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Leah Geier

Mary Del Rosario, Anna Bagiackas Carrie Farrell, Ryyan Joye Doug Dougherty

Sean Adams, Heidi Bayfield, Nathaniel Jamison, Tom Keys, Claudia Stier, Jeff Teeselink

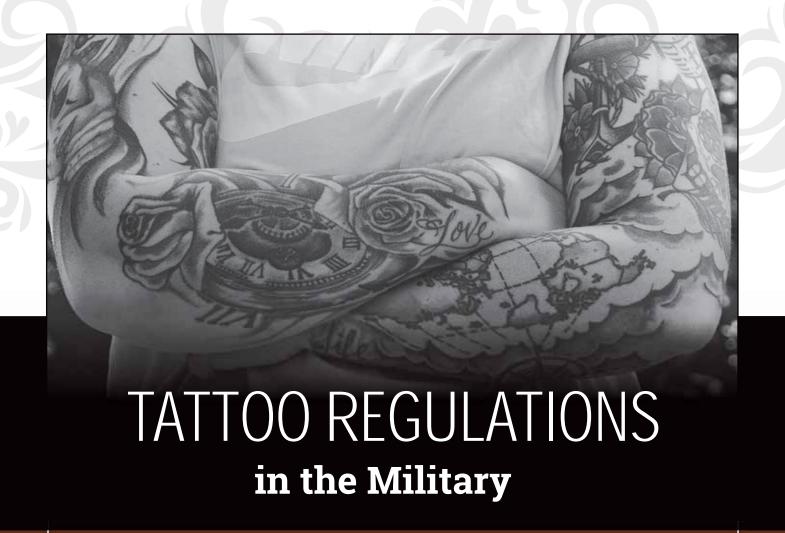
Al Green Carrie Farrell

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Stars and Stripes Europe, Advertising Unit 29480, APO AE 09211 or email dougherty.doug@stripes.com

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IF YOU ARE AN ACTIVE-DUTY SERVICE MEMBER AND ARE CONSIDERING GETTING A TATTOO, BE SURE TO INFORM YOURSELF OF THE RULES AND REGULATIONS. BELOW YOU'LL FIND THE LATEST TATTOO POLICY ACCORDING TO THE U.S. ARMY AND AIR FORCE.

ACCEPTABLE

- No limit—in number or size—to the number of tattoos displayed on the chest, torso, arms and legs.
- One ring tattoo per hand. Note that for the Air Force, it is limited to one single-band ring tattoo on one hand that is no more than 3/8 of an inch in width, below the knuckle and above the finger joint.
- Permanent makeup (eyebrows and eyeliner) for women.
 Must be applied modestly and in good taste.

NOT ACCEPTABLE

- ♦ Tattoos, brands or body markings visible from the wrist down or the neck up (head, face, tongue, lips and scalp)
- Indecent tattoos, such as sexist, racist, obscene, religious and extremist illustrations.
- Chest and back tattoos that are visible through any uniform or visible while wearing an open collar uniform.

*For the latest and more in-depth look at the Air Force tattoo regulations, refer to AFI36-2903. For the Army, refer to AR 670-1.





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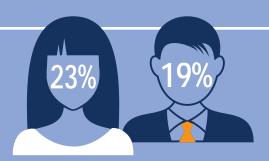
SURPRISING STATISTICS

about (1100)

\$45
is the average cost of a small tattoo.

Source: https://
comparecamp.com/
tattoo-statistics/

\$150 is the average cost per hour for a large tattoo



ARE SLIGHTLY MORE LIKELY
TO BE TATTOOED THAN
MEN, ALTHOUGH
MEN ARE MORE LIKELY TO
ADMIT HAVING A TATTOO.



17% OF PEOPLE WITH TATTOOS REGRET HAVING THEM USUALLY BECAUSE "IT'S THE NAME OF ANOTHER PERSON."



36% OF THE U.S. ARMED FORCES, INCLUDING MILITARY VETERANS, HAVE TATTOOS.



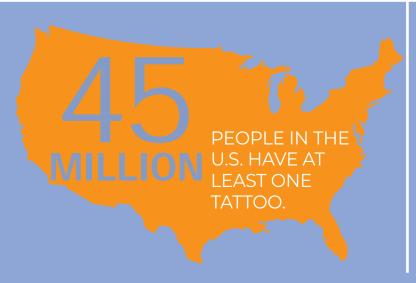
TATTOO MACHINES
PUNCTURE THE SKIN
BETWEEN 50 AND 3,000
TIMES PER MINUTE.

