

HOW HAVING A MILITARY FATHER AFFECTS PROMOTION TO GENERAL
OFFICER

A Thesis

by

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ABSTRACT

This study identifies factors associated with rapid promotion rates among elite United States Army officers. It is particularly interested whether officer mobility rates are affected by the military experience of the officer's father. Existing studies of military mobility focus primarily on factors dealing with three key areas: military organization, historical situations, and social background. Fathers' prior military service has received relatively little attention. This neglect is unwarranted, as there are studies enough to suggest that a father's occupation may influence the choices and values of their offspring, which in turn bear on the promotion rates of their sons. This study suggests that among a set of elite officers, those who had a father with a history of military service are promoted to elite level more quickly than those without a father who served. To assess this hypothesis, Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) software developed by Charles Ragin in 1987 is used. QCA allows us to identify what factors are most important among a set of elite Army officers who were most quickly promoted to general officer rank.

DEDICATION

To my mom, who simply wanted me to go to college, what would she think now?
To my siblings who set the bar high, I am catching up.
To my husband, who now knows more about military generals than he wants to.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In 1956, C. Wright Mills defined the elite in society as those whose decisions have global consequences. He posited that these decision makers, located in three centers of influence, corporations, politics, and the military, are responsible for the development and implementation of economic policies and political agendas (Mills 1956). Of the three groups, the military is unique because it is charged with the substantial job of maintaining the security and defense of the nation and has control of the means of violence to do so. The decisions elite military leaders make and the actions they take not only have national and global ramifications, they also shape the relative importance of democratic ideals and changing political agendas. The weight these decisions have should be carried only by those who are focused on what is good for society. But from where will competent leaders arise?

Harold Lasswell in *Personality and Power* (1948) believes that to build a better society youth with democratic leadership qualities should be identified so they can then be raised and trained to work for the good of society. The ability to do this exists and can be accomplished by studying the careers and lives of elite military leaders and identifying factors influencing their promotion. Mills believes that those who lead the American military and who achieve high military commands come from “similar social origins.” They are often able to rise to that high status through reliance on available “social links” that allow them access to the institutions, which will mold them into soldiers, especially but not exclusively, the national military academies (1956:12). In his

seminal portrait of the military profession, Janowitz (1960) accepts Mills' (1956) embrace of the social attributes perspective, and takes it one step further by expanding the social factors that should be taken into account. Janowitz collected a large amount of data on the social origins of military personnel including details on lifestyle, etiquette, political beliefs, and career motivations, to provide an inclusive and encompassing portrait of all service members.

Scholars interested in who populates the upper echelon of the military have used the information Janowitz (1960) gathered as a basis for their own research but with more focused concentration on distinct areas instead of in total. They usually attribute officer promotion to one of three factors, military organizations, historical contexts, or social background. Organizational factors include rules of promotion required by law and the officers' accessibility to military educational institutions (Janowitz 1960; Mazur and Mueller 1996; Peck 1994). Historical context of service includes, for example, serving during times of economic upheaval or in times of war and interwar years (Coffman and Herrly 1977; Moore and Trout 1978). Lastly, elements of social background are so numerous and varied as to defy definition. In scholarly research they include matters such as region of origin or religious affiliation and they are not normally the central focus but are a secondary consideration or an interesting side bar (Margiotta 1976; Mazur and Mueller 1996).

This study uses the inclusive approach used by Janowitz (1960) and it considers the contribution of all three factors prominent in promotion studies. In addition it extends the less studied possibility that normative family values may also play a

