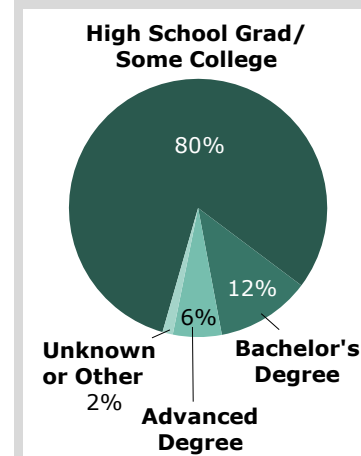
Today's active-duty enlistees are slightly more likely to be college graduates than someone in their service cohort a generation or two ago. In 2009, about 4.6% of all enlisted personnel were college graduates, compared with 2.5% in 1990. At the same time, the proportion who had no high school diploma or GED fell from 1.8% to 0.7%.

This recent change follows a dramatic increase in education levels of enlistees that occurred after the draft ended. Until 1982, the average recruit was less well educated than the typical 18- to 24-year-old. For example, in 1977, the first year for which comparable data are available, 71.5% of all recruits had at least a high school diploma, compared with 79.1% of their civilian age cohorts. But education levels quickly rose, and by 2009, 92.5% of recruits were at least high school graduates, compared with 82.8% of comparably aged civilians.

In contrast to the pattern among enlisted personnel, education levels of officers have declined slightly over the past 19 years. In 1990, nearly nine-in-ten officers (89.6%) had a college diploma or an advanced degree, compared with 86.0% of today's officer corps. At the same time, the proportion of officers with less than a bachelor's degree nearly doubled, from 4.7% to 9.3%.

Proportionally more of those who serve in the Air Force are college graduates (24%) than those in the Army (18%), Navy (16%) or Marines (10%).

### Education Level of Active-Duty Military



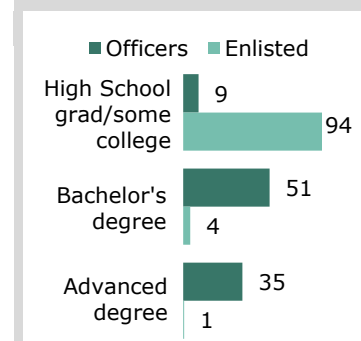
Note: "Unknown or Other" includes 0.6% who do not have a high school diploma

Source: Department of Defense Demographics 2009: Profile of the Military Community

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### Education by Rank

% by last grade completed in school



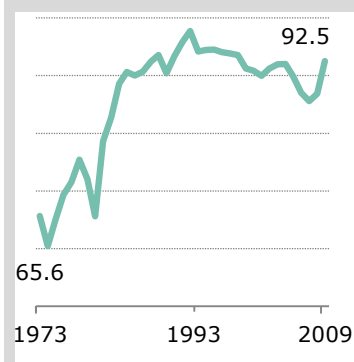
Source: Department of Defense Demographics 2009: Profile of the Military Community

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A substantial majority (77%) of those in the National Guard or Reserves are at least high school graduates but have less than a bachelor's degree. That is somewhat smaller than the proportion of active-duty military personnel with similar educational credentials (77% vs. 80%).

### Education Level Rises among New Enlistees Since End of Draft

*% of new enlistees with at least a high school education, 1973-2009*



Source: Department of Defense  
*Population Representation in the  
Military Services FY2009*

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## APPENDIX 1: SURVEY METHODOLOGY

### About the Veterans Survey

Veterans of the U.S. armed forces constitute a somewhat rare population, especially those who served after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Military veterans are an estimated 9.6% of the U.S. adult population, and those who served after 9/11 account for 12% of all veterans (and thus slightly more than 1% of the adult U.S. population). No publicly available comprehensive list of veterans exists to provide the basis for a sampling frame. Because veterans are widely dispersed among the general public, sampling methods used for certain rare populations that tend to be geographically concentrated are not very effective in improving the efficiency of locating and interviewing this group. Thus, extensive screening using several different sampling sources was necessary to interview this population.

This study interviewed a representative sample of 1,853 veterans who served in the U.S. armed forces and are no longer on active duty. Interviewing was conducted between July 28 and Sept. 4, 2011. Of the total sample of 1,853 veterans, 1,134 had separated from military service before 9/11 (“pre-9/11 veterans”) and 712 served after 9/11 (“post-9/11 veterans”), including 336 who served in Afghanistan or Iraq since combat operations began in those countries. The time of service of seven respondents was not determined.

Sampling, data collection and survey weighting were conducted or coordinated by Social Science Research Solutions (SSRS). Several sample sources were employed in order to ensure an adequate number of interviews with post-9/11 veterans. Most of the interviews (n=1,639, including 498 interviews with post-9/11 veterans) were obtained from random digit dialing (RDD) studies conducted by SSRS

and the Pew Research Center. A total of 1,307 interviews were conducted on landline telephones and 332 on cell phones. An additional 214 interviews were conducted with post-9/11 veterans through the random sample panel of households maintained by Knowledge Networks between Aug. 18 and Aug. 31, 2011. This chapter describes the design of the sample and the methods used to collect and weight the data.

---

#### Interviews by Mode

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Pre- 9/11</b>	<b>Post- 9/11</b>
Telephone	1,639	1,134	498
Web	<u>214</u>	--	<u>214</u>
Total	1,853	1,134	712

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## I. Sample Design

The majority of survey respondents were recruited in a two-stage sampling process. The first stage involved screening for qualifying veteran households and respondents (prescreening), and the second involved the actual administration of the survey. A small portion of the post-9/11 veterans (n=56) were interviewed during SSRS's omnibus survey without a prescreening stage. An additional 214 post-9/11 veterans recruited from Knowledge Networks completed an online interview without a prescreening stage.

### *Screening by SSRS*

Questions to identify households with military veterans were included on SSRS national surveys starting March 2, 2011, and running through Sept. 4, 2011. These studies employed a random based sampling procedure.<sup>31</sup> Prescreening involved three questions:

1. Have you or has anyone in your household ever served in the U.S. military or the military reserves?
2. Did you or that person serve in the military or military reserves since Sept. 11, 2001?
3. Did you or that person serve in Iraq or Afghanistan since Sept. 11, 2001?

The initial sample derived from these prescreening interviews included all numbers where a respondent indicated there was a veteran in the household (whether or not this was the original respondent).

To boost the share of post-9/11 veterans in the survey, additional sample based on four surveys conducted in 2011 was provided by the Pew Research Center, which resulted in 78 interviews with respondents who served personally or who reported that another household member had

### Sample Design

	Total	Pre-9/11	Post-9/11
Veteran households previously interviewed by SSRS	1,498	1,112	386
Veteran households previously interviewed by Pew Research Center	78	16	62
Post-9/11 veterans identified & interviewed on SSRS omnibus surveys	56	6	50
Post-9/11 veterans interviewed from the Knowledge Networks panel	214	0	214

Seven respondents decline to answer the time of service question and thus cannot be classified as either pre- or post-9/11 veterans.

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<sup>31</sup> One of the studies used in screening (*People & Home*) employs an addressed-based sampling (ABS) design. The rest were overlapping-frame landline and cell phone RDD designs.

done so.<sup>32</sup> Only the first two SSRS screening questions used to identify veteran households were asked on two of the Pew Research surveys while all three questions were asked on two others.

Members of the Knowledge Networks panel were randomly recruited for the survey and were first asked an initial screener question to determine whether they served in the military after Sept. 11, 2001. Those who answered yes to this question were then asked to complete the remainder of the survey.

### *Main survey*

The RDD telephone sample for the survey was drawn from the pool of prescreened sample from SSRS and the Pew Research Center. The sample was divided into two groups based on whether a pre-9/11 or post-9/11 veteran was reported to be living in the household. Below is the overall breakdown of the final interviews, based on sample source and time of service.

### Composition of Completes by Screening

	Pre-9/11		Post-9/11			
	Self	Other	Self, not Afghanistan or Iraq	Other, not Afghanistan or Iraq	Self, Afghanistan or Iraq	Other, Afghanistan or Iraq
Total	748	268	184	147	382	124
Prescreened by SSRS	748	268	154	123	96	116
Prescreened by Pew Research	0	0	30	24	16	8
Interviewed directly by SSRS*	0	0	0	0	56	0
Knowledge Networks	0	0	140	0	74	0

Households were considered as post-9/11 if at least one person had served post-9/11 and as Afghanistan or Iraq if at least one person had served there.

\*Veterans who were interviewed directly by SSRS were screened for service after 9/11 but not specifically for service in Iraq or Afghanistan.

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The prescreened sample included more pre-9/11 veteran households than needed, so a random sample of 3,673 pre-9/11 veteran households was drawn for the survey. All prescreened post-9/11 households (n=2,416) were included in the post-9/11 sample.

<sup>32</sup> These surveys were on other subjects but included the screening questions used to identify post-9/11 veterans. The veterans were later re-contacted and interviewed for the veterans survey.

Additional steps were taken in order to assure the highest possible rate of response among post-9/11 veterans, including:

- (1) A \$20 incentive was offered to all respondents in the post-9/11 sample who initially refused to participate in the survey, and starting July 22, 2011, this incentive was offered to all post-9/11 veterans in the sample.
- (2) Phone numbers of the post-9/11 sample were crossed with records in the infoUSA and Experian databases in order to match as many of these phone numbers as possible with addresses. For sampled phone numbers with an address match, an advance letter was sent to this household, along with a \$2 incentive. The letter informed potential respondents of the study and its importance, offering them a toll-free number to dial in to participate and advising them of the pre-incentive. For a total 1,097 cases (57.2%), phone numbers were matched to addresses and were mailed a letter. An additional 420 interviews drawn from an address-based screening study also received a letter. In all, 256 interviews were completed with respondents in these households (16.9% of the total households where addresses were matched).<sup>33</sup>
- (3) In cases where respondents at the re-contacted numbers said the veteran in their household could be reached at a different phone number, the new number was substituted and used to attempt to reach the respondent.

#### *Interviews with respondents in SSRS's omnibus survey*

Additional interviews with post-9/11 veterans (n=56) were conducted directly on SSRS's Excel omnibus survey. Starting July 29, Excel respondents who reported personally serving in the armed forces after 9/11 were interviewed at the time of contact, rather than being screened and re-contacted.

Excel is a national, weekly, dual-frame bilingual telephone survey designed to meet standards of quality associated with custom research studies. Each weekly wave of Excel consists of 1,000 interviews, of which 300 are obtained with respondents on their cell phones and a minimum of 30 interviews are completed in Spanish. All Excel data are weighted to represent the target population, based on parameters from the Current Population Survey (CPS).

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<sup>33</sup> Cases where the screening interview was done after the mailing of the letters were not matched for their address.



### *Knowledge Networks Panel*

An additional 214 interviews were conducted with post-9/11 veterans who are members of Knowledge Networks' online panel, using an online version of the questionnaire. Knowledge Networks (KN) is an online research panel designed so that it is representative of the entire U.S. population. KN now recruits households using address-based sampling methods, and thus includes cell phone-only households, although some existing panel members were originally recruited using landline RDD. Households who have opted into the panel are contacted either by email or through an online member page with requests to take a survey.<sup>34</sup>

Data from KN are given a base weight to correct for deviations from random selection to the panel, such as under-sampling of telephone numbers unmatched to a valid mailing address, over-sampling in certain geographic regions, and disproportionate recruitment of those living at addresses that could be matched to a landline phone number. KN also post-stratifies to parameters from the CPS in order to control for non-response and non-coverage at both the level of the panel and the individual survey.

