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*The Impact Of Draft Vulnerability
On Service Academy Attrition*

Manpower Development Division
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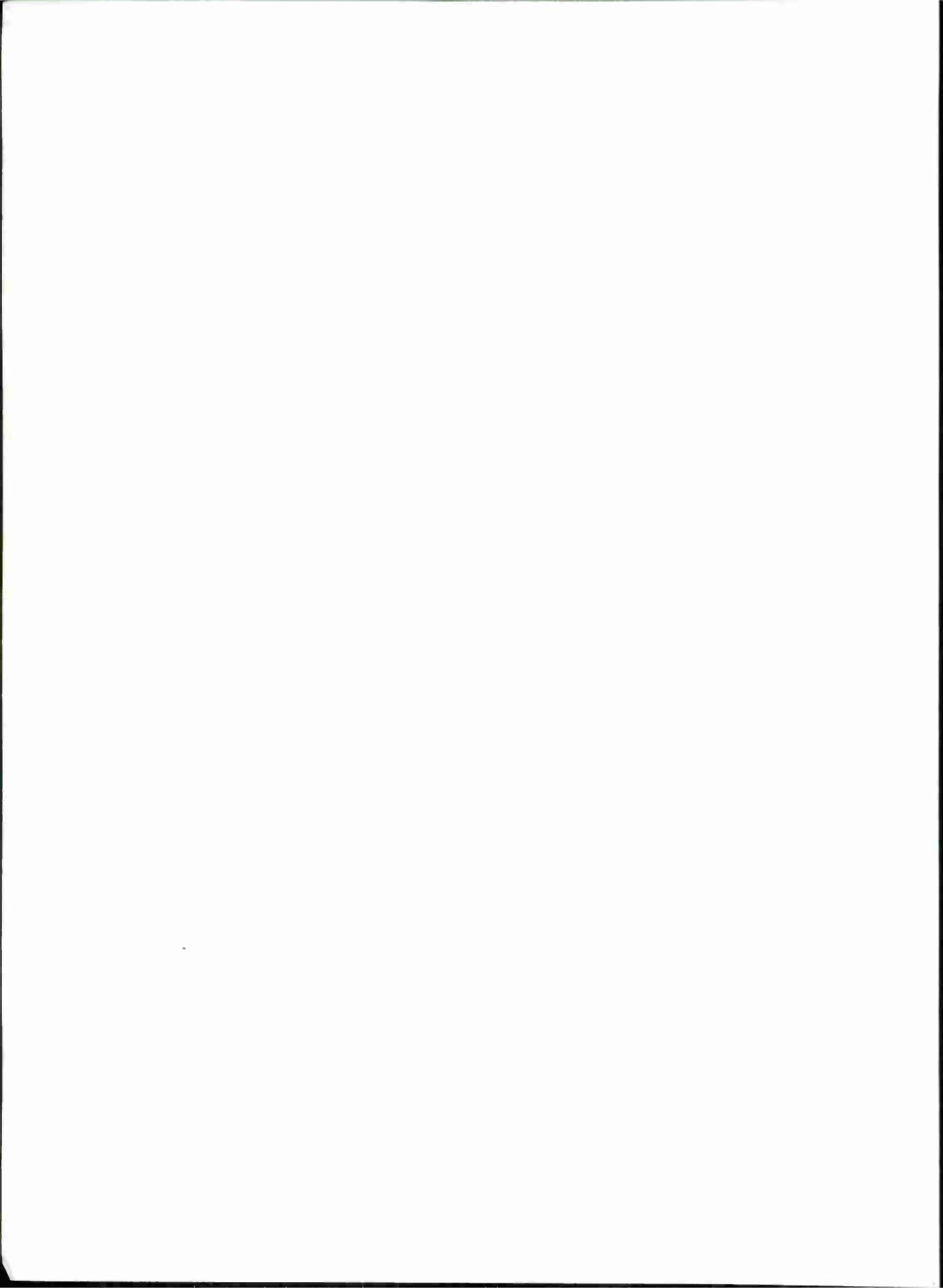
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The Impact of Draft Vulnerability
on Service Academy Attrition