significant part in bringing up those who enter the highest military circles. A father's occupation may affect not only the father's beliefs but also those instilled in their children (Aldrich and Kim 2007; Burk 1984; Egerton 1997; Faris 1981; Hammill, Segal, and Segal 1995; Kelty, Kleykamp, and Segal 2010; Mortimer 1975). Offspring learn to value money, service, patriotism, independence, a particular lifestyle, or the habit of conformity. All of these can influence their decision to follow their father's career choice (Egerton 1997; Faris 1981; Kelty et al. 2010; Mortimer 1975; Sackett 2003).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This project explores reasons and reaches conclusions for variation in the rate of military officer promotion to senior rank. Existing literature focuses on three key factors affecting rapid promotion to senior ranks: institutional structures, historic context, and social backgrounds. Less studied is the possibility that rapid rates of promotion result from influences within the family, particularly from a father who served in the military. To establish the effect of a father's service it is necessary to define a clear pathway connecting it to factors within the lives of officers who reach elite status. Therefore, literature surrounding the influence of a father's military service on their male offspring will also be examined.

Military organizations contain mandated and traditional milestones that enhance or diminish the odds of promotion to higher ranks. Advancing in rank within the U.S. Armed Forces is dictated by specific rules and an appropriate sequence of events. Official criteria for promotion are codified in Title 10 USC and can include Time Spent in Service (TIS), Time Spent in Grade (TIG), and Officer Evaluation Reports (OER). An officer is selected for promotion, or not, by a review board according to these measurements. While there are formalized measures for advancement, structural factors outside the realm of legal mandates also affect promotion rates. Usually among these are graduation from a national military academy, successful participation in the military education system, and the increasing need for specialists trained in new technologies (Coffman and Herrly 1977; Janowitz 1960; Margiotta 1976; Mazur and Mueller 1996;

Moore and Trout 1978; Moskos 1998; Peck 1994, Segal 1967).

An academy education is said to set “the standards of behavior for the whole military profession” by indoctrinating cadets into the military way of doing things and creating a “like-mindedness” (Hosek 2001; Janowitz 1960:127). These bonds in conjunction with frequently intersecting careers, serve to facilitate promotion (Hosek 2001; Janowitz 1960; Mazur and Mueller 1996; Moore and Trout 1978; Peck 1994). In her study of officer ascension, Susan Hosek (2001) recognizes this “fraternity” noting that graduates of academies have certain assets because they are well versed in the nuances of military operations and expected behaviors, and have a “sizeable cohort of peers” with whom they establish personal and career relationships (Hosek 2001:8; Janowitz 1960; Moore and Trout 1978). Mitchel Peck (1994) examined the effects of an academy education. While he found that commissioning through Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) or Officer Candidate School (OCS) or programs was a “positive and statistically significant” factor affecting promotion; it was an academy graduate who would eventually reach the upper echelon of service.

A second positive organizational contributor to promotion is participation in higher education provided by the military (Coffman and Herrly 1977; Janowitz 1960; Mazur and Mueller 1996; Peck 1994; Thirtle 2001). Two main avenues for further military education are attendance at Command and General Staff School (CGSS) and the War College. Invitations to either are extended to officers who have garnered the necessary institutional criteria and passed a board review. Attendance exposes officers to a curriculum designed to prepare them to be managers and administrators, necessary

attributes they will take with them into the elite officer corps (Janowitz 1960; Mazur and Mueller 1996; Peck 1994). With particular focus on the West Point class of 1950, Mazur and Mueller (1996) were able to discern and illustrate a system which “channels” officers forward for promotion or “shunts” them to the side for retirement. The basis for being channeled upward is dependent on attendance at these two colleges. They are most consequential at the rank of Lt. Colonel and Colonel where a division at each point occurs, either advancing or stagnating the career of an officer (Mazur and Mueller 1996; Peck 1994). At the rank of Lt. Colonel, attendance at the CGSS channels them further upward whereas their absence serves to shunt them towards retirement. At the rank of Colonel a divide is again drawn between those who are invited to attend War College and those who are not. Graduates from this institute enter into a pool from which brigadier generals are chosen. Although graduation from an academy and further institutional education are part of the arsenal carried by those who eventually enter the elite cadre, the importance of the two may be decreasing (Janowitz 1960).

