

**SpringerBriefs in Psychology**

Behavioral Criminology

**Monty T. Baker · Alyssa R. Ojeda · Hannah Pressley ·  
Jessica Blalock · Riki Ann Martinez · Brian A. Moore ·  
Vincent B. Van Hasselt**

# Violence in the Military

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### **Series Editor**

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Behavioral Criminology is a multidisciplinary approach that draws on behavioral research for the application of behavioral theories and methods to assessment, prevention, and intervention efforts directed toward violent crime and criminal behavior. Disciplines relevant to this field are criminology; criminal justice (law enforcement and corrections); forensic, correctional, and clinical psychology and psychiatry; neuropsychology, neurobiology, conflict and dispute resolution; sociology, and epidemiology. Areas of study and application include, but are not limited to: specific crimes and perpetrators (e.g., homicide and sex crimes, crimes against children, child exploitation, domestic, school, and workplace violence), topics of current national and international interest and concern (e.g., terrorism and counter terrorism, cyber crime), and strategies geared toward evaluation, identification, and interdiction with regard to criminal acts (e.g., hostage negotiation, criminal investigative analysis, threat and risk assessment). The aim of the proposed Briefs is to provide practitioners and researchers with information, data, and current best practices on important and timely topics in Behavioral Criminology. Each Brief will include a review of relevant research in the area, original data, implications of findings, case illustrations (where relevant), and recommendations for directions that future efforts might take.

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# Preface

The global war on terrorism resulted in a continual involvement of the US military and allied nations from 2001 to 2021. While the training and experiences of service members are essential to national security, 20 years of conflict and ongoing military operations greatly impacted service members, families, and veterans. This impact is not unique to the US military but also extends to many of our close allies including Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand. Standardized training, such as initial entry training, and specialized training, such as advanced schools for combat operations, develop the service member to withstand intense physical conditions and instill in them the courage to fight despite an oncoming danger. This training necessitates the need for a structure that contains and employs organized violence in an effective, efficient way. For this brief, violence is defined as behavior directed toward the self or others with the intent to injure or kill. The proponents of organized violence, such as military function, individual warfighters, and organizational structure, have changed as national threats evolve. The US military and supporting organizations are expected to deploy rapidly with extensive capabilities to address issues ranging from armed conflict to national emergencies. The requirement and expectation of constant readiness for or exposure to organized violence may contribute to the expression of violence outside of the military through the exacerbation of aggressive traits. This in turn is likely to impact mental health. Nevertheless, each service member acts within the realm of factors contributing to their environment, genetics, health, and experience. This comprehensive review addresses the impact of the aforementioned training and experiences on service members' mental health, behavior, and propensity toward non-combat-related violence. Non-combat-related violence manifests in a variety of ways, including suicidality and self-harm, sexual violence, intimate partner and domestic violence, and other violent criminal behaviors. Factors contributing to the perpetration of violence include personality traits (i.e., aggression), the military life cycle, interpersonal dynamics, and mental health. Each of the violence subtypes and contributing factors will be explored in this review. Violence in military populations can result in emotional, interpersonal, legal, and financial consequences for service members and their families. Additionally, the effects of military life on the propensity for violence

do not dissipate when an individual leaves military service. Thus, identifying and addressing violent behavior and the factors enabling or exacerbating it is crucial for the long-term health and safety of service members, their families, and the communities in which they live.

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# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction to Violence in the Military</b>	<b>1</b>
	References	2
<b>2</b>	<b>Suicide and Self-Harm in the Military</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1	Recent Suicide Statistics	4
2.1.1	Methods for Suicide	5
2.1.2	Known Concerns	6
2.2	The Interpersonal Theory of Suicide	6
2.2.1	IPTS Risk and Protective Factors	7
2.2.2	Military IPTS Research	7
2.3	Shame, Guilt, and Moral Injury	9
2.4	Other Mental Health Factors: Depression, Substance Use, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, and Traumatic Brain Injury	11
2.5	Suicide Prevention Efforts	12
2.6	Summary	13
	References	14
<b>3</b>	<b>Military Sexual Violence: Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Hazing</b>	<b>19</b>
3.1	Case Study	19
3.2	Military Sexual Trauma: Types of MST	20
3.2.1	Sexual Assault	20
3.2.2	Sexual Harassment	21
3.2.3	Sexual Hazing	21
3.3	Prevalence of Military Sexual Trauma	22
3.4	Reporting Procedures	23
3.4.1	Unrestricted Reporting	23
3.4.2	Restricted Reporting	24
3.4.3	Why Do Service Members Choose Not to Report?	24
3.5	Health Consequences of Military Sexual Trauma	25
3.5.1	Physical Health	25
3.5.2	Sexual Satisfaction	26