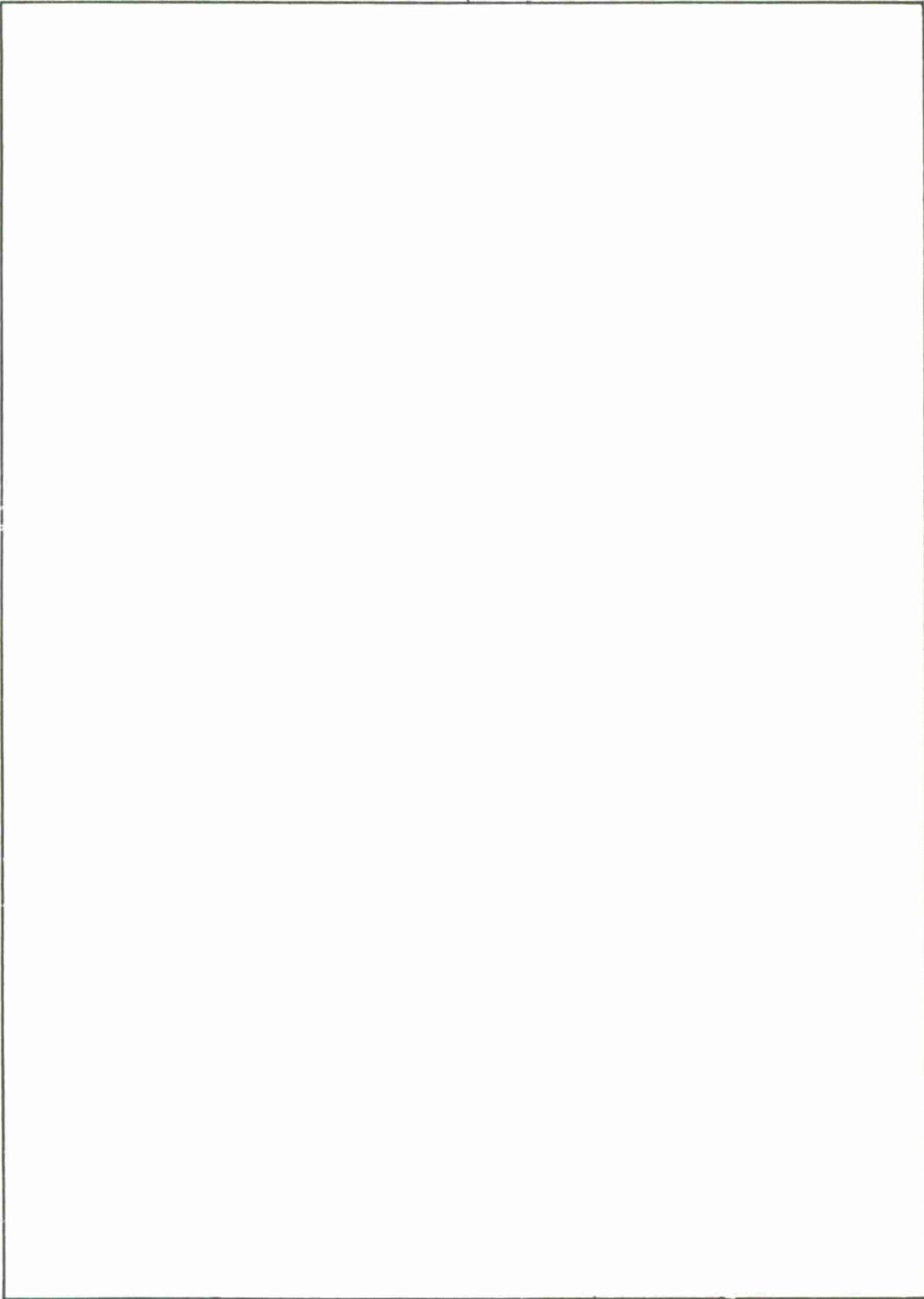
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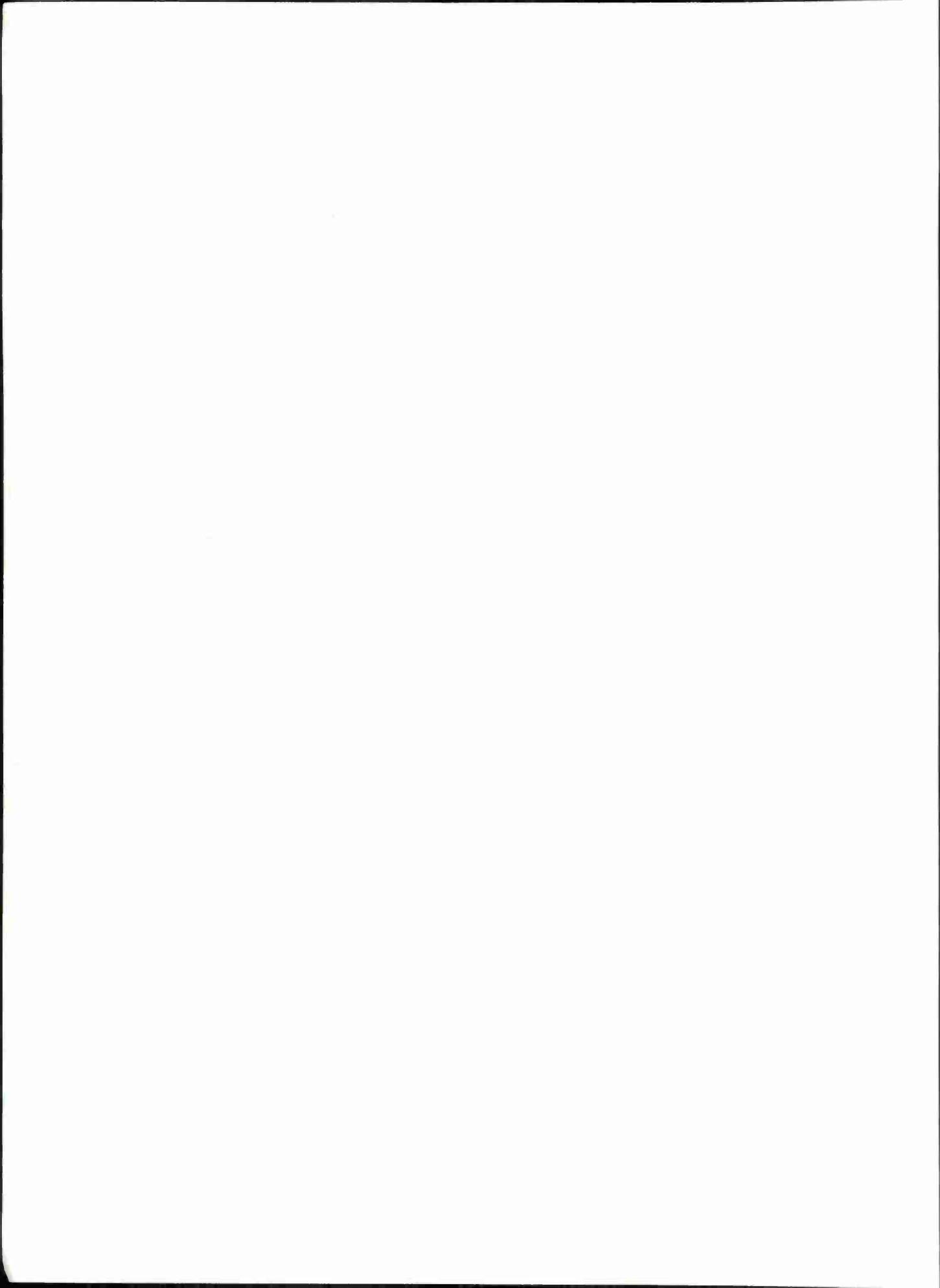
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BACKGROUND

