
The Intergenerational Effects of the Vietnam Draft on Risky Health Behaviors

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Disclaimer

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What This Paper Answers

- Are children of draft eligible men more likely to engage in risky health behaviors?
 - Substance use among adolescents?
 - Delinquent behaviors among adolescents?

 - Are children of draft eligible men disproportionately exposed to a home conducive to risky health behaviors?
 - Because of parenting styles and inputs?
 - Because of exposure to worse environments?
 - Because of genetic reasons?
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Preview of Results

- Paternal draft eligibility affects risky health behaviors.
 - Increases propensity to consume marijuana by age 18.
 - Reduces marijuana and cigarette age of initiation.
 - Increases time-varying measures of marijuana consumption.
 - Increases propensity to commit crime.

 - Paternal draft eligibility affects potential mechanisms.
 - Affects some parenting styles and attitudes toward the child.
 - Affects residential location.
 - No apparent genetic differences.
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Why Parental Draft Eligibility May Affect Children's Risky Behaviors?

- Military service could have an ambiguous effect.
 - Increase opioid use, psychiatric conditions, propensity to commit violent crimes and incarceration, domestic violence, lower socioeconomic status by precluding soldiers from labor market experience.
 - Negative impact on children's outcomes.
 - Provide training, impart discipline, access to GI Bill benefits.
 - Positive impact on children's outcomes.
 - Draft avoidance could have a positive effect.
 - Educational deferments
 - Positive impact on children's outcomes.
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Contribution to the Literature

- Literature on identification of causal intergenerational effects of shocks and policies.
 - Literature on intergenerational consequences of the Vietnam lottery (Goodman and Isen, 2019; Johnson and Dawes, 2016).
 - Literature on unintended consequences of the Vietnam lottery draft.
 - Literature on determinants of adolescent risky health behaviors.
 - Identifying causal intergenerational effects of policies that affect parental inputs on children's risky behaviors is challenging due to data availability (Chalfin and Deza, 2015).
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Empirical Strategy

- Selective Service implemented Vietnam draft lottery to increase number of men who served in the military.
 - Lottery randomly associated each day of a given year with a specific number.
 - Numbers equal or less than a specific cutoff determined whether men born that day were draft-eligible.
 - Three lotteries
 - 1969: affected those born between 1944-1950 (cutoff 195).
 - 1970: affected those born in 1951 (cutoff 125).
 - 1971: affected those born in 1952 (cutoff 95).
 - We exploit the randomized variation that occurred as a result of the Vietnam lottery draft.
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Empirical Strategy (cont.)

$$Y_{i,c,p} = \beta_1 + \beta_2 \text{Eligible}_{i,p} + \beta_3 X_i + \beta_c + \beta_{py} + \beta_{pm} + \mu_{i,c,p}$$

$Y_{i,c,p}$: outcome for child i , born in year c , whose father had an exact date of birth p .

$\text{Eligible}_{i,p}$: whether father was draft eligible (based on lottery).

X_i : demographic characteristics of child (male, black, Hispanic).

β_c : child's year of birth fixed effect.

β_{py} : father's year of birth fixed effect.

β_{pm} : father's month of birth fixed effect.

β_2 : parameter of interest.

Interpretation of Results

- Draft eligibility: Are results driven by military service or draft avoidance?
 - At least three reasons to believe effect of draft avoidance may be limited.
 - Avoidance through spousal and paternal exemptions no longer available at time of the lotteries (Bitler and Schmidt, 2012).
 - Avoidance through educational deferments were not prevalent (Card and Lemieux, 2001) and should work against our results.
 - Refusing to serve in military resulted in convictions of draft offenders and prison sentencing, making avoidance costly.
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Data

- National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997.
 - Nationally representative sample of children born between 1980 and 1984, interviewed between 1997 and present.
 - Substance use: alcohol, marijuana, cigarettes, and hard drugs.
 - Delinquent behaviors: attack somebody, steal, sell drugs, belong to a gang.
 - Parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, uninvolved.
 - Attitudes toward children: praise, criticize, help or blame children.
 - Environment: peers and characteristics of residence.
 - Exact date of birth for resident parents, allowing link to lottery numbers.
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Summary Statistics

- N=8,984 respondents in the NLSY97.
- N=5,958 report information on the father.
- N=2,029 fathers born between 1944 and 1952, with 1,464 born in the US.

	<u>Non-Draft-Eligible</u>	<u>Draft-Eligible</u>
Consumed by Age 18		
Alcohol	80%	79%
Cigarette	60%	61%
Marijuana	41%	46%
Hard Drugs	12%	15%
Age of Initiation		
Alcohol	15.2	15.2
Cigarette	15.2	14.8
Marijuana	17.3	16.6
Hard Drugs	18.1	17.8
Delinquent Behavior by Age 18		
Engaged?	51%	58%
Observations	757	707

Results: Ever Used Drugs by Age 18?

