

RUI: Military Service and Patterns of Marriage, Cohabitation and Union Dissolution
Award ID: 0646472

Activities and Findings:

Teachman, Jay. 2007. 'Race, Military Service, and Marital Timing: Evidence from the NLSY-79.' *Demography* 44:389-404.

I use data from the NLSY-79 to examine the relationship between military service and marital timing for white and black men during the 1980s. I make use of information about active-duty and reserve-duty service, as well as veteran status to implement strong controls for selectivity. I find that active-duty military service increases the probability of first marriage for both Whites and Blacks. In part, this relationship is due to positive selectivity into the military, and for Whites, greater income and economic stability. Above and beyond the effect of selectivity, income and economic stability, the effect of active-duty military service is particularly strong for black men.

Teachman, Jay and Lucky Tedrow. 2008. 'Divorce, Race, and Military Service: More than Equal Pay and Equal Opportunity.' *Journal of Marriage and Family* 70:1030-1044.

Several researchers have suggested that the persistently higher rate of divorce among Blacks may due to hard-to-measure concepts such as culture or norms. To attack this problem, we examine the risk of divorce among active-duty military servicemen where economic differences and the effects of racism are minimized. Our results indicate that the effect of military service in reducing marital dissolution among Blacks is not likely the result of unobserved selectivity and is limited to service in the Army. We attribute the latter finding to the fact that the Army has more fully integrated Blacks into leadership positions where they can provide positive role models than have other branches of the military.

Teachman, Jay. 2008. 'Military Service, Race and the Transition to Marriage and Cohabitation.' Forthcoming, *Journal of Family Issues*.

Using data from the 1979 National Longitudinal Study of Youth, I investigate the relationship between military service and transition to first intimate union. I argue that active-duty military service promotes marriage over cohabitation. The results are consistent with my argument, showing that active-duty members of the military are much more likely to choose marriage over cohabitation compared to reserve-duty service members, veterans, and comparable civilians. These results are particularly strong for black men, indicating a possible relationship between working in a largely race-neutral environment and choice of first intimate union.

Lemmon*, Megan, Mira Whyman*, and Jay Teachman. 2009. 'Active-Duty Military Service, Cohabiting Unions, and the Transition to Marriage.' Forthcoming, *Demographic Research*.

A small but growing body of research has begun to identify the consequences of military service during the all-voluntary era. Previous literature has emphasized the role played by the economic prospects of men in stimulating marriage, among both singles and cohabiters. Military service and marriage are related through pay rates, stability of employment and additional benefits awarded to married couples. In this article, we examine the relationship between military service and the likelihood that cohabiting unions will be converted into marriages. Our paper extends previous research by making a distinction between the effects of active-duty versus reserve-duty service on the transition to marriage using data from the 1979-2004 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY). Our findings indicate that there is a positive relationship between active-duty service and cohabiters transitioning to marriage.

Teachman, Jay. 2009. 'Setting an Agenda for Future Research on Military Service and the Life Course.' Forthcoming in Janet Wilmoth and Andrew London, *Life Course Perspectives on Military Service*. New York: Routledge.

In this chapter, I briefly review what we know about the consequences of military service for the lives of enlistees, including their family and marital transitions. I also provide a sketch of what we do not know; the important unanswered questions that should drive subsequent research. Finally, I outline the sorts of data that are necessary to answer the important questions facing researchers. Before tackling these tasks, however, I consider the concept of the life course as an organizing theme around which the discussion can take place.

Teachman, Jay. 2009. 'Health of Active-duty Veterans of the Peacetime All-volunteer Force Less Positive than Expected at Age 40.' Under review at Military Medicine.

I determine whether active-duty military service is linked to health outcomes at age 40. Screening on physical health at time of induction implies that veterans should experience better health than nonveterans. I use information from 2378 black and white men who are nationally representative of men who were age 14 to 21 in 1979 and at least age 40 by 2004. I examine two measures of health ascertained at age 40; self-reported health (using the health component of the SF-12) and whether the respondent spends 10 or more minutes per day attending to health problems. Active-duty veterans do not self report better health on the SF-12 and are more likely than other men to report spending at least 10 minutes per day attending to a health condition despite the fact that they enjoy more stable positions in the family life course.

Whyman*, Mira and Jay Teachman. 2009. 'Non-Combat Military Service in the United States and its Effects on Depression.' Under review.

A large body of research has established that military service can have a negative effect on soldiers, especially when they have been exposed to combat, resulting in PTSD and a wide range of other mental health problems. However, very little research examines what positive effect non-combat military service can have on mental health, and more specifically depression. Using data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY) we show that men who serve on active duty, and do not see combat, are less likely to experience depression than their civilian and reserve duty counterparts. We suggest that it is the high level of social support available to men serving on active duty that buffers the stresses they experience and therefore reduces the likelihood of an individual developing depression. In addition, veterans enjoy more advantageous family life course histories.

Training and Development:

The three undergraduate research assistants have learned to use the 'Gator' extraction system to create files from the NLSY longitudinal data. They conducted supervised investigation using the NLSY data. Together, they presented their research to the WWU Demography Club (faculty and students); at the 2008 Pacific Sociological Association meeting in Portland, OR; at the 2009 Pacific Sociological Association meeting in San Diego, CA; and at the departmental Scholars Week program May, 2008 and scheduled for May, 2009.

Outreach Activities:

Research Papers Presented –

Lemmon*, Megan, Mira Whyman*, and Jay Teachman. 'Active-Duty Military Service, Cohabiting Unions, and the Transition to Marriage.' Presented at the undergraduate roundtable session, Pacific Sociological Association annual meeting April, 2008, Portland, OR. The paper was presented at the Western Washington University, Scholars Week-Sociology Program, May, 2008.

Kim*, Gina and Lucky Tedrow. 'The Joint Effects of Marital Status and Education on Health Limitations: NLSY-79.' Presented at the Medical Sociology undergraduate roundtable session, Pacific Sociological Association meeting, April, 2009, San Diego, CA. Scheduled for presentation at the Western Washington University, Scholars Week- Sociology Program, May, 2009.

Whyman*, Mira, Megan Lemmon* and Jay Teachman. 'Non-Combat Military Service in the United States and its Effects on Depression.' Presented at the Medical Sociology undergraduate roundtable session, Pacific Sociological Association meeting, April, 2009, San Diego, CA. Scheduled for presentation at the Western Washington University, Scholars Week- Sociology Program, May, 2009.