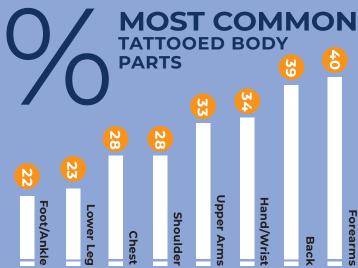
1,650,000,000

DOLLARS ARE SPENT ON TATTOOS EACH YEAR

27%
of tattoos on
women are
located on the
ankle.

34% of tattoos on men are on the upper back shoulder. **30%** of U.S. college graduates have tattoos.











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Ins & Outs of Tattoos

IN THE MILITARY

By Anna Leigh Bagiackas and Stacy Roman

or those of us living in a military community, the presence of tattoos may be second nature, and we may not give them a second thought. But there are stories to be told, both in each individual tattoo, and the collective history of service members getting tattoos that represent patriotism, pride in service, memorials to fallen comrades or commemorations of an achievement or event.

HISTORY

The tradition of tattooing and body marking goes back in history to as early as 4000 BC, as seen on ancient mummies. And the connection between tattoos and warriors, or those defending their home, may be just as old. Within ancient Roman history, soldiers were tattooed with identifying information to show member-

ship to a certain group or unit. It was common for tribes all over the world to have specific designs tattooed on warriors, such as with the Maori in New Zealand or Picti, called "Painted People," in Scotland.

While tattoos are common among all military branches, the tradition of tattoos may be more well-known with naval forces. During the Revolutionary War, it was reported that sailors tattooed identification on their bodies to stop them from being illegally recruited by the British naval forces when their paperwork was destroyed. One hundred years later in the Civil War, it was not uncommon for soldiers to get tattoos, and tattoo artist Martin Hildebrandt, who opened the first tattoo shop in the United States in 1846, traveled around the country tattooing soldiers during the war.

Some of the leading tattooists were service members. Tom Riley, Sutherland Macdonald and George Burchett, the last of which became known as the "King of Tattooists," were members of the British forces before becoming leaders in the tattoo industry. Across the Atlantic, artists such as August "Cap" Coleman and Franklin Paul Rogers helped expand the industry and Norman Keith Collins, known as "Sailor Jerry," joined the Navy in 1930 and after many travels in Southeast Asia, shaped a style of tattoos that is still popular today.

The perception of tattoos has changed throughout history too, such as following World War I when tattoos lost their social status. Opinions have wavered over time from respect and seeing tattoos as a sign of strength and loyalty to frowning upon them for representing lack of sophistication. Today, society seems to be moving toward a more inclusive attitude and regulations are loosening regarding what service members are allowed to have. Most recently, tattoos are considered a form of therapy for service members suffering from PTSD or chronic pain.

STYLES

If you're thinking of getting ink done, one of the first questions to ask yourself is what type of tattoo you should get. Tattoos become a permanent part of not just your body, but also your identity and story. There are so many choices and sizes, it can be daunting to choose the right one. Here are some specific types of styles and designs to choose from.

Americana and neo-traditional. Americana tattoos consist of bold lines and classic primary colors, such as red, blue, yellow and green. These designs exploded in popularity with service members during World War II. Military insignias and unit crests, iconic red roses, Harley Davidson logos, daggers and skulls are examples of this type of design. On the other hand, neo-traditional tattoos twist Americana artwork by using non-conventional colors and a mash-up of abstract and classical designs.

New school. If you're a fan of the bright and whimsical, the new school type of tattoo may be something worth considering. Lively characters (think of your favorite cartoon or comic hero) and vivid colors usually comprise new school ink work.

Irezumi. These Japanese-style tattoos depict stories and legends within Japanese history and folklore and date back centuries. Using an array of colors, Irezumi tattoos feature waves, dragons, warriors, "kirins" and smokey patterns.

Blackwork and black and grey. Although these designs are done using only black ink, these

tattoos are striking in their intricate work and etching or engraving styles. Blackwork often features less shading and uses the boldness of the ink to highlight the artwork. Black and grey also uses only black ink but focuses more of the attention on shading to make the grey stand out in the design.

Portraiture and realism. Portraiture and realism are what they sound like. Those who want to see a loved one, beloved animal or even a favorite landscape immortalized can do so through

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BC, AS SEEN
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MUMMIES.

these types of tattoos. Artists transform photos and memories into true-to-life ink masterpieces. Flowers and other natural elements can also fall within this category depending on how real you want them to look.

Tribal. These tattoos are more than just impressive and intricate designs. In Polynesian, Maori and Hawaiian cultures, these tattoos tell a

story about the history of their people and land. Centuries ago, tattoos were done painstakingly by hand-tapping the ink into the skin. Although most designs are done via machine today, some studios on the islands perform the hand-tapped method.