## **II. Data Collection and Processing**

The questionnaire was developed by Pew Research Center staff in consultation with the SSRS project team. The questionnaire was also available in Spanish so respondents could choose to be interviewed in English or Spanish, or switch between the languages according to their comfort level.

Two pretests of the survey instrument and procedures were conducted on July 8-9 (pre-9/11 veterans) and July 14-15 (post-9/11 veterans). In view of the scarcity of post-9/11 sample, the post-9/11 sample used for the pretest was a convenience sample provided by the Pew Research Center. Members of the Pew Research project team listened to recordings of the pretest interviews, and the questionnaire was adapted according to the pretest findings.

In order to maximize survey response, SSRS used the following procedures during the field period:

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<sup>34</sup> More information about the Knowledge Networks panel methodology can be found at <http://www.knowledgenetworks.com/knpanel/index.html> .

- Each non-responsive number that had not already set up a callback appointment for an interview (largely voice mail, no answers and busy) was called approximately eight additional times, varying the times of day and the days of the week.
- Interviewers left messages on answering machines with a callback number for the respondent to call in and complete the survey.
- The study included an incentive of \$5 for cell phone respondents in the pre-9/11 veteran group.

### *Screening*

Although all of the households in the pre-screened sample had indicated the presence of a veteran, it was necessary to re-screen the household at the time of the second contact. The screening protocol was distinguished by the type of veteran in the household (pre-9/11, post-9/11 but not in Afghanistan or Iraq, or post-9/11 in Afghanistan or Iraq) and by phone type (landline or cell phone). If the prescreen indicated that an Afghanistan or Iraq veteran lived in the household, the interview would begin by asking to speak with that veteran (and if there was more than one post-9/11 Afghanistan or Iraq veteran in the household, interviewers asked to speak with the one who had the most recent birthday). If the respondent said no such person was available, interviewers asked for a veteran who served at any time since Sept. 11, 2001. If no person met that definition, interviewers asked to speak with any veteran living in that household. A similar hierarchy of questions was used if the prescreen suggested a post-9/11 non-Afghanistan or Iraq veteran lived in the household (without asking for an Afghanistan or Iraq veteran). Where only a pre-9/11 veteran was mentioned in the pre-screen, interviewers simply asked to speak with a veteran living in that household.

Although cell phones are typically considered individual, rather than household, devices, the cell phone screener was essentially identical to the landline screener. This is due to the fact that the pre-screen interviews asked about “someone in the household” in general and there was no guarantee that person would be answering the cell phone. The one difference was that if the respondent confirmed the presence of the type of veteran asked about, interviewers would ask whether the respondent or someone else was the veteran.

### *Screen-Outs*

Once the selected veteran was on the phone, two more questions about eligibility were asked before the main interview began.

1. *Active-duty status.* Individuals who are still on active duty were not eligible for the study, and thus a question was asked to determine the duty status of the selected respondent. Altogether, 198 respondents reported that they were still on active duty. This situation arose most often in the post-9/11 sample and specifically, where “someone else” was the reported veteran in the household (n=142). Interviews in 204 households were coded as ineligible because the veteran living in these households was reported to be on active duty (of which, 200 were in the post-9/11 sample).
2. *State-level National Guard service.* Eleven respondents whose experience in the armed forces consisted exclusively of being called up by the governor for National Guard service (Title 32) were screened out of the interview as well (an additional five respondents refused to answer this question).

### *Veteran Status*

In total, 1,016 interviews were completed with respondents from the pre-9/11 re-contact sample; based on their responses, 990 were pre-9/11 veterans and 20 were post-9/11 veterans (seven of these served in Afghanistan or Iraq). And 567 interviews were completed with respondents from the post-9/11 re-contact sample; based on their responses, 428 were post-9/11 veterans (223 of these served in Afghanistan or Iraq) and 138 were pre-9/11 veterans.

## **III. Analysis of Mode Differences**

Previous research has shown the mode of survey interview can sometimes affect the way in which questions are answered, especially for sensitive questions. Because the post-9/11 veterans were interviewed using both telephone (n=498) and internet (n=214) modes, we analyzed whether there were differences between the two samples to ensure that the data from the two modes were comparable enough to be combined. Variations can arise from both the mode of interview and from differences in the two samples used for the interviews. It is necessary to attempt to disentangle sample and mode differences to understand what may be causing any variations.

The web questionnaire mirrored the phone questionnaire as much as possible. However, some differences may result because of how the questions were asked in the two modes when the formats could not be exactly the same (for example, volunteered responses on the phone, such as “other” or “depends,” were not offered on the web).

In general, the differences in responses between the two modes were modest in size and most were not statistically significant. For many of the key questions in the survey, including those of a sensitive nature, there were no significant differences between the post-9/11 veterans who responded by phone and those who responded by web. There were no significant differences on ratings of their overall health, whether they were seriously injured while performing their duties, or whether they had experienced post-traumatic stress, depression, anger or strained family relations as a result of their military service. Similarly, no significant differences were found for ratings of Obama's job performance as commander in chief, whether the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have been worth fighting or basic evaluations of the U.S. military. There also were no significant differences by mode on questions about various aspects of their military service, including the length of their service, whether they had served in Afghanistan or Iraq, whether they had served in combat or a war zone, or the number of times they had been deployed.

There were statistically significant differences in 19 of the 60 substantive questions, but in general the pattern was not consistent. More web than phone post-9/11 veterans said it is best for the country to be active in world affairs (45% vs. 31%) and that the increased use of drone attacks is a good thing (93% vs. 84%). More phone than web respondents said it was appropriate for the military to be involved in nation building (63% vs. 50%) and that someone who they knew and served with was killed while performing their duties in the military (52% vs. 37%). Phone respondents were more critical than web respondents of the care that injured military personnel received in military hospitals in the U.S. (26% only fair or poor job, compared with 13% of web respondents).

On two questions that asked about a list of items, post-9/11 veterans who responded by phone were more likely than those who responded by web to say their military service had a positive effect on various aspects of their life. More phone respondents said their military service was very useful in teaching them to work together with others, giving them self-confidence, preparing them for a job or career, and helping them grow and mature as a person. Similarly, phone respondents were more likely than web respondents to say that they appreciated life more, felt proud of their military service and had people thank them for their service. Phone respondents also were more satisfied than web respondents with their personal financial situation.

The samples of post-9/11 veterans who responded by phone and those who responded online were somewhat different on a few characteristics. There were no significant differences by gender, age, race or ethnicity, but more phone than web respondents had never attended college and fewer were currently married. To analyze whether the differences by mode were

related to any of these demographic differences, we ran logistic regression models for each of the questions that exhibited significant differences by mode controlling for standard demographics (gender, age, race/ethnicity, education, marital status and for some questions party identification) as well as factors related to their military service (whether an officer or not, years of service, whether served in Iraq or Afghanistan, and number of deployments). After controlling for all these variables, a significant effect by mode of interview was found for six of the 19 questions, including whether it is best for the U.S. to be active in world affairs, satisfaction with their personal finances and how good the care is for injured veterans at U.S. military hospitals. A significant difference by mode also was found for whether the military helped them learn to work together with others, helped them grow and mature, and whether people had thanked them for their military service.

Because there was not a consistent pattern across these differences, we made the decision to combine the phone and web samples for the analysis of post-9/11 veterans in the report.

#### **IV. Weighting Procedures**

A two-stage weighting design was applied to ensure an accurate representation of the pre-9/11 and post-9/11 veteran population. The first stage (the base or design weight phase) included four steps.

##### ***First stage***

###### ***1. Re-contact propensity correction***

An adjustment to account for the potential bias associated with re-contacting respondents (sample bias). This is a typical problem for panel studies, where bias is introduced if certain types of respondents in the original study (in this case the prescreened veterans) have a different likelihood of being available for or amenable to a follow-up survey.

Inverse Probability Weighting (IPW) or Propensity Weighting is typically used to adjust for attrition in panel and longitudinal studies. Characteristics of the respondents as measured in the initial studies were used to model their probability of response to the re-contact survey. This was done with a logistic regression model in which the outcome is whether or not a screened household produced a completed re-contact interview. The initial studies varied somewhat in the demographic questions available for the modeling. Consequently, slightly different models were used for each subsample source. Variables in these models included demographics such as gender, age, race, education, marital status, presence of children in the

household, geographic variables such as Census Bureau region or metropolitan status and phone status (e.g., cell phone only and landline only). For the subsamples from SSRS studies, separate regressions were used to predict completion of the re-contact interview by those who screened in as pre-9/11 and post-9/11 veterans. Predictors with a p-value greater than .30 were dropped from the logistic regression models.

The predictive values are used as the probability of a person being a respondent to the re-contact survey. The inverse of this probability is computed and used as the propensity weight. As such, higher weights correspond to respondents who have a lower probability of responding to the re-contact survey. Therefore, if, for example, people with high educational attainment were more likely to respond to the re-contact, such cases would attain a lower propensity weight and respondents with low educational attainment would receive a higher weight.

In order to account for any biases in the original surveys from which the re-contact cases were drawn, the weights derived for those studies were applied prior to the propensity-weighting process. Interviews completed on the omnibus survey assigned only their unique weight within the omnibus survey at this stage. The Knowledge Networks sample was assigned the weighting correction provided by KN at this point (which includes a correction for that particular panel design).

## *2. Correction for listed-sample overrepresentation*

One of the sample modifications included the mailing of invitations and pre-incentives to post-9/11 sample cases in the RDD frame whose phone numbers were matched with a mailing address in published directories. This increased the relative likelihood of completing interviews with matched (listed) post-9/11 interviews. To correct for any possible bias caused by the mailing, a weight was calculated as the quotient of  $M_S/M_D$  for the listed cases and  $U_S/U_D$  for the unlisted cases, where  $M_S$  and  $M_D$  stand for the share of matched records in the sample and in the data respectively, and  $U_S$  and  $U_D$  stand for the share of unmatched records in the sample and in the data respectively. The KN data and cases interviewed directly on the omnibus survey received a weight of 1 at this stage.

## *3. Within household selection correction*

The purpose of this stage was to correct for the unequal probabilities that are introduced by some households having more qualified veterans than others. Qualification was affected by the type of veteran screened at the beginning of the interview. If the veteran was screened in by requesting to speak with the veteran who served in Afghanistan or Iraq, the qualifying respondents would be those living in that household and had served in these areas. If the

screening was for veterans who served at some point since 9/11, all veterans in the household who served during this period were considered the qualifying veterans. And if the screener asked simply to speak with a veteran living in the household, all veterans in the household were qualifying respondents.

Households with a single qualifying veteran received a weight of 1, households with two qualifying veterans received a weight of 2, and households with three or more qualifying veterans received a weight of 3. Respondents with missing data were given the mean response. Cases were adjusted so that the sum of this weight totaled the unweighted sample size.

These three corrections (propensity-to-complete, listed-sample overrepresentation and within household probability of selection) were multiplied together to arrive at a final base weight. Base-weights were truncated at the top and bottom 2.5%.

