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ABSTRACT

The military orientations of rural East Texas black and white high school students interviewed in 1966 were very similar; those of metropolitan and nonmetropolitan youth also did not differ much. Since then, status projections of Texas youth have been extended by adding a sample of Mexican American sophomores (1966) to compare with the East Texas ethnic groups. In addition, the original 1966 respondents were followed up in 1968 when they were seniors. The sophomores of the original 1966 study areas were restudied in 1972. Among the findings of the analysis reported here are the following. All three ethnic types desired military service to a similar extent--a majority of each. The greatest difference between the Chicanos and the other two ethnic types in reference to expectations was that a much higher proportion--almost half of the Chicanos expected to enlist. Adolescent boys' orientations toward military service do not appear to differ very much by ethnic type and do not appear to change greatly over late adolescence. Historical period of time may, however, produce dramatic changes in military orientations of youth: a very dramatic negative drift away from military service was observed between 1966 and 1972 in the occupational status projections of the black and white youth studied here. (Author/JM)

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MILITARY ORIENTATIONS OF WHITE, BLACK, AND CHICANO HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH:
SOME EXTENSIONS OF PRIOR EMPIRICAL GENERALIZATIONS FROM A TEXAS STUDY*

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INTRODUCTION

In two recent articles, we reported that the military orientations of rural Texas Black and White teen-age boys interviewed in 1966 were very similar (Kuvlesky and Dameron, 1971) and that those of metropolitan and nonmetropolitan youth also did not differ much (Kuvlesky and Dietrich, 1973). In discussing the limitations of these findings, we noted the need to test the generalizability of these findings by investigating other types of populations (i.e., Mexican Americans), the same populations at different ages, and the same populations at different periods (more recent) of historical time.

Since the original 1966 study of East Texas high school sophomores we have continued our work in surveying status projections of Texas youth by adding a sample of Mexican American sophomores (1967) to compare with the East Texas ethnic groups. In addition, we followed up the original 1966 respondents in 1968 when they were seniors and restudied the sophomores in the original 1966 study areas in 1972 (See Diagram 1). These expansions of our original 1966 survey make it possible to explore the level of generality of our earlier findings to some extent.

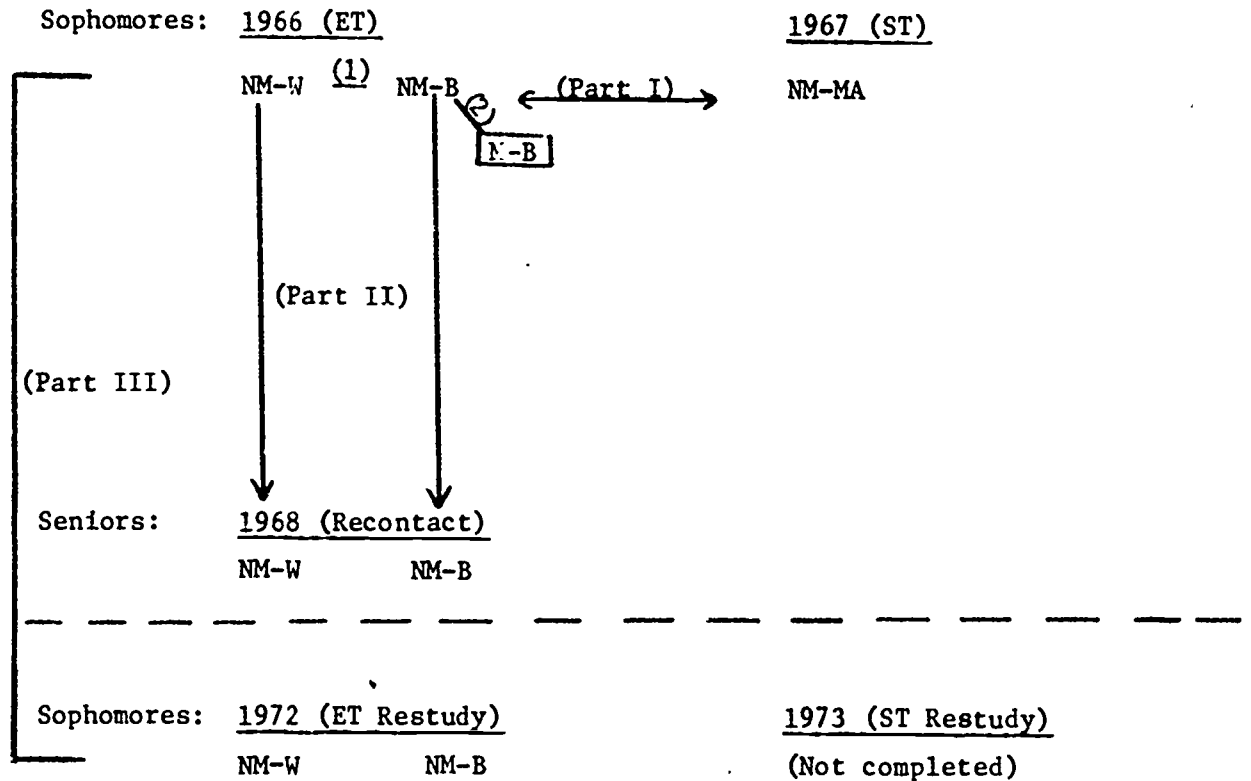
The major purpose of this "working paper" is to answer the following three questions within the context of our data:

- (1) Do Mexican American youth have military orientations similar to Black and White youth? (Part I of the ANALYSIS)
- (2) Do military orientations of youth change as they move from mid-adolescence to late adolescence? (Part II of the ANALYSIS)
- (3) Have military orientations of youth changed as a result of broad historical changes that have taken place since 1966? (Part III of the ANALYSIS).

The analyses involved on our sets of data relative to answering these questions are depicted in Diagram 1.

Because we have been informed that this paper is to serve primarily as a stimulus for roundtable discussion, it is purposefully structured to be straight-forward, lean, and easily read. Detail on methods of observation, measurement, and sample attributes can be obtained from the references listed at the end of the paper.

Diagram 1. Diagrammatical Representation of Comparative Analyses Among Selected Texas Study Populations



NM = Nonmetropolitan

ET = East Texas

W = White

M = Metropolitan

ST = South Texas

B = Black

MA = Mexican American

(1) Kuvlesky and Dameron, 1971

(2) Kuvlesky and Dietrich, 1973

ANALYSIS: EXTENDED GENERALIZATIONS

PART I: TRI-ETHNIC COMPARISON

Utilizing data from a replication of the 1966 East Texas study (Kuvlesky and Dameron, 1971) of rural youth completed in areas contingent or close to the Texas-Mexican border (Kuvlesky, Wright, and Juarez, 1971), we were able to test the earlier general findings reported on racial similarities among our 1966 high school sophomores. The tabular comparisons are shown in Tables 1-4.

Major findings are as follows:

- (1) All three ethnic types desired military service to a similar extent--a majority of each (58% to 63%) (Table 1).
- (2) About half or more of all three ethnic groups expected either to wait for the draft or join a reserve unit (Table 2).
- (3) Small proportions of any ethnic type expected to "get out of going"; however, more White boys than others expected this (Table 2).
- (4) The greatest difference between the Chicanos and the other two ethnic types in reference to expectations was that a much higher proportion--almost half--of the Chicanos expected to enlist (Table 4).
- (5) As was the case for Black and White boys, a substantial but small percentage (14%) of Chicano boys not desiring service expected to enlist and over a third of these youth expected to avoid military service.

Table 1. Texas Youths' Desire for Military Service by Ethnic Type

Desire to Enter Military Service	Black (N=98)	White (N=121)	MA (N=286)
	-----Percent-----		
Yes	63	60	58
No	<u>37</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>42*</u>
Total	100	100	100
No Information	0	0	3

*No and not sure.

Table 2. Texas Youths' Expectations for Military Service by Ethnic Type

Military Expectation	Black (N=89)	White (N=117)	MA (N=286)
	-----Percent-----		
Enlist	24	31	47
Officers' Training at College	59	34	---*
Reserves or National Guard	9	20	---*
Wait to be Drafted	---*	---*	48
Get out of going	<u>8</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>5</u>
Total	100	100	100
No Information or Ineligible	9	4	21

*Options not provided in response categories.

Table 3. The Relationship of Type of Military Expectation to Desire for Military Service Among Texas Youth by Ethnic Type

Military Expectation	Blacks		Whites		Mexican Americans		No (N=14)
	Yes (N=61)	No (N=28)	Yes (N=70)	No (N=47)	Yes (N=160)	Not Sure (N=91)	
-----Percent-----							
Enlist	30	11	40	17	61	27	14
Officers' Training at College	62	53	40	26	--	--	--
Reserves or National Guard	8	11	20	19	--	--	--
Wait to be Drafted	--	--	--	--	37	68	50
Get out of Going	<u>0</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>36</u>
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 4. Summary of Tri-Ethnic Comparison of Texas Youth's Military Orientations

Military Orientations	Black 1966	White 1966	MA 1967
Desire to Enter M.S. (%)	63	60	58
Expect to Enlist (%)	24	31	47
Expect to Avoid (%)	8	15	5
Attitude Toward M.S. (Mean)*	3.4	3.8	Not Avail.