Stick-and-poke or hand-poked. Similar to the traditional tribal tattoos, stick-and-poke tattoos are done the old-fashioned way. A small, thin needle is inserted into ink and etched into the skin without using electric instruments. The resulting design is often more delicate and creates a hand-drawn effect. Stick-and-poke is a good option for smaller tattoos.

Watercolor. One emerging trend over the past decade has been watercolor tattoos. With brilliant color gradients to create the effect of watercolor paintings, these pieces are often bold and unique. Some designs use black lines to create the primary image and use the color as an afterthought or create a splatter paint-type effect. Others may not use black ink and have the colors blend into each other for a more authentic feel.

Other styles of tattoos include geometric, biomechanical and illustrative. Geometric designs are typically more angular and edgy. On the flip side, illustrative tattoos encompass more artistic and flowy artwork, including calligraphy and scripts. Finally, biomechanical tattoos are designed to make a body part appear as though it's made of mechanical parts.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

What is the cost? The price depends on many different factors; but to put it bluntly, you get what you pay for. Do your homework and compare prices, read reviews and view the photo galleries. Tattoos will likely be with you for the rest of your life. Quality tattoos are worth the money.

Choose your design carefully. What do you want it to say about you? Is it a memorialization of a time or person that is important to you? Is it something that is meaningful just to you, or is it a showpiece designed to stimulate conversation? Although Winnie the Pooh may not be a first choice for some, if he has significance for you, go for it.

Where to put it and what size? Tattoos can be placed just about anywhere you want and can be as large or small as you desire. Just know the larger the tattoo, the longer it will take (it could require multiple hours-long sessions) and the costlier it will be. You may want to consider factors such as the ease of covering it up for professional or business purposes (or maybe your mom may still not approve of them).

TODAY, SOCIETY
SEEMS TO
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MORE INCLUSIVE
ATTITUDE, AND
REGULATIONS
ARE LOOSENING
REGARDING
WHAT SERVICE
MEMBERS ARE
ALLOWED TO
HAVE.





Check out the studio and

artist. A lot of reputable shops and artists can be found online. Once you've decided on one, make a consultation appointment or stop by to check it out. The artist should be licensed, and the space should be sterile and clean. If you don't get a good vibe, be sure to check into other studios or artists.

Does it hurt? In short, yes. How much depends on your pain tolerance and where you put it. There's not much you can do except embrace the suck during the appointment. As tempting as it may be, do not drink alcohol before getting a tattoo. It thins the blood,

which can cause problems during the process.

Aftercare is important.

Follow the aftercare advice verbatim. Your newly inked skin will be bandaged to staunch any bleeding. Remove the bandage between one to three hours later and wash very gently with warm water and mild soap. Pat dry. DO NOT RUB OR SCRATCH. Let it air dry and apply a thin amount of aftercare ointment. If the studio didn't provide any cream, Aquaphor or any light, unscented lotion would work. Do not use bandages after the initial one. Over the next 10 days or so, you'll need to keep the area away from overexposure to the

sun and water, which means no tanning, pools or baths (showers are okay).

Don't scratch! As the skin begins to heal, the tattoo will start to scab over and itch something fierce. Whatever you do, do NOT pick or scratch. If you do, you'll mess up your beautiful masterpiece or worse, cause it to become infected. When the itching becomes almost unbearable, putting on a small dab of aftercare ointment or lotion helps immensely. After a few days, the scabs will flake away, leaving your tattoo looking fabulous. ■

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TATTOO ARMED FORCES

tars and Stripes' first-ever "Tattoo: Armed Forces" magazine pays special tribute to a popular, yet underrated audience in our military—those with tattoos. This one-of-a-kind magazine is designed to feature our military audience's current ink masterpieces and the stories that are behind them. As Fred R. Barnard put it, "A picture is worth a thousand words." "With the help of local photographer Brittany Atkins, she truly captured the stories of our military audience and their civilian counterparts by showcasing their creativity, vivid designs and bold colors—letting their body art do the talking. Take an in-depth look at the works of art and their stories:

About the photographer



While Brittany Atkins has only been photographing for a year, she has been doing creative hobbies for most of her life. She spends most of her time engaged in theatrical activities at KMC Onstage where she builds sets, crafts props and soon, will be co-directing a musical this spring. Having just graduated with her associate degree from the University of Maryland, she will be finishing her bachelor's this winter with a degree in Graphic Communication. Brittany and her husband started photographing after taking a class together. Now they create fantasy-style photos and videos that they post to their Instagram and Facebook Art by Atkins.