### ***Second stage***

The second stage of weighting was the post-stratification sample balancing. We utilized an iterative proportionate fitting (IPF) procedure to create the post-stratification weights. IPF, or “raking,” is a now-ubiquitous sample balancing method designed to adjust samples in economic and social surveys on selected demographic characteristics using parameters obtained from credible sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau. IPF uses least-squares curve fitting algorithms to obtain a unique weight for each case that minimizes the root mean square error (RMSE) across multiple dimensions simultaneously. It then applies these weights to the data and repeats the procedure using the newly obtained marginal counts to obtain yet another set of weights. This process is repeated for a specified number of iterations or until the difference in the RMSE between successive steps becomes less than a specific minimum value. This study employed an IPF procedure using statistical software that also allows for the application of a pre-existing base weight to the input data for the sample balancing process.

The pre-9/11 and post-9/11 groups were weighted, separately, to match the July 2010 CPS figures for age, gender, ethnicity, educational attainment, census region and metropolitan status, for each group. Because the pre-9/11 and post-9/11 samples were weighted separately, population parameters for each of these groups needed to be established. There are several sources providing demographic details about veterans, including the U.S. Census Bureau’s Current Population Survey (CPS) and the American Community Survey (ACS). Specifically, the Census Bureau conducts a recurring survey focused on veterans asking more extensive questions that allow distinguishing type of service, combat service and military branch.

Both Census surveys have limitations. For one, they are currently a year (CPS) to two years (ACS) old. Typically, this is not a major concern because demographics are slow-shifting. However, some parameters among the veteran population are shifting more rapidly. The number of post-9/11 veterans is constantly growing, since each new recruit, by definition, is already or will become a post-9/11 veteran. At the same time the aging pre-9/11 population is naturally decreasing in size. Accordingly, the mean age of the pre-9/11 veteran group is increasing. Some projection of group sizes and their age distribution is necessary. Furthermore, the size of the post-9/11 veterans is relatively small. In the sample sources used for estimating the characteristics of this group, some of the post-9/11 samples included approximately 600 cases (CPS, July 2010). In other words, the Census sources were limited due to their size and age.

An alternative source is the [VetPop 2007 tool](#) of the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA). VetPop involves projections of the veteran population (through 2036) based on the 2000 Decennial data, other Census data (ongoing updates) and official Department of Defense accounts about recruitment, deaths and separations. These projections are not the same as Census counts, but instead build on existing information to produce accurate estimates of the veteran population. In the VA's most recent National Survey of Veterans (NSV), survey data were post-stratified to projected counts from [VetPop 2007](#).

Acknowledging the limitations of each of the available sources of information about demographic parameters for these veteran groups, comparisons among multiple sources (ACS, CPS, VetPop, NSV) were made to determine the most plausible estimate of the key demographic parameters. Because the differences among these sources were minor, the July 2010 CPS figures were used (see tables at the end of this section for detailed comparisons).

In addition to demographic characteristics such as age, sex and education, an estimate of telephone status was needed. With the increase of wireless-only households, the veterans survey may have been at risk of under-covering veterans who answer only cell phones (and, indeed, most of the prescreening surveys had underrepresented cell phone-only households by design). This was a particular concern with the post-9/11 veteran group, which is younger and, as such, more likely to live in wireless-only households. An overall estimate of the wireless-only veteran population was derived from the 2010 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS). According to NHIS, 19% of veterans lived in wireless-only households. It was not possible to create separate estimates for phone status of pre-9/11 and post-9/11 veterans directly from the NHIS data. An estimate was created using observed distributions from the dual frame Excel omnibus. Post-9/11 veterans in the weighted Excel file had a wireless-only rate that was nearly



three times as large as the pre-9/11 veterans. On this basis, it was estimated that 16.3% of pre-9/11 veterans and 46.0% of post-9/11 veterans were wireless-only.

### ***Design Effects***

Weighting procedures increase the variance in the data, with larger weights causing greater variance, and, as a consequence, a higher margin of error for given sample size. The impact of the survey design on variance estimates is measured by the design effect. The design effect describes the variance of the sample estimate for the survey relative to the variance of an estimate based on a hypothetical simple random sample of the same size. In situations where statistical software packages assume a simple random sample, the adjusted standard error of a statistic should be calculated by multiplying by the square root of the design effect. Each variable will have its own design effect. The following table shows the sample sizes, design effects and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

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#### **Weight Adjusted Margins of Error**

	<b>Sample size</b>	<b>Design effect</b>	<b>Margin of error (plus or minus ...)</b>
Total	1,853	2.28	3.5 percentage points
Pre-9/11	1,134	1.74	3.9 percentage points
Post-9/11	712	2.35	5.7 percentage points
Afghanistan/Iraq	336	2.20	8.0 percentage points
Vietnam era	522	1.59	5.5 percentage points
WWII/Korea era	269	1.56	7.5 percentage points
Served in combat	918	2.27	4.9 percentage points

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## Comparison of Survey Data for All Veterans to Data from Other Sources

	Survey estimates		Weighting parameters	Other available data		
	Unweighted	Weighted	CPS 2010	VetPop 2007	ACS 2009	NSV 2010
<i>Period of service</i>	%	%	%	%	%	%
Pre-9/11	61.2	87.5	90.2	88.1	91.3	88.3
Post-9/11	38.4	11.9	9.8	11.9	8.7	11.7
<i>Gender</i>						
Men	89.5	91.4	91.9	91.7	93.2	91.9
Women	10.5	8.6	8.1	8.3	6.8	8.1
<i>Region</i>						
Northeast	14.5	16.0	16.1	--	15.8	--
Midwest	24.2	21.9	22.4	--	22.3	--
South	39.7	40.4	40.0	--	39.9	--
West	21.6	21.7	21.5	--	21.9	--
<i>Race-Ethnicity</i>						
White, non-Hispanic	80.6	80.0	80.9	78.7	81.1	--
Black, non-Hispanic	7.6	9.8	10.1	11.6	10.4	--
Hispanic	6.0	5.6	5.4	6.0	5.2	5.1
Other	4.9	3.6	3.5	3.7	3.2	--
<i>Age</i>						
Less than 35	14.9	8.9	8.9	8.8	7.6	7.3
35-44	10.4	9.9	11.0	10.7	10.7	9.6
45-54	16.0	18.1	16.6	16.3	15.5	19.3
55-64	19.3	23.7	24.3	22.0	24.9	23.0
65-74	20.6	18.5	18.9	21.0	19.0	20.3
75 or older	18.2	20.5	20.4	21.1	22.3	20.6
<i>Education</i>						
High school or less	31.2	37.9	38.9	--	38.5	31.4
Some college	32.3	34.2	34.2	--	36.2	39.1
College graduate+	36.4	27.7	26.9	--	25.3	29.4
<i>Branch of service</i>						
Air Force	19.1	19.1	17.2	18.2	--	20.4
Army	42.5	45.7	49.4	43.5	--	47.3
Marines	10.5	8.9	9.9	10.7	--	9.9
Navy	20.9	21.7	20.6	22.5	--	23.0
Other	7.0	4.6	2.9	5.1	--	1.9
<i>Rank</i>						
Commissioned officer	14.7	7.6	--	6.9	--	--
Enlisted	84.7	91.8	--	93.1	--	--

Survey estimates are the final unweighted and weighted estimates for all veterans who completed the survey. CPS 2010 data are from the July 2010 Veterans Supplement of the Current Population Survey and were used as weighting parameters for this survey. VetPop 2007 data are from the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) projection tool. ACS 2009 data are from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2009 American Community Survey. NSV 2010 data are from the VA's 2010 National Survey of Veterans.

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## Comparison of Survey Data for Post-9/11 Veterans to Data from Other Sources

	Survey estimates		Weighting parameters	Other available data	
	Unweighted	Weighted	CPS 2010	VetPop 2007	ACS 2009
<i>Gender</i>	%	%	%	%	%
Men	81.0	81.0	81.4	84.0	83.2
Women	19.0	19.0	18.6	16.0	16.8
<i>Region</i>					
Northeast	21.5	20.2	10.6	--	11.4
Midwest	42.8	46.7	20.0	--	17.9
South	21.2	22.0	48.5	--	47.7
West	21.5	20.2	21.0	--	23.0
<i>Race-Ethnicity</i>					
White, non-Hispanic	72.1	70.5	71.8	68.8	69.7
Black, non-Hispanic	11.5	13.2	14.6	16.6	16.2
Hispanic	8.4	10.6	8.9	9.3	8.7
Other	7.3	4.9	4.6	5.3	5.4
<i>Age</i>					
Less than 35	38.1	63.8	68	61.1	61.6
35-44	21.1	20.4	16.1	19.0	20.1
45-54	25.6	11.6	12.3	15.9	15.2
55-64	11.9	3.4	3.0	3.7	2.9
65-74	2.5	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.3
75 or older	0.6	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Education</i>					
High school or less	22.1	28.7	28.3	--	25.1
Some college	39.2	47.1	47.4	--	50.3
College graduate+	38.8	24.2	24.3	--	24.6
<i>Branch of service</i>					
Air Force	19.5	13.8	17.7	17.0	--
Army	35.3	34.4	45.6	32.9	--
Marines	13.8	18.1	14.3	12.4	--
Navy	19.7	18.8	19.5	22.9	--
Other	11.7	14.9	2.9	14.8	--
<i>Rank</i>					
Commissioned officer	20.9	8.7	--	8.3	--
Enlisted	78.8	90.3	--	91.7	--

Survey estimates are the final unweighted and weighted estimates for all veterans who completed the survey. CPS 2010 data are from the July 2010 Veterans Supplement of the Current Population Survey and were used as weighting parameters for this survey. VetPop 2007 data are from the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) projection tool—data are not available for post-9/11 veterans so estimates here are for veterans who served during or after the first Gulf War. ACS 2009 data are from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2009 American Community Survey.

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## V. Response Rate

The overall response rate for this study was calculated to be 5.8% using AAPOR's RR3 formula modified to account for screening in screener surveys, and by combining the final response rates of the screening studies and the re-contact study. The re-contact rate response rate was 55.8% (the re-contact rate refers to the response rate among the prescreened cases, who were asked to complete the veterans survey), and the original screening response rate was 10.3%.

### *Re-contact Screening Response Rates*

Generally, screener surveys are different than general population surveys in that there are two levels of eligibility: household and screener. That is, a sample record is "household eligible" if it is determined that the record reaches a household. Screener eligible refers to whether known household-eligible records are eligible to in fact complete the full survey. In the case of the veterans survey, screener eligibility refers to whether a household has a member who has served in the military but is not currently on active duty.