*Scale scores ranged from a low of 0 (negative) to 5 (most positive).

PART II: DEVELOPMENTAL CHANGE (Sophomore to Senior)

A recontact with the original 1966 high school sophomores when they were seniors in 1968 provided a basis for ascertaining whether or not youth's orientations toward military service change as they become older, except for desire for service. The tabular findings of this panel analysis are provided in Tables 5-7.

Major findings are summarized as follows:

Desire for Service (Table 5)

The response categories varied between the two contacts--a "not sure" alternative was added in 1968: this basic variation in measurement prohibits drawing any conclusions about change over time. However, it is clear that Blacks, substantially more than Whites, answered the "not sure" category in 1968 (58% vs. 29%); whereas, the two racial groupings did not differ in 1966. The addition of a "certainty" dimension in 1968 ("not sure") could account for the variation in amount of racial difference between the two contacts; however, we cannot be sure this is the case.

Expectations for Service (Table 6)

To the extent that the two sets of response categories (1966 and 1968) were similar ("enlist" and "get out of going"), no appreciable change occurred for either grouping in expectations for military service.

Attitude Toward Military Service (Table 7)

Both racial groupings demonstrated an observable tendency to shift toward a more negative attitude toward military service as they became older. The comparison of 1966 and 1968 aggregate mean attitude scores, indicate a downward shift in value of the same extent for both racial groupings.

Table 5. Desires for Military Service of Texas Rural Youth Panel:
1966 and 1968

Desire	Blacks		Whites	
	1966 (N=98)	1968 (N=85)	1966 (N=121)	1968 (N=105)
	-----Percent-----			
Yes	63	14	60	32
Not Sure	Not Asked	58	Not Asked	29
No	<u>37</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>39</u>
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
No Information	0	2		

Table 6. Military Expectations of Texas Rural Youth Panel: 1966 and 1968

Military Expectation	Blacks		Whites	
	1966 (N=89)	1968 (N=77)	1966 (N=117)	1968 (N=92)
	-----Percent-----			
Enlist	23	17	31	36
Officer's Training in College	60	Not Asked	34	Not Asked
Reserves or National Guard	9	Not Asked	20	Not Asked
Wait to be Drafted	Not Asked	74	Not Asked	49
Get out of Going	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
Ineligible-Physical Disability	6	6	4	11
No Information	3	4		2

Table 7. Attitude of Blacks and Whites Toward Military Service, by Year of Study

Attitude Index	Blacks		Whites	
	1966 (N=91)	1968 (N=74)	1966 (N=120)	1968 (N=94)
0	1	3	1	1
1	7 22	9 32	3 12	5 21
2	14	20	8	15
3	24	26	19	27
4	36 78	23 68	38 88	30 79
5	18	19	31	32
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
MEAN	3.4	2.1	3.8	3.5
No Information	7	13	1	11

PART III: HISTORICAL CHANGE IN ORIENTATIONS TOWARD MILITARY SERVICE AS AN OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE

In a very recent paper, a colleague has reported findings from a 1972 restudy of sophomores in the 1966 original East Texas study areas which indicate a dramatic historical change taking place in rural youths' selection of military career lines (Dowdell, 1973). From small but substantial percentages of youth desiring and expecting military careers as jobs in 1966, the rate falls to almost none in 1972. For both occupational aspirations and expectations a marked negative tendency over time (1966-1972) is apparent in selection of military jobs (Table 10) for both racial groupings. Almost no youth desired and extremely few expected military careers in 1972.

Data on other military orientations similar to those reported on in the first part of this paper also exist from the 1972 historical recontact but have not yet been analyzed.

Table 8. Historical Change in Selection of Military Careers As Occupational Aspirations and Expectations Among Black and White East Texas Rural Youth: 1966-1972

A. Occupational Aspirations

<u>Year</u>	<u>White</u>			<u>Black</u>		
	<u>Officer</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Officer</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>	<u>Total</u>
	-----%			-----%		
1966	4.78	2.39	7.17	6.12	3.06	9.18
1972	.43	0	.43	1.02	0	1.02
Difference	-4.35	-2.39	-6.74	-5.10	-3.06	-8.16

B. Occupational Expectations

<u>Year</u>	<u>White</u>			<u>Black</u>		
	<u>Officer</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Officer</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>	<u>Total</u>
	-----%			-----%		
1966	4.78	3.98	8.76	9.18	4.08	13.26
1972	.43	2.17	2.60	0	3.06	3.06
Difference	-4.35	-1.81	-6.16	-9.18	-1.02	-10.20

CONCLUSIONS

Ethnic Variability (1966-67)

- (1) During the period 1966-67, Texas youth of all ethnic types were positively oriented toward military service: most desired to serve, large percentages desired to enlist after high school, and few expected to "get out of going" in some way.
- (2) The only ethnic group difference noted of any consequence was that Chicano boys more often expected to enlist after high school than others.

