

**Veteran Status and Work in Deadly Civilian Jobs  
Are Veterans More Likely to Be Employed in High-Risk Occupations than  
Nonveterans?**

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**Abstract**

The demand for workers in high-risk occupations is growing, as is the number of service members transitioning from military to civilian jobs. This paper will address whether veterans are more likely to hold physically hazardous occupations than nonveterans. While military jobs vary in the degree to which physical injury or death is likely, even basic entry into the military requires recruits to be mindful of risks at all times and routinely follow safety protocols. In comparison to the nonveteran workforce, veterans may experience a greater risk of holding physically hazardous jobs as a result of the jobs and skills for which they were trained in the military. This paper is part of a dissertation project which addresses fatal occupational injury. While much of the work literature on veterans has been descriptive, this study uses logistic regression to address the following questions: Are veterans overall more likely than nonveterans to hold high-risk occupations? The data come from recent pooled Veterans Supplements of the Current Population Survey.

The trend toward increasing high-risk employment opportunity is substantiated by the latest employment projections from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The occupations with the highest projected number of new jobs, in 2022, are concentrated in health care, retail service, and construction industries. The type and number of construction jobs vary among the highest growth occupations. Most in demand in 2022 will be construction laborers (259,800); laborers and freight stock, and material movers (241,900); carpenters (218,200), and heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (192,600). Many of these jobs are nested within industries that are well-known as dangerous—industries such as agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting, mining, construction, and manufacturing. None of these industries is evenly distributed across metropolitan (metro) and nonmetropolitan (nonmetro) places, with each having greater shares of total employment in nonmetro places compared to metro areas. This dissertation will explore whether nonmetro veterans are more at risk of high-risk job holding than metro or suburban veterans. One factor possibly contributing to nonmetro veterans being in high-risk work is that they have fewer alternative employment options, suggesting an increased likelihood that nonmetro veterans would be more willing to take higher-risk jobs than their nonmetropolitan counterparts.

**Keywords:** workforce, rural veterans, fatal occupations, gendered occupations, employment opportunities, high-risk industries

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# **Veteran status and work in deadly civilian jobs:**

**Are veterans more likely to be employed  
in high-risk occupations than nonveterans?**



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## **BACKGROUND – Veterans and High-Risk Occupations**

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**Are veterans more likely to be employed in high-risk occupations than nonveterans?**

**A high-risk occupation is one in which injuries that occur are likely to be unexpected, sudden, and fatal.**

Non-fatal or chronic injuries associated with repetitive movements or prolonged exposures not addressed here.

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## Wartime Periods

### Gulf I (Pre 9/11)

Operation Desert Shield  
Operation Desert Storm

### Gulf II (OEF/OIF)

Operation Enduring Freedom  
Operation Iraqi Freedom

Gulf Era Vets = 89.6% Labor Force Participation Rate

### ★ Gulf War era (1990-ongoing)

Vietnam Vets = 64.3% Labor Force Participation Rate

Vietnam era (1964-1975)



Korean conflict (1950-1955)



World War II (1941-1946)

