2012

Children serve too: An investigation of the impacts of military family life on adult relationships

Karena Heyward
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CHILDREN SERVE TOO:
AN INVESTIGATION OF THE IMPACTS OF MILITARY FAMILY LIFE ON ADULT RELATIONSHIPS

A Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the School of Education
The College of William & Mary in Virginia

InPartial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by
Karena Heyward
April 2012
CHILDREN SERVE TOO

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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE IMPACTS OF MILITARY FAMILY LIFE ON ADULT RELATIONSHIPS

by

Karena Heyward

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I owe so much more than “Thank you” to the following people:

My Partner: Benjamin Dumire

My Family: Hilbert Heyward
Marc Heyward
Silvia Heyward

My Friends:
Alyssa Durden
Ashley Marlow
Chris Fisher
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Megan Huether
Raven Adams
Stephanie Kliebenstein
William “Tre” Allen III

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Dr. Tom Ward
Dr. Victoria Foster

For me, life’s journey is not about the places you will go, but the person you will become. When I meet a person who has a significant impact on my life, I carry a piece of them with me. I am thankful that our paths have crossed and that you have allowed me to carry a piece of you with me. I collect these pieces and each of them inform or shape me in a unique way. No one piece is more significant than another. I treasure all of these pieces, and I carry them all with me, every day, as I continue this journey through life and continue to grow. Thank you for helping me to become the person I am today, helping me live out my dreams, thus far, and supporting me through the dissertation process.
Military involvement in Operations Iraqi Freedom, New Dawn and Enduring Freedom brings a focus on military families to the forefront of public and governmental attention. The military family represents a distinct cultural context, as each family is immersed in "the prevailing values, norms, philosophies, customs and traditions of the armed forces" (Collins, 2000, p. 213, i.e., military culture). Thousands of families live within these unique communities, but little is known about the role of such family experiences upon the development of children and their transitions into adulthood or the impacts of military family life throughout adulthood. Specifically, few studies are available that assess how being a part of a military family affects the choices, competencies, challenges, and patterns of children in regards to relationships as adults. This study utilized a sequential explanatory design, exploring friendships and romantic relationships of adult children from military families. One hundred and two participants completed the survey. Of those participants, eight were chosen to participate in qualitative interviews. Quantitative and qualitative results were interpreted through current literature, the Family Life Cycle, and the Theory of Ego Development.

Karena Heyward
Department of Counselor Education
THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM & MARY IN VIRGINIA
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"Military brats, my lost tribe, spent their entire youth in service to this country and no one even knew we were there...There are no ceremonies to mark the end of our career as military brats, either. We simply walk out into our destinies, into the dead center of our lives and try to make the most of it."

-Pat Conroy

Children Serve Too: An Investigation of Military Family Life on Adult Relationships

Chapter 1

Introduction

Military involvement in Operations Iraqi Freedom, New Dawn and Enduring Freedom brings a focus on military families to the forefront of public and governmental attention. Various branches of the military have implemented programs to support military families in order to ease some of the burdens of the military lifestyle. Community services in areas surrounding military installations also expand the range of specialized programs for service members and their families. The First Lady, Michelle Obama, advocates heavily for military families, creating a national platform that speaks to the diverse needs of this population. On the home page of www.whitehouse.gov/joiningforces she states, "All across our county in communities, large and small, there are heroes that live among us. We just might not always see them. They're our nation's military families. They're the troops who keep us safe, the parents who raise their children all alone while their spouses are deployed, the kids who step up when mom and dad are far away, and the survivors of our fallen, and veterans who
continue to contribute right here at home. These extraordinary men, women and children always stand ready to serve their loved ones, their communities and our country” (Michelle Obama, 2011).

The military family represents a distinct cultural context, as each family is immersed in “the prevailing values, norms, philosophies, customs and traditions of the armed forces” (Collins, 2000, p. 213, i.e., military culture). Military culture incorporates a long list of unique characteristics: frequent separations and reunions, regular family relocations, a commitment that the mission must come first, family adoption of rigidity, conformity, frequent rumors of loss, detachment from civilian life, family security through services provided by the military, work that involves travel and adventure, rank and its effect on the family's social life, and no control of promotion and pay raises, and early retirement (Ridenour, 1984). Hall (2010) identifies additional aspects of military life including authoritarian structure, isolation and alienation, a strict class system, parent absence, importance of missions, and preparation for disaster. A sense of pride, uniqueness and patriotism emerges from this culture, but it also creates challenges and very stressful experiences for these families. Thousands of families live within these unique communities, and little is known about the role of such family experiences upon the development of children and their transitions into adulthood.

Minimal formal research is available regarding the influence of the military family experience and military culture upon children and their transition to adulthood or the impacts of military family life throughout adult life. Specifically, few studies are available that assess how being a part of a military family affects the choices, competencies, challenges, and patterns of children in regards to relationships as adults.
Given the ongoing political and military obligations in the Middle East, further study of military family experiences is warranted. Hearing and documenting the voices of adult military children could provide a lens through which a greater understanding of the impact of military family life might emerge, and thus offer specific contexts for support to diverse military families.

Recent popular literature has directed attention to military culture and the experiences of military BRATS. According to Mary Edwards Wertsch, author of *Military Brats: Legacies of Childhood inside the Fortress* (2001), the life of military BRATs is a "mixed bag. In some ways they're worldly and sophisticated, which civilians might label as 'sturdiness.' Military BRATs can also be very hard for other people to figure out," Wertsch said. "That's because that kind of worldliness makes people think that we have a higher level of maturity than we sometimes do" (Williams, 2001).

Further, the National Institute of Health opened research grants to encourage developmental and exploratory studies on the impact of parental military deployment, combat-related stress, and reintegration with the family on child social and affective development as well as family functioning. Studies targeting the particular concerns of early childhood, middle childhood, and adolescence are also encouraged, as are the development and testing of measures to assess family functioning and child development outcomes.