Advancements in weapons development and computerized technology increases the need for leaders with “a wider diversity of skill”, those who exemplify both specialized knowledge and managerial skills (Dempsey 2014; Janowitz 1960:12; Margiotta 1976; Moore and Trout 1978; Moskos 1998; Peck 1994; Segal 1967; Thirtle 2001). It may be necessary for those with specialized skill sets to be recruited from civilian post-baccalaureate programs. With a more civilian oriented work force and increased collaboration with civilian specialists, officers already well versed in the management of combat will also need to have personnel management skills. This

comingling of “warrior and non-warrior” will increase the number of non-academy trained officers who progress into the upper echelons of the military ranks (Janowitz 1960; Moskos 1977; Moskos 1998:5; Peck 1994; Thirtle 2001). These institutional components provide some insight into rates of officer promotion and are thoroughly documented. Nevertheless, organization factors should not be considered independently of the historical context in which they exist.

Structure and expectations within institutions change and are affected by current historical events, just as are the decisions made by individuals. Economic upheavals and the declaration or ending of a war can enrich, stall, or end an officer’s career prospects (Call and Teachman 1991; Coffman and Herryly 1977, Gade 1991; Janowitz 1960; Maclean and Elder 2007; Moore and Trout 1978, Peck 1994). For example, membership in the armed forces during economic hard times can provide a steady income and training in marketable job skills (Elder 1985; Heller 2010). During the Great Depression the federal government provided supervisory experience and other work and skills training through the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) (Elder 1985; Heller 2010). Administered by the Army, the CCC placed mostly reserve officers, with some regular, in leadership positions and provided the participants with “paramilitary training” (Heller 2010:440). Therefore at the outbreak of World War II the reserve officers and CCC participants, trained and motivated, were already prepped for service and able to garner higher ranks as the country went to war (Heller 2010). In opposition, an upswing in the economy can cause members with marketable skills to vacate the service to secure similar but better paying civilian jobs. Similar to economic explanations, service in and

around the context of war will certainly affect the military careers. Within war the visibility of a soldier's actions are accentuated (Moore and Trout 1978). Combat can provide the opportunity to showcase leadership skills, teamwork, and bravery while under the tutelage of higher ranking and influential officers who in turn can provide positive OERs and suggestions for a battlefield promotion (Gade 1991; Janowitz 1960; Moore and Trout 1978; Peck 1994). This same visibility can have a detrimental effect when the same characteristics are seen as lacking, resulting in a rank downgrade or reassignment, and affecting promotions. Neither of the factors mentioned above can stand alone without considering the effects of social background which can influence the development of normative values and impact life decisions that affect promotion rates.

Social background factors are many in number, definition, and measurement resulting in great diversity of focus within scholarly research. (Janowitz 1960; Faris 1981; Margiotta 1976). For example, religion defined and measured by Morris Janowitz (1960) consists of Catholic, Protestant, and Episcopalian, in comparison Mazur and Mueller (1996) consider only Catholic and Jewish religious affiliation and used it as a measurement of "ethnic background" (131). Athleticism measured by Mazur and Mueller (1996) is quite precise, whether or not an officer participated in intramural or varsity sports, for how long, and in which sports (133). Zettler (2002) is much more simplistic in measurement of athleticism. He asks whether an officer, when a cadet, earned a varsity letter or not. Morris Janowitz (1960) covers wider ground including religion, social strata, rural origins, and nativity, but also matters of lifestyle, etiquette, political beliefs, and career motivations. Mazur and Mueller (1996) do likewise and

consider among important social background factors such matters as facial characteristics and dominance, General Order of Merit (GOM), athleticism, friendships, religion, socioeconomic status (SES), height, and many others.