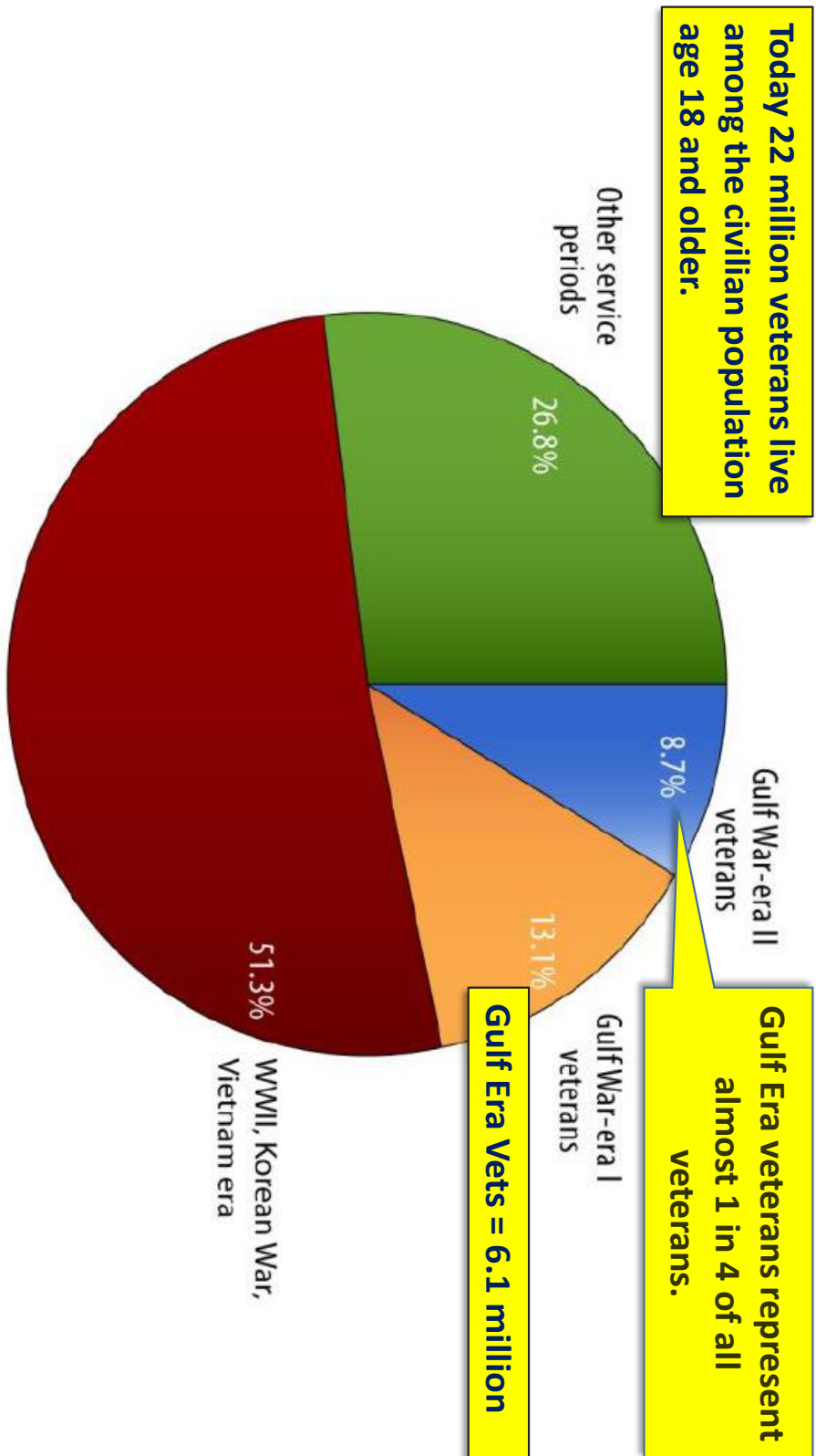


World War I (1917-1918)

Source: National Center for  
Veterans Analysis and  
Statistics

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## Veterans by Period of Service

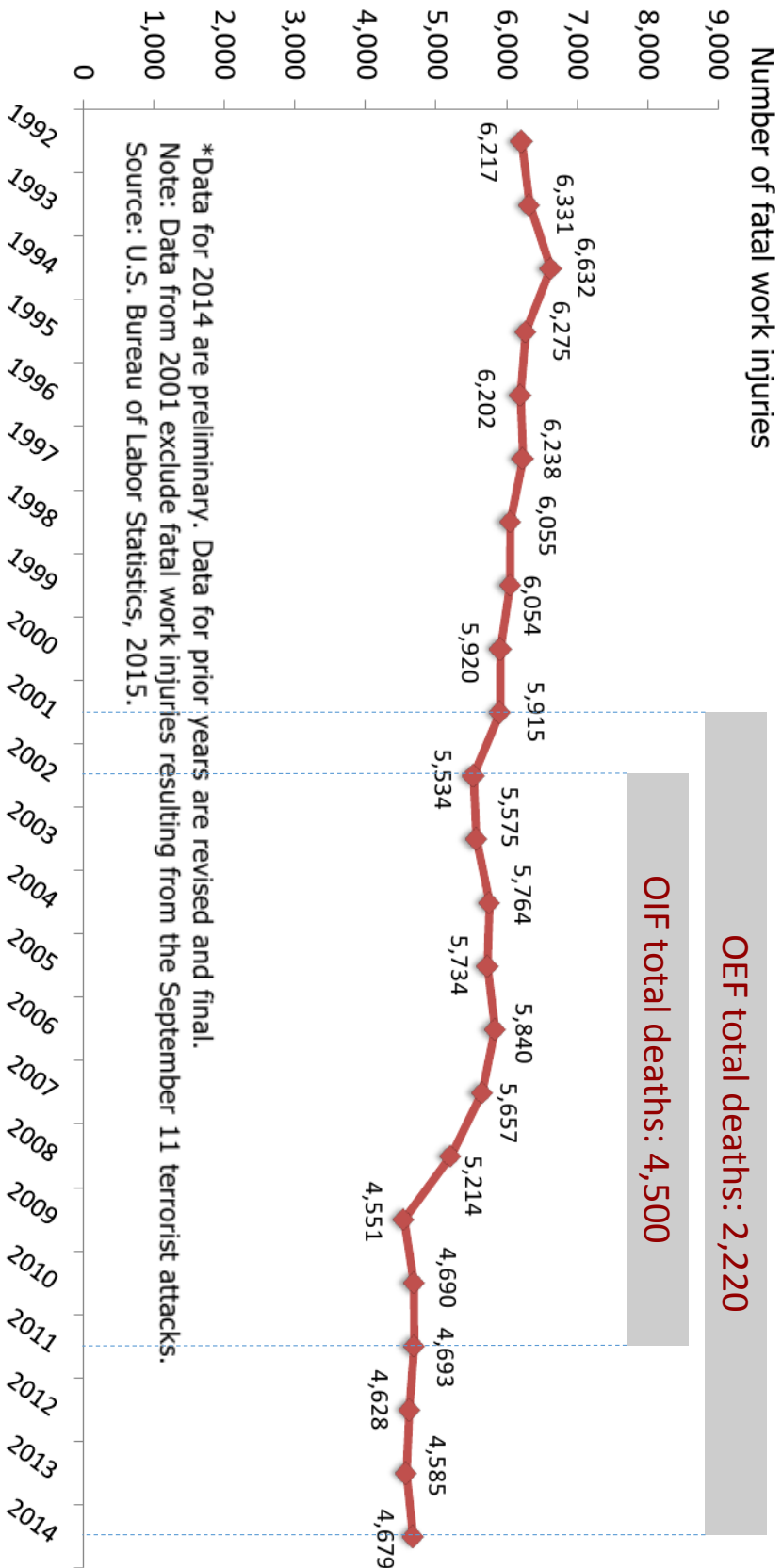


Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

[www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov)