This paper illuminates the importance of additional study related to the experiences of military children on extended life transitions into adulthood. A review of related literature clarifies the framework for research investigating the impacts of growing up immersed within military culture upon adult relationships. The framework of
the Family Life Cycle (McGoldrick, Carter, Preto, 2011) illuminates the particular pattern of transitions and developmental tasks as manifested by military families. Ego Development (Loveinger, 1970) offers an empirically supported theoretical framework for a comprehensive model to study constructions of thought and experiences across the lifespan of adults raised in military families.

The current study uses mixed methodology for a sufficient understanding of patterns in adult relationships, as influenced by military culture in childhood. If either qualitative methodology or quantitative methodology was used exclusively, the study would not provide the necessary investigation of more than a few individuals (qualitative research) and of variables too numerous and specific to the individual (quantitative research). In addition, the unique aspect of this research topic calls for a mixed method that explores the nature, strengths, and interactions of variables regarding adult children of military families' patterns of relationships, an endeavor that would be limited by a solely qualitative perspective or quantitative perspective. Also, quantitative research alone would also not allow a nuanced and rich study of how the military culture has impacted their adult lives. Mixed methods research uses a method and philosophy that attempt to fit together the insights provided by qualitative and quantitative research into a workable context for enhanced understanding of the complex lives of children from military families.

Participants of this study included a sample of adult military children, ages 25 and older, through convenience sampling methods, assessing online communities for adult military children. Participants represented adult military children from the United States Army, United States Air Force, United States Navy, and United States Marines Corps.
The United States Coast Guard and Reservist populations have a different type of experience in the military, mostly living a civilian lifestyle; thus, these populations were not included in this study. The following chapter introduces the reader to a contemporary presentation of the unique experiences of military families and their children.

**Demographics of Military Families**

Decades of social change resonated within the military structure and continue to organized military life and family culture. Historically, the United States military consisted of a small number of volunteer members, except during times of war. In 1973, the United States began using an All-Volunteer Force to ensure security and national interests, which introduced significant changes to the demographics of military families. Most senior members of the military were married before the military became an All-Volunteer Force. However, during this time the frequent turnover of single, young men caused the overall amount of married military members to be relatively low. Due to second and subsequent enlistments that began to occur after the All-Volunteer Force was implemented, individual service members across the board now are older and more likely to be married. Many military members marry before their initial enlistment ends and have children earlier in life than their civilian counterparts. The rise of women in the military also changed the make-up of military families and increased the number of dual-military career marriages (Martin & McClure, 2000).

Of the approximately 1.4 million active duty personnel that compose the United States military today, roughly 56.3% are married, 44.1% have children, and 38.8% are married with children. Military family members (1,983,236) now outnumber the amount of active duty service members. Notably, 41,059 (2.9%) active duty personnel are
married to another member of the military and have children. Further, 74,754 active duty members are single parents (Department of Defense, 2010). In addition, service members experience marriage, divorce and remarriage at younger ages than the general population of the United States and compared to population proportions in similar age categories, proportions of divorced and remarried military personnel are higher, particularly true among women in the military and younger age brackets (Adler-Baeder, Pittman & Taylor, 2006). These active duty families and their children are immersed in the culture of the United States Military bringing them to the forefront of military life at a time where the demands of the military are greater than ever.

The Family Life Cycle

Being surrounded by the beliefs, values and traditions of the military creates a unique family experience for military families. The Family Life Cycle (McGoldrick, Carter, Preto, 2011) conceptualizes family life across the lifespan. The Family Life Cycle posits seven stages:

Table 1.1

The Family Life Cycle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Life Cycle Stage</th>
<th>Emotional Process of Transition: Key Principles</th>
<th>Second Order Changes in Family Status Required to Proceed Developmentally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leaving Home: Emerging Young Adults</td>
<td>Accepting emotional and financial responsibility for self</td>
<td>a. Differentiation of self in relation to family of origin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Development of intimate peer relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. Establishment of self in respect to work and financial independence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>d. Establishment of self in community and larger society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>e. Spirituality?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joining of Families through</td>
<td>Commitment to a new system</td>
<td>a. Formation of new partner systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Realignment of relationships with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage of Family Development</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Action Items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Marriage/Union**          | extended family, friends, and larger community and social system to include new partners. | - Adjustment of couple system to make space for children.  
- Collaboration in child-rearing, financial and housekeeping tasks.  
- Realignment of relationships with extended family to include parenting and grandparenting roles.  
- Realignment of relationships with community and larger social system to include new family structure and relationships. |
| **Families with Young Children** | Accepting new members into the system. | - Increase flexibility of family boundaries to permit children’s independence and grandparents’ frailties.  
- Shift of parent-child relationships to permit adolescent to move into and out of system.  
- Refocus on midlife couple and career issues.  
- Begin shift toward caring for older generation.  
- Realignment with community and larger social system to include shifting family of emerging adolescent and parents in new formation pattern of relating. |
| **Families with Adolescents** | Increasing flexibility of family boundaries to permit children’s independence and grandparents’ frailties | - Renegotiation of couple system as a dyad.  
- Development of adult-to-adult relationships between parents and grown children.  
- Realignment of relationships to include in-laws and grandchildren.  
- Realignment of relationships with community and larger social system to include new structure and constellation of family relationships.  
- Exploration of new interests/career given the freedom from child care responsibilities.  
- Dealing with care needs, disabilities, and death of parents (grandparents). |
| **Launching Children and Moving on in Midlife** | Accepting a multitude of exits from and entries into the system | - Maintenance of own and/or couple functioning and interesting in face of physiological decline: exploration of new familial and social role options. |
| **Families in Late Middle Age** | Accepting the shifting generational roles. | - Maintenance of own and/or couple functioning and interesting in face of physiological decline: exploration of new familial and social role options. |
CHILDREN SERVE TOO

According to this framework, stressors impact family functioning and growth throughout a family life cycle. Vertical stressors include generational patterns of family functioning, such as family history, views, rules, and values. Considering the family in the context of the larger society, vertical stressors can also include the influence and occurrence of social stereotypes, discrimination and traumatic histories of large groups. Horizontal stressors focus on the family as it progresses through the Family Life Cycle, including the impact of any developmental issues and unexpected events that may disrupt family functioning (McGoldrick, Carter, Preto, 2011). “Given enough stress on the horizontal, developmental axis, any individual family will appear extremely dysfunctional” (McGoldrick, Carter, Preto, 2011, p. 9).