On November 26, 1969, the President signed an Executive Order creating a draft lottery system which would select men for military service by means of a random drawing of birth dates. A lottery drawing is held each year to assign permanent lottery numbers, also known as Random Sequence Numbers (RSNs), to all men reaching their nineteenth birthdays in that calendar year. The first drawing, held in December 1969, included all men who were at least 19 but had not yet attained the age of 26. Since then, annual drawings have been held (Table 1).

TABLE 1
DATES OF DRAFT LOTTERY DRAWINGS

<u>DRAFT YEAR</u>	<u>DATE</u>
1970	December 1, 1969
1971	July 1, 1970
1972	August 5, 1971
1973	February 2, 1972

The lottery system was heralded as offering a number of advantages over the previous system. First, it's a more equitable system since many of the deferments which were utilized disproportionately by higher socio-economic status men were eliminated. Second, the individual's exposure to the draft is restricted to a period of one year. Third, since the young men receive their RSNs the year before they become eligible for induction, they are better able to plan their futures. These features act to significantly reduce the individual's uncertainty concerning his military obligation.

During the same time period when the switch to the draft lottery system was made, attrition rates increased at each of the Department of Defense service academies. The higher attrition has recently received both legislative (U.S. Congress, 1973) and media (Newsweek, 1974) interest. One hypothesis, which has been advanced to explain the higher attrition rates, attributes part of the blame to the phaseout of the draft. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between lack of draft vulnerability and attrition.

A relationship between the draft and academy attrition could have taken either of two forms. First, draft vulnerability may have acted as a deterrent to attrition. That is, cadets and midshipmen with low lottery numbers who were considering leaving may have been deterred by their high probability of induction. On the other hand, lack of draft vulnerability may have acted as a facilitator by lowering the "cost" of dropping out. If the draft acted as either a deterrent or facilitator, the proportion of men with low RSNs who attritted should be lower than the proportion of high RSN men who attritted.

METHODOLOGY

Each of the three DoD service academies supplied a tape containing information on all enrollees at their institution for the 1969-1970, 1970-1971, 1971-1972, and 1972-1973 academic years. The data on each individual consisted of student number, date of birth, class year, an attrition code, and the date of attrition for those individuals who dropped out.

A number of steps were required to modify the data for analysis. Since the data were supplied by academic year and the draft lottery system operated on a calendar year basis, the data covering the four academic years was condensed into a single data file listing every individual who was enrolled during that period. All cases where the individual was either too old or too young to have had a lottery number were excluded. In addition, those cadets and midshipmen who left prior to the lottery drawing for their age group were deleted from the file. Also excluded were a small number of cases with missing or obviously erroneous birth dates. Then, the draft lottery number (RSN) corresponding to the man's birth date was added to the file.