# GFOI – The Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries by BLS

Number of fatal work injuries, 1992–2014\*



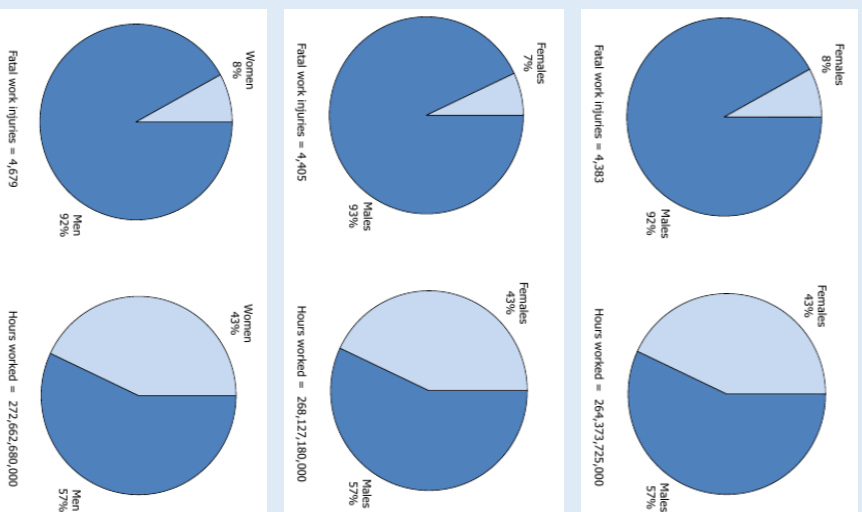
# CFOI – Men’s & Women’s Fatality

A disproportionate share of fatal work injuries involve men relative to their work hours.

Men and women sort into different types of occupations.

- differences in men’s and women’s abilities
- their risk/safety preferences
- employer discrimination
- differing economic circumstances

Fatal work injuries & hours worked, by gender of worker, by year.



Source: CFOI 2012, 2013, 2014

## GF01 – Fatality Count and Rate by Occupation by Year

Major Occupational Category	2014*		2013		2012	
	Count	Rate	Count	Rate	Count	Rate
Transportation and moving	1289	14.7	1184	14.1	1150	14.0
Construction and extraction	885	11.8	818	11.8	838	12.4
Service	584	2.6	624	2.7	596	2.7
Management, business, and finance	452	1.9	410	1.7	451	1.9
Installation, maintenance, and repair	391	7.8	356	7.0	326	6.7
Professional and related	253	1.6	228	0.8	245	0.7
<b>Farming, fishing, and forestry</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>24.1</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>23.1</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>23.3</b>
Sales and related	232	0.7	211	1.5	216	0.7
Production	206	2.4	210	2.6	211	1.5
Office and administrative support	98	0.6	70	0.4	82	2.5
<b>Total Worker Fatalities/All-Worker Rate</b>	<b>4679</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>4405</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>4383</b>	<b>3.2</b>

\* Data are preliminary for 2014.  
Rates are per 100,000 full-time equivalent workers



<http://www.startribune.com/deadliest-workplace-the-family-farm/330403811/>  
October 7, 2015

# T R A G G I C H A R V E S T

The family farms that dot the Midwestern landscape are some of the most dangerous places in America to work. Training is scarce, rules lax — and deaths are rising.

## PART 1

Nearly all U.S. workplaces are getting safer, but not the small farms of Minnesota and the Midwest.



## PART 3



## PART 2

Safety upgrades to farm equipment can save lives, but many improvements are expensive and optional.

## PART 4

# WORKFORCE OPPORTUNITY – Veterans Returning Home

**“Farming fits veterans, and veterans fit farming. Many veterans want to return to small town America to raise their families. And we welcome them home.”**

**G.I. JOBS**  
 CAREER EDUCATION GETTING OUT  
 f 0 2dk

**5 Different Types of Jobs in Agriculture for Veterans**  
 By *Caroline Kexser* on September 14, 2015  
**September 14, 2015**

<http://www.gijobs.com/5-different-types-of-jobs-in-agriculture/>

**CENTER for RURAL AFFAIRS**  
 ABOUT MEDIA SMALL BUSINESS SMALL TOWNS FARM & FOOD ENVIRONMENT DONATE

**FARMING FITS VETERANS AND VETERANS FIT FARMING**  
 By Wyatt Fraas on Nov 2 2015 - 12:00am

**Nov 2 2015**

The Center for Rural Affairs has worked to support and assist beginning farmers and ranchers for over 25 years. And increasingly, beginning farmer and rancher inquiries come from military veterans. They have the same needs as other new farmers: access to land, financing and information. But they also bring new issues: disabilities, returning to civilian life, a drive to help fellow veterans, a powerful sense of wanting to be of service to their country.