Developmental Change [1966 (Soph.) - 1968(Senior)]

- (1) Both Black and White boys tended in general to become less positive in their attitude toward military service over the last two years of high school. Still, the majority of both types retained a generally positive attitude toward military service as seniors.
- (2) As far as could be determined from our data, aspirations and expectations for military service did not change much over the last two years of high school.

Historical Change (1966-1972)

Beyond a doubt, Texas youth are much less likely to select a military career as a desirable long-term occupational goal today than in 1966. What is more, the same trend is apparent for expectations, which is probably a better predictor of actual career attainment than aspirations. Very few of the youth studied here in 1972 (less than 1% of the total) desired a military career. Proportionately over twice as many Blacks as Whites desired such careers and all of these youth wanted to be officers--none desired enlisted rank.

Summary

Adolescent boys' orientations toward military service do not appear to differ very much by ethnic type and do not appear to change greatly over late adolescence. Historical period of time may, however, produce dramatic changes in military orientations of youth: a very dramatic negative drift away from military service was observed between 1966 and 1972 in the occupational status projections of the Black and White youth studied here.

RELATION TO PAST RESEARCH

As has been noted in earlier reports as a result of extensive reviews of past published research, not much knowledge exists on youth's orientations toward military service, particularly in reference to rural youth (Kuvlesky and Dietrich, 1973). What little past research comparable to ours that exists on southern Black and White youth supports what we found in 1966. As far as we know, nothing exists from prior research on developmental change relative to military orientation. Likewise, we have been unable to turn up any past research on recent historical change in this regard.

Relative to Chicanos, the only comparable research comes from a more recent study of metropolitan youth in Texas (Schulman, et al., 1973), which is deemed of little value for comparative purposes with our 1967 findings due to the confounding influences of a five year gap over a critical historical period.

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APPENDIX: Military Orientation Instruments

Military Aspirations

1966 East Texas: Do you want to go into military service? (Circle one number)

1 Yes 2 No

1967 South Texas: Do you want to go into military service? (Circle one number)

1 Yes 2 Not sure 3 No

1968 East Texas: Same as 1967 South Texas

Military Expectations

1966 East Texas: What do you expect to do about military service? (Circle only one number)

1. Quit high school and enlist.
2. Enlist right after high school.
3. Go to college and take officer's training.
4. Enlist in the Reserves or National Guard.
5. Not eligible--I have a physical disability.
6. Get out of going some way or other.

1967 South Texas: What do you expect to do about military service? (Circle only one number)

1. Enlist
2. Wait to be drafted
3. Get out of going some way or other
4. Not eligible--I have a physical disability

1968 East Texas: Same as 1967 South Texas

Military Attitudes

1966 East Texas: Tell me whether you agree with the following statements about entering military service. (Check one blank for each statement.)

Agree Disagree

- | | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | 1. Every American male should want to serve in the military. |
| _____ | _____ | 2. Every able bodied American male should enlist if the country is fighting a war. |
| _____ | _____ | 3. One should not complain if he is drafted. |
| _____ | _____ | 4. One can do more for his country by doing something else. |
| _____ | _____ | 5. Anyone who enlists in the service is foolish. |

1967 South Texas: Not asked

1968 East Texas: Same as 1966 East Texas

Main Earner's Job

1966 East Texas: What is the major job held by the mainbreadwinner of your home? (Write your answer in the following box. Give a specific job, not the company or place worked for.)

ANSWER: _____

1967 South Texas: What is the main job held by the major money earner of your home? (Write your answer in the following box. Give a specific job, not the company or place worked for.)

ANSWER: _____

1968 East Texas: Same as 1967 South Texas

Occupational Aspirations

1966 East Texas: If you were completely free to choose any job, what would you most desire as a lifetime kind of work? (In answering this question give an exact job. For example, do not say "work on the railroad" but tell us what railroad job you would like to have.) Write your answer in the box below.

ANSWER: _____

1967 South Texas: If you were completely free to choose any job, what would you desire most as a lifetime job? (In answering this question give an exact job. For example, do not say "work on the railroad" but tell us what railroad job you would like to have.) Write your answer in the box below.

ANSWER: _____

1968 East Texas: Same as 1967 South Texas