Such stressors impact the family as it progresses through the Family Life Cycle stages, particularly during the transition from one stage to another (McGoldrick, Carter,
Preto, 2011). If developmental tasks related to the current stage are not completed, tasks will be carried to the next stage and barriers to adequate individual and family development may arise. An important task for all families, and especially military families, is identifying and understanding stress as it relates to family patterns and histories throughout the Family Life Cycle.

The Family Life Cycle has been updated and adapted for use with a variety of populations (McGoldrick, Carter, Preto, 2011). However, it has not been applied specifically to the unique experiences of military families. Everson and Camp (2011) did create a developmental life cycle for military families during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, as seen below, however; it focuses only on deployment and retirement stressors for military families, leaving out the broader contexts of life in military families, such as, frequent separations and the concerns of safety, relocations and other aspects of military culture. By exploring these areas of military culture that influence the daily lives of military families in the context of the Family Life Cycle, a more specific profile of the impact of military culture upon child and family development may be created. Research indicates that family functioning and health has strong impacts on the well-being of children and upon the developmental transition into adulthood. Therefore, an investigation of adult recollections of their experiences as children in military families offers constructive insights for supporting family well-being, individual growth, psychological development and the implications for adult children of military families.
The Theory of Ego Development as Applied to Military Families

The theory of Ego Development (Loevinger, 1970) offers a theoretical framework for exploring the development of adult children of military families. Ego development is the course of the individual’s character development, encompassing moral development, interpersonal relationship development and cognitive development (Loevinger, 1970). The ego is seen as the “master trait” which organizes one’s personality (Loevinger, 1976), providing a framework for perceiving and interpreting the self, others and the environment. How the individual makes meaning of the self, others, and the environment impacts their behavior in relation to these three areas (Borders & Fong, 1989).
The ego develops through a "sequence of increasingly mature stages of functioning across the domains of personal relationships, impulse control, moral development, and cognitive style," in which each stage builds upon the previous stage (Hauser, Powers, and Noam, 1991, p.6). Stages are defined independently of chronological age, and individual growth can stop at any stage. The table below highlights the main characteristics of each of the nine stages. It is important to note that the first stage is included for theoretical comprehensiveness; it cannot be measured, as it refers to a newborn's initial attempts to make meaning of the world.

Table 1.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages of Ego Development</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Some Characteristics of Ego Development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impulsive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-protective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conformist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Aware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ego development has been applied to interpersonal relationships; at higher levels of ego development individuals are more responsible, exhibit greater ability to nurture, greater self-control and value individuality more. Family interactions have also been linked to ego development during adolescence, in that positive interactions, such as acceptance, problem solving and curiosity enhance ego development and negative interactions, such as indifference, withholding information or devaluing limit development (Hauser, Gerber & Allen, 1998). Billings, Hauser and Allen (2008) found a link between teens at the Pre-conformist level who were reevaluated at the age of 25 and found to be at the Pre-conformist level again were more impaired in their social relationships, as defined by the Adult Attachment Inventory and the Close Peer Relationship Interview, at the age of 25, than those teens who were reevaluated at the Conformist of Post-conformist levels. The results of this study suggest that those at higher levels of Ego Development in young adulthood have more functional social relationships than those at lower levels of Ego Development. Because Ego Development has been shown to develop through family interactions and is linked to healthy adult relationships, the theory of Ego Development seems particularly relevant to the life experiences of adult children of military families and their adult relationships. However,
the relationship between levels of ego development in adulthood and experiences as children of military families is unclear and merits further study.

**Demographics of Adult Children of Military Families**

Although no scholarly research has explored the impact of military culture on adult relationships for children of military families, a survey conducted between 1991 and 1997 collected demographic information on this population (Ender, 2000). The survey included adult children of families involved with Foreign Service and international business, missionaries and civilian government employees. The ages of these participants ranged from 15-46, however, the average age was 39. The majority of participants (78.3%) were adult children of military families, representing all branches of the military. Almost all respondents had siblings, averaging two siblings per respondent. Approximately three-fourths reported that their parent had served in a major war, including Vietnam and World War II. Most respondents reported that their parents were retired and living in North America at the time of the survey (Ender, 2000).

The survey participants were also asked about their experiences with moving during childhood and adolescence. The average number of moves between birth and the end of high school for each participant was eight. Army families experienced the most moves, and the Coast Guard and civilian government families experienced the least. The average number of years each participant spent overseas was seven. Most respondents reported living in at least one foreign country during childhood and adolescence, a little more than half reported living in two, and about one-third reported living in three. Two-thirds of these respondents reported that they immersed themselves in the host country’s culture “often” or “totally.” Of all participants, 80.9% reported speaking at least one
foreign language during childhood and adolescence, 37.9% reported speaking two, and 14.3% reported speaking at least three (Ender, 2000).

Participants were asked about their perceived stress related to their parents’ work. “Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard adult children reported the most stress on geographic mobility, normative constraints, and parent separation” (Ender, 2000). In a section where participants could write in other stressors, many reported dysfunctional family situations, such as “excessive drinking” (Ender, 2000).

Participants reported an overall satisfaction with their life, ranking family, friends and nonworking activities as being most satisfying. Work, health and place of residence were also rated fairly well in terms of overall satisfaction. This is identical to the general population in the United States (Ender, 2000).

This survey provides a general perspective of reports by adult children of military families regarding their life experiences after adolescence. Although participants reported that they are satisfied with their adult lives, the survey did not address the question of how the military culture affects their adult lives, specifically in terms of relationships. Further, this study is over a decade old and was undertaken prior to the significant changes related to the recent wars, as well as shifts in gender and family compositions.