The Center's Veteran Farmers Project was launched to provide information, encouragement, connections, and referrals that help beginning farmers and ranchers access land and financing, identify markets, build business plans, and more.

We also connect veteran-farmers with other veterans; to help retain and rebuild bonds with others who have served in the military and help each other overcome the obstacles of building a farm business and returning to civilian life. We refer veteran-farmers to resource providers who can help with disability services, business advising, finding mentors, gaining production and marketing experience, and other needs.

Farming fits veterans, and veterans fit farming. Many veterans want to return to small town America to raise their families. And we welcome them home.

<http://www.cfra.org/farming-fits-veterans-and-veterans-fit-farming>

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 WI: 414-241-2188, 414-241-2188

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# DATA -- Current Population Survey, Veteran Supplements

CPS is the only monthly estimate of the labor force  
(Does not include active duty service members)  
Certain months have a "focus" (a.k.a. supplements)

I combined data from 2012 & 2013  
Starting N ≈ 300,000  
(removed those Not in the Labor Force) N = 124,117 (ages 18-65)  
(removed women)  
**Final N = 64,753**

CURRENT POPULATION SURVEY, August 2012  
Veterans Supplement FILE  
TECHNICAL DOCUMENTATION  
CPS—12

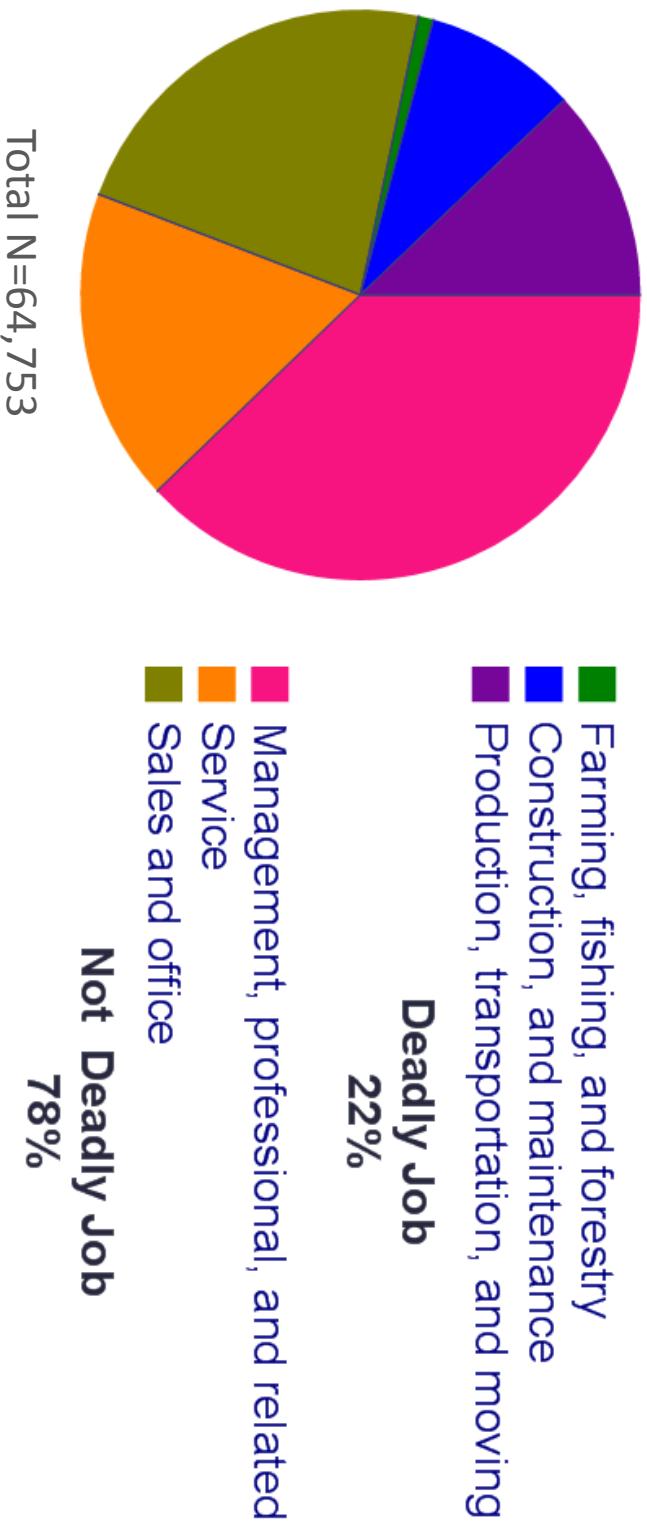
CURRENT POPULATION SURVEY, August 2013  
Veterans Use FILE  
TECHNICAL DOCUMENTATION  
CPS—13

Documentation consists of the following materials:

Attachment 1	Abstract
Attachment 2	Overview - Current Population Survey
Attachment 3	Overview - August 2013 Veterans Use Supplement
Attachment 4	Glossary
Attachment 5	How to Use the Record Layout
Attachment 6	Basic CPS Record Layout
Attachment 7	Current Population Survey, August 2013 Veterans Use Supplement Record Layout
Attachment 8	Current Population Survey, August 2013