The standard AAPOR RR3 formula is as follows:

$$\frac{I}{I + R + NR + [UNR + UR]e}$$

Where:

I: Completed Interview

R: Known Eligible Refusal/ Breakoff

NR: Known Eligible Non-Respondent

UNR: Unknown if Household

UR: Household, Unknown if Screener Eligible

e = Estimated Percent of Eligibility

At issue with this calculation for screener surveys is that it does not distinguish the two separate eligibility requirements: UNR and UR and both multiplied by an overall "e" that incorporates any and all eligibility criteria. An alternative RR4 calculation utilized by a large number of health researchers and academicians simply divides "e" into two separate numbers, one for household eligibility and one for screener eligibility:

I

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$$I + R + NR + [(UNR)e2 + (UR)]e1$$

Where:

e2 = Estimated Percent of Household Eligibility

e1 = Estimated Percent of Screener Eligibility

“E” calculations are completed via the standard “proportional representation” method dictated by AAPOR. In short, e2 is all identified household / (all identified households + all identified non-households) and e1 = all identified households eligible to do the full survey / (all identified households known to be eligible to do the full survey + all identified households known to not be eligible to do the full survey). See Appendix for a full disposition of the re-contact sample.

With regard to the original screening sample, response rates were calculated using the AAPOR RR3 formula provided above, with the exception of one SSRS study of Hispanics, because that study is also a screening study rather than a general population study.

### ***Knowledge Networks***

Interviews attained from Knowledge Networks presented a special case. In general, Knowledge Networks provides a quite different method for calculating response rates, given the unique nature of its sample. Below are the components of the response rate calculation and the actual calculations. An extended description of how to compute response metrics for online panels is found in Callegaro & DiSogra (2008).

*Household Recruitment Rate (RECR) = .174*

Panel recruitment is done using RDD telephone methods and address-based sampling (ABS). The recruitment rate is computed using the AAPOR Response Rate 3 (RR3). If at least one member of the household is recruited, the household as a unit is counted in the household recruitment rate.

*Household Profile Rate (PROR) = .619*

The study profile rate is computed as an average of the cohort profile rates for all households in the study sample. Although the average number of profiled panel members per household is usually greater than one, a household is considered “profiled” when at least one member completes a profile survey. In this study, an overall mean of 61.9% of recruited households successfully completed a profile survey.

*Study Completion Rate (COMR) = .852*

For this study, one panel member per household was selected at random to be part of the sample. At the end of the fielding period, 85.2% of assigned members completed the survey. Substitution, or another member of the same household taking the survey instead of the sampled respondent, was not allowed in this study. This is also the general policy for Knowledge Networks panel samples.

*Break-Off Rate (BOR) = .003*

Among all members who started the survey, 0.3% broke off before the interview was completed. It is the researcher's call to classify break-off as break-offs or partial interviews depending on the study design and the key variables to be measured.

*Household Retention Rate (RETR) = .316*

The retention rate is computed as an average of the cohort retention rates for all members in the study sample.

*Cumulative Response Rate 1 (CUMRR1) = RECR \* PROR \* COMR = .092*

Because one member per household was selected in computing the cumulative response rate, we use the household recruitment rate multiplied by the household profile rate and the survey completion rate.

*Cumulative Response Rate 2 (CUMRR2) = RECR \* PROR \* RETR \* COMR = .029*

In the cumulative response rate 2, retention is taken into account.

In short, 3,910 panelists who previously reported serving in the military were drawn from the Knowledge Networks panel; 3,332 responded to the invitation, yielding a final stage completion rate of 85.2% percent. The recruitment rate for this study was 17.4% and the profile rate was 61.9%, for a cumulative response rate of 9.2%.

Given the diverse sample sources utilized for the study a final overall screening rate for the veterans survey can be calculated in raw form, because three distinct metrics are used. Therefore, a final screening response rate was developed as a basic weighted average of the component response rates. That is, the final screening response rate is based on the response rate of each distinct screening source, weighted to the percent of sample each screening source afforded to the final screening sample database.

A summary of each screening dataset response rate is provided below.

## TABLES

## SSRS Screening Study Response Rates

	SSRS Gen Pop Tracker		SSRS Excel Omnibus		SSRS P&H ABS Omnibus	SSRS Gen Pop Study		SSRS Hispanic Study	
	Landline	Cell	Landline	Cell	ABS	Landline	Cell	Landline	Cell
I=Completes	3,263	607	19,209	4,498	12,830	2,022	1,001	594	407
R=Refusal and breakoff	1,600	6,268	66,665	19,527	38,070	2,061	2,342	78	16
NC=Non-contact	2,303	1,155	44,404	24,034	6,479	727	1,526	294	111
O=Other	0	0	0	0	0	61	19	193	81
OF=Business/computer/ not working	95,327	10,757	446,081	66,023	26,240	30,045	28,668	33,833	5,241
UH/UO=Unknown household/Unknown other	29,931	9,912	241,076	62,567	270,127	11,600	6,351	15,049	11,299
AAPOR's e= (I+R+NC+O)/(I+R+NC+O+OF)	19%	44%	23%	42%	69%	14%	15%	6%	19%
e2 (household eligibility)								39%	39%
AAPOR RR3= I/[I+R+NC+O+(e*UH/UO)]	13.2%	7.2%	10.4%	6.0%	5.3%	31.4%	17.3%	26.4%	19.8%

## Pew Research Center Screening Study Response Rates

	February 2011 Political Survey		August 2011 Political Survey		June 2011 Political Survey		March 2011 Higher Ed/Post Recession Survey		Cell 18-34
	Landline	Cell	Landline	Cell	Landline	Cell	Landline	Cell	
I=Completes	952	433	905	604	1,001	501	1001	805	204
R=Refusal and breakoff	4,176	3,866	4,055	5,166	4,842	4,454	4496	5800	4238
NC=Non-contact	1,416	2,107	2,525	2,731	2,480	2,204	1528	2303	2832
O=Other	32	14	27	14	21	12	57	58	31
OF=Business/computer/ not working	15,939	4,449	19,234	6,234	21,283	5,126	16718	6711	5730
UH/UO=Unknown household/Unknown other	1,695	198	2,078	250	2,184	203	1982	252	325
AAPOR's e= (I+R+NC+O)/(I+R+NC+O+OF)	29%	59%	28%	58%	28%	58%	30%	57%	56%
AAPOR RR3= I/[I+R+NC+O+(e*UH/UO)]	13.5%	6.6%	11.2%	7.0%	11.2%	6.9%	13.0%	8.8%	2.7%

## Re-contact Response Rates

	<b>Pew Sample Landline Post- 9/11</b>	<b>Pew Sample Cell Post- 9/11</b>	<b>SSRS Sample Landline Pre- 9/11</b>	<b>SSRS Sample Cell Pre- 9/11</b>	<b>SSRS Sample Landline Post- 9/11</b>	<b>SSRS Sample Cell Post- 9/11</b>	<b>Total Post- 9/11</b>	<b>Total Pre- 9/11</b>	<b>Total</b>
I=Completes	35	43	846	170	387	102	567	1016	1583
R=Eligible refusal and breakoff	1	3	110	15	21	3	28	125	153
OF=Business/computer/ not working	46	39	284	111	280	95	460	395	855
UH=Unknown if household	25	36	543	202	228	107	396	745	1141
UO=Household, unknown if eligible	52	67	500	147	378	139	636	647	1283
e1 (estimate of being a household)	66%	74%	84%	75%	74%	72%	73%	82%	78%
e2 (estimate of being a household)	41%	41%	66%	56%	52%	43%	48%	64%	58%
AAPOR RR3= $I/[I+R+NC+O+(e*UH/UO)]$	71.2%	62.8%	52.5%	44.6%	66.3%	60.5%	65.0%	50.7%	55.8%



## About the General Public Survey

Results for the general public survey are based on telephone interviews conducted Sept. 1-15, 2011, among a national sample of 2,003 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (a total of 1,203 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 800 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 349 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International (PSRAI). Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial (RDD) samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. The landline RDD sample was drawn using traditional list-assisted methods where telephone numbers were drawn with equal probabilities from all active blocks in the continental U.S. The cell sample was drawn through a systematic sampling from dedicated wireless 100-blocks and shared service 100-blocks with no directory-listed landline numbers.

Both the landline and cell samples were released for interviewing in replicates, which are small random samples of each larger sample. Using replicates to control the release of telephone numbers ensures that the complete call procedures are followed for all numbers dialed. At least 7 attempts were made to complete an interview at every sampled telephone number. The calls are staggered over times of day and days of the week (including at least one daytime call) to maximize the chances of making contact with a potential respondent. An effort is made to re-contact most interview breakoffs and refusals to attempt to convert them to completed interviews.

Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older.

Weighting is generally used in survey analysis to adjust for effects of sample design and to compensate for patterns of nonresponse that might bias results. Weighting also balances sample demographic distributions to match known population parameters. The weighting was accomplished in multiple stages.

The first stage of weighting included a probability-of-selection adjustment for the RDD landline sample to correct for the fact that respondents in the landline sample have different probabilities of being sampled depending on how many adults live in the household (i.e., people who live with no other adults have a greater chance of being selected than those who

live in multiple-adult households). This weighting also accounted for the overlap in the landline and cellular RDD frames.

In the second stage of weighting, the combined sample was weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and region to parameters from the March 2010 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. The population density parameter is county-based and was derived from 2000 Census data. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status and relative usage of landline and cell phones (for those with both), based on extrapolations from the 2010 National Health Interview Survey.

The survey's *margin of error* is the largest 95% confidence interval for any estimated proportion based on the total sample—the one around 50%. The margin of error for the entire sample is plus or minus 2.5 percentage points. This means that in 95 out of every 100 samples drawn using the same methods, estimated proportions based on the entire sample will be no more than 2.5 percentage points away from their true values in the population. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. Sample sizes and sampling errors for subgroups within the full sample are available upon request.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting opinion surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings.

## APPENDIX 2: TOPLINE QUESTIONNAIRES

### PEW SOCIAL & DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

#### MILITARY VETERANS SURVEY

#### FINAL TOPLINE

JULY 18-SEPTEMBER 4, 2011

TOTAL N=1,853; VETERANS WHO SERVED SINCE SEPT. 11, 2001, N=712

NOTE: ALL NUMBERS ARE PERCENTAGES. THE PERCENTAGES GREATER THAN ZERO BUT LESS THAN 0.5 % ARE REPLACED BY AN ASTERISK (\*). COLUMNS/ROWS MAY NOT TOTAL 100% DUE TO ROUNDING.

1. First, I would like to talk to you about your life overall:  
Generally, how would you say things are these days in your life -- would you say that you are very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy?

	Very happy	Pretty happy	Not too happy	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	32	50	16	1
Pre-9/11 <sup>35</sup>	33	49	17	1
Post-9/11	29	59	12	*

2. Next, please tell me whether you are satisfied or dissatisfied, on the whole, with the following aspects of your life: (First/Next) (INSERT)

- a. Your family life

	SATISFIED			DISSATISFIED			Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Very	
Total	90	69	21	9	5	4	1
Pre-9/11	90	69	21	9	5	4	1
Post-9/11	88	63	25	10	9	2	1

- b. Your personal financial situation

	SATISFIED			DISSATISFIED			Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Very	
Total	68	29	39	30	16	14	2
Pre-9/11	69	30	39	28	15	14	2
Post-9/11	57	20	37	42	25	17	1

<sup>35</sup> Caution should be used when comparing the pre-9/11 and post-9/11 samples. Experiences and attitudes of veterans who served in wartime can vary significantly from those who served in periods of relative peace between major wars. The pre-9/11 sample includes veterans who served in wartime and those who did not while all veterans who served in the military after 9/11 did so in a period of continuous war.

3. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his duties as commander-in-chief of the military?