Among the many social factors available for investigation, one universally considered element is family socioeconomic status or the placement of officers and families within the larger social strata (Aldrich and Kim 2007; Call and Teachman 1991; Egerton 1997; Faris 1981; Fligstein 1980; Hammill, Segal, and Segal 1995; Janowitz 1960; Margiotta 1976; Mazur and Mueller 1996; Thomas 1984). It is here where a father's vocation becomes a focus as SES is typically measured by the level of a father's education, occupation, or by family income if available (Aldrich and Kim 2007; Egerton 1997; Faris 1981; Hammill, Segal, and Segal 1995; Janowitz 1960, Margiotta 1976; Mazur and Mueller 1996; Thomas 1984). Placement within the social hierarchy may also determine the normative values instilled in children. The values learned and practiced by a family reared on limited resources differ from those raised in affluence.

Knowing a father's vocation may also serve as a resource in determining the presence of occupational inheritance and thus a solid accounting of how a father who served in the military might not only influence their offspring to become a soldier but also affect their rate of promotion. Research in intergenerational transmission within the military has yielded mixed results, with both connections and irrelevancy found between the careers of fathers and sons (Bowen 1986; Faris 1981; Margiotta 1976; Moore and Trout 1978; Thomas 1984). Encompassing four branches, the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines, and both officers and enlisted personnel, George Thomas (1984) found a

“strong intergenerational linkage” between fathers and sons who had made a career out of the military (Thomas 1984:307). With the advent of the All-Volunteer Force (AVF), in the United States, John Faris (1981) wanted to differentiate between economic and normative reasons for joining and found connections between soldiers and the service of their son:

father son linkages appear to be a component in a more general model of family and normative factors which supports military service and which counterbalances to some extent the effect of a marketplace emphasis in recruiting policy. (P. 14)

In contrast, Franklin Margiotta (1976) found little evidence for “self-recruitment” of sons within the U.S. Air Force (159). In his investigation, seventy percent of respondents had no history of family military service. In agreement, Thomas Bowen (1986) scrutinized Air Force enlisted personnel and officers with the initial belief that a paternal occupational influence existed, but found no connection between military service patterns of fathers and the career decisions of their sons.

The availability of different contributing factors within institutional, historical, and social structures result in research that is usually focused in only one of the three areas. When any are considered in conjunction they are not given equal focus, a scholar may center on institutional components with a secondary nod to social attributes or historical context. Equal contemplation of all four factors and the linkages between them would provide a more comprehensive view of promotion pathways (Gade 1991; Moore and Trout 1978). This study hopes to exemplify the value of a more inclusive approach to the study of occupational inheritance within the armed forces through confirmation of linkages found between the four factors affecting officer promotion.

3. DATA COLLECTION

This study identifies pathways senior military officers travelled as they were promoted from junior to senior rank; it asks which pathways led to more rapid rates of promotion. Addressing these issues requires a clear definition of the military officers selected for study. For purposes of this study, the included officers were those who reached the rank of brigadier general and served in at least one of the four major military conflicts fought by the United States from World War I through Vietnam.

The problem for data collection lies not with definitions but with gaining the data. There is no comprehensive list of brigadier generals. In some cases, the problem was that the list of general officers was too large to sample given the limited resources available. For example, the time frame for the study spans over sixty years. Yet in 1946 alone there were approximately 900 brigadier generals listed in the *Official Army Register* (Boston 2014). Similar problems arose with biographical dictionaries which contained too many entries, such as the *American National Biography* (twenty-four volumes) (Betz 1999) or *Current Biography: Who's News and Why* (seventy-five volumes) (Current Biography, 1940). Some could not be used because inclusion was regulated to particular populations such as those who have attained four stars, or to a certain branch of service or conflict. The number of entries in *Who Was Who in American History-the Military* (Marquis 1975) is smaller yet still prohibitive with 652 pages of figures. In addition, dates of promotions were not included and only those who had already died at the time of publication are listed.

In other cases, public access to resources was difficult to obtain. The Defense Manpower Data Center is a case in point (Defense 2015). Developed in 1974, its primary mission is to provide resources for active duty personnel. It does retain historical records, but of the thirteen reports available on their website, only three allow public access, the rest require current military affiliation or a CAC (Common Access Card) and passwords (Defense 2015). The Army Human Resources Command (HRC) will process requests under the Freedom of Information Act but it is a time consuming process, sometimes taking months to have questions answered via email (USArmy Ft Knox HRC, personal communication, Feb. 18, 2014; C. Blanch, personal communication, April 1, 2014).