# DATA -- Dependent Variable -- Binary "In a Deadly Job or Not"

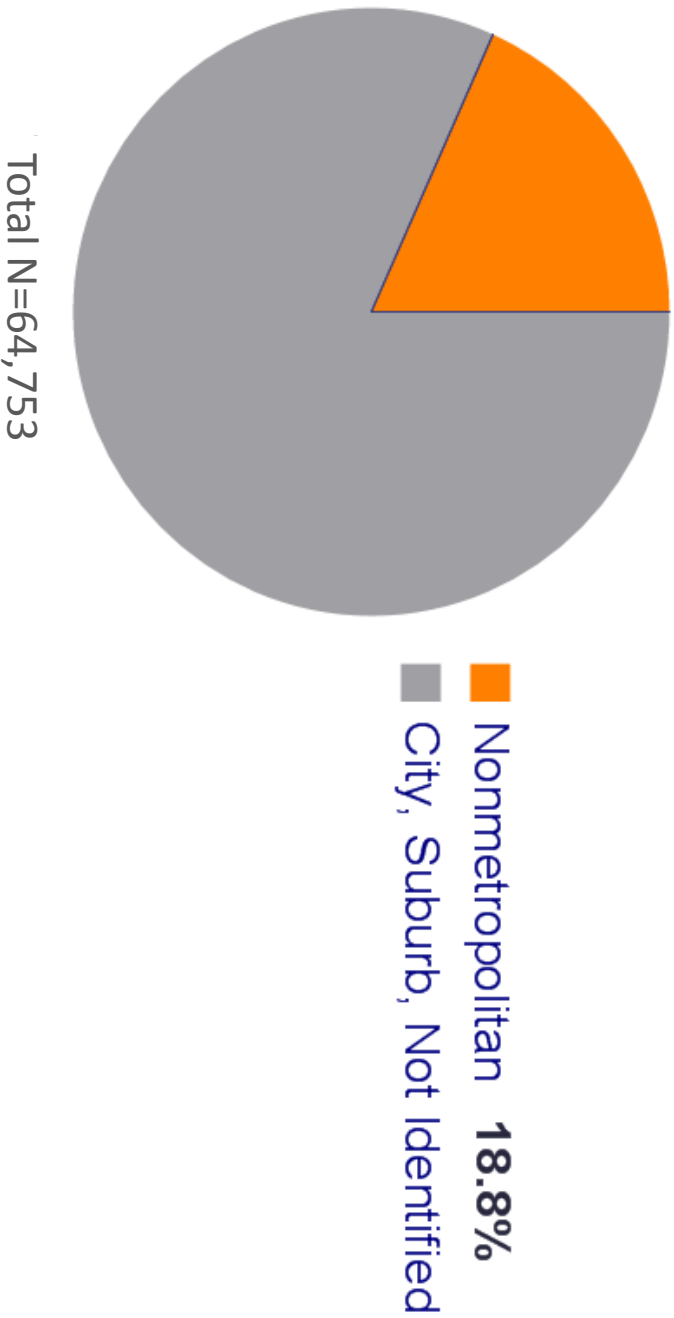
## Major Occupation Groups



Source: CPS Veterans Supplement 2012 & 2013 Combined

# DATA -- Independent Variable -- Binary "Nonmetro or Not"

## Metropolitan Status



Source: CPS Veterans Supplement 2012 & 2013 Combined

## DATA -- All Workers & Veteran Workers Characteristics

Variables	2012 & 2013	
	All ♂ & ♀	All Vets
<b>Working in a Deadly Job</b>	<b>21.7</b>	<b>33.3</b>
Age (18-65)	$\bar{x}$ =41.4	$\bar{x}$ =48.7
Race		
White	82.4	84.3
Black	9.5	10.2
Other	8.0	5.5
Hispanic (any race)	12.7	5.7
Education		
Less than HS/HS diploma	35.4	30.7
Some college	30.4	39.7
College degree (BS/higher)	34.3	29.5
Female	47.9	10.4
Ever served in the military	5.8	100
<b>Nonmetropolitan status</b>	<b>18.8</b>	<b>21.7</b>
<b>Total Worker</b>	<b>124,117</b>	<b>7,150</b>

Variables	2012 & 2013	
	All ♂	♂ Vets
<b>Working in a Deadly Job</b>	<b>35.4</b>	<b>36.4</b>
Age (18-65)	$\bar{x}$ =41.4	$\bar{x}$ =49.1
Race		
White	83.8	84.8
Black	8.3	9.5
Other	8.0	5.7
Hispanic (any race)	13.7	5.7
Education		
Less than HS/HS diploma	39.6	32.4
Some college	28.0	39.3
College degree (BS/higher)	32.4	28.4
Female	---	---
Ever served in the military	9.9	100
<b>Nonmetropolitan status</b>	<b>18.9</b>	<b>21.9</b>
<b>Total Worker</b>	<b>64,753</b>	<b>6,408</b>

# Results – Bivariate relationships – Sex

Deadly Job or Not	Female or Not		Total
	0. Male	1. Female	
0. Not Hazardous Occ	41,850 64.63	55,387 93.30	97,237 78.34
1. Hazardous Occ	22,903 35.37	3,977 6.70	26,880 21.66
Total	64,753 100.00	59,364 100.00	124,117 100.00

Pearson chi2(1) = 1.5e+04 Pr = 0.000

Higher risk of holding a deadly job for men.  
Men in deadly jobs 35% compared to 7% women.