	Approve	Disapprove	Don't know/ refused (VOL.)
Total	40	50	9
Pre-9/11	40	51	9
Post-9/11	44	47	9

4. I'm going to read you some pairs of statements that will help us understand how you feel about a number of things. As I read each pair, tell me whether the FIRST statement or the SECOND statement comes closer to your own views — even if neither is exactly right. The first pair is... (INSERT)

NO ITEM a.

b.

	Total	Pre-9/11	Post-9/11
It's best for the future of our country to be active in world affairs	32	31	35
We should pay less attention to problems overseas and concentrate on problems here at home	61	61	59
Neither/both equally (VOL.)	7	7	4
Don't know/refused (VOL.)	1	*	2

c.

	Total	Pre-9/11	Post-9/11
Using overwhelming military force is the best way to defeat terrorism around the world	46	48	40
Relying too much on military force to defeat terrorism creates hatred that leads to more terrorism	45	44	51
Neither/both equally (VOL.)	6	6	6
Don't know/refused (VOL.)	3	3	3

5a. Do you think you are more patriotic, less patriotic, or about as patriotic as most other people in this country?

	More patriotic	Less patriotic	About as patriotic	Don't know/ refused (VOL.)
Total	55	2	41	1
Pre-9/11	55	2	42	1
Post-9/11	61	5	32	1

5b. Overall, do you think that the U.S. military operates efficiently or inefficiently?

	Efficiently	Inefficiently	Both equally (VOL.)	Neither (VOL.)	Don't know/ refused (VOL.)
Total	66	27	2	1	4
Pre-9/11	66	27	2	1	4
Post-9/11	67	29	1	1	2

5c. Generally speaking, do you think people get ahead in the military based on their hard work and ability, or do you think that hard work and ability are no guarantee of success in the military?

	People get ahead in military on hard work and ability	Hard work and ability are no guarantee	Don't know/ refused (VOL.)
Total	62	34	4
Pre-9/11	63	32	4
Post-9/11	54	43	3

6. All in all, considering the costs to the United States versus the benefits to the United States, do you think the war in Iraq has been worth fighting, or not?

	Worth fighting	Not worth fighting	Don't know/ refused (VOL.)
Total	39	57	4
Pre-9/11	39	58	4
Post-9/11	44	50	6

7. All in all, considering the costs to the United States versus the benefits to the United States, do you think the war in Afghanistan has been worth fighting, or not?

	Worth fighting	Not worth fighting	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	42	53	5
Pre-9/11	41	55	4
Post-9/11	50	42	8

8. In Afghanistan and Iraq, the military has been asked to engage in noncombat missions like reconstruction and operations designed to strengthen the country's social, political and economic institutions, sometimes called "nation building." Do you think these are appropriate roles or inappropriate roles for the military?

	Appropriate	Inappropriate	Don't know/ refused (VOL.)
Total	47	50	4
Pre-9/11	45	51	4
Post-9/11	59	38	3

9. As you may know, the United States military has made increasing use of unmanned aircraft called "drones" to launch aerial attacks in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere. Do you think the increased use of drones by the military is a good thing, or a bad thing?

	Good thing	Bad thing	Doesn't make a difference (VOL.)	Neither/equally good and bad (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	86	8	*	2	3
Pre-9/11	86	8	*	2	3
Post-9/11	87	7	*	3	3

10. Do you think the United States should return to the military draft at this time, or not?

	Yes	No	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	30	68	2
Pre-9/11	32	66	2
Post-9/11	16	82	2

11. What year did you (enter/ first enter) the service?

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO ENTERED IN 2001 [n = 31; Pre-9/11 = 1; Post-9/11 = 30]**

11a. Did you enter the service before or after September 11, 2001?

11/11a. Combo Table

	Total	Pre-9/11	Post-9/11
Prior to 1954	17	19	*
1954-1963	14	15	*
1964-1973	27	31	2
1974-9/11	36	34	53
9/11 to present	5	0	44
Don't know/refused (VOL.)	1	0	0

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO ENTERED THE SERVICE BEFORE 1974 [n = 999; Pre-9/11 = 932; Post-9/11 = 67]**

12. Were you drafted, or did you volunteer?

	Drafted	Volunteered	Don't know/ refused (VOL.)
Total	28	72	*
Pre-9/11	28	72	*
Post-9/11	33	67	0

11/12. Combo Table

	Enter the service before 1974			Entered the service after 1974	Don't know/ refused (VOL.)
	NET	Drafted	Volunteered		
Total	58	16	42	42	1
Pre-9/11	66	18	48	34	0
Post-9/11	3	1	2	97	0

13. Altogether, how long did you serve on active duty?

	2 years or less	3-less than 5 years	5-less than 10 years	10 years or more	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	27	39	18	16	*
Pre-9/11	27	40	17	15	*
Post-9/11	25	30	22	21	*

14. At the time of your (most recent, **IF MORE THAN ONE ITEM MENTIONED**) discharge or retirement were you a commissioned officer, a noncommissioned officer, a warrant officer, or an enlisted person?

	TOTAL OFFICERS				Enlisted person	In National Guard/Reserves (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Commissioned officer	Non-commissioned officer	Warrant officer			
Total	50	8	42	1	49	1	1
Pre-9/11	50	8	42	1	49	0	1
Post-9/11	44	8	35	1	49	6	1

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO SERVED AFTER 9/11 [n = 712]**

- 15a. Did you serve in Iraq, off the coast of Iraq, or did you fly missions over Iraq at any time since March 2003?

	-----TOTAL SERVED-----				No	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Served in Iraq	Flew missions over Iraq	Served off the coast of Iraq		
Post-9/11	45	36	4	9	54	1

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO SERVED AFTER 9/11 [n = 712]**

- 15b. Did you serve in Afghanistan, or did you fly missions over Afghanistan at any time since October 2001?

	-----TOTAL SERVED-----			No	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Served in Afghanistan	Flew missions over Afghanistan		
Post-9/11	16	13	4	82	2



**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO ENTERED THE SERVICE AFTER 2001 OR AFTER 9/11/01 OR DK/REF WHEN ENTERED AND SERVED IN IRAQ AT ANY TIME SINCE MARCH 2003 [n = 217]**

16a. If you had to choose just one word that best describes your experience in Iraq what would that word be?

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO ENTERED THE SERVICE AFTER 2001 OR AFTER 9/11/01 OR DK/REF WHEN ENTERED AND SERVED IN AFGHANISTAN AT ANY TIME SINCE OCTOBER 2001 [n = 87]**

16b. If you had to choose just one word that best describes your experience in Afghanistan what would that word be?

Total	Answer given
19	Worthwhile/beneficial/rewarding/fulfilling
18	Hot
16	Bad/lousy/terrible/horrible/miserable
15	Interesting
13	Hell/nightmare/horrifying
13	Eye-opening
12	Educational/knowledgeable
11	Life-changing
10	Challenging
9	Good
9	Different/unique
9	Stressful/nerve-racking/on edge
7	Hard/tough
7	Enlightening
6	Scary/fearful
5	Confusing/confused
4	Experience
4	Memorable
4	Frustrating
4	Business
3	Sad/tragic
3	Appreciative/thankful
3	Depressing
3	Disappointing
3	Long
2	Futile
2	Hope
2	Satisfying
2	Humbling
2	Awesome
2	Amazing
70	Other
12	Don't know/refused

NOTE: The numbers listed represent the number of respondents who offered each response; the numbers are not percentages. All words are shown.

17. When you were on active duty would you say that you had a clear understanding of what your missions were ... all of the time, most of the time, just some of the time or none of the time?

	ALL/MOST			JUST SOME/NONE			Varied (VOL.)	Don't know/ refused (VOL.)
	NET	All of the time	Most of the time	NET	Just some of the time	None of the time		
Total	85	48	37	14	12	3	*	1
Pre-9/11	85	50	36	14	11	3	*	*
Post-9/11	79	37	42	20	17	3	0	1

- 17a. (MARITAL). Are you currently married, living with a partner, divorced, separated, widowed, or have you never been married?

	Married	Living with a partner	Divorced	Separated	Widowed	Never been married	Refused (VOL.)
Total	64	4	13	3	9	8	*
Pre-9/11	65	4	14	3	10	5	*
Post-9/11	56	5	9	3	*	26	*

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO HAVE NEVER BEEN MARRIED OR REFUSED  
MARITAL STATUS [n = 1701; Pre-9/11 = 1094; Post-9/11 = 602<sup>36</sup>]**

18. Were you married at any point when you were on active duty, or were you not married then?

	Married	Not married	Refused (VOL.)
Total	53	47	*
Pre-9/11	52	48	0
Post-9/11	72	28	*

**17a/18. Combo Table**

	EVER BEEN MARRIED/REFUSED			Never been married
	NET	Married while on active duty	Not married while on active duty	
Total	92	49	43	8
Pre-9/11	95	49	46	5
Post-9/11	74	53	21	26

<sup>36</sup> Pre-9/11 and post-9/11 cases do not always add to the total due to "Don't know/Refused" responses in Q.11/11a.

19. Were you the parent of a child under age 18 when you were on active duty, or did you not have children during that time?

	Had young children	Did not have young children	Refused (VOL.)
Total	32	68	*
Pre-9/11	32	68	0
Post-9/11	39	61	1

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO HAVE BEEN MARRIED OR PARENTS WHILE ON ACTIVE DUTY [n = 1051; Pre-9/11 = 545; Post-9/11 = 505]**

20. Now I would like you to think back to the time when you were on active duty. How would you rate the job the military did in meeting the needs of your family when you served? Did the military do an excellent, good, only fair or poor job [IF NEEDED] meeting the needs of your family?

	EXCELLENT/GOOD			ONLY FAIR/POOR			Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Excellent	Good	NET	Only fair	Poor	
Total	74	26	48	24	17	8	2
Pre-9/11	75	27	48	23	15	7	2
Post-9/11	63	20	44	34	26	8	2

**18/19/20. Combo Table**

	Total	Pre-9/11	Post-9/11
Married/had young children while on active duty	51	51	57
Military did excellent job meeting needs of family	13	14	11
Military did good job meeting needs of family	24	25	25
Military did only fair job meeting needs of family	9	8	15
Military did poor job meeting needs of family	4	4	5
Not married/did not have young children while on active duty	49	49	43
Don't know/refused (VOL.)	0	0	0

21. During your military service, how many times were you deployed away from your permanent duty station?

	Total	Pre-9/11	Post-9/11
None	29	31	15
1-2	30	28	46
3-7	20	20	24
8 or more	10	10	9
Multiple (unspecified) (VOL.)	9	10	4
Don't know/refused (VOL.)	3	3	1

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO WERE DEPLOYED [n = 1323; Pre-9/11 = 723; Post-9/11 = 599]**

22. Overall, did your (deployment/deployments) have a positive impact, a negative impact or no impact on each of the following? (INSERT FIRST ITEM)? How about (INSERT NEXT ITEM)?