ON THE COVER Ben Nieto



The work all over my body is virtually all American Traditional/ Old School/Western. My arms have a lot of California-inspired tattoos. I have the full State of California accompanied by the state flower, California

Golden Poppy & the text "Familia" which symbolizes my appreciation for the Golden State and the unconditional love & bonds that I have with my family. I have a compass accompanied by a blue

symbolizes that I have a purpose in life and to always keep my head up. The blue flower is for inspiration and drive. The blue rose tattoo symbolizes me

striving to achieve

flower. The compass

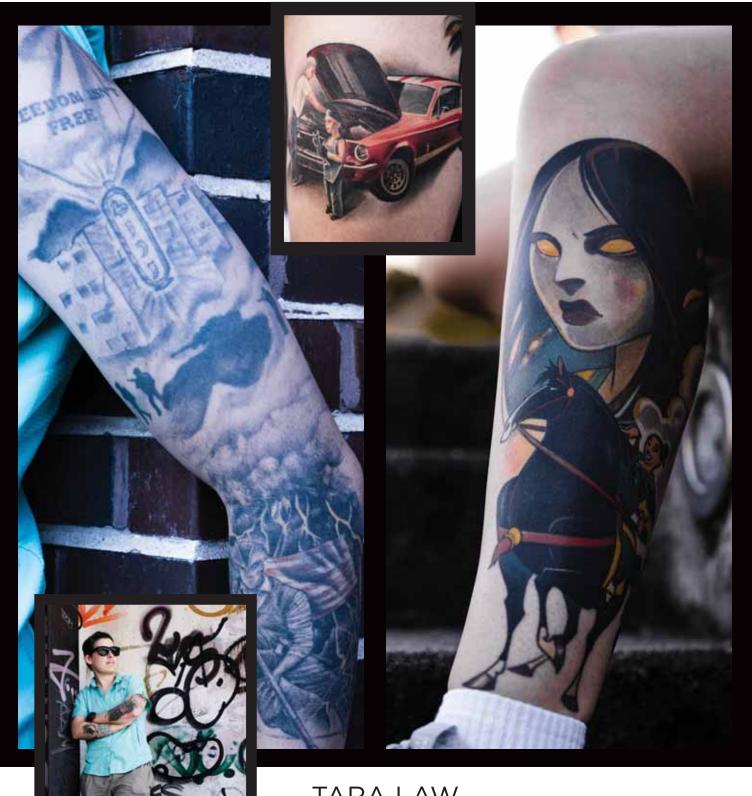
things I thought were impossible.
All of my tattoos have deep meaning for me. I'm a die hard Californian and I've got mad love for my hometown of Bakersfield, CA, my family and life.



Watercolor LILIANA DRUM

Tulips are my favorite flower! The tattoo I had always imagined were three tulips, each representing what had happened, what never happened and what has yet to happen (James 8). All in a blooming tulip. My husband sketched the design on an iPhone note a few years ago and that's where it stayed. Then, while chatting with my hairdresser who sang worship in my church, she mentioned her husband, a pastor, was ending his side job as a tattoo artist. It was a sign, and I knew it was my one shot to get the tattoo I had always wanted. So, I booked an all-day session with him and had it done-a watercolor impression without any black ink. It's one of the things amongst serving in the military, achieving a bachelor's degree, completing a marathon and birthing my daughters naturally that I cherish as a test of my strength and

courage.



TARA LAW

Mulan leg piece-Mulan is the first strong feminist character to look up to for me. Fiercely loyal to her family and country, risked her life to protect them, even if it meant possible punishment of death for impersonating a man/soldier. One tough woman right there! Car piece-This one has the most meaning. That one is a memorial piece of my dad. He died back in October 2020; he was 59. It was very sudden. He was a master mechanic, and his favorite car was the 1967 Shelby Mustang. He always wanted to own one. So, I got the piece made with us working under the hood together like he always dreamed of.