Under the provisions of DoD Directive 1332.23, any cadet or midshipman who is separated after the beginning of his Second Class academic year (except for physical disqualifications, unfitness or unsuitability) will incur an enlisted active duty commitment of from two to four years. Since the draft vulnerability of an individual separating after the beginning of Second Class academics is a moot question (i.e., he automatically incurs an active duty service obligation), this study only looks at attrition during the Fourth and Third Class years.

In order to identify the existence of relationships during particular time periods, the data are analyzed by academic term. The dates of attrition were collapsed into time periods on the basis of information provided by the academies on their starting and ending academic term dates. For a first summer period, the dates cover the time from their first day at the academy through the day preceding the beginning of the Fall academic term. For a Fall period, the inclusion period extends from the beginning of the academic term to a date approximately two weeks after the beginning of the Spring academic term. This extended time frame is utilized to allow ample time for processing of attrition decisions attributable to the previous term. The Spring and Summer period extends from the day after the end date utilized for the Fall period to the day preceding the beginning of the new Fall academic term. In each case, the distribution of attrition dates around the inclusion cutoff date was examined to make sure there was no abnormal clustering on a particular day which might indicate an administrative processing lag. In some cases, the inclusion date rules described above were modified because of such clustering.

Aside from the individual's RSN, several other numbers were important to potential inductees; the Uniform National Call Number and the administrative processing number(which later became the 1-H Cutoff Number). Based upon the manpower requirements of the military services and the number of men available for induction, Selective Service National Headquarters calculated and announced a Uniform National Call Number which specified the highest RSN to be called during that period. Each month, local boards began at RSN 1 and proceeded forward to the announced call number, sending an induction notice to every eligible man.

Following each lottery drawing, a 1-H Cutoff Number was announced. The 1-H Cutoff Number served as a processing ceiling for local boards. Non-deferred men with RSNs below the processing number were called in to take preinduction physical examinations. If an individual had an RSN above the cutoff, he would be placed in Class 1-H and was virtually assured that he would not be called for induction.

By comparing his RSN to the 1-H Cutoff Number and the latest Uniform National Call Number, the individual could get a pretty good idea of his likelihood of being drafted. These numbers were readily available since they were announced in the Federal Register and were usually picked up and publicized by the media. Since the individual could have used either the draft cutoff number or the processing cutoff number to assess his probability of being drafted, both are utilized as criteria for determining draft vulnerability in this study.

THE IMPACT OF THE DRAFT ON MOTIVATION TO ENTER THE ACADEMY

There are several intuitive reasons to expect a low level of draft motivation among academy cadets and midshipmen. First, the academies are the most demanding route to an officer commission. Second, the relatively long lead time required to apply and qualify for academy appointments also mediates against utilization of the service academies as vehicle to avoid the draft. Also, receipt of a commission through an academy results in a longer initial service obligation.

The introduction of the lottery system and the subsequent downward revisions of the cutoff numbers, seem to have had no effect upon service academy entrants. Table 2 shows the mean draft lottery numbers for the Classes of 1970 through 1976. The fact that there was no discernable trend toward a lower mean RSN by class indicates that the academies continued to draw entrants with both high and low draft vulnerability despite the greater determinance of the lottery system. This lends support to the contention that draft pressure is not a major motivating factor among academy applicants.

TABLE 2
MEAN LOTTERY NUMBERS BY CLASS

	<u>USMA</u>	<u>USNA</u>	<u>USAFA</u>
Class of 1970	171.27	184.96	186.23
Class of 1971	185.44	179.60	182.45
Class of 1972	180.12	183.69	183.45
Class of 1973	183.41	179.16	176.82
Class of 1974	178.29	179.34	182.81
Class of 1975	187.46	181.69	180.66
Class of 1976	180.11	184.12	179.53
Grand Mean	181.29	181.61	181.19
F	2.352	0.635	0.894
Significance	NS	NS	NS

THE IMPACT OF THE DRAFT UPON ATTRITION

If the individual's RSN had an impact upon whether he stayed or left, it should be expected that "leavers" as a group would have had a higher mean RSN than "stayers." As the data in Table 3 indicate, there are only random fluctuations among the mean RSNs of stayers and men leaving at different points in their academy careers.

The data also revealed no significant degree of correlation between RSN and a dichotomous attrition criterion variable. The coefficient of correlation at each of the academies was only around .01. However, this does not necessarily mean that no relationship exists. Although the RSN scale is continuous, it actually describes a discrete situation; either an individual is vulnerable to the draft or he is not. In this sense, it would not matter to an individual if he had a very low RSN or a moderately low RSN since in either case he would be vulnerable to the draft. Thus, in order to more accurately test for a relationship, the men in the sample were categorized as being either "vulnerable" or "safe" depending upon their RSN and the cutoffs applicable to the period in question (Table 4). If a man had an RSN at or below the cutoff, he was classified as vulnerable, otherwise he was classified as safe.

