

Invisible Wounds of War

Psychological and Cognitive Injuries,
Their Consequences, and Services to Assist Recovery

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Sponsored by the California Community Foundation



Center for Military Health Policy Research

A JOINT ENDEAVOR OF RAND HEALTH AND THE
RAND NATIONAL SECURITY RESEARCH DIVISION

This work was funded by a grant from the Iraq Afghanistan Deployment Impact Fund, which is administered by the California Community Foundation. The study was conducted jointly under the auspices of the Center for Military Health Policy Research, a RAND Health center, and the Forces and Resources Policy Center of the National Security Research Division (NSRD).

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Tanielian, Terri L.

Invisible wounds of war : psychological and cognitive injuries, their consequences, and services to assist recovery / Terri Tanielian, Lisa H. Jaycox.

p. ; cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 978-0-8330-4454-9 (pbk. : alk. paper)

1. Post-traumatic stress disorder—United States. 2. Brain—Wounds and injuries—United States. 3. Depression—United States. 4. Veterans—Mental health—United States. 5. Iraq war, 2003—Psychological aspects. 6. Afghan war, 2001—Psychological aspects. 7. War on terrorism, 2001—Psychological aspects. 8. War—Psychological aspects. I. Jaycox, Lisa. II. Rand Corporation. III. Title.

[DNLM: 1. Combat Disorders. 2. Brain Injuries. 3. Depressive Disorder.

4. Iraq War, 2003— . 5. Stress Disorders, Post-Traumatic. 6. Veterans—psychology. WM 184 T164i 2008]

RC552.P67T34 2008

362.196'85212—dc22

2008008840

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*Cover design by Eileen Delson La Russo
Cover photo: U.S. Army photo by SPC Eric Jungels*

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Published 2008 by the RAND Corporation

1776 Main Street, P.O. Box 2138, Santa Monica, CA 90407-2138

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Part I: Introduction, Current Policy Context, and Historical Perspective

Chapter One briefly describes the psychological and cognitive injuries associated with combat, discusses the unique features associated with the current deployments, introduces the issues surrounding caring for servicemembers with these invisible wounds, and provides an overview of RAND’s study on these topics and the scope of this monograph.

Chapter Two provides a thumbnail sketch of the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, describing the composition of the U.S. forces in terms of both demographic components and their organizational affiliations in the Active and Reserve Components; placing the conflicts in perspective, comparing them with other wars the United States has fought; showing the history of troop deployments in the war on terrorism and arraying them against signal events that have occurred in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF); discussing the casualties sustained in Iraq in terms of killed in action (KIA) and wounded in action (WIA) in Iraq for ground forces—that is, the predominantly Active and Reserve forces of the Army and the Marine Corps—and showing the numbers who have died as a result of improvised explosive devices (IEDs); and providing a brief overview of the health care systems that serve OEF/OIF veterans.