- a. Your financial situation

	Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	Mixed, both equally (VOL.)	Not applicable (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	36	19	45	*	*	*
Pre-9/11	32	20	47	*	*	*
Post-9/11	60	10	30	*	0	*

- b. Your health

	Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	Mixed, both equally (VOL.)	Not applicable (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	27	21	50	1	0	1
Pre-9/11	28	18	52	1	0	1
Post-9/11	21	40	38	*	0	1

- c. Your chances for promotion and advancement within the military

	Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	Mixed, both equally (VOL.)	Not applicable (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	58	6	35	1	*	*
Pre-9/11	58	6	34	1	*	*
Post-9/11	57	7	35	1	*	*

## Q. 22 CONTINUED...

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO WERE DEPLOYED AND MARRIED WHILE ON ACTIVE DUTY [n = 790; Pre-9/11 = 372; Post-9/11 = 418]**

d. Your relationship with your spouse

	Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	Mixed, both equally (VOL.)	Not applicable (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	24	36	38	1	*	1
Pre-9/11	25	34	38	1	*	1
Post-9/11	16	48	33	1	1	0

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO WERE DEPLOYED AND HAD CHILDREN WHILE ON ACTIVE DUTY [n = 580; Pre-9/11 = 249; Post-9/11 = 330]**

e. Your relationship with your children

	Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	Mixed, both equally (VOL.)	Not applicable (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	23	35	40	*	*	*
Pre-9/11	24	34	42	0	*	*
Post-9/11	22	44	32	1	1	0

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO WERE DEPLOYED [n = 1323; Pre-9/11 = 723; Post-9/11 = 599]**

23. Did your (deployment/deployments) make you feel you were doing something important for your country, or didn't it make you feel that way?

	Felt doing something important	Did not make me feel that way	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	84	15	1
Pre-9/11	84	14	1
Post-9/11	80	18	2

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO ENTERED THE SERVICE AFTER 1973 [n = 1583;****Pre-9/11 = 886; Post-9/11 = 697]**

25. I'm going to read you some reasons why people join the military. For each one, please tell me if this is an important reason or not an important reason why you joined the military. Here is the first (INSERT)?

- a. To serve your country

	Important	Not important	Not applicable (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	92	8	*	*
Pre-9/11	93	7	*	*
Post-9/11	88	10	1	1

- b. To receive education benefits

	Important	Not important	Not applicable (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	58	41	*	*
Pre-9/11	55	44	*	*
Post-9/11	75	24	*	1

- c. To learn skills for civilian jobs

	Important	Not important	Not applicable (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	55	44	*	*
Pre-9/11	55	45	*	*
Post-9/11	57	42	*	1

- d. Because jobs were hard to find

	Important	Not important	Not applicable (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	25	74	*	1
Pre-9/11	25	74	*	*
Post-9/11	28	70	1	1

**Q.25 CONTINUED...**

e. To see more of the world

	Important	Not important	Not applicable (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	55	44	1	*
Pre-9/11	53	46	1	*
Post-9/11	65	35	0	1

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO ENTERED THE SERVICE AFTER 9/11/01 OR ENTERED ON 9/11/01 [n=183]**

f. Because of the terrorist attacks on 9/11

	Important	Not important	Not applicable (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	58	42	*	*

26. Considering everything, do you think your military experience has helped you get ahead in life, do you think it has hurt you, or don't you think it has made a difference one way or another?

	Total	Pre-9/11	Post-9/11
Helped (NET)	80	80	74
A lot	66	67	58
A little	14	14	16
Hurt (NET)	3	3	6
A little	2	1	2
A lot	2	1	4
Made no difference	16	16	15
Both equally/neither (VOL.)	1	1	3
Too soon to tell, recently discharged (VOL.)	*	0	1
Don't know/refused (VOL.)	1	*	1

27. How useful was your military experience in (INSERT). Would you say very useful, fairly useful, not too useful or not useful at all?

a. Teaching you how to work together with other people

	USEFUL			NOT USEFUL			Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Very	Fairly	NET	Not too	Not at all	
Total	92	67	25	8	5	3	*
Pre-9/11	92	67	25	8	4	4	*
Post-9/11	90	65	25	9	7	2	1

b. Giving you self-confidence

	USEFUL			NOT USEFUL			Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Very	Fairly	NET	Not too	Not at all	
Total	92	68	23	8	4	4	*
Pre-9/11	92	69	22	8	4	5	*
Post-9/11	90	61	29	8	6	2	2

c. Preparing you for a job or career

	USEFUL			NOT USEFUL			Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Very	Fairly	NET	Not too	Not at all	
Total	69	44	25	30	13	16	1
Pre-9/11	69	44	25	30	13	17	1
Post-9/11	72	41	31	27	16	11	2

d. Helping you grow and mature as a person

	USEFUL			NOT USEFUL			Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Very	Fairly	NET	Not too	Not at all	
Total	93	71	21	7	3	3	*
Pre-9/11	93	71	21	7	3	4	*
Post-9/11	93	71	21	6	5	1	1

**Q.28 MOVED TO AFTER Q.51**



29. Generally speaking, how well do you think the American people understand: (INSERT): very well, fairly well, not too well or not well at all?

a. The benefits and rewards of military service

	VERY/FAIRLY			NOT TOO/NOT AT ALL			Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Very	Fairly	NET	Not too	Not at all	
Total	29	5	24	70	46	24	2
Pre-9/11	29	5	24	69	45	24	2
Post-9/11	26	4	22	73	49	23	1

b. The problems that those in the military face

	VERY/FAIRLY			NOT TOO/NOT AT ALL			Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Very	Fairly	NET	Not too	Not at all	
Total	22	3	18	77	44	33	2
Pre-9/11	22	4	19	76	44	32	2
Post-9/11	15	2	13	84	44	39	1

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO ENTERED THE SERVICE BEFORE 2001 [n = 1635;  
Pre-9/11 = 1133; Post-9/11 = 502]**

30. Compared to when you were in the military, do you think the American public today has more respect or less respect for those who serve in the military?

	A LOT/LITTLE MORE			A LOT/LITTLE LESS			About the same respect (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	A lot	A little	NET	A little	A lot		
Total	70	47	24	22	13	10	5	3
Pre-9/11	70	47	23	23	13	10	5	3
Post-9/11	74	39	35	18	12	6	5	2

31. Next, I'm going to ask some questions about combat and other military experiences. Did you ever serve in a combat or war zone, or not?

	Yes, served in combat or war zone	No did not serve	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	44	55	1
Pre-9/11	42	57	1
Post-9/11	60	39	1

32. Were you ever seriously injured while performing your duties in the military, or not?

	Yes	No	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	10	89	1
Pre-9/11	10	90	1
Post-9/11	16	83	1

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO WERE INJURED IN A COMBAT ZONE [n = 143]**

32a. Were any of those injuries combat-related, or not?

Yes, seriously injured in combat	No, not combat-related	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
72	28	0

32/32a. Combo table

	-----WAS INJURED-----				Was not injured	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Injured in combat	Injured, not in combat	Don't know/refused (VOL.)		
Total	10	4	2	0	89	1
Pre-9/11	10	4	1	0	90	1
Post-9/11	16	6	4	0	83	1

33. Was anyone you knew and served with seriously injured while performing their duties in the military, or not?

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO KNEW SOMEONE WHO WAS INJURED [n = 1046;**

**Pre-9/11 = 598; Post-9/11 = 446]**

33a. Were any of those injuries combat-related, or not?

33/33a. Combo Table

	KNEW SOMEONE WHO WAS INJURED				Do not know someone who was injured	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Injured in combat	Injured, not in combat	Don't know/refused (VOL.)		
Total	52	40	12	1	47	1
Pre-9/11	51	39	12	1	49	1
Post-9/11	60	48	12	*	38	2

34. Was anyone you knew and served with killed while performing their duties in the military, or not?

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO KNEW SOMEONE WHO WAS KILLED [n = 883;**

**Pre-9/11 = 515; Post-9/11 = 367]**

- 34a. Were they killed in combat, or not?

34/34a. Combo Table

	KNEW SOMEONE WHO WAS KILLED				Do not know someone who was killed	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Killed in combat	Killed, not in combat	Don't know/refused (VOL.)		
Total	43	35	8	*	56	1
Pre-9/11	43	34	8	1	56	1
Post-9/11	47	38	9	*	52	1

35. When you were in the service, how would you rate the care that injured U.S. military personnel received in military hospitals in the United States? Would you say the care they received when you were in the service was excellent, good, only fair or poor?

	EXCELLENT/GOOD			ONLY FAIR/POOR			Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Excellent	Good	NET	Only fair	Poor	
Total	70	26	44	18	14	4	12
Pre-9/11	70	26	43	17	13	4	13
Post-9/11	74	22	52	22	18	4	5

36. On another subject, after your military service, would you say your readjustment to civilian life was very easy, somewhat easy, somewhat difficult or very difficult?

	VERY/SOMEWHAT EASY			VERY/SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT			Just left the service/too soon to tell (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Very		
Total	72	43	29	27	21	6	*	*
Pre-9/11	75	47	28	25	20	5	0	*
Post-9/11	54	17	37	44	31	13	*	1

37. How would you rate the job the Veterans Administration is doing today to meet the needs of military veterans? Is the VA doing an excellent, good, only fair or poor job [IF NEEDED] meeting the needs of military veterans?<sup>37</sup>

	EXCELLENT/GOOD			ONLY FAIR/POOR			Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Excellent	Good	NET	Only fair	Poor	
Total	52	16	36	38	30	8	10
Pre-9/11	52	16	36	37	29	8	11
Post-9/11	51	12	39	44	35	9	5

38. Have you received any benefits from the Veterans Administration, or not?

	Yes	No	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	55	45	*
Pre-9/11	54	46	0
Post-9/11	62	38	1

39. Has the government given you, as a veteran, all the help you think it should?

	Yes	No	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	61	34	5
Pre-9/11	62	32	5
Post-9/11	51	47	2

- E2. Are you now enrolled in school, either full or part-time, or not?

	STUDENT			No	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Full-time	Part-time		
Total	7	4	3	93	*
Pre-9/11	3	1	3	97	0
Post-9/11	33	25	8	66	1

<sup>37</sup> When the Veterans Administration was established as a Cabinet-level position in 1989, the name was changed to the Department of Veterans Affairs. Survey respondents were asked to rate the "Veterans Administration."

E3. Are you now employed full-time, part-time or not employed?

	EMPLOYED			Not employed	Retired (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Full-time	Part-time			
Total	45	38	6	35	20	*
Pre-9/11	41	36	5	36	23	0
Post-9/11	69	55	13	30	*	1

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO ARE EMPLOYED [n = 860; Pre-9/11 = 360; Post-9/11 = 499]**

40. Are you now employed by a private company or business, a private nonprofit organization; the federal, state, or local government, or are you self-employed in your own business or professional practice?

	A private company or business	A private nonprofit organization	The federal, state, or local government	Self-employed	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	55	8	24	12	1
Pre-9/11	54	9	23	12	1
Post-9/11	61	5	27	7	*

**NO QUESTION 41.**

42. How would you rate your own health in general these days? Would you say your health is excellent, good, only fair or poor?