TABLE 3
MEAN LOTTERY NUMBERS BY
CLASS AT TIME OF ATTRITION

	<u>USMA</u>	<u>USNA</u>	<u>USAFA</u>
First Classman	172.8	166.80	192.63
Second Classman	174.7	186.36	179.67
Third Classman	192.5	189.82	188.75
Fourth Classman	178.7	179.57	179.59
Still in or Graduated	181.3	181.07	180.80
Grand Mean	181.6	181.61	181.19
F	1.398	1.715	1.020
Significance	NS	NS	NS

TABLE 4

DRAFT AND PROCESSING CUTOFF
NUMBERS BY TIME PERIOD

<u>TIME</u>		<u>DRAFT CUTOFF NUMBER</u>	<u>PROCESSING CUTOFF NUMBER</u>
Winter, Spring, Summer	1970	195	215
First Summer	1970	195	215
Fall	1970	195	215
Spring and Summer	1971	125	175
First Summer	1971	125	175
Fall	1971	125	175
Spring and Summer	1972	95	100
First Summer	1972	95	100
Fall	1972	95	100
Spring	1973	0	95

The results of the contingency table analysis of the relationship between draft vulnerability and attrition are shown for each academy in Tables 5 through 10. Data are shown using both the draft cutoff and processing cutoff criteria. As can be seen, no systematic relationship could be detected.

For the U.S. Military Academy cadets (Table 5), the data approached statistical significance in only two out of fifteen tests using the draft cutoff criterion. During the 1970 Fall Term, the Class of 1974 showed a higher proportion of draft-safe cadets attriting and during the Spring and Summer of 1971, a higher proportion of draft-safe cadets in the Class of 1973 attritted.

When the processing cutoff criterion was used (Table 6), only two tests out of seventeen were statistically significant. For the Class of 1973, a higher proportion of draft-safe cadets left during the Spring and Summer of 1971. The other significant difference involved a reversal. For the Class of 1976, a higher proportion of draft-vulnerable cadets attritted in the Spring of 1973.

The results of the analysis of U.S. Naval Academy attrition was similar. Using the draft cutoff criterion (Table 7), a statistically significant difference between the attrition rates of safe and vulnerable midshipmen was found in only one out of fifteen tests. During the Fall of 1971, a higher proportion of the draft-safe members of the Class of 1974 left the academy.

Using the processing number criterion (Table 8), the data were found to be statistically significant in only one out of seventeen tests. Again this was for the Class of 1974 during Fall 1971.

Similar results were also found in the analysis of the U.S. Air Force Academy attrition. Using the draft cutoff criterion (Table 9), the data approached statistical significance in only two out of fifteen tests. This occurred for the Class of 1973 during the period from the beginning of the draft lottery system through the Spring and Summer of 1970 and again during the Spring and Summer of 1971. In both these cases, a higher percentage of draft-safe cadets attritted. However, the statistical significance level ($p < .10$) was only marginal.

Applying the processing cutoff criterion (Table 10), there were only two marginally significant cases out of seventeen tests. A higher proportion of the Class of 1973 draft-safe cadets attritted during the Spring and Summer of 1971 and a higher proportion of the draft-safe members of the Class of 1976 left in the Fall of 1972.

TABLE 5

SUMMARY OF DATA ON USMA ATTRITION
AND DRAFT VULNERABILITY
USING DRAFT-CUTOFF CRITERION

<u>CLASS</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>ACADEMIC PERIOD</u>	<u>% DRAFT-VULNERABLE ATTRITTING</u>	<u>% DRAFT-SAFE ATTRITTING</u>	<u>CHI SQUARE</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE</u>
72	Winter, Spring, Summer, 1970	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	12.6	10.6	.728	NS
73	Winter, Spring, Summer, 1970	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	9.7	13.2	.612	NS
74	Summer, 1970	Plebe Summer	7.9	7.6	.008	NS
73	Fall, 1970	1st Half of 3rd Class Year	11.4	13.3	.138	NS
74	Fall, 1970	1st Half of 4th Class Year	2.5	4.8	3.280	.07
73	Spring and Summer, 1971	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	7.9	12.5	4.347	.04
74	Spring and Summer, 1971	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	8.9	10.8	.129	NS
75	Summer, 1971	Plebe Summer	9.2	5.3	1.521	NS
74	Fall, 1971	1st Half of 3rd Class Year	9.3	10.3	.008	NS
75	Fall, 1971	1st Half of 4th Class Year	4.1	4.0	.007	NS
74	Spring and Summer, 1972	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	11.2	11.7	.015	NS
75	Spring and Summer, 1972	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	9.2	8.6	.040	NS
76	Summer, 1972	Plebe Summer	1.8	2.2	.035	NS
75	Fall, 1972	1st Half of 3rd Class Year	12.1	12.2	.024	NS
76	Fall, 1972	1st Half of 4th Class Year	5.3	3.7	.809	NS
75	Spring, 1973	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	----	----	NA	--
76	Spring, 1973	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	----	----	NA	--