Summary

Chapter one provided a glimpse into the lives of military families. Demographics of previous military families and current military families were provided, compared and contrasted. The Family Life Cycle and the theory of Ego Development were briefly explained and explored as frameworks to explore adult recollections of childhood experiences in a military family; specifically, as they relate to adult relationships.
Because of the unique developmental experiences military children face throughout the Family Life Cycle it is pertinent to discover how these experiences are carried into adulthood and adult relationships. Military families are currently receiving attention from mental health professionals, in regard to best approaches to treatment, however, the approaches focus on children and families in the moment, not later down the road. The findings of this study may better prepare mental health professionals for working with children of military families during any stage of development.
Chapter 2

A Selected Review of the Literature

Chapter two will present the Family Life Cycle as it applies to active duty military families, examining the unique stressors of military families that can potentially offset its stages. Next, the various impacts that military culture has upon the children of these families will be explored. The aspects of the military culture examined will include relocation, frequent separations and the deployment cycle. The natural progression to adulthood will also be addressed.

Research findings in this chapter aim to indicate as a whole that little is known about the impacts of growing up in a military family upon adult life. While many of these studies focus on the impact of military culture on childhood risks and resiliencies, little scholarly research follows these influences into adulthood. In particular, viewing adult children of military families through the lens of the theory of Ego Development is missing from scholarly research. The following literature review highlights the current body of knowledge regarding the experiences of military children and identifies gaps in the literature that underscore the importance of expanding the body of knowledge.

Critical impacts to the family life cycle of active duty military families.

Military families struggle with issues common to civilian families, such as parenting strategies, career issues, and caring for family members (Drummet, 2003). However, the military family’s trajectory through the Family Life Cycle is slightly different because of the unique needs these families face. Balancing career and family life in a culture where military members are expected to put their commitment to the military, their unit, and their missions before themselves or their family members is very difficult (Drummet,
Family life is often seen as a competing priority in the lives of military personnel, as both family and the military take up significant time and energy. Even so, military families point to frequent deployments and long duty hours as sources of considerable concern (Martin, McClure, 2000).

**Safety concerns.** Perceived danger during training and combat is another stressor faced by military families. The fear of life threatening accidents can place a lot of stress upon the family (Rosen, Durand, 2000). Unfortunately, military service members have "an unlimited commitment" to the military, highlighting the possibility that they may sacrifice their life for their country. Although members of the military and their families generally accept this philosophy, coping with the concerns does not come easy (Martin, McClure, 2000). This is evident in a study of 346 military spouses residing overseas which explored the military lifestyle (risk of service member’s injury or death, frequent relocations, periodic separations, and foreign residence) and its relationship to psychological and physical well-being, satisfaction with the army and marital satisfaction. Results of this study indicate that a spouse’s fear concerning the soldier’s safety impacts their physical well-being as measured by the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research’s physical health symptoms checklist (Burrell, Adams, Durand, Castro, 2006).

**Relocations.** About one third of military families are relocated annually (Orthner, 2005), adding more stress to military families. Burrell, Adams, Durand and Castro’s (2006) study found that moving is associated with reported satisfaction with military life according to Army spouses. Specifically, the more moves that a family experiences, the less satisfied they are with the Army (Burrell et al., 2006).
Frequent separations. Another stressor that military families face is separation from the military service member (Drummet, 2003). During these separations, military families must determine who will care for their children, especially in situations where both parents are active in the military. Separations also bring concerns about relationship maintenance due to inability to communicate regularly, shifting roles and boundaries for the stay-at-home parent and children, feelings of loss and helplessness for the military member and a lack of social support (Drummet, 2003). A study found periodic separation most important in determining how spouses are affected by military culture. Given the fact that it was weighed against risk of injury or death, frequent relocations and foreign residence it is significant (Burrel, Adams, Durand and Castro, 2006) “The actual number of separations does not necessarily influence the perception of separation, but rather it is the experience itself. For example, was the separation at a particularly bad time? Did the separation cause the soldier to miss an important event or was the separation due to combat rather than a peacekeeping mission?” (Burrell, Adams, Durand, Castro, 2006).

The deployment cycle. According to the Virginia Joint Military Family Services Board (2003), “the deployment cycle is a construct that helps us to understand the emotional stages that many military families go through in adjusting to family separations and reunions” (p.17). Most frequently deployment is conceptualized in 3 phases: pre-deployment, deployment, and post-deployment (Chandra et al., 2010; Flake et al., 2009; McFarlane, 2009). The time for a military family to progress through the deployment cycle varies and the experiences of this cycle are not the same for every family (Virginia Joint Military Family Services Board, 2003).
With deployments come numerous stressors and difficult transitions for military families. As stated above, separations of any kind are difficult for military families (Drummet, 2003). When the separation is due to combat, stress may be heightened, as separation moves "from the category of 'normative' life stressor to the category of 'catastrophic' life stressor (McCubbin & Figley, 1983). Based on the work of McCubbin & Figley (1983), Peebles-Kleiger and Kleiger (1994) created a description of the emotional stages of wartime deployment based on the experience of Desert Storm and Desert Shield deployment.

**Pre-deployment.** This phase begins when the military service member receives notification that he or she will be deployed. Families given short notice about their loved one’s deployment are initially thrust into an emotional cycle, alternating between self-numbing and fear, upset, and protest. Some families will cope with these feelings by focusing on the tasks that need to be accomplished before the service member can deploy, such as figuring out childcare plans and creating or finalizing wills. This can be a very painful time for families struggling with the uncertainty of deployment (Peebles-Kleiger & Kleiger, 1994).