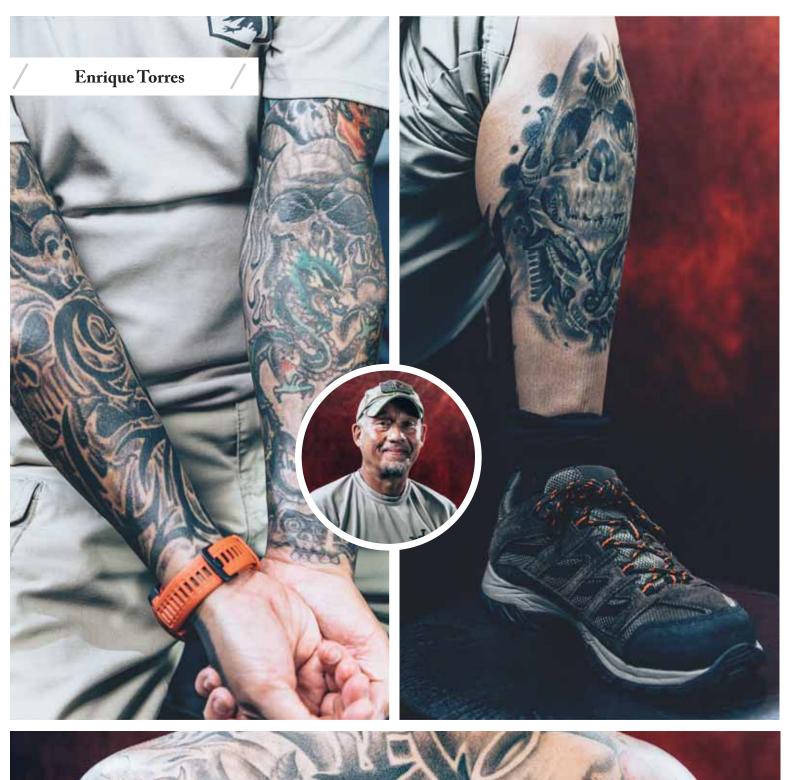
KIERSTEN CUSTER

My tattoos are a representation of what matters most to me as well as what I love. I love bright colors, so all my tattoos are colorful. I want my tattoos to each tell their own story; they each come with their own story as well as how they came into existence.













Stephanie Higley

I used to have a Bible verse on my back. It was Hebrews 13:5b "Never shall I leave you, never shall I forsake you." It's one of my favorites. But people kept coming up behind me to read my back so I had it covered up. I let the artist choose what to do for the most part. I will get the verse again somewhere it can start a conversation without people sneaking up on me.

Right sleeve: One of the meanings of octopi is adaptability and overcoming challenges. They can tear their own arm off to get away from danger and then grow a

new one. It sort of reminds me to keep trying even when bad things keep happening.

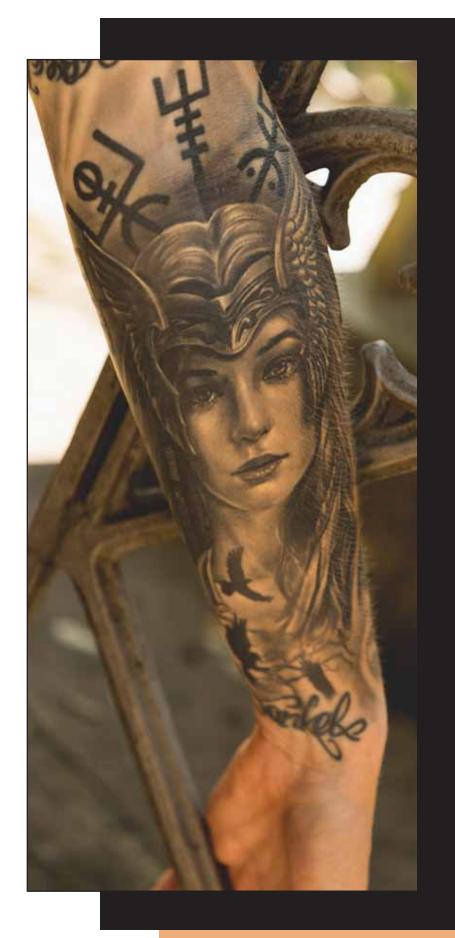
Chest: I feel like a weirdo because a good portion of my tattoos don't have meaning. I just think they are pretty and they make me feel pretty.



Zane Alvarez

Bundle of Arrows (right inner forearm): This symbolizes strong bonds. Two of the arrows represent my two closest friends, one who I've known one for my whole career and the other I've known since I was ten years old. The third arrow being broken represents the different people I've had in my life that have fit in that role to be there when I needed them during that time.







BOLD



AND BEAUTIFUL Mel Nestle





Leg (TMNT): For part of my childhood I was raised by my grandma who was an early childhood development specialist. Every morning, I would watch "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" before going to preschool. She was all about it. She supported my obsession with this cartoon in every way imaginable, and I just thought it was because she was cool. Later on she explained that she saw the TMNT as a great example of how people who come from the same place can have completely different skills and personality types, can work together to achieve the same goal. Essentially, everyone brings something to the table and can contribute to any team. That's a mentality I've carried with me well into adulthood. [done by @ drewstattoo at @queenstreettattoo in Wilmington, NC]