TABLE 6

SUMMARY OF DATA ON USMA ATTRITION
AND DRAFT VULNERABILITY
USING PROCESSING-CUTOFF CRITERION

<u>CLASS</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>ACADEMIC PERIOD</u>	<u>% DRAFT-VULNERABLE ATTRITTING</u>	<u>% DRAFT-SAFE ATTRITTING</u>	<u>CHI SQUARE</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE</u>
72	Winter, Spring, Summer, 1970	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	12.5	10.5	.688	NS
73	Winter, Spring, Summer, 1970	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	9.8	13.6	.656	NS
74	Summer, 1970	Plebe Summer	7.4	8.6	.049	NS
73	Fall, 1970	1st Half of 3rd Class Year	12.0	13.3	.050	NS
74	Fall, 1970	1st Half of 4th Class Year	2.9	4.4	1.149	NS
73	Spring and Summer, 1971	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	8.5	13.2	4.715	.03
74	Spring and Summer, 1971	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	8.5	11.9	.652	NS
75	Summer, 1971	Plebe Summer	8.2	5.1	.985	NS
74	Fall, 1971	1st Half of 3rd Class Year	9.6	10.3	.001	NS
75	Fall, 1971	1st Half of 4th Class Year	3.6	4.5	.301	NS
74	Spring and Summer, 1972	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	11.3	11.7	.004	NS
75	Spring and Summer, 1972	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	8.2	9.3	.187	NS
76	Summer, 1972	Plebe Summer	1.7	2.2	.007	NS
75	Fall, 1972	1st Half of 3rd Class Year	12.4	12.1	.010	NS
76	Fall, 1972	1st Half of 4th Class Year	5.2	3.7	.858	NS
75	Spring, 1973	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	6.0	5.4	.034	NS
76	Spring, 1973	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	9.6	3.0	5.055	.03

TABLE 7

SUMMARY OF DATA ON USNA ATTRITION
AND DRAFT VULNERABILITY
USING DRAFT-CUTOFF CRITERION

<u>CLASS</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>ACADEMIC PERIOD</u>	<u>% DRAFT-VULNERABLE ATTRITING</u>	<u>% DRAFT-SAFE ATTRITING</u>	<u>CHI SQUARE</u>	<u>SIGNIF ICANCE</u>
72	Winter, Spring, Summer, 1970	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	8.0	9.9	.899	NS
73	Winter, Spring, Summer, 1970	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	9.7	6.2	.928	NS
74	Summer, 1970	Plebe Summer	1.1	.6	.002	NS
73	Fall, 1970	1st Half of 3rd Class Year	2.8	2.6	.002	NS
74	Fall, 1970	1st Half of 4th Class Year	4.2	4.8	.000	NS
73	Spring and Summer, 1971	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	13.3	12.5	.094	NS
74	Spring and Summer, 1971	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	11.5	8.9	.345	NS
75	Summer, 1971	Plebe Summer	2.1	2.4	.037	NS
74	Fall, 1971	1st Half of 3rd Class Year	2.7	5.9	5.171	.03
75	Fall, 1971	1st Half of 4th Class Year	7.6	8.8	.425	NS
74	Spring and Summer, 1972	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	13.2	13.2	.006	NS
75	Spring and Summer, 1972	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	2.5	4.4	1.559	NS
76	Summer, 1972	Plebe Summer	.9	.3	.007	NS
75	Fall, 1972	1st Half of 3rd Class Year	2.9	3.8	.251	NS
76	Fall, 1972	1st Half of 4th Class Year	11.0	6.6	1.545	NS
75	Spring, 1973	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	----	----	NA	--
76	Spring, 1973	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	----	----	NA	--

TABLE 8

SUMMARY OF DATA ON USNA ATTRITION
AND DRAFT VULNERABILITY
USING PROCESSING-CUTOFF CRITERION

<u>CLASS</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>ACADEMIC PERIOD</u>	<u>% DRAFT-VULNERABLE ATTRITTING</u>	<u>% DRAFT-SAFE ATTRITTING</u>	<u>CHI SQUARE</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE</u>
72	Winter, Spring, Summer, 1970	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	7.9	10.2	1.479	NS
73	Winter, Spring, Summer, 1970	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	9.2	6.5	.441	NS
74	Summer, 1970	Plebe Summer	.9	.6	.087	NS
73	Fall, 1970	1st Half of 3rd Class Year	2.5	3.0	.060	NS
74	Fall, 1970	1st Half of 4th Class Year	4.8	4.5	.005	NS
73	Spring and Summer, 1971	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	14.3	11.3	1.912	NS
74	Spring and Summer, 1971	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	10.8	8.8	.205	NS
75	Summer, 1971	Plebe Summer	2.7	1.8	.904	NS
74	Fall, 1971	1st Half of 3rd Class Year	3.0	6.5	6.617	.02
75	Fall, 1971	1st Half of 4th Class Year	8.5	7.6	.191	NS
74	Spring and Summer, 1972	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	12.7	13.4	.060	NS
75	Spring and Summer, 1972	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	3.0	4.3	.631	NS
76	Summer, 1972	Plebe Summer	.9	.4	.011	NS
75	Fall, 1972	1st Half of 3rd Class Year	3.1	3.8	.128	NS
76	Fall, 1972	1st Half of 4th Class Year	10.7	6.7	1.288	NS
75	Spring, 1973	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	6.7	8.6	.680	NS
76	Spring, 1973	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	10.3	8.2	.174	NS