	EXCELLENT/GOOD			ONLY FAIR/POOR			Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Excellent	Good	NET	Only fair	Poor	
Total	70	21	48	30	23	8	*
Pre-9/11	69	21	48	31	23	8	*
Post-9/11	72	26	46	27	23	4	1

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO SERVED AFTER 9/11[n = 712]**

43. Now I am going to read to you things that some veterans have experienced since they were discharged from the service and others have not. For each, tell me whether this is something you, personally, have experienced. Here's the first: (INSERT):  
(READ FOR ITEMS f-i): And did you have any of these experiences since you were discharged, or not:

	Yes	No	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
a. Appreciated life more	82	16	2
b. Felt proud that you had served in the military	96	4	1
NO ITEM c.			
d. Had people thank you for your service	92	7	1
NO ITEM e.			
f. Experienced strains in family relations	48	51	1
g. Felt that you didn't care about anything	32	66	2
NO ITEM h.			
i. Experienced frequent incidents of irritability or outbursts of anger	47	52	1

44. Were there any specific experiences related to your military service that you found to be emotionally traumatic or distressing, or not?

	Yes	No	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	32	67	1
Pre-9/11	30	68	1
Post-9/11	43	56	2

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO EXPERIENCED EMOTIONALLY TRAUMATIC EVENTS [n = 663; Pre-9/11 = 353; Post-9/11 = 309]**

45. Since those experiences, have you had flashbacks, repeated distressing memories or recurring dreams of those experiences?

	Yes	No	Had one / some but not others (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	56	41	3	*
Pre-9/11	53	43	3	*
Post-9/11	72	27	1	*

## 44/45. Combo Table

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Pre-9/11</b>	<b>Post-9/11</b>
Specific experiences related to military service found to be emotionally traumatic/distressing	32	30	43
Have had flashbacks/repeated distressing memories/recurring dreams of those experiences	18	16	31
Have not had flashbacks/repeated distressing memories/recurring dreams of those experiences	13	13	11
Had one/some but not others	1	1	*
Specific experiences related to military service not found to be emotionally traumatic/distressing	67	68	56
Don't know/refused (VOL.)	1	1	2

46. When you were in the military, did your superiors make you and others who served with you feel comfortable or uncomfortable about seeking help for emotional issues resulting from experiences on active duty?

	<b>Comfortable</b>	<b>Uncomfortable</b>	<b>Neither/both (VOL.)</b>	<b>Don't know/refused (VOL.)</b>
Total	54	22	13	12
Pre-9/11	51	22	14	13
Post-9/11	69	23	5	2

## NO QUESTION 47.

48. Did anyone you knew and served with in the military suffer from post-traumatic stress as a result of their experiences in the service, or not?

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know/refused (VOL.)</b>
Total	37	58	4
Pre-9/11	35	60	5
Post-9/11	58	39	3

## NO QUESTION 49.

50. Regardless of whether you have been diagnosed, do you think you ever suffered from post-traumatic stress as a result of your experiences in the military, or not?

	Yes	No	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	19	79	2
Pre-9/11	16	82	2
Post-9/11	37	61	2

51. Have any of the following members of your family served in the military?

- a. A parent

	Yes	No	Not applicable (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	50	49	*	*
Pre-9/11	51	49	0	*
Post-9/11	45	53	1	1

- b. A sister or brother

	Yes	No	Not applicable (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	43	56	1	*
Pre-9/11	44	55	1	*
Post-9/11	33	64	2	1

- c. A grandparent

	Yes	No	Not applicable (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	37	56	1	7
Pre-9/11	35	58	*	7
Post-9/11	57	38	2	4

- d. A child

	Yes	No	Not applicable (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	21	77	2	*
Pre-9/11	23	76	1	*
Post-9/11	5	86	8	1



**Q.51 CONTINUED...**

e. An uncle or aunt

	Yes	No	Not applicable (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	70	27	*	3
Pre-9/11	73	24	*	3
Post-9/11	57	39	2	2

f. A niece or nephew

	Yes	No	Not applicable (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	40	58	1	2
Pre-9/11	43	55	*	2
Post-9/11	14	82	3	1

g. A spouse or domestic partner

**BASED ON VETERANS WHO HAVE EVER BEEN MARRIED OR REFUSED MARITAL  
STATUS [n = 1701; Pre-9/11 = 1094; Post-9/11 = 602]**

	Yes	No	Not applicable (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	12	88	*	*
Pre-9/11	11	89	0	*
Post-9/11	23	75	*	1

**BASED ON TOTAL**

	Yes	No	Not applicable (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)	Never married
Total	11	81	*	*	8
Pre-9/11	10	85	0	*	5
Post-9/11	17	56	*	1	26

28. Would you advise a young person close to you to join the military, or not?

	Yes, would advise joining	No, would not advise joining	Depends (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	75	17	8	1
Pre-9/11	74	17	9	*
Post-9/11	82	12	5	1

## SEX RECORD RESPONDENT'S GENDER (DO NOT ASK)

	Male	Female
Total	91	9
Pre-9/11	93	7
Post-9/11	81	19

## AGE What is your age?

	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	Refused (VOL.)
Total	5	23	32	39	*
Pre-9/11	0	20	36	44	*
Post-9/11	45	47	7	1	*

## EDUC What is the last grade or class that you completed in school?

	Total	Pre-9/11	Post-9/11
HS or less (NET)	38	39	29
None, or grade 1-8	1	1	*
High school incomplete (Grades 9-11)	3	3	1
High school graduate (Grade 12 or GED certificate)	30	31	26
Technical, trade, or vocational school AFTER high school	4	4	1
Some college, associate degree, no 4-year degree	34	33	47
College grad + (NET)	28	28	24
College graduate (B.S., B.A., or other 4-year degree)	15	14	15
Post-graduate training or professional schooling after college	13	14	9
Don't know/refused (VOL.)	*	*	0

HISP4 Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican or Cuban?

RACE1 Which of the following describes your race? You can select as many as apply.

[READ LIST. RECORD UP TO FOUR RESPONSES IN ORDER MENTIONED]

## HISP4/ RACE1 Combo Table

	White non-Hispanic	Black non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Other	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	80	10	6	4	1
Pre-9/11	82	9	5	3	1
Post-9/11	71	13	11	5	1

RELIG What is your present religion, if any? Are you Protestant, Roman Catholic, Mormon, Orthodox such as Greek or Russian Orthodox, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, atheist, agnostic, something else, or nothing in particular?

	Total	Pre-9/11	Post-9/11
Protestant	47	49	37
Roman Catholic	22	23	15
Mormon	2	3	2
Orthodox	*	*	*
Jewish	2	2	1
Muslim	*	*	*
Buddhist	1	*	1
Hindu	0	0	0
Atheist (do not believe in God)	1	1	3
Agnostic (not sure there is a God)	3	2	4
Something else	2	2	2
Nothing in particular	12	11	22
Christian	6	6	8
Unitarian	*	*	*
Don't know/refused	1	*	2

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO ARE SOMETHING ELSE/DK/REF [n = 39; pre-9/11 = 19; post-9/11 = 20]**

CHR Do you think of yourself as a Christian or not?

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO ARE CHRISTIAN OR THINK OF THEMSELVES AS CHRISTIAN; n = 1480; pre-9/11 = 943; post-9/11 = 532)**

BORN Would you describe yourself as a "born again" or evangelical Christian, or not?

	Yes, would	No, would not	Don't know/refused
Total	37	61	2
Pre-9/11	37	61	2
Post-9/11	39	61	1

RELIG combo table

Total	Pre-9/11	Post-9/11	
54	55	45	Protestant
22	23	15	Catholic
16	15	30	Unaffiliated
7	7	7	Other
1	*	2	Don't know/Refused (VOL)

**ATTEND** Aside from weddings and funerals, how often do you attend religious services... more than once a week, once a week, once or twice a month, a few times a year, seldom, or never?

	-----NEVER-----						Never	Don't know/ refused (VOL.)
	NET	More than once a week	Once a week	Once or twice a month	A few times a year	Seldom		
Total	84	11	26	12	18	17	15	1
Pre-9/11	85	12	27	12	18	17	14	1
Post-9/11	76	9	20	12	15	20	23	2

**REGIST** These days, many people are so busy they can't find time to register to vote, or move around so often they don't get a chance to re-register. Are you NOW registered to vote in your precinct or election district or haven't you been able to register so far?

	Yes, registered	No, not registered	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	88	12	*
Pre-9/11	89	10	*
Post-9/11	80	20	*

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO ARE REGISTERED TO VOTE [n = 1677;  
Post-9/11 = 1058; Pre-9/11 = 613]**

**REGICERT** Are you absolutely certain that you are registered to vote, or is there a chance that your registration has lapsed because you moved or for some other reason?

	Absolutely certain	Chance registration has lapsed	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	97	3	*
Pre-9/11	98	2	*
Post-9/11	90	9	1

**REGIST/REGICERT Combo Table**

	-----REGISTERED-----			Not registered	Don't know/ refused (VOL.)
	NET	Absolutely certain	Chance registration has lapsed		
Total	88	85	2	12	*
Pre-9/11	89	87	2	10	*
Post-9/11	80	72	7	20	*

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?

	Republican	Democrat	Independent	No preference (VOL.)	Other party (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	31	25	36	5	1	2
Pre-9/11	30	26	36	5	1	2
Post-9/11	36	21	35	4	1	4

**ASKED OF TOTAL VETERANS WHO ARE INDEPENDENT, NO PREFERENCE, OTHER PARTY, DK/REF [n = 814; Pre-9/11 = 505; Post-9/11 = 307]**

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

	Republican	Democratic	Neither (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	35	33	28	4
Pre-9/11	35	33	29	3
Post-9/11	35	33	23	10

PARTY/PARTYLN Combo Table

	Leaned/ Republican	Leaned/ Democratic	Independent	No preference (VOL.)	Other party (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	46	40	10	2	*	1
Pre-9/11	46	40	10	2	*	1
Post-9/11	51	35	9	2	*	3

IDEO In general, would you describe your political views as... [READ]

	CONSERVATIVE			Moderate	LIBERAL			Don't know/refused (VOL.)
	NET	Very conservative	Conservative		NET	Liberal	Very liberal	
Total	48	12	36	35	14	12	3	3
Pre-9/11	49	12	37	34	15	12	3	3
Post-9/11	40	8	31	43	12	9	3	6

USBORN1A Were you born in the United States or in another country?

	Yes, born in the U.S.	No, some other country	Puerto Rico (VOL.)	Other U.S. territories (VOL.)	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	96	3	*	*	*
Pre-9/11	97	2	1	*	*
Post-9/11	94	6	0	*	*

USBORN2 Were both of your parents born in the United States, or not?

**INTERVIEWER NOTE:** Born in U.S. includes born in Puerto Rico, other U.S. territories

	Yes, both parents born in U.S.	No, one or both parents born in another country	Don't know/refused (VOL.)
Total	87	13	1
Pre-9/11	87	12	1
Post-9/11	83	16	1

INCOME Last year, that is in 2010, what was your total family income from all sources, before taxes? Just stop me when I get to the right category. [

	Total	Pre-9/11	Post-9/11
Less than \$10,000	4	4	4
10 to under \$20,000	9	10	9
20 to under \$30,000	12	11	15
30 to under \$40,000	12	12	14
40 to under \$50,000	10	10	9
50 to under \$75,000	19	19	19
75 to under \$100,000	12	11	14
100 to under \$150,000	9	10	9
\$150,000 or more	4	4	4
Don't know/refused (VOL.)	9	10	3

**PEW SOCIAL & DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS**  
**SEPTEMBER 2011 GP SURVEY ON VETERANS**  
**FINAL TOPLINE**  
**SEPTEMBER 1-15, 2011**  
**TOTAL N=2,003**

**NOTE: ALL NUMBERS ARE PERCENTAGES. THE PERCENTAGES GREATER THAN ZERO BUT LESS THAN 0.5 % ARE REPLACED BY AN ASTERISK (\*). COLUMNS/ROWS MAY NOT TOTAL 100% DUE TO ROUNDING. UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, ALL TRENDS REFERENCE SURVEYS FROM SOCIAL & DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS AND THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS. PERCENTAGES FOR SUB-GROUPS ARE NOT REPORTED WHEN N IS LESS THAN 100.**

**ASK ALL:**

On another subject...