Two promising compilations were *Webster's American Military Biographies* (McHenry 1978) and the *Dictionary of American Military Biography* (Spiller, Dawson, and Williams 1984). The first contains a more manageable listing of 1033 military figures who served from 1776 to 1978. Included information is focused on dates of birth, death, tours of duty, and promotions but there is no indication in the volume noting the exact criteria for the selection of entries. The *Dictionary of American Military Biography* (Spiller et al. 1984) contains the most manageable number of entries, 374, who had an effect on American military history between 1607 and 1975. To be included in this dictionary meant surviving a long and rigorous process of selection, and twenty-five editions, by fifty “leading American military historians” (Spiller et al. 1984:xi). For these reasons, a purposive sample, a type of non-probability sampling (*selecting* units from a population), was used because of the exploratory nature of the project, lack of an

aggregated population to draw from, and a concentration on cases with distinct characteristics. Culled from this dictionary were the names of U.S. Army officers who achieved flag officer status and who participated in World War I, World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War. In all, 117 officers in this dictionary met the criteria (see Appendix A).

Once the original source was exhausted, research continued through different avenues. Primary sources included the *U.S. Army Register, Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the United States Military Academy* developed by George W. Cullum (1891), autobiographies and online obituaries. Secondary resources used were biographies, additional biographical dictionaries, as well as scholarly articles and internet web sites such as ancestry.com. Contact with official libraries and archivists at Catholic University of America and Shattuck Military Academy also helped to resolve missing information.

When data collection was complete, cases were dropped owing to missing data (11), death before retirement (5) or not in Army service (30). Because this research is particularly interested in the role fathers play in the promotion rates those within the population were divided into two populations. One subpopulation (n=29) was made up of officers whose fathers served in the military (MF) and another (n=42) of officers whose fathers had no military service (NMF). Because this research is particularly interested in the effect of a military father it is necessary to have comparative abilities between those with fathers who served in the military and those with no military father. Therefore, members of one subpopulation were matched with members of the other by

context of service. In the end, twenty of the original twenty-nine generals with a MF were able to be matched to twenty with no military father, yielding a total of forty cases to be found in the study (see Appendix A).

4. METHODS

Conditions affecting rates of promotion for officers vary. Not all officers follow the same route but they arrive at the same place, the condition of equifinality. To know why this is so, Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) was used to analyze the population of officers promoted to general officer rank. This program is specifically designed to consider which different combinations of factors form pathways that lead to the same outcome (Grofman and Schneider 2009; Ragin 1987; Ragin and Sonnett 2004). QCA has several methods of analysis available, each dependent on a different type of measurement. The first is Crisp Set QCA (csQCA) which uses dichotomously measured variables. Second, Fuzzy Set QCA (fsQCA) allows interval measurements between 1 and 0, so a factor can be partially in (0.5) or barely out (1.5) (Kent 2008; Ragin 1987). Lastly, Multi-Value QCA (mvQCA), the newest edition to QCA, can use up to five measurements, 1 through 5. In this study factors can be easily coded dichotomously without the loss of important information, therefore Crisp Set QCA will be used as the method of analysis. QCA will produce three interpretations which are called complex, parsimonious, and intermediate (Ragin 1987). Complex analysis uses only those combinations of factors that have empirical cases. Parsimonious does the same but also considers closely matching configurations (counterfactuals or remainders) that lack an empirical case but are theoretically based. Between these two ends of the spectrum is the interpretation used in this research, intermediate, which is recommended for use by Charles Ragin (1987) and the most used in research analysis. It considers the empirical

configurations found in complex analysis and some of the counterfactuals found in the parsimonious analysis (see Appendix B).