TABLE 9

SUMMARY OF DATA ON USAFA ATTRITION
AND DRAFT VULNERABILITY
USING DRAFT-CUTOFF CRITERION

<u>CLASS</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>ACADEMIC PERIOD</u>	<u>% DRAFT-VULNERABLE ATTRITTING</u>	<u>% DRAFT-SAFE ATTRITTING</u>	<u>CHI SQUARE</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE</u>
72	Winter, Spring, Summer, 1970	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	10.0	12.6	1.330	NS
73	Winter, Spring, Summer, 1970	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	14.4	22.0	2.702	.10
74	Summer, 1970	Plebe Summer	1.9	2.7	.035	NS
73	Fall, 1970	1st Half of 3rd Class Year	11.1	13.0	.141	NS
74	Fall, 1970	1st Half of 4th Class Year	5.9	6.1	.000	NS
73	Spring and Summer, 1971	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	8.6	12.1	2.711	.10
74	Spring and Summer, 1971	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	14.2	17.8	.483	NS
75	Summer, 1971	Plebe Summer	5.6	4.6	.029	NS
74	Fall, 1971	1st Half of 3rd Class Year	11.0	13.5	.248	NS
75	Fall, 1971	1st Half of 4th Class Year	5.7	7.2	.614	NS
74	Spring and Summer, 1972	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	12.8	12.0	.056	NS
75	Spring and Summer, 1972	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	14.9	14.6	.000	NS
76	Summer, 1972	Plebe Summer	9.8	5.9	1.431	NS
75	Fall, 1972	1st Half of 3rd Class Year	9.9	14.7	1.183	NS
76	Fall, 1972	1st Half of 4th Class Year	3.3	6.0	2.195	NS
75	Spring, 1973	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	----	----	NA	--
76	Spring, 1973	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	----	----	NA	--

TABLE 10

SUMMARY OF DATA ON USAFA ATTRITION
AND DRAFT VULNERABILITY
USING PROCESSING-CUTOFF CRITERION

<u>CLASS</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>ACADEMIC PERIOD</u>	<u>% DRAFT-VULNERABLE ATTRITTING</u>	<u>% DRAFT-SAFE ATTRITTING</u>	<u>CHI SQUARE</u>	<u>SIGNIFICANCE</u>
72	Winter, Spring, Summer, 1970	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	10.3	12.5	.846	NS
73	Winter, Spring, Summer, 1970	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	15.0	21.9	2.048	NS
74	Summer, 1970	Plebe Summer	1.7	3.2	.364	NS
73	Fall, 1970	1st Half of 3rd Class Year	10.9	13.6	.419	NS
74	Fall, 1970	1st Half of 4th Class Year	5.5	6.8	.605	NS
73	Spring and Summer, 1971	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	9.1	12.6	2.914	.09
74	Spring and Summer, 1971	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	14.1	18.7	.973	NS
75	Summer, 1971	Plebe Summer	6.3	3.5	.967	NS
74	Fall, 1971	1st Half of 3rd Class Year	15.0	10.2	1.409	NS
75	Fall, 1971	1st Half of 4th Class Year	6.2	7.0	.136	NS
74	Spring and Summer, 1972	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	12.3	12.1	.001	NS
75	Spring and Summer, 1972	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	14.3	15.0	.029	NS
76	Summer, 1972	Plebe Summer	9.2	6.0	.888	NS
75	Fall, 1972	1st Half of 3rd Class Year	10.1	14.8	1.182	NS
76	Fall, 1972	1st Half of 4th Class Year	3.1	6.1	2.780	.10
75	Spring, 1973	2nd Half of 3rd Class Year	7.6	7.0	.021	NS
76	Spring, 1973	2nd Half of 4th Class Year	13.0	12.1	.003	NS

There are a number of factors which may have worked to "hide" a relationship between safety from the draft and attrition at the academies. First, up until the end of the 1970-71 academic year, student deferrments (2-S) were still being granted to any student who was enrolled during the 1970-71 year and was making satisfactory progress toward his degree. Thus, a cadet or midshipman could have attritted from the academy, enrolled in another school and been eligible for a 2-S deferrment. Consequently, because it was possible for an individual with a low RSN to leave the academy and still feel safe from the draft, the actual relationship between draft "safety" and attrition may be understated from the Classes of 1972, 1973 and 1974. Since the Classes of 1975 and 1976 entered after the 1970-71 academic year, they were not eligible for 2-S deferrments.