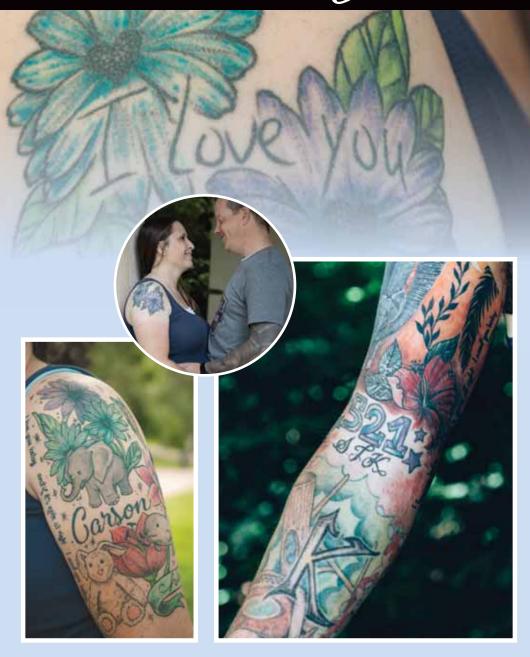
Leg (Reaper): I really like the traditional tattoo style, and I was wanting to get a reaper tattoo holding up a peace sign. There's no need to fear death, because life itself is chaos. After life, I think the other side is just chillin'. Hence the sunglasses and shirt on Death—he's just hanging out. We'll all get there eventually. [done in Warsaw, Poland @fostek_ink]

Back: My dad is the grandson of Lithuanian immigrants, and being in Europe, I thought there wouldn't be a better way to honor that heritage than with a back piece/mural by Lithuanian tattoo artist @audriusptattoo when he came through Mannheim at Ministry of Ink.

Arm (Love me tender): My grandpa was stationed at Ramstein during the Cold War, and we used to listen to Elvis together on weekends when I would stay over at his house. That man was and always has been an absolute hero in my eyes, and I couldn't miss the opportunity to get a tattoo in his honor while I am in Europe. [done in Riga, Latvia by @mels.artworks]

Arm (Eye of providence): I am a believer in a higher power, and this is a tribute to that. No matter what your "religion," when it comes to God, I find it hard to believe that any of us are technically "wrong". As long as you're not using your religion as a justification to hurt humanity, you're good by me. [@mels. artworks]

TATTOO love



Scott Kjendlie - My tattoos have a lot of meaning. My right arm I consider my family arm, as all three tattoos that help make up the entire sleeve signifies my children. Each one has an individual, special meaning that accurately represents that child. One smaller one in the middle of my arm is a matching one with my wife that has our anniversary date and initials.



Janetta Kjendlie - I never just "do" a tattoo, I have to take time to think about what it will say. My left arm is a tribute to my wonderful children. They have nicknames (bunny, elephant and monkey) and I have included that as well as their names. My upper right arm are two flowers to signify marriage along with my husband's handwriting. My most precious tattoo is the smallest of them all. It's my miscarriage tattoo and it's on my left ankle—there is a butterfly carrying a carnation up and that's them all in heaven.





Amanda Hylton

I have had this vision in my head for several years now. I found an amazing tattoo artist here in Germany that brought my vision to life. Sewing has been a big part of my life from the early age of 8. My amazing mom taught me how to sew by helping me make my Halloween costume that year. I dabbled in sewing off and on for years, but it never was consistent. That all changed when I became pregnant with my first child, a daughter, in 2008. My mom purchased me my first sewing machine and I have been consistently sewing since then, for not only my family, but many other families far and wide. Sewing has become a therapy for me to help me cope with my anxiety and depression. This tattoo not only symbolizes my mom with the addition of an iris, her favorite flower, and the fire she set inside me for the love for sewing that, but it is also a symbol to me to always continue to fight. My mom was the strongest woman I have ever known, she overcame so many obstacles in her life. She passed away from lung cancer in 2014, just a little over three months from when she was diagnosed and she fought hard until the very end. Because of her, I know whatever life throws my way, I must continue to fight.