	Alcohol	Cigarette	Marijuana	Hard Drugs
Father Draft Eligible	-0.016 (0.025)	0.013 (0.026)	0.069** (0.030)	0.037* (0.020)
Mean	0.795	0.603	0.436	0.133
Respondent Year of Birth FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
Father Year of Birth FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
Father Month of Birth FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
Father 1944-1952	Y	Y	Y	Y

** 5%, * 10%

- Children of draft eligible fathers more likely to have consumed marijuana and hard drugs by 16 and 28 percent, respectively.

Results: Age of Initiation

	Alcohol	Cigarette	Marijuana	Hard Drugs
Father Draft Eligible	-0.008 (0.213)	-0.561** (0.253)	-1.031*** (0.350)	0.063 (0.435)
Mean	15.17	15	16.93	17.93
Respondent Year of Birth FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
Father Year of Birth FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
Father Month of Birth FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
Father 1944-1952	Y	Y	Y	Y

*** 1%, ** 5%, * 10%

- Children of draft eligible fathers more likely to start consuming earlier cigarettes and marijuana, by 0.6 and 1 years respectively.

Results: Used in the Past Year?

	Alcohol	Cigarette	Marijuana	Hard Drugs
Father Draft Eligible	0.008 (0.025)	0.005 (0.022)	0.046** (0.022)	0.017* (0.010)
Mean	0.583	0.383	0.247	0.0648
Respondent Year of Birth FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
Father Year of Birth FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
Father Month of Birth FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
Father 1944-1952	Y	Y	Y	Y

*** 1%, ** 5%, * 10%

- Children of draft eligible fathers more likely to have used marijuana and hard drugs in the past year.

Results: Intensity of Use—Ln(Days in Past Month)

	Alcohol	Cigarette	Marijuana	Hard Drugs
Father Draft Eligible	0.025 (0.031)	0.070 (0.051)	0.091** (0.038)	0.065* (0.035)
Mean	0.547	0.637	0.266	0.168
Respondent Year of Birth FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
Father Year of Birth FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
Father Month of Birth FE	Y	Y	Y	Y
Father 1944-1952	Y	Y	Y	Y

*** 1%, ** 5%, * 10%

- Children of draft eligible fathers more likely to consume more days marijuana and hard drugs in month prior to interview.

Results: Ever Engage in Delinquency by Age 18?

Father Draft Eligible	0.067** (0.031)
Mean	0.544
Respondent Year of Birth FE	Y
Father Year of Birth FE	Y
Father Month of Birth FE	Y
Father 1944-1952	Y

*** 1%, ** 5%, * 10%

- Dependent variable: whether respondent have attacked somebody, stolen, sold drugs, or belong to a gang by age 18.
- Children of draft eligible fathers are 6.7 pp. more likely to engage in delinquent behavior by age 18.

Summary of Results on Risky Behaviors

- Paternal draft eligibility affects risky health behaviors
 - Increases propensity to consume marijuana by age 18 by 6.9 pp. (mean 43%).
 - Reduces marijuana initiation age by 1 year (mean 16.9).
 - Reduces cigarette initiation age by 0.5 years (mean 15).
 - Increases time-varying measures of marijuana consumption, such as last year use and number of days marijuana was consumed in last month.
 - Increases propensity to commit crime by age 18 by 6.7 pp. (mean 54%).
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Alternative Specifications

- Results hold to the following alternative specifications:
 - Limit sample to fathers born between 1948-1952 (cohort for which probability of induction conditional on being draft eligible is the highest and access to exemptions was more limited).
 - Introduction of father year-by-month fixed effect to account for randomization problems in 1969 lottery.
 - Falsification test: use mothers' exact date of birth to determine draft eligibility.
 - Results become insignificant, suggesting findings are not driven by something unrelated that correlates with the exact date of birth of parents.
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Results: Mechanisms

- Paternal draft eligibility affects potential mechanisms
 - Parenting styles are less likely to be authoritative (responsive and demanding) and more likely to be uninvolved.
 - Father less likely to help and more likely to cancel plans on child.
 - School peers more likely to engage in risky health behaviors (smoke and have sex).
 - Residence less likely to be perceived as safe by interviewer.
 - No apparent genetic differences.
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Conclusions. Why Should We Care? Implications for Current Environment

- Fathers' draft eligibility had unintended negative consequences on children's risky health behaviors.
 - Important to measure true cost of policy for those affected.
 - Current environment based on volunteering.
 - Results could be informative for countries that maintain a draft (e.g., Russia, China, Brazil, Denmark, Egypt).
 - Lottery system similar to Vietnam's expected to be resumed in times of national emergency (Selective Service System).
 - Strength of results call for additional research.
 - Censur and Sabia's (2016) findings of increased domestic violence among current vets suggest our results may still hold.
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Thank you!