**Deployment.** The next phase of the deployment cycle occurs when the service member is away from home. The initial separation can bring about an absence of feeling, as some families use self-numbing as a means to cope. After a few weeks families begin to allow the reality of their feelings to set in (Peebles-Kleiger & Kleiger, 1994). Some families may experience great emotional stress, which involves feelings of missing the soldier, and concern for the deployed member's safety. They may also experience stress related to managing the home, childcare, finances (Rosen & Durand, 2000) and fulfilling
roles that the service member usually fills (Mmari, Roche, Sudhinaraset, & Blum, 2009). During Operation Desert Storm, families reported concerns of “loneliness, financial insecurities, children’s discipline, and an overall feeling that the military was not concerned for their well-being” (DiNola, 2008, p.vi). With time, families are able to stabilize to some degree, although uncertainty and media coverage related to the deployment can make this difficult. When the family is notified of their loved one’s upcoming return, feelings of happiness and relief mix in with the ongoing emotional states, such as anxiety and anger (Peebles-Kleiger & Kleiger, 1994).

Post-deployment. When the deployed service member reaches their home base, the post-deployment phase occurs (Pincus, et al., 2004). Families may believe that reuniting with their service member is the cure all for their difficult experiences. However, reunion is a time of great stress as well, and may last anywhere from three to 18 months. Some families are able to reach a state of stabilization where family dynamics have been renegotiated to include the returning parent (Peebles-Kleiger & Kleiger, 1994).

Through a series of 11 focus groups including adolescents in military families, military parents, and school personnel in schools that are impacted by the military, Mmari, Roche, Sudhinaraset and Blum (2009) found that both parents and adolescents described changing family roles to be particularly stressful as the deployed parent returned. Some participants responded that this was because the adolescent had become comfortable with the parenting style of the stay-at-home parent and reunion changed the system. Adolescents also reported stress from witnessing negative changes in their parents’ relationship post deployment, such as arguing more frequently.
Following recent combat deployments, redeployment did not allow adequate time for families to reintegrate the deployed family member back into the family system. Military families report that entering a new deployment shortly after the family member has returned from a previous deployment results in family members carrying unresolved worries and expectations from the previous deployments (National Military Family Association, 2005).

The unique situations described above can add “another set of superimposed stages or marker events, not characteristic of all families” onto the Family Life Cycle (Ridenour, 1984). Ridenour (1984) echoes and offers additional examples of these events such as:

- joining the military, the first prolonged separation, and then reunion periods;
- periodic moves or geographic relocation, especially those away from extended family of origin roots, often beyond the control of the family unit itself and leading sometimes to a group feeling of impotency periodic culture shock;
- mandatory shifts in job or career directions for a military member’s spouse due to a service related relocation; retirement and/or shift of career foals for the service members and the associate life changes which occur much earlier than their civilian peers families. (p. 10)

McGoldrick, Carter and Preto (2011) emphasize “stress is often greatest at transition points from one stage to another” (p. 7) in the Family Life Cycle, stating the necessity “to assess not only the dimensions of the current life-cycle stress, but also their connections to family themes and triangles coming down in the family over historical time” (p. 9). In considering the military family and the unique needs that come with being
a part of the military, transitions through the family life cycle are directly influenced by the particular experiences that being a military family require. Also, being a military family means being a part of the traditions, beliefs, values and overall culture of the military, which influence the family themes, patterns, rules, dynamics and functioning that are carried through the Family Life Cycle. This unique progression has particular implications for children and adolescents.

**Negative impacts of Military Culture on Children and Adolescents.** Not only is the military family’s trajectory through the Family Life Cycle slightly different because of the unique needs these families face, children of military families are specifically impacted by these unique needs. A body of literature concerned with the negative impacts military culture may have on children is highlighted below.

**Safety Concerns.** A study by Ryan-Wegner (2001) highlights the stress children feel when the threat of war, “a pervasive stimulus that becomes part of everyday life” (Ryan-Wegner, 2001, p. 239) is lingering in their minds. Children ages 8-11, across several states and socioeconomic statuses, in active-duty and reserve families were participants of this descriptive, comparative study. Open ended questions were posed to the children, ranging from questions about what make them happy or sad to question that focused on their specific ideas and fears about war. The Revised Children’s Manifest Anxiety Scale was also used in this study to better understand the level of anxiety these children are facing. Another measure of emotional status that was used in this study was the Human Figure Drawing. Coping strategies of the children and how often they use them were explored by the School-age Children’s Coping Strategies Inventory.
The results of this study indicate no significant differences in children of active-duty, reserve and civilian families in terms of manifest anxiety or the human figure drawings. Certain questions were answered differently for active-duty children; for example, on the Manifest Anxiety Scale, they were significantly more likely to choose "worry about what my parents will say to me" and on the human subjects drawings they were significantly more likely to have "poor integration of parts" and "arms pressed close to the body" suggesting impulsivity and timidity. In terms of coping strategies, active duty children were significantly more likely than civilian and reserve children to choose "bite my nails," "daydream" or "fight with someone" (Ryan-Wegner, 2001).

Overall these results suggest that despite ideas and thoughts of the threat of war, military children are able to cope as well as civilian children. However, in responding to an open-ended question about the United States going to war, active duty children expressed a concern about their parent or themselves dying in the war more often than other children (Ryan-Wegner, 2001), highlighting the fact that children of active duty families are stressed by the idea of war. Unfortunately, little is known about how this concern manifests itself later in life, if at all.

Cozza, Chun and Polo (2005) reflect on their experiences working with the Department of Psychiatry at Walter Reed Army Medical Center focusing on the actual injury or death of a parent and how that impacts children of military families. Once a family is notified of the injury of the service member, the spouse typically joins the service member which may require the child to be left under the supervision of other adults, resulting in schedule changes and routine interruptions. Children who travel with their parent experience routine interruptions as well, and also miss school. Parents often
do not know what information to share with children about the injury, resulting in sharing too much or too little information. Not having enough information may cause the child's imagination to run wild or question what other information their parents are hiding from them. Exposing the child to too much information may lead to heightened anxiety.