5. VARIABLES

The dependent variable, shown in Table 1, is the time taken to rise from lieutenant to Brigadier General (CTOB). Among those who achieve brigadier rank some promote more quickly than others, these are elite officers. This variable is measured using the total years taken from initial commissioning to brigadier, a general was either above the mean of total years or below. The independent variable was military father. The dichotomous measure was, yes if there was a father with military service or no, there was not. The context and the amount of time spent in service by the father were not considered. More complex data on military fathers were not available.

Table 1 also indicates the three control variables. One was college graduate (CLGRAD), with a notation as to whether the college was a military academy. The measure was a yes/no dichotomy. Once again, more complex data were not available. Another was the number of years each general spent in conflict (YRSCNF) between their commissioning and retirement dates. The measure was yes if above the mean of years spent in conflict for all forty generals (4.65). The final control variable used was region. Scholarly studies which cite region of birth as a distinguishing characteristic of officers usually point in two directions, the Northern and Southern United States. Region was yes if a general was born (and probably raised) in the South, meaning one of the eleven former Confederate states and delineated by the Mason Dixon Line, or no for those born in the North.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variable	Mean	SD	Percent
Years Commissioning to Brigadier			
All Forty	27.87	6.06	
Independent Causal Variables			
Years in Conflict			
All Forty	4.62	3.57	
College Graduate			
All Forty			82.5
Military Father			90
No Military Father			75
Region of Birth			
All Forty			
North			67.5
South			32.5
Military Father			
North			65
South			35
No Military Father			
North			70
South			30

6. FINDINGS

The calculations performed by csQCA identify two pathways followed by officers who became brigadier generals (Table 2). The first pathway is made up of two variables, more than the mean years spent in conflict and region of birth being the Southern United States. This is not surprising. Scholarly literature attests to the importance of both for the promotion to general. The direct experience of war increases the visibility of a soldier's behavior in situations that directly test the officers' performance skills. The Southern United States, or the former Confederate states, is stereotyped as a culture more accepting of military values (see Appendix A). This route is followed when there is no the presence of a military father. One-hundred percent of the twenty generals without a father with military experience who followed this particular two variable path were elite, or were generals who rose faster than others to brigadier status. Forty percent of the elite generals within these twenty followed this two variable pathway. Among the forty generals, without consideration of military father, 87.5 percent of those who followed this path are elite. Considering only the elite in this group, 36.84 percent took this route.

The second pathway is made up of the two variables that defined the first path, but it adds a third factor to the pathway, college graduation, to make a unique pathway. This second path includes those who served more than the mean years spent in combat, were born in the Southern United States, and were a college graduates. The identification of this third variable, college graduation, (of which 67.5 percent are West Point

Table 2. Observed Pathways for Promotion from Second Lieutenant to Brigadier General

Number of Generals	Inclusion of Military father	Identified Pathway	Consistency (in percent)	Coverage (in percent)
20	No	Years in Conflict, Region	100	40
40	No	Years in Conflict, Region	87.5	36.84
20	Yes	Years in Conflict, Region, College Graduate	75	33
40	Yes	Years in Conflict, Region, College Graduate	83.71	31.57

Note: Ragin defines “consistency” as the percent within a path who possess the outcome of interest, in this case, more rapid promotion to general rank. By “coverage” Ragin means the percent of the outcome variable that is included within a particular path.

graduates) is not surprising. Research has established that attending college not only develops bonds among peers but from West Point specifically creates familiarity with the military way, both known to affect promotion. This pathway is followed when the variable, military father, is present or considered. Of those twenty generals with a military father who followed this particular path, 75 percent were elite. If one considers only elite generals among these twenty, 33 percent followed this second path. The second population of the forty generals with the inclusion of military father as a variable indicates that 83.71 percent are elite generals and when considering only those elite generals within this population, 31.57 percent followed this particular pathway.

