

Veteran Suicide Awareness

REVEALING THE SILENT BATTLE



VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

22 VETERANS COMMIT SUICIDE ON US SOIL EVERYDAY

Suicide is a major public health issue and among the top ten causes of death in the United States. Unfortunately, for more than a decade, the suicide rate has been rising in the general U.S. population, but more specifically among veterans — men and women who risked their lives for the country. **In order to bring awareness to this issue, this publication presents data on the magnitude of veteran suicide, and identifies specific issues and trends.** In its 2018–2024 strategic plan, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) identified preventing veteran suicide as its highest clinical priority, and we are committed to helping the VA—and the country—achieve this critical goal.

Mission 22 is a national community supporting active service members, Veterans, and their family members, through multiple focus areas to unite civilians and the military community to raise awareness of issues active service members, veterans, and their family members face during their “war at home”.



EVERY

MINUTES

**THAT'S HOW OFTEN
A VETERAN COMMITS
SUICIDE ON US SOIL DAILY**

Everyday, 22 veterans lose their battle to post traumatic stress on American soil. That is 1 veterans every 65 minutes. The rates for the active duty individual services per 100,000 according to the report, were **23 for the Army, 23.1 for the Marine Corps, 14.4 for the Air Force** and **13.4 for the Navy**. The Veteran Administration statistics confirm 22 Veterans a day are succumbing to suicide on American soil. The total number of those losing their battle grows larger with each day research and treatments are not able to be done.

THE RATE OF SUICIDE
AMONG **VETERANS** WAS
32.0 PER 10,000
COMPARED WITH **17.2**
PER 10,000 FOR
NON VETERANS (VA 2020B)



SUICIDE RATES ARE HIGHEST AMONG

VHA patients diagnosed with opioid use disorder or bipolar disorder (both between 120 and 130 suicide deaths per 100,000), followed by schizophrenia and substance use disorders overall (both between 80 and 100 deaths per 100,000), anxiety (67 per 100,000), depression (66.4 per 100,000), and posttraumatic stress disorder (between 50 and 60 per 100,000). There is also evidence that veterans with traumatic brain injuries are at increased risk of suicide compared with those without these injuries (Hostetter et al., 2019).



MOST COMMON LETHAL MEANS

Among non-Veterans overall, there were increases from 2001 to 2019 in the percentage of suicides involving suffocation and “other means” and decreases in the percentage involving firearms and poisoning. **Among Veterans, there were increases in the percentage involving firearms and suffocation** and decreases for those involving poisoning and other means. Firearms accounted for 70.2% of male Veteran suicides in 2019 (up from 69.6% in 2018) and 49.8% of female Veteran suicides in 2019 (up from 41.1% in 2018). The proportion of firearm-related Veteran suicide deaths increased in 2019 compared to 2001.

**SUICIDE RATE AMONG
VETERANS 18–34 YEARS
OLD WAS 45.9 PER 100,000.**

—higher than in any other age group in either population and **almost three times higher than for nonveterans in the same age bracket (16.5).**