Fear and anxiety is also heightened by the media and informal communication around military bases. Often, children are informed quickly of a service member's death or injury via informal communication causing them to anxiously await knowledge on whether it was their parent who died. Once confirmation is received more family, disruption is heightened. A number of changes may be in place that are less common among civilian families. For example, military families experiencing the death of a service member may lose their government housing may no longer reside close to a military installation, losing access to important resources.

Although not all military children experience the injury or death of a parent, what happens to those who do? Scholarly research on the topic of how these experiences impact children of military families later in life is non-existent.

Relocations. Relocation has been found to be negatively related to how satisfied one is with being a part of the military lifestyle (Burrel, Adams, Durand, & Castro, 2010), suggesting that relocations are stressful for military families. Looking at relocation stress, Weber and Weber (2005) surveyed parents of 179 military families to highlight their perceptions of their children's conduct and behavior. The results of these surveys showed that on average the adolescents in these families experience 4.89 relocations. As the number of frequencies of relocations increased children's behavior improved, as measured by the Behavioral Problems Index. This study suggests that relocation is not
necessarily detrimental to child behavior and that “relocation frequency might be a determining factor in resilient behavioral development” (Weber & Weber, 2005, p. 641). This article highlights that based on parent perceptions, relocations do not always negatively impact children and adolescents of military families, in terms of behavior. Learning more about the children’s perception may highlight a different scenario or confirm the parent’s perceptions.

Bradshaw, Sudhinaraset, Mmari and Blum (2010) explored transition-related stressors as reported by mobile military students, their parents and school personnel. This study focused specifically on adjusting to new school systems after relocation occurred. Through this qualitative study themes emerged from the three groups. “The data indicated that the most prevalent stressors on the students resulted from tension at home, strains on their relationships with peers, adapting to a new school environment, academic challenges, student/teachers relationships and becoming involved in extracurricular activities” (Bradshaw et al., 2010, p. 90).

A theme emerging from all three groups is the impact that the random nature of relocation has on the family system. Students reported heightened tension in the family, such as resentment towards parents and the military because they did not desire to move. Tension from home may be seen at school through the child’s behavior, according to school personnel. (Bradshaw et al. 2010).

Students report on the social stress of relocating saying that initiating and sustaining friendships is very difficult. Friends will pull away once they know the student is leaving, and joining already established social networks is challenging. Parents confirmed social stressors when speaking about military children who live on military
bases. They report that these children also experience the loss of their friends who are moving away and parents described the anxiety they witness their children experiencing (Bradshaw et al., 2010). One parent focused on his own experiences growing up in a military family saying, “I still have problems with relationships because I have always been that same way...I always went to off-base schools. But you never knew when you were going to move...So, it’s a relationship thing, it is a dual [edged] sword. One thing is that they learn to adapt, but the other thing is they are scared to commit to a relationship because they don’t know when they are going to move again” (Bradshaw, et al, 2010, p.91).

In terms of adapting to a new school, students spoke about difficulties adapting to the physical space, the culture of the school, and the school’s policies. School personnel and students commented upon the timing of relocations, stating that moving in the middle of the school year added more stress to the adaptation process. Stereotypes of “military brats” held by fellow students and teachers also impact the process of familiarizing one’s self to a new school. Quality of education, repeating classes or missing major course topics is a big stressor for parents.

Parents also commented on the 50/50 chance of their children receiving a teacher who understood the unique needs that military children face, emphasizing that teachers who work with any military children or adolescents need additional training to know what to expect from this population and how to support them through these periods of transition. Lastly, students reported challenges of joining extracurricular activities and concerns of graduating on time due to the above mentioned academic challenges (Brashaw et al., 2010).
Relocations sometimes require military families to move to other countries, finding themselves living in cultures that are different from their own. Often military families reside on base or in US communities set apart from the cultural environment of the host country, while some may become engaged with the local region. Burrell, Adams, Durand and Castro (2006) found that foreign residence has a negative impact on the psychological and physical well-being of military spouses. Satisfaction of being a part of the military as reported by spouses of military personnel is also negatively related to living in a foreign country (Burrell et al., 2010).

Relocations have the potential to have negative impacts on children and the possibility exists that these impacts are exacerbated during foreign relocation assignments (Burrell et al., 2010). The work of Bradshaw and colleagues highlight many of the possible stressors related to relocation for military children and adolescents. This particular study did not highlight what happens beyond adolescence. However, one parent interviewed alluded to the fact that he grew up in a military family, which in the present is still impacting his ability to sustain meaningful relationships. It appears that the impact of multiple relocations resonated throughout the Family Life Cycle.

**Frequent Separations.** Since the Persian Gulf War, military families have experienced an increased amount of separations from military service members. Separations bring about stress for the stay at home spouse and for the children, in terms of feelings of loneliness, depression and anxiety, being responsible for taking care of the home and children alone and changes in family dynamics (Rosen & Durand, 2000). Burrell et al. (2010) also note that frequent separations impact the psychological and physical well-being of the stay at home spouse, as well as satisfaction with the military
and their marriages. Specifically for children, being separated from a parent for less than a year may bring about temporary behavior and affective changes and being separated for a greater period may heighten these impacts (Watanabe & Jensen, 2000).

*Pre-deployment.* This phase begins when the military service member receives notification that he or she will be deployed. The amount of time in this phase can vary from a few weeks to over a year. Pre-deployment is a period of time where family members alternate between feeling of denial and anticipation of their loved one leaving. (Pincus, House, Christenson, & Adler, 2004). For children and adolescents, this is a time marked by confusion and anxiety surrounding where their parent is going, what they’re going there to do and how they can remain connected while their parent is gone (Virginia Joint Military Family Services Board, 2003).