The unexpected finding is that college graduation only attains significance in the

life pathways of officers if and only if a military father is present or considered. Spending more than the mean years of all forty generals in conflict and being born in the Southern United States is the core of every pathway identified. But if a general had a father who served in the military then college graduation is added to their route. The consistency percentages, from 75 percent to 100 percent, indicate that elite officers also follow these paths. These results not only address the theoretical interests of this study but also illustrate a prime benefit of using QCA, divulging the links between variables. In this case there is something about having a military father that is linked to graduation from college. There is also evidence of a link between years spent in conflict and region of birth, they are found together in every pathway. The linkages found by csQCA are validated when variables are viewed singularly (Table 3).

The first two variables in Table 3, military father and years spent in conflict, have numbers that are expected. Because this study was designed to incorporate matching generals, twenty with a military father (50 percent) and twenty without (50 percent), it is understandable that military father does not show up in any of the pathways. Spending more than the mean years in conflict is not only a factor in every pathway but has a much higher percentage of elite generals. This is also expected and supported by research. It is the second half of Table 3 that supports the linkages found by csQCA and increases confidence that these patterns are important. Nearly twice as many generals are born in the Northern United States (67.5 percent), the expectation is that it would be seen in pathways, but it is not. Southern born is the variable in all the pathways and it is always linked with years spent in conflict. Although Northern born

generals outnumber those born in the South, it is not sheer numbers that csQCA considers, it is the link between variables and the combination of variables that are the focus. The last variable in the table, college graduate, shows a large difference in the number of generals who graduate from college compared to those who do not. Again, it would make sense for college graduation to be a factor in the pathways simply because 82.5 percent are college graduates, yet it is only present if and only if military father is a consideration.

Table 3. Percentage of Total and Elite Generals

Generals	Military father		Mean Years in Conflict		Region of Birth		College Graduate	
	No	Yes	Above	Below	North	South	Yes	No
Percent Total	50	50	57.5	43.5	67.5	32.5	82.5	17.5
Percent Elite	50	45	73.9	41.1	27.5	22.5	42.5	7.5

7. CONCLUSION

This study set out to evaluate officer ascension in a more holistic manner, escaping the usual scholarly compartmentalizing of promotion patterns into institutional, contextual, or social spheres, and to particularly discern the effect a military father had on promotion to elite status. Scholarship hints that these relationships exist, this research assents they are more tangible. Using Crisp-Set Qualitative Comparative Analysis, connections and linkages were found among the four, and were further validated by the offering of singular views of each.

Most importantly, having a military father was identified as the differentiating factor in pathways followed by officers. These links and the effect of a military father are helpful in discovering the origins of elite decision makers in the armed forces. Currently, a consensus among scholars does not exist: to some the effect of military fathers is crucial and proven, to others it is not even a variable to be considered in research. The continuation of this divide will hamper progress in defining factors contained in the paths taken by elite military leaders and in the effect of occupational inheritance in the military. To reach a consensus and to build knowledge more research is necessary.

This study was exploratory in nature from the beginning and did not focus on the ability to generalize to a larger population. This does not negate the value of the findings, quite the opposite. It asks the question, if having a military father between 1917 and 1973 differentiated pathways to elite officer status will it still have the same effect

for officers after 1973? The advent of the U.S.A.'s all-volunteer force (AVF) in 1973 to the end of the War in Afghanistan in 2014 provides another time frame that could be used for the same type of study and provide an answer to this question. In addition it could move scholarship in the direction of a consensus. To use the findings and structure of this study for a more nuanced examination of pathways and to address the prospect of generalization, future studies should include more variables and cases. This is not easily done; the problems encountered in this study will also be present for any new research. The lack of access to data and assembling comprehensive yet manageable list of generals is a challenge. Easing restrictions to data maintained by the military for qualified researchers would help increase collection capabilities, but the ability to draw a random sample of generals will continue to be elusive. An all-inclusive listing of brigadier generals in the Army does not exist; if it did or was developed it would be too large to work with. Because limited resources for data collection and case selection still exist, even with a more modern time frame, the use of a purposive sample will still be necessary. There is value in using a purposive sample in exploratory research, discoveries can still be made; this study provides evidence of that.

