Abstract
In an anonymous online study of 79 active members or veterans of the US Military (77.2% male; 81% Caucasian; 45.5% enlisted, 44.1% officers), we investigated the relationship between empathy-based guilt (survivor and omnipotent responsibility guilt), rumination, satisfaction with life, and scores on a measure of Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). We expected PTSD to be associated with empathy-based guilt, and that soldiers who witnessed harm happening to others would experience negative psychological outcomes at least to the same degree or more, than those who were harmed themselves.

Method
Fifty (69.4%) participants had served at least once during the war in Iraq (Operation Iraqi Freedom) and 12.6% had served in the war in Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom).

Instruments
PTSD Checklist-Military Version (PCL-M)
Interpersonal Guilt Questionnaire (guilt based on empathy) subscales of Survivor Guilt (broadly defined) and Omnipotent Responsibility Guilt
Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression Scale (CES-D)
The Satisfaction with Life Scale

Results
Table 1 presents correlations between PTSD (measured with the PCL-M) and measures of depression (CES-D), life satisfaction, empathy-based interpersonal guilt scales, whether a traumatic event was a threat to self and/or to others, and the frequency of rumination about a threat to others.  Consistent with previous research, PTSD was significantly positively associated with depression and the experience of a threat to self and negatively associated with life satisfaction. As hypothesized in the present study, PTSD was also positively associated with survivor guilt, the experience of a threat to others, and current rumination about a threat to others.

Discussion
As expected, scores on the measure of PTSD were positively associated with depression (r=.71, p<.001) and negatively with satisfaction with life (r=-.34, p<.01). Consistent with our hypotheses, PTSD was positively associated with survivor guilt (r=.36, p<.01). PTSD was positively but not significantly associated with omnipotent responsibility (r=.14, n.s.). Survivor guilt was a significant predictor of depression (r=.43, p<.01) but not life satisfaction. In a hierarchical regression, a threat to self was positively associated with PTSD symptoms at Step 1 (r=.44, p<.001). At Step 2, threat to others was significantly associated with PTSD (r=.30, p<.05) and threat to self was no longer significant (r=.23, n.s.). Finally, at Step 3, current rumination about a threat to others was strongly associated with PTSD symptoms (r=.69, p<.001) and the previous variables were no longer significant predictors. We conclude that in contemporary war conditions, conscious and non-conscious empathy-based guilt and intense concern about the wellbeing of others may be particularly relevant to the severe mental disorders, including high rates of suicide, currently found in our returning soldiers.

Acknowledgements / Information
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This is an ongoing study. For further information, go to www.celeb.org or contact Professor O'Connor at loconnor@wi.edu.