*Deployment.* Focusing on the impacts deployment has on children, Chandra et al. (2010) conducted interviews and assessments with military children ages 11 to 17 and the corresponding non-deployed caregiver in order to understand their experiences with deployment. This study revealed that military children and adolescents report higher emotional difficulties than the national average and 30% showed some sort of anxiety, which is higher than other samples. Notably, caregiver mental health is significantly correlated with child well-being, in terms of academic engagement, peer functioning, family functioning and emotional difficulties. Caregivers reported that older children were experiencing more difficulties with deployment. Families renting off-base housing and employed caregivers reported more challenges. Employed caregivers also reported more difficulties with their children when the deployed caregiver returned (Chandra et. al, 2010).
Huebner, Mancini, Wilcox, Grass and Grass (2007) conducted focus groups with children ages 12-18 who had a deployed parent in order to explore feelings of uncertainty and ambiguous loss. The majority of children reported negative feelings associated with the knowledge of their parent’s deployment. “Adolescents also made comments reflecting a sense of “loss” of an important person who provided security and assistance.” (Huebner et al., 2007, p. 116). Children reported uncertainty related to roles and responsibilities at home, routine changes and what happens when their parent returns. Symptoms of anxiety and depression also emerged through the interviews with children. The children in this study also stated that their families experience heightened emotions and changes in the relationship between the non-deployed parent and child (Huebner et al, 2007).

Post-Deployment. When the deployed service member reaches home base, the post-deployment phase occurs (Pincus, et al., 2004). Children during this phase, struggle with reconnecting to their returning parent. Younger children may not remember their parent or understand why their parent has been gone. Allowing time for the child to warm-up to their returning parent may be helpful. Some younger children may also be angry and demanding. School aged children typically respond by wanting a lot of attention, where teenager may appear moody and as if they do not care their parent is back home. Children ages 5-12 may specifically fear the return of their parent because the stay at home parent has threatened them with the service members’ return as a means of discipline or because they know that rules and roles in the family will shift back to the way they were before their parent left. Teenagers aged 13-18, may also be concerned
about the rules and responsibilities required of them as their parents returns (Virginia Joint Military Services Board, 2003).

**Positive Impacts of Military Culture on Children and Adolescents.** Although much of the research focuses on the negative impact that military culture has on children of military families, especially with the current war, positive impacts of military culture on children of military families exist. In an article reviewed above Weber and Weber (2005) found that one of the major issues of military culture, relocation, has the potential to impact military children positively. The results of their study show that as the number of relocations occurred, adolescents were less likely to experience behavioral problems, suggesting that relocation is not necessarily detrimental to a child.

A survey of over 6,000 military adolescents in 1996 and 1997 highlighted some strengths of being in a military family. Ninety-one percent of participants reposted their overall health is good or excellent at the time of the survey. In terms of mental health, researchers measured their self-esteem, trait anxiety and depression, finding that military adolescent was comparable to civilian adolescents. Examining delinquent behaviors showed that the majority of military adolescents that participated in this survey did not engage in any of the mild or moderate delinquent behaviors, such as shoplifting, carrying a weapon or vandalizing property. Military children reported that in their free time they were hanging out with friends watching TV or doing homework, making them quite similar to the civilian population. Having good relationships with peers and being like by their peers were concerns held by the majority of respondents. They also reported having moderate to good family relationships, which was significantly related to family structure (single or two-parent families) (Jefferys & Leitzel, 2000).
Hutchinson (2006) conducted a survey study looking at risk behaviors in military adolescents, grades 9 through 12. He compared this information to the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance (YRBS) data collected in 2003. He found that in his sample of military adolescents, “30.7% reported a history of sexual intercourse, compared with 46.7% from the 2003 YRBS national statistics” (Hutchinson, 2006, p. 927). Hutchinson (2006) also explored marijuana, alcohol and cigarette use in both populations, finding that 7.8% of the military adolescents used marijuana as opposed to 22.4% in the YRBS data, for “12th grade males, marijuana used was 20% in the study group...and 30% nationally” (p. 297-928), overall alcohol use was 21.4% lower than the national percentage and cigarette use in the national population was 21.9%, as compared to 5.4% in the military adolescent group. This study suggests that adolescents of military families are less likely to participate in risk-taking behaviors.

**Psychological Effects of Childhood carried through the Family Life Cycle.**

The research reviewed above outlined stressors and challenges face by military families. McGoldrick, Carter and Preto (2011) emphasize that vertical and horizontal stressors impact the progression of families through the family life cycle. For military families, these stressors include relocations, deployments, frequent separations, etc. Unresolved stressors, family patterns and histories are carried throughout the family life cycle. For military children, this may mean that the stress they experience from growing up in a military family, related to the unique experience military families face, influence their adult lives. The following section explores research related to these contentions.

**Transitions into Adulthood.** In considering the impact of military culture on the adult lives of military children, the significant period of transition into adulthood has
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received little attention. Although most studies do not specifically look at children who grow up in a military family and their transition to adulthood, reviewing studies on other populations can be useful in understanding what this transition may look like.

Arnett (1996) interview 140 people aged 21-28 to highlight the current perceptions young American’s have of the transition into adulthood. Participants were asked to indicate whether certain tasks must be achieved before a person can be considered an adult. They were also asked “Do you feel like you have reached adulthood?; In what ways do you feel you have or have not?” (p.304); “What would you say makes a person a woman, as opposed to a girl?; What would you say makes a person a man, as opposed to a boy?” These questions were posed in order to see how the tasks they perceive as transitioning into adulthood related to their own transition and if they had different requirements dependent on gender.