Since the transition to the AVF the demographics and size of America's armed forces has changed. Some scholars worry that the United States is maintaining a fighting force made up mostly of those who join based on market place factors or economic incentives instead of normative values such as patriotism. Others are concerned that the all-volunteer force propagates occupational inheritance leading to a more homogenous and politically and religiously conservative military out of touch with the civilian society

it serves. Both of these concerns illustrate the importance of continued research focused on fathers who have served and the influence they have on their military offspring.

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APPENDIX A

For data collection two problems had to be surmounted, securing a population of officers and choosing appropriate variables to explain the rapidity of promotion to elite rank. Developing a random sample of military officers was difficult because any available directories of officers and their achievements were huge and incomplete. They were unmanageable. More manageable lists were found in biographical dictionaries which if used meant abandoning attempts at drawing a random sample and the ability to generalize. This fit just fine as the goal of this study was exploratory, wanting to build and advance existing scholarship. The *Dictionary of American Military Biography* (Spiller et al. 1984) was chosen for reasons outlined on pages 12-13. Initially this dictionary yielded 117 generals but within this population there were five generals who died prior to retirement, eleven with too much missing information, and thirty who were eliminated because they were not in the U.S. Army. Because of the main interest of this study the remaining seventy-one generals were assigned numbers as identifiers and divided into two separate categories, those with a military father who served (29) and those without (42). Also included were the commission dates and total years that each general served. To match cases within the same context of service, both lists were sorted by year of commissioning from earliest inauguration to most recent and then paired with their counterpart on the opposite list according to similar dates. If a general did not have a match, the choice was expanded to include no more than one year of difference because officers who differ in this way would still experience the same contextual

influences. If a case on one list had coinciding commission dates with several on the other then total years served, commissioning to retirement, was used as a secondary matching criterion. This matching yielded forty generals, twenty with a military father and twenty without.

Choosing variables was done after extensive reading of scholarly journals, biographies, autobiographies, memoirs, and personal and professional correspondence, to determine what factors were thought to be most influential for promotion. This project started out considering many variables such as nativity, birth order, and number of offspring. In tandem with developing a random sample this listing of variables quickly became cumbersome and investigating missing information took too much time. Although the information gathered would be valuable, variables were selected based on those used in existing scholarship and centered in three key areas (see page 4). Just because the variables were chosen based on scholarship does not negate the fact that their inclusion may be contested. For example, defining region of birth as either the Southern United States or the Northern United States neglects those born in the Western frontier states or those only born in a particular region but not raised there. Finally, does labeling military officers as Southern or not—something done in this study and by many others—unthinkingly perpetuate a misleading stereotype about a “militarist culture” supposed to be found in the South but not elsewhere? The question is not answered here. My findings support the idea that the South is a distinctive region, supporting a military culture. But other factors may be at work. Was it Southern Military Culture that led defense policymakers to build new air bases in the South for training pilots to fly in

World War II? Or was it the South's good weather that permitted many more days of flight training than were permitted in the Mid-West or in New England? It could be that the idea of a fighting spirit or culture is a matter of folklore or family tradition handed down through generations. Or a perspective, many presidents who have served during war have been from the South or that an economy based on a plantation system and the institution of slavery perpetuated family traditions, values, and morals.

APPENDIX B

Qualitative Comparative Analysis uses a truth table that considers all the variables contained in a study. With columns designating each variable, every logical combination is represented in the rows, regardless of being empirically present or not. The three choices of analysis that QCA offers (page 16) are based on evidence from this table.

Complex analysis considers only those combinations of variables which have empirical cases. Parsimonious analysis does the same but also includes those combinations without an empirical case. It considers any mix of variables which should or could be observed based on theoretical knowledge. These unobserved yet theoretically grounded combinations are called counterfactuals in QCA terms. Intermediate, aptly named, is a middle road between complex and parsimonious analysis because it considers all empirically based combinations and some of the parsimonious counterfactuals, the “easy counterfactual” (Ragin 1987).