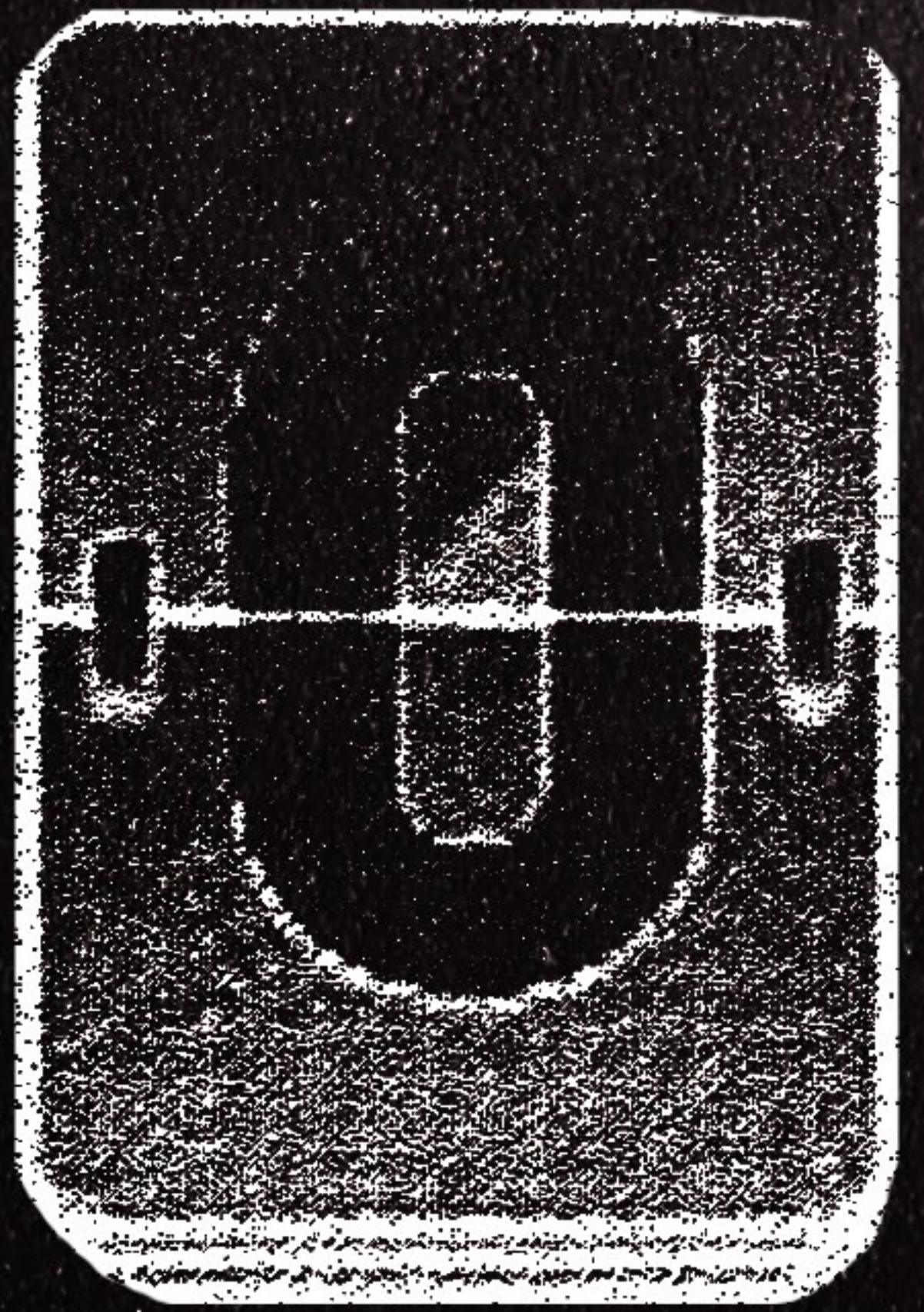
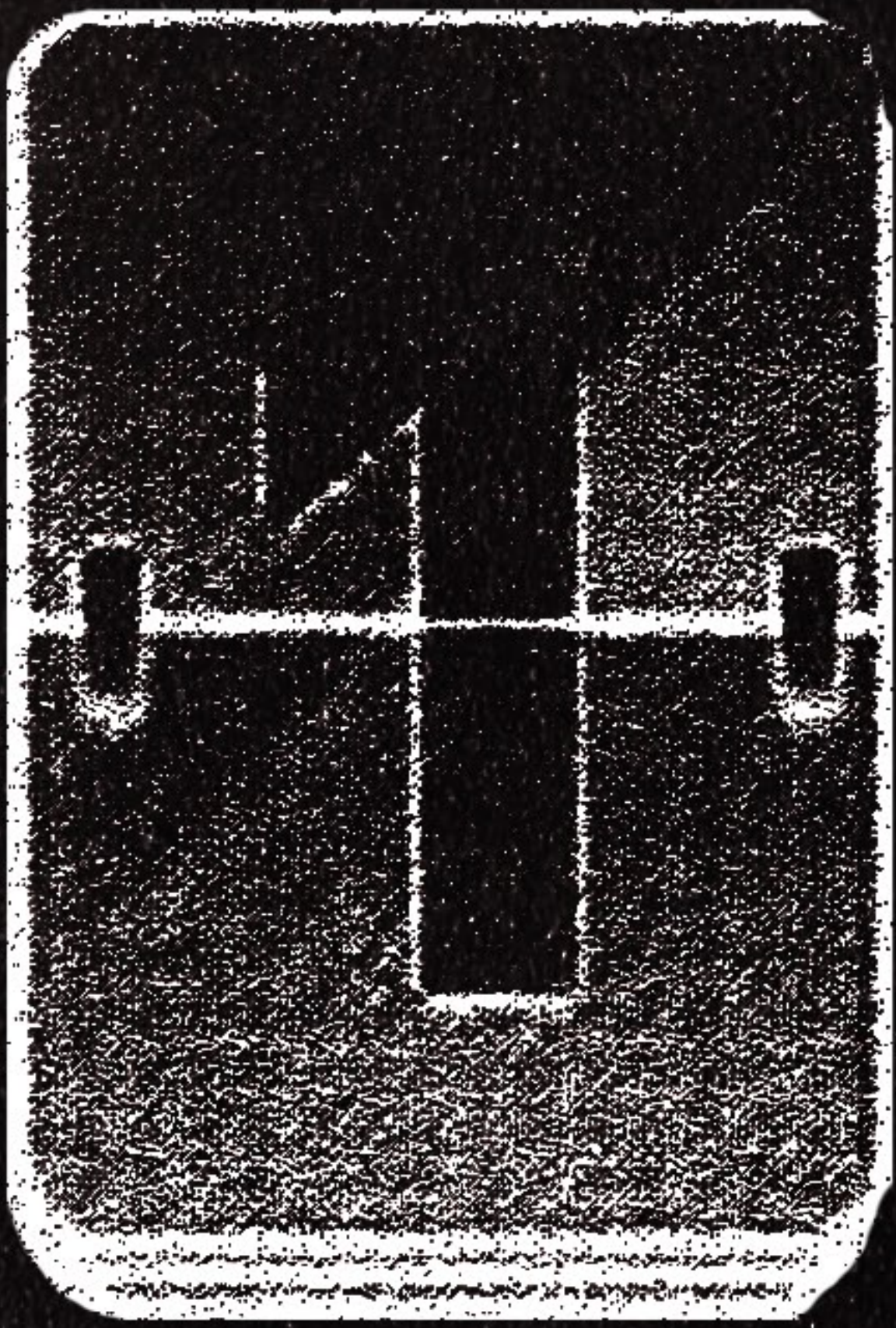
**SUICIDE RATE AMONG
VETERANS 55–74
YEARS OLD WAS 30.4
PER 100,000.**