- Q.20 Generally speaking, do you think people get ahead in THEIR JOB OR CAREER based on their hard work and ability, or do you think that hard work and ability are no guarantee of success in a job or career? { *Veterans survey, Q5c modified* }
- [IF NECESSARY: Which comes closer to the way you feel?]

48	People get ahead based on hard work and ability
48	Hard work and ability are no guarantee
4	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>

**ASK ALL:**

- E3 (IF E1=1,2 & E2=3,9 : Some people who have retired do some type of work for pay.../IF E2=1,2 & E1=3,9: Some students also do some type of work for pay//IF E1=4: Some people who are disabled do some type of work for pay...) Are you now employed full-time, part-time or not employed? { *Veterans survey, E3 modified* }

60	Employed <b>(NET)</b>
44	Full-time
16	Part-time
39	Not employed
1	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>

**ASK IF EMPLOYED [n=1,168]:**

- E3a Are you now employed by a private company or business, a private non-profit organization; the federal, state, or local government, or are you self-employed in your own business or professional practice? { *Veterans survey, Q40* }

56	A private company or business
8	A private nonprofit organization
17	The federal, state, or local government
17	Self-employed
3	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>

**ASK ALL:**

Now, on a different subject...

- Q.26 Do you think you are more patriotic, less patriotic, or about as patriotic as most other people in this country?  
{ *Veterans survey, Q5a*}

	More <u>patriotic</u>	Less <u>patriotic</u>	About as <u>patriotic</u>	DK/Ref ( <u>VOL.</u> )
Sep 2011	37	10	49	4
Mar 2010	33	6	59	2

**ASK ALL:**

- Q.27 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his duties as commander-in-chief of the military?  
{ *Veterans survey, Q3*}

**[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF RESPONDENT SAYS “DEPENDS” PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as commander-in-chief of the military? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

53	Approve
39	Disapprove
8	Don't know/Refused ( <b>VOL.</b> )

**NO Q.28-29****ASK ALL:**

- Q.30 Overall, do you think that the U.S. military operates efficiently or inefficiently? { *Veterans survey, Q5b*}

58	Efficiently
32	Inefficiently
1	Both equally ( <b>VOL.</b> )
*	Neither ( <b>VOL.</b> )
7	Don't know/Refused ( <b>VOL.</b> )

**ASK ALL, ROTATE Q.31 AND Q.32:**

- Q.31 All in all, considering the costs to the United States versus the benefits to the United States, do you think the war in IRAQ has been worth fighting, or not? { *Veterans survey, Q6*}

36	Worth fighting
57	Not worth fighting
7	Don't know/Refused ( <b>VOL.</b> )

- Q.32 All in all, considering the costs to the United States versus the benefits to the United States, do you think the war in AFGHANISTAN has been worth fighting, or not? { *Veterans survey, Q7*}

41	Worth fighting
52	Not worth fighting
8	Don't know/Refused ( <b>VOL.</b> )



**ASK ALL:**

Q.33 In Afghanistan and Iraq, the military has been asked to engage in noncombat missions like reconstruction and operations designed to strengthen the country's social, political and economic institutions, sometimes called "nation-building." Do you think these are appropriate roles or inappropriate roles for the military? { *Veterans survey, Q8* }

- 45 Appropriate
- 48 Inappropriate
- 8 Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.34 As you may know, the United States military has made increasing use of unmanned aircraft called "drones" to launch aerial attacks in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere. Do you think the increased use of drones by the military is a good thing, or a bad thing? { *Veterans survey, Q9* }

- 68 Good thing
- 19 Bad thing
- \* Doesn't make a difference **(VOL.)**
- 2 Neither/equally good and bad **(VOL.)**
- 11 Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.35 Do you think the United States should return to the military draft at this time, or not? { *Veterans survey, Q10* }

	Yes, return to <u>draft</u>	No, don't return <u>to draft</u>	DK/Ref <u>(VOL.)</u>
Sep 2011	20	74	6
Gallup Aug 2007	18	80	2
Gallup Oct 2004	14	85	1
Gallup/CNN/USA Today Oct 2003	17	81	2
Gallup/CNN/USA Today Jan 2003	27	69	4
Gallup/CNN/USA Today Jun 1998	16	81	3

**ASK ALL:**

Q.36 Generally speaking, how well do you think the American people understand: **(INSERT, Randomize)**: very well, fairly well, not too well or not well at all? { *Veterans survey, Q29* }

a. The benefits and rewards of military service

- 44 Very/fairly well **(NET)**
- 12 Very well
- 32 Fairly well
- 54 Not too well/not well at all **(NET)**
- 36 Not too well
- 18 Not well at all
- 2 Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**

**Q.36 CONTINUED...**

- b. The problems that those in the military face

27 Very/fairly well (**NET**)  
 8 Very well  
 19 Fairly well  
 71 Not too well/not well at all (**NET**)  
 43 Not too well  
 28 Not well at all  
 2 Don't know/Refused (**VOL.**)

**NO Q.37****ASK ALL:**

Q.38 Now I am going to read a list of things some people have done or felt since the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq began. For each one, please tell me if this is something you have personally done or felt, or not. (First,) have you personally [INSERT, RANDOMIZE] [read AFTER items a, b, and e: since the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq began], or not?

- a. Thanked someone in the military for their service

76 Yes  
 23 No  
 1 Don't know/Refused (**VOL.**)

- b. Felt proud of the soldiers who are serving in the military

91 Yes  
 7 No  
 1 Don't know/Refused (**VOL.**)

- c. Felt ashamed about something the military had done in Afghanistan or Iraq

34 Yes  
 62 No  
 3 Don't know/Refused (**VOL.**)

- d. Felt the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan made little difference in your life

50 Yes  
 47 No  
 3 Don't know/Refused (**VOL.**)

- e. Done something to help someone in the military or a military family

58 Yes  
 41 No  
 1 Don't know/Refused (**VOL.**)

**NO Q.39**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.40 Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, do you think that people who serve in the military and their families have had to make a lot of sacrifices, some sacrifices, hardly any or none at all?

97 A lot/some **(NET)**  
 83 A lot  
 14 Some  
 2 Hardly any/none at all **(NET)**  
 1 Hardly any  
 1 None at all  
 1 Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.41 And since 9/11, do you think that the American PEOPLE have had to make a lot of sacrifices, some sacrifices, hardly any or none at all?

81 A lot/some **(NET)**  
 43 A lot  
 39 Some  
 18 Hardly any/none at all **(NET)**  
 15 Hardly any  
 3 None at all  
 1 Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**

**ASK Q.42 IF Q.41 > Q.40 & Q41 ≠ 9 (e.g., Q41=2, Q40=1): [n=1,031]**

Q.42 Do you think it is unfair that those in the military and their families have made more sacrifices during this time, or is it just part of being in the military?

26 Unfair  
 70 Part of being in the military  
 1 Both **(VOL.)**  
 \* Neither **(VOL.)**  
 3 Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**

**ASK ALL:**

VET1a Have you ever served in the U.S. military or the military reserves? (**If yes:** Are you presently on active duty, or did you serve on active duty in the past?) **[DO NOT READ]**

15 Yes **(NET)**  
 2 Presently on active duty  
 11 Served on active duty in the past  
 2 Never on active duty except for initial/basic training **(VOL.)**  
 85 No  
 \* Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**  
  
 13 Veterans **(NET)**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.43 Have any of the following members of your family served in the military, or not? How about **(INSERT AND RANDOMIZE)**? **READ IF NECESSARY:** Have they served in the military, or not? { *Veterans survey, Q51* }

a. A parent

41 Yes  
 58 No  
 \* Not applicable **(VOL.)**  
 1 Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**

b. A sister or brother

27 Yes  
 72 No  
 \* Not applicable **(VOL.)**  
 \* Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**

c. A grandparent

51 Yes  
 44 No  
 \* Not applicable **(VOL.)**  
 5 Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**

d. A child

9 Yes  
 88 No  
 2 Not applicable **(VOL.)**  
 1 Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**

e. An uncle or aunt

62 Yes  
 35 No  
 \* Not applicable **(VOL.)**  
 2 Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**

f. A niece or nephew

31 Yes  
 67 No  
 1 Not applicable **(VOL.)**  
 1 Don't know/Refused **(VOL.)**

## Q.43 CONTINUED...

ASK g ONLY IF MARITAL=1-5, or 9 [INTERVIEWER: IF RESPONDENT ASKS, SPOUSE OR PARTNER REFERS TO ANY SPOUSE OR PARTNER THEY HAD IN THE PAST OR AT THE PRESENT]: [n=1,609]

g. A spouse or domestic partner

18 Yes  
82 No  
\* Not applicable (VOL.)  
\* Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

## ASK ALL:

Q.44 Thinking about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, did you serve, or do you have a close personal friend or family member in the military who has served in either of these wars, or not?

59 Yes (NET)  
3 Yes, respondent served  
56 Yes, close friend or family member served  
1 Both respondent and friend/family member served (VOL.)  
40 No, neither  
1 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

## ASK ALL:

Q.45 Would you advise a young person close to you to join the military, or not? {Veterans survey, Q28}

	Yes, would advise joining	No, wouldn't advise joining	Depends (VOL.)	DK/Ref (VOL.)
Sep 2011	48	41	7	4
ABC News/Wash. Post Jun 2005	41	52	6	1
Wash. Post/Kaiser/Harvard Jun 1999	58	32	8	2

## ASK ALL:

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?

23 Republican  
34 Democrat  
35 Independent  
4 No preference (VOL.)  
\* Other party (VOL.)  
4 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)



## APPENDIX 3: VIEWS ON WARS IN AFGHANISTAN, IRAQ

### Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq Worth Fighting?

	Pre-Vietnam veterans	Vietnam veterans	Post-Vietnam/ Pre-9/11 veterans	Post-9/11 veterans	General public
<i>All is all, considering the costs versus benefits to the U.S. has the war in...</i>	%	%	%	%	%
Afghanistan					
Been worth fighting	33	39	50	50	41
Not been worth fighting	59	58	47	42	52
Don't know	9	3	3	8	8
Iraq					
Been worth fighting	35	36	45	44	36
Not been worth fighting	58	61	53	50	57
Don't know	7	3	2	6	7
Both wars worth fighting	21	26	34	34	28
Neither war worth fighting	47	49	37	33	45
Mixed					
Afghanistan yes, Iraq no	10	12	16	15	11
Iraq yes, Afghanistan no	11	9	9	9	6
Don't know (to either)	11	5	4	9	10

Based on all veterans, N=1853. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

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