Deadly Job or Not	Female or Not		Total
	0. Male	1. Female	
0. Not Hazardous Occ	4,074 63.58	692 93.26	4,766 66.66
1. Hazardous Occ	2,334 36.42	50 6.74	2,384 33.34
Total	6,408 100.00	742 100.00	7,150 100.00

Pearson chi2(1) = 263.6555 Pr = 0.000

MEN VETERAN workers are more likely to be in deadly jobs than women veterans.  
The proportions are 36% men and 7% women of veteran workers in deadly jobs.



# Results – Bivariate relationships – Metropolitan Status

Deadly Job or Not	Nonmetro or Not		Total
	0. City,	1. Nonmet	
0. Not Hazardous Occ	35,304 67.23	6,546 53.48	41,850 64.63
1. Hazardous Occ	17,210 32.77	5,693 46.52	22,903 35.37
Total	52,514 100.00	12,239 100.00	64,753 100.00

Pearson chi2(1) = 820.0829 Pr = 0.000

Higher risk of holding a deadly job in NONMETRO areas for men. Nonmetro workers in deadly jobs 47% compared to 33% metro.

Deadly Job or Not	Nonmetro or Not		Total
	0. City,	1. Nonmet	
0. Not Hazardous Occ	3,314 66.17	760 54.29	4,074 63.58
1. Hazardous Occ	1,694 33.83	640 45.71	2,334 36.42
Total	5,008 100.00	1,400 100.00	6,408 100.00

Pearson chi2(1) = 66.7791 Pr = 0.000

NONMETRO VETERAN men workers are more likely to be in deadly jobs than metro veterans. The proportions are 34% metro and 46% nonmetro of veteran workers in deadly jobs.

# Results – Logistic Regression Modeling – Key IV's

. logistic hazjob veteran

Veteran status is marginally significant. Veterans more likely than nonvets to be in a deadly job.

Number of obs = 64,753  
 LR chi2(1) = 3.44  
 Prob > chi2 = 0.0637  
 Pseudo R2 = 0.0000

	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]
hazjob					
veteran	1.052162	.0287954	1.86	0.063	.9972111 1.110141
_cons	.5444992	.0047183	-70.15	0.000	.5353296 .5538258

. logistic hazjob nonmet

Nonmetro status is significant. Nonmetro men are more likely than metros to be in a deadly job.

Number of obs = 64,753  
 LR chi2(1) = 797.58  
 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000  
 Pseudo R2 = 0.0095

	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]
hazjob					
nonmet	1.784051	.0363373	28.42	0.000	1.714234 1.856712
_cons	.4874801	.004532	-77.28	0.000	.478678 .4964442

# Results – Key IV’s – Veteran & Metropolitan Status

Controlling for nonmetro status drops veteran status out of statistical significance.

Number of obs = 64,753  
 LR chi2(2) = 798.90  
 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000  
 Pseudo R2 = 0.0095

	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]
hazjob					
veteran	1.032199	.0284561	1.15	0.250	.9779062 1.089506
nonmet	1.782996	.0363274	28.38	0.000	1.713199 1.855637
_cons	.4860019	.0046989	-74.63	0.000	.4768789 .4952994

. logistic hazjob veteran nonmet vetXnonmet

An interaction effect between veterans and nonmetro status is not significant in this model.

Number of obs = 64,753  
 LR chi2(3) = 800.77  
 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000  
 Pseudo R2 = 0.0095

	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]
hazjob					
veteran	1.05389	.0331227	1.67	0.095	.9909301 1.120851
nonmet	1.800551	.038887	27.28	0.000	1.725924 1.878404
vetXnonmet	.9149559	.0595551	-1.37	0.172	.8053688 1.039454
_cons	.4850266	.0047451	-73.96	0.000	.475815 .4944165

# Results – Interaction Effect? – Veteran x Nonmet

An interaction effect between veterans and nonmetro status is not significant in this model.

Number of obs = 64,753  
 LR chi2(5) = 946.56  
 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000  
 Pseudo R2 = 0.0112

hazjob	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	Z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]
veteran	1.040799	.0327579	1.27	0.204	.9785344 1.107025
nonmet	1.792023	.0388902	2.88	0.000	1.717398 1.869891
vetXnonmet	.9262654	.0603498	-1.18	0.240	.8152229 1.052433
black	1.123077	.0336209	3.88	0.000	1.059077 1.190945
othrc	.7024447	.022919	-10.82	0.000	.6589305 .7488325
_cons	.4941817	.0052211	-66.71	0.000	.4840537 .5045216

Logistic regression

Number of obs = 64,753  
 LR chi2(4) = 945.18  
 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000  
 Pseudo R2 = 0.0112

Log likelihood = -41597.808

hazjob	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	Z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]
veteran	1.022304	.0282128	0.80	0.424	.9684768 1.079123
nonmet	1.776966	.036398	28.07	0.000	1.70704 1.849756
black	1.123366	.0336284	3.89	0.000	1.059351 1.191248
othrc	.7021014	.0229055	-10.84	0.000	.6586125 .7484618
_cons	.495045	.005177	-67.23	0.000	.4850015 .5052964

# Controls – Education

Controlling for education brings veteran status back into statistical significance.