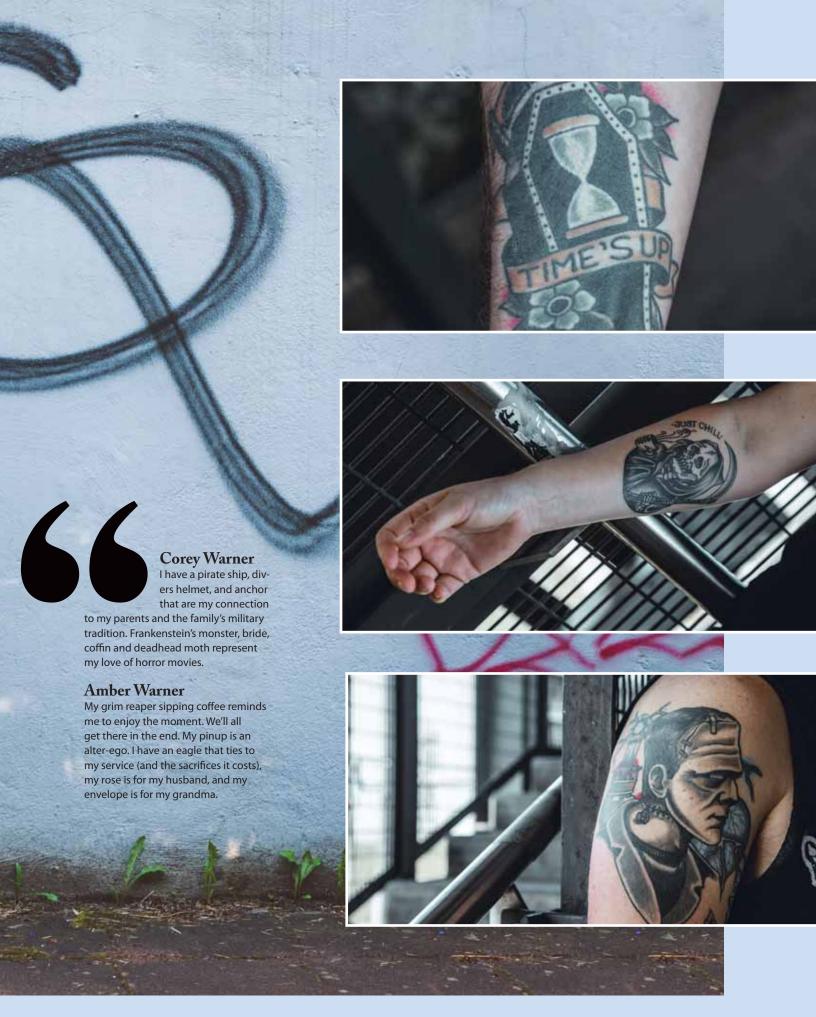
My tattoo started back in 2007 with just a band around my forearm. The band is a remembrance for my grandmother who was the reason why I decided to join the military. Her passing forced me to step back and reevaluate my current life choices. As for the rest of the design, I have known what I wanted the layout to be, it was just finding an artist to put it all together. The crowd of people around my wrist represent us (humans) in our day to day life. The ones that have broken away from the crowd walking up my arm towards the band. Those are the folks on their way to meet death. Some old, some young and some dealing with life struggles that could reshape their future depending on their choices. Above the band, we have two ravens which help guide spirits into the afterlife or whatever your beliefs may be. We have the individual in the doorway with emptiness in front of him. That emptiness can represent what you believe follows after death. Then the storm and lighting shows that we all face struggle in life, but in the end we all die. So, there is no need to fear what may come but to live in the here and now.











BACK TATTOOS

behind the scenes



Megan Wilmore

Tattoos, animals and nature were each part of my life growing up. My dad, a heavily tattooed Marine, instilled a love for nature and animals in me, and that has left a lasting impression on my life. I received this tattoo shortly after he passed, and it includes cherry blossoms to represent my time at my husband and I's first duty station, Okinawa, Japan, and all of my favorite birds. My butterflies and birds are a reminder to me to be present in life and all of its fleeting moments.



Nicole Foust

The military and first responders are ordinary people coming together to serve humankind. We are a family, a team that stands for courage and strength. We see and do things that few people do. It's unacceptable to me that so many commit suicide due to PTSD. It's the hardest fight but you aren't alone. We are a family, and I am here. When it gets too tough just reach out. That's how we should honor our fallen. That's what my tattoo is all about.





Nicolle DaSilva-Pfieffer

I got my first tattoo in 1991. I was on "Good Day New York" at that time because young ladies who worked in an office didn't have tattoos at that time. I'm now 52 and still getting more.



It's hard to put into the right words exactly what my tattoos mean, but I will try. I guess the best way to describe them is that they tell my story. They tell of the good times in life as well as the bad. They tell of the successes, failures and everything inbetween. For me, they remind me of what I have endured and made it through when I wasn't sure if I'd be able to. However, at the heart, they remind me that while all of these elements are part of my story, which have all been woven together to make me who I am today, my story isn't done yet and there is so much more to come!

Brooke Stadler



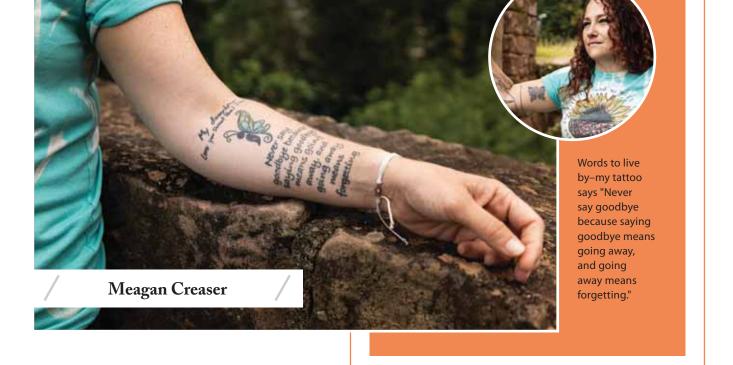




Tiffany Hall

My back tattoo is of two sparrows that represent love and hate. There is no specific reason that I chose this tattoo.







