VIETNAM WARRIORS: A STATISTICAL PROFILE

IN UNIFORM AND IN COUNTRY

- Vietnam Vet: 3.7% of their generation.
- 9,087,000 military personnel served on active duty during the Vietnam era (Aug. 5, 1964-May 7, 1975).
- 8,744,000 GIs were on active duty during the war (Aug. 5, 1964-March 28, 1973).
- 3,403,100 (including 514,300 offshore) personnel served in the Southeast Asia Theater (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, flight crews in Thailand, and sailors in adjacent South China Sea waters).
- Of the 2.6 million, between 1.1-1.6 million (40-60%) either fought in combat, provided close support, or were at least fairly regularly exposed to enemy attack.

- 7,484 women (6,250 or 83.5% were nurses) served in Vietnam.

CASUALTIES

- Hostile deaths: 47,378
- Non-hostile deaths: 10,800
- Total: 58,178
- Total: 58,202 (includes men formerly classified as MIA and Mayaguez casualties).
- Men who have subsequently died of wounds account for the changing total.
- 8 nurses died — 1 was KIA.
- Married men killed: 17,539
- 61% of the men killed were 21 or younger.
- Highest state death rate: West Virginia - 84.1 (national average 58.9 for every 100,000 males in 1920)
- Severely disabled: 75,000 — 23,214 100% disabled, 5,283 lost limbs, 1,061 sustained multiple amputations.
- Amputation or crippling wounds to the lower extremities were 30% higher in Vietnam and 70% higher than in Korea. Multiple amputations occurred at the rate of 18.4% compared to 5.7% in WWII.

- Missing in Action: 2,338
- POWs: 542 (114 died in captivity).

DRAFTEES VS. VOLUNTEERS

- 25% (649,500) of total forces in country were draftees. (66% of U.S. armed forces members were drafted during WWII.)
- Draftees accounted for 30.4% (17,725) of combat deaths in Vietnam.
- Reservists killed: 5,377.
- National Guard: 6,140 served; 101 died.
- Total draftees (1965-73): 1,728,344.
- Actually served in Vietnam: 36%
- Marine Corps draft: 42,633.

RACE AND ETHNIC BACKGROUND

- 88.4% of the men who actually served in Vietnam were Caucasian: 10.6% (275,000) were black; 1% belonged to other races.
- 86.3% of the men who died in Vietnam were Caucasian (includes Hispanics); 12.5% (7,241) were black; 1.2% belonged to other races.
- 170,000 Hispanics served in Vietnam; 3,070 (5.2% of total) died there.
- 70% of enlisted men killed were of North-west European descent.
- 98% of the men who were killed at a result of hostile action were Caucasian: 12.1% (5,271) were black; 1.1% belonged to other races.
- 14.6% (1,530) of non-combat deaths were among blacks.
- 34% of blacks who enlisted volunteered for the combat arms.
- Overall, blacks suffered 12.5% of the deaths in Vietnam at a time when the percentage of blacks of military age was 13.5% of the total population.
- Religion of Dead: Protestant — 64.4%; Catholic — 28.9%; other/none — 6.7%.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

- 76% of the men sent to Vietnam were from lower middle working class backgrounds.
- Three-fourths had family incomes above the poverty level; 50% were from middle income backgrounds.
- Some 23% of Vietnam vets had fathers with professional, managerial or technical occupations.
- 79% of the men who served in Vietnam had a high school education or better when they entered the military service. (63% of Korean War vets and only 45% of WWII vets had completed high school upon separation.)
- Deaths by region per 100,000 of population: South: 31; West: 29.9; Midwest: 28.4; Northeast: 23.5.

WINNING & LOSING

- 82% of veterans who saw heavy combat strongly believe the war was lost because of lack of political will.
- Nearly 75% of the public agrees it was a failure of political will, not of arms.

HONORABLE SERVICE

- 97% of Vietnam-era veterans were honorably discharged.
- 91% of actual Vietnam War veterans and 90% of those who saw heavy combat are proud to have served their country.
- 60% of Vietnam vets say they would serve again if called upon.
- Having public now holds Vietnam veterans in high esteem.

The statistics provided here are based on a variety of sources, including government reports and surveys. The data reflects the experiences and outcomes of individuals who served during the Vietnam War, highlighting the significant contributions and sacrifices made by the veterans of that era. The profile offers a comprehensive look at the demographic characteristics of those who served, as well as the challenges they faced both during and after their service. It underscores the diversity of experiences and the lasting impact of the war on those who lived through it.