Number of obs = 64,753  
 LR chi2(5) = 12828.84  
 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000  
 Pseudo R2 = 0.1525

	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]
hazjob					
veteran	<b>1.080769</b>	.0370003	<b>2.27</b>	<b>0.023</b>	<b>1.010629 1.155777</b>
nonmet	<b>1.484747</b>	.0351013	<b>16.72</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>1.417519 1.555163</b>
vetXnonmet	<b>.9599843</b>	.0678366	<b>-0.58</b>	<b>0.563</b>	<b>.8358236 1.102589</b>
somecol	<b>.4506118</b>	.0090355	<b>-39.75</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>.4332461 .4686736</b>
college	<b>.0792986</b>	.0021673	<b>-92.73</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>.0751625 .0836623</b>
_cons	<b>1.164296</b>	.0161054	<b>11.00</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>1.133154 1.196294</b>

Logistic regression

Number of obs = 64,753  
 LR chi2(4) = 12828.50  
 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000  
 Pseudo R2 = 0.1525

Log likelihood = -35656.146

	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]
hazjob					
veteran	1.070512	.0321353	2.27	0.023	1.009345 1.135386
nonmet	1.477985	.0329326	17.53	0.000	1.414827 1.543962
somecol	.4506497	.009036	-39.75	0.000	.4332829 .4687125
college	.0792928	.0021671	-92.74	0.000	.0751571 .0836561
_cons	1.165378	.0160113	11.14	0.000	1.134415 1.197186

# Controls – Race

Controlling for race does NOT bring veteran status back into statistical significance.

Number of obs = 64,753  
 LR chi2(5) = 946.56  
 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000  
 Pseudo R2 = 0.0112

hazjob	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]
veteran	<b>1.040799</b>	.0327579	<b>1.27</b>	<b>0.204</b>	<b>.9785344 1.107025</b>
nonmet	1.792023	.0388902	26.88	0.000	1.717398 1.869891
vetXnonmet	.9262654	.0603498	-1.18	0.240	.8152229 1.052433
black	1.123077	.0336209	3.88	0.000	1.059077 1.190945
othrc	.7024447	.022919	-10.82	0.000	.6589305 .7488325
cons	.4941817	.0052211	-66.71	0.000	.4840537 .5045216

Logistic regression  
 Number of obs = 64,753  
 LR chi2(4) = 945.18  
 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000  
 Pseudo R2 = 0.0112  
 Log likelihood = -41597.808

hazjob	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]
veteran	1.022304	.0282128	0.80	0.424	.9684768 1.079123
nonmet	1.776966	.036398	28.07	0.000	1.70704 1.849756
black	1.123366	.0336284	3.89	0.000	1.059351 1.191248
othrc	.7021014	.0229055	-10.84	0.000	.6586125 .7484618
_cons	.495045	.005177	-67.23	0.000	.4850015 .5052964

# Controls – Education & Race

Number of obs = 64,753  
 LR chi2(7) = 12876.27  
 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000  
 Pseudo R2 = 0.1530

Adding controls for education & race brings veteran status back into statistical significance.

		z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]		
veteran	1.077814	.0369184	2.19	0.029	1.007831	1.152657
nonmet	1.467895	.0348331	16.17	0.000	1.401187	1.537779
vetXnonmet	.9615717	.0679654	-0.55	0.579	.8371773	1.10445
somecol	.4508355	.0090458	-39.70	0.000	.4334503	.4689181
college	.0793578	.0021741	-92.49	0.000	.0752091	.0837355
black	.8923894	.028735	-3.54	0.000	.8378103	.9505241
othrc	.8019935	.0287831	-6.15	0.000	.7475181	.8604388
_cons	1.197566	.017447	12.38	0.000	1.163854	1.232254

Logistic regression  
 Number of obs = 64,753  
 LR chi2(6) = 12875.96  
 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000  
 Pseudo R2 = 0.1530  
 Log Likelihood = -35632.416

hazjob	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]	
veteran	1.067994	.0320744	2.19	0.028	1.006943	1.132745
nonmet	1.461488	.0327067	16.96	0.000	1.398769	1.527019
somecol	.4508724	.0090462	-39.70	0.000	.4334862	.4689559
college	.0793535	.002174	-92.49	0.000	.075205	.0837309
black	.8924754	.0287375	-3.53	0.000	.8378914	.9506153
othrc	.8018932	.028778	-6.15	0.000	.7474273	.8603281
_cons	1.198631	.0173565	12.51	0.000	1.165091	1.233136

# Controls – Educ & Race & Hisp

Number of obs = 64,753  
 LR chi2(8) = 12972.69  
 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000  
 Pseudo R2 = 0.1542