Stephanie Birge

My sleeve was done to help me heal after an abusive past. The Venus fly trap in my sleeve symbolizes empowerment, perspective, perception, personal will and strength, prophetic events happening in our lives. The Venus fly trap reminds us that everything we need comes to us in perfect time and space.





Amy Smolinski

The tree goddess over my left ovary was my first tattoo. It was part of my healing process after my hysterectomy. Two years later, I had another surgery to repair a 6cm hole in my abdominal muscles and a tummy tuck, and I lost the bottom roots. The full tattoo now restored her roots, and the leaves and vine grow out to cover my scar. I feel completely healed and beautiful after all my body has gone through.





SKIN DEEP

Mandy Albers

I got my first tattoo when I was 17. Surprisingly not being rebellious, my parents knew all along.

My tattoos are a way of expressing myself. Some have a personal meaning and others I just like the way they look and go with the flow.

Kacie Ransome

I started my tattoos with the spade and club. They are significant to me because I grew up fascinated with cards and also learned when I was 5 or 6 how to play many different games with my grandfather. I continued on with the card theme and incorporated a rose to represent my father and the queen of hearts skull to represent my absolute love of Halloween. The snowflake on my shoulder blade doesn't have much meaning to it other than a good friend of mine was the artist.





Tavorite COO

We've asked our staff to weigh in on their favorite tattoo and the reasoning behind their ink masterpiece. Here's what they have to say:

Brass Kynckles





NOEL MIN

I was in the Marine Corps in 2010, deployed to Southern Helmand with Regimental Combat Team 7. One of the Marines received a care package, and in it, a tattoo machine with several vials of black ink. We decided that one of the many ways we will remember this deployment is by getting the same tattoo. We all decided on "the one" and the next thing you know, I am sitting in a chair, in a tent, getting the aforementioned design—a pair of brass knuckles where the suits of playing cards are where the holes would be. It was butchered—and to this day looks terrible—and I love it.

ELIZABETH JONES

I grew up an Army Brat and loved to travel, so it was only fitting that my first tattoo revolve around that passion. However, I did get this tattoo while on spring break in college and kept it a secret from my parents (who aren't big fans of tattoos) for two years. They know now but weren't too pleased once they eventually saw it for the first time. But still ... #NoRegrets.



Wanderbust Map



Crimson Tide





SCOTT FOLEY

Being a native of the great state of Alabama, growing up loving Alabama football, and the University being my alma mater, I chose one of the Alabama Crimson Tide logos as my tattoo of choice. Coming from a family of all Auburn fans, this was a way for me to never cross that line. Roll Tide! This was my first tattoo and as the saying goes, you can't just have one. So, I do have plans for more.

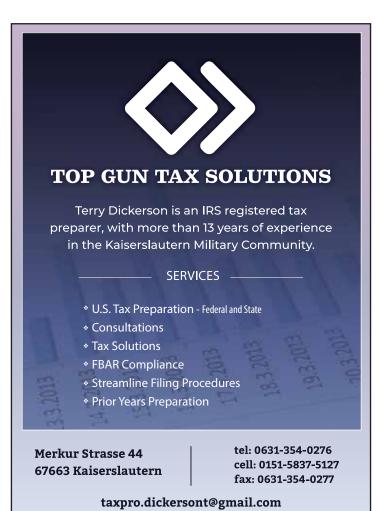
KEVIN MILLER

As silly as it sounds, my mushroom tattoo is a homage to tacky yard ornaments. My wife and I have a love for obnoxious knick-knacks, trinkets and awful lawn decorations. Besides that, the mushroom has no other significant meaning; it's basically a tacky space filler.

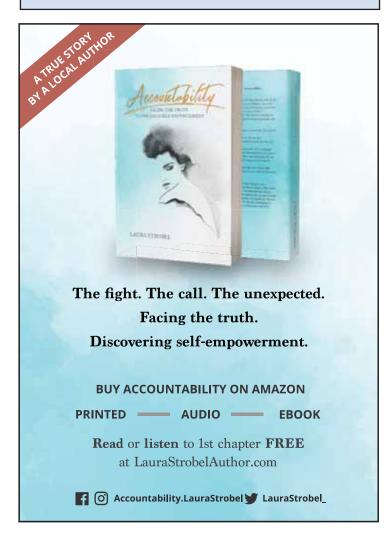


Mushroom











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