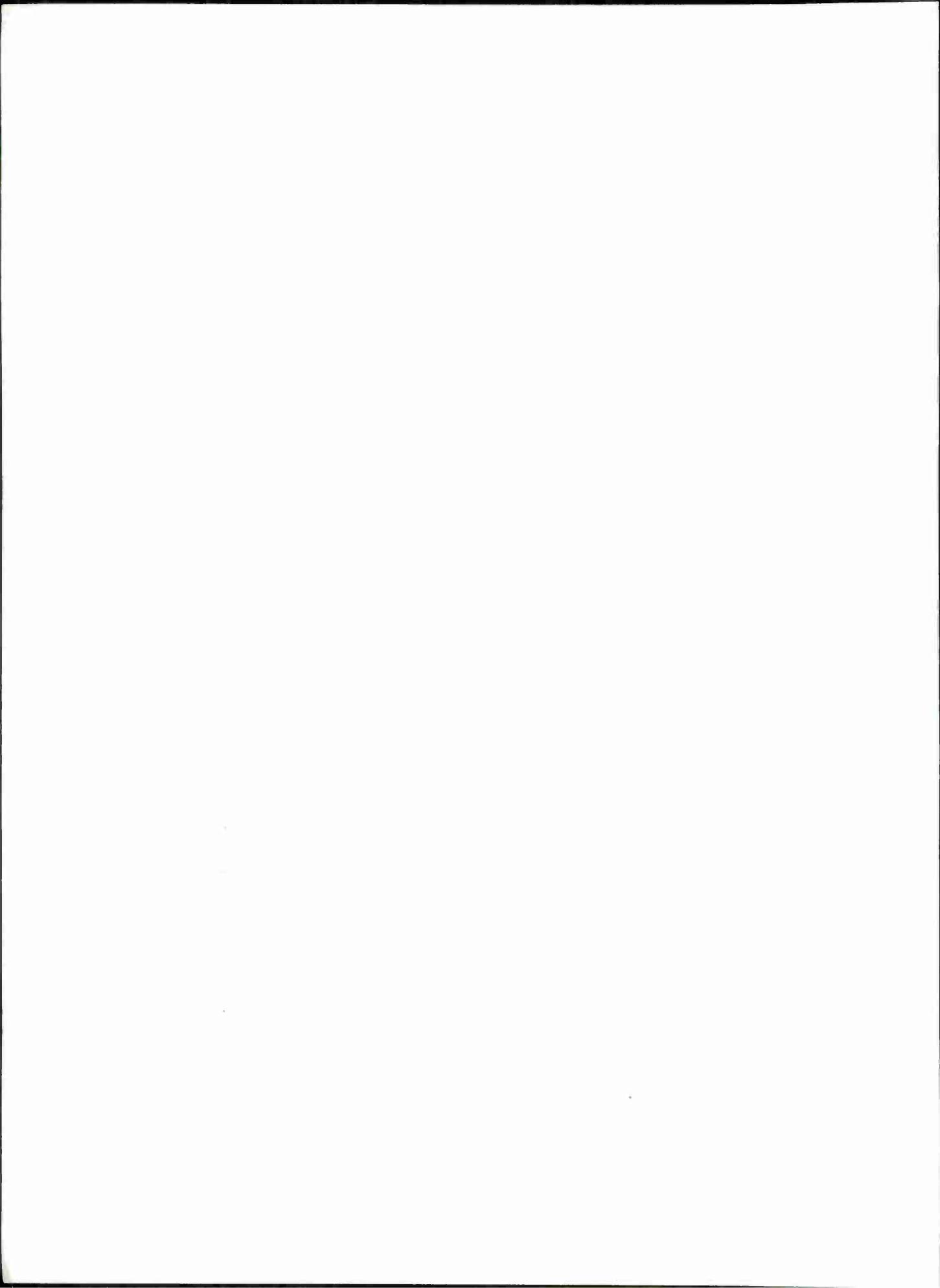
Another factor which may have served to supress the relationship results from the procedures for handling individuals who dropped their deferrments. Since draft calls and call numbers were announced monthly, and in advance, men with what would normally be considered vulnerable RSNs would have had a good idea of the prospects of their being drafted in the final months of the calendar year. Consequently an individual could drop his deferrment in the latter part of the year and experience only a few months in the priority selection pool.

In sum, the data do not indicate any strong or consistent tendency for draft-safe cadets/midshipmen to have attritted in higher proportions than men who were vulnerable to the draft. Thus while vulnerability to or safety from the draft may have had an impact upon some individual decisions, the impact of the draft was not widespread.

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