**Adding Hispanic ethnicity strengthens the effect and statistical significance of veteran.**

	B	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]
veteran	1.108429	.0380491	3.00	0.003	1.036308 1.18557
nonmet	1.524215	.0366323	17.54	0.000	1.454082 1.597731
vetXnonmet	.942986	.0665544	-0.83	0.406	.821162 1.082883
somecol	.4647214	.0094326	-37.75	0.000	.4465969 .4835816
college	.0830378	.0023046	-89.66	0.000	.0786415 .0876799
black	.9283106	.0300872	-2.30	0.022	.8711747 .9891937
othrc	.8188441	.0294336	-5.56	0.000	.7631406 .8786136
hisp	1.287077	.0330589	9.83	0.000	1.223887 1.35353

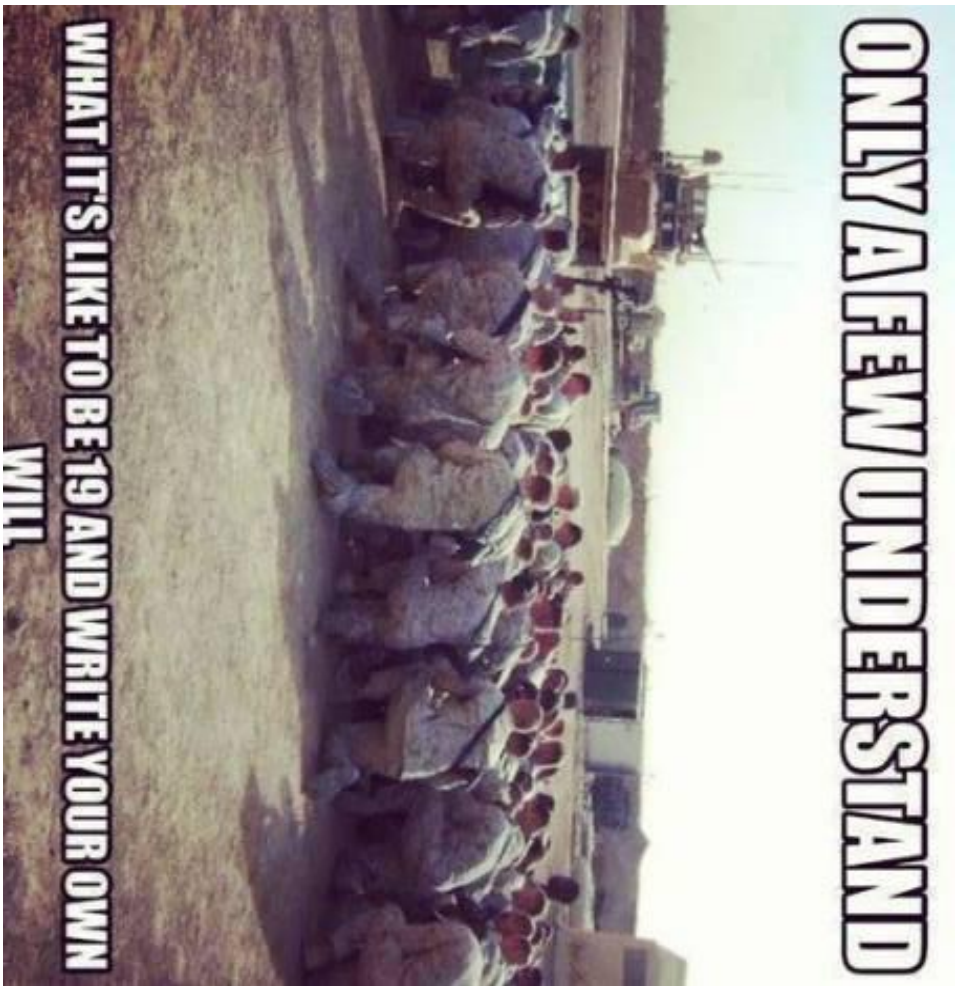
Logistic regression  
 Log likelihood = -35584.4  
 Number of obs = 64,753  
 LR chi2(7) = 12972.00  
 Prob > chi2 = 0.0000  
 Pseudo R2 = 0.1542

	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]
hazjob					
veteran	1.09325	.0328968	2.96	0.003	1.030638 1.159666
nonmet	1.514102	.0343102	18.31	0.000	1.448326 1.582864
somecol	.4647459	.0094333	-37.75	0.000	.4466205 .4836069
college	.0830225	.0023041	-89.67	0.000	.0786271 .0876636
black	.9283556	.0300889	-2.29	0.022	.8712165 .9892423
othrc	.8186477	.029424	-5.57	0.000	.7629622 .8783976
hisp	1.28629	.0330241	9.81	0.000	1.223166 1.352673
_cons	1.115137	.0181005	6.71	0.000	1.080219 1.151184



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## CONCLUSION – Questions



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### About the Author

April Gunsallus, M.S., is a Graduate Research Assistant for the Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness at The Pennsylvania State University. After earning a bachelor's degree in Economics at Lebanon Valley College of Pennsylvania, April commissioned as a U.S. Navy officer at Pensacola, Florida, and worked for three years in naval aviation. April received her M.S. in Rural Sociology from Penn State and will receive her Ph.D. in 2016. The arc of her research explores how risk and resilience interact among the individual, family, and community levels. She is particularly fascinated by the domain of work and occupations. At the Clearinghouse, she contributes to The Veteran Metrics Initiative which seeks to better understand Service member transition from Military to civilian life. As a doctoral student, she serves on the executive board of a student Veteran fraternity and is actively engaged in philanthropic and social Veteran activities.

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