(compared with 17.0 per 100,000 among nonveterans in the same age bracket).

SUICIDE RATES BETWEEN MEN & WOMEN

The difference in suicide rates between veterans and nonveterans is greater among women than men, but for both veterans and non veterans, rates are higher among men. In 2018, the suicide rate for veteran women was 14.8 per 100,000 (291 deaths), almost twice the rate for nonveteran women (7.6 per 100,000). The difference was greatest among women ages 18–34 (veterans: 21.8; nonveterans: 6.8 per 100,000). That same year, the suicide rate among veteran men was 1.2 times the rate among nonveteran men (33.8 versus 29.0).





“WE USED TO HAVE A
COUNTDOWN AND **IF**
WE MADE IT 10 DAYS
WITHOUT A SUICIDE,
WE WOULD GET A
4-DAY WEEKEND.”

The loves of my life

I'm sorry, Daddy just can't be fixed. No matter how hard I try to be normal and level headed it always comes back and even worse. I wasn't always this bad, ^{most} ~~sometimes~~ I wish I died in Afghanistan. I was never right again. What I did had to happen and is nobody's fault but my own. I will always love you Jasmine, Keola, & My Rock Misty. Mom, Dad, Ryan, I love you all very much. Could you please look after Misty & the kids while I'm gone.

WE HAVE



VETERANS

TO SAVE

TOMORROW

ARE YOU

WITH

US?

#MISSION22

UNITED IN THE WAR AGAINST VETERAN SUICIDE

MISSION22.COM