The results of these interviews highlighted that accepting personal responsibility (94% of participants rated this as necessary to reach adulthood), making decisions independently (78%), and having financial independence (73%) are all indicators that one has reached adulthood successfully. This study provides some evidence that young Americans believe gender has little to do with the transition to adulthood, in that males and females were rated as equally needing to know how to protect a family, care for children, and run a household. No important distinction was drawn between genders in terms of what differentiates a girl from a woman and man from a boy. Sixty-four per cent of participants felt they had already reached adulthood at the time of this study, 2% responded that they had not and 35% responded that they had reached adulthood in some regards, but not in others (Arnett, 1996).
Another study focusing on the transition to adulthood was conducted by Shulman, Feldman, Blatt, Cohen and Mahler (2005). This study interviewed seventy-two Israeli adults, ages 21-46, and sought to assess their self-perception in terms of personal, social and professional goals, current life status, and relationships with intimate partners and their parents. To validate these descriptions, researchers gave the Psychological Separation Inventory to a parent of each participant. Data was analyzed and identified three types of emerging adults: 1.) low integrated, having low levels of reflectivity, a low level of clarity of occupation goals and no romantic partner 2.) Authentic and competent, having and integrated and authentic self, couples with clear occupation goals an investment in preparing for these goals, a high level of reflectivity and mature involvement with a romantic partner 3.) Acting competent/low authenticity, having low reflectivity with a moderate level of clarity in terms of occupation goals, being committed to obtaining their occupation goals and having a mature relationship with an intimate partner.

As stated previously, no studies were found on military children and their transitions into adulthood. However, Kelty, Kleykamp and Segal (2010) examined literature on the effect of military service on emerging adults. Their examination yielded the following findings. "Military personnel are slightly more likely than their civilian peers to be married, though they are less likely than their age peers to be married when they enter the military (Kelty, Kleykamp, Segal, 2010, p. 190). Service members enter the military single, but marry young. Divorce rates for military families show that military men are less likely to be divorced than their civilian peers while women in the military are more likely to be divorced than their civilian peers. In the military African
Americans are less likely to have experience divorced than Whites. The reverse is true in the civilian population. In terms of having children, men in the military and their civilian counterparts are having their first children around the same age and military women are having their first children a year and a half before their civilian counterparts (Kelty, Kleykamp, Segal, 2010).

These studies highlight the experiences of some emerging adults, examples are: one's personal definition of adulthood being related to if individuals identify as an adult, and the varying experiences of those who choose to join the military and those who do not choose to join. The experience of military service members and their transitions into adulthood are explored as well. However, what about the children who grow up in the military culture? For those who join the military, a certain level of understanding exists about what their transition looks like. What about those who choose another option?

Although no scholarly research has explored the impact of military culture on adult children of military families, a survey conducted between 1991 and 1997 collected demographic information on this population (Ender, 2000). The survey also included adult children of families involved with Foreign Service and international business, and missionaries and civilian government employees. The ages of these participants ranged from 15-26, however, the average age was 39. Out of the participants, 34.3% represented adult children of Army families, 36.4% represented adult children of Air Force families, 6.6% represented adult children of Navy families, .8% represented adult children of Marine families and .2% represented adult children of Coast Guard families. Ninety-five percent of respondents had siblings, averaging two siblings per respondent. 73.3% reported that their parent had served in a major war, including
Vietnam (33.3%) and World War II (23.6%). Most respondents (90.5%) reported that their parents were retired at the time of the survey in North America (96.1%).

The majority of participants (96.6%) reported living in North America and, living in urban areas and suburban areas near large cities (55.8%). Most respondents reported being married (61.9%) and their numbers of children ranged from 0-5, averaging one child per family, although 43.4% had no children. Twenty-one percent of respondents who were married or previously married met their spouses or previous spouses while they were overseas due to their parents’ work.

Ninety-five percent of respondents received some sort of college education and 29.1% earned advanced degrees. Their current employment ranged from professional work (29.5%) to business management (16.2%) to students (11.2%). Some participants reported currently serving in the military (5.7%) or previously serving in the military (21.8%). The Army was largely represented in those with previous experience with 45.7% of participants serving in this branch. Thirty-four percent served in the Air Force, 4.3% served in the Marines and 16% served in the Navy. Approximately 57% percent of those who served in the military were among enlisted ranks. Of those currently in the military at the time of the survey, 63.3% were officer and 2.4% were in the Air Force. Fifty-three percent of respondents who did not have experience serving in the military, reported that they had no interest in ever doing so.

The survey participants also were asked about their experiences with moving in childhood and adolescence. The average number of moves between birth and the end of high school for each participant was eight. Army families experienced the most moves (nine), whereas the Navy, Air Force, Foreign Service and Marine Corps reported eight
moves, missionary and international business reported seven moves, and the Coast Guard and civilian government workers six moves. The average number of years that each participant spent overseas was seven. When asked to list three countries where they lived while growing up, 97% respondents reported at least one foreign country, 53% reported two and 31% reported three. Two-thirds of these respondents reported that they immersed themselves in the host country’s culture “often” or “totally”. About 80.9% of participants reported speaking at least one foreign language during childhood and adolescence, 37.9% reported speaking two and 14.3% reported speaking at least three (Ender, 2000).

Lastly, participants reported about their perceived stress related to their parents’ work. “Within the demands, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard adult children reported the most stress on geographic mobility, normative constraints, and parent separation” (Ender, 2000). In a section where participants could write in other stressors, many reported dysfunctional family situations, such as “excessive drinking in the military” (Ender, 2000).

Participants reported an overall satisfaction with their life, ranking family, friends and nonworking activities as being most satisfying. Work, health and place of residence were also rated fairly well in terms of overall satisfaction. This is identical to the general population in the United Stated (Ender, 2000).

This survey provides a general idea of what happens to adult children of military families after adolescence. It offers a useful basis of understanding the patterns of career choices, relocating during childhood and living in foreign countries in adult children of military families. However, it does not address the question of how this population perceives their choices in adulthood as being linked to growing up in a military family.
The following section offers the application of the Ego Development as a theoretical and empirical model for explaining psychological functioning in adult relationships.

**Adult Relationships in Military Families.** Little is known about the adult relationships of children raised in military families. However, there is research geared towards their parents. Due to second and subsequent enlistments that began to occur after the All-Volunteer Force was implemented, military personnel enlisted for longer periods of time, resulting in individual service members who are more likely to be married. Many military members marry before their initial enlistment ends and have children earlier in life than their civilian counterparts. (Martin & McClure, 2000). In addition to this, Lundquist (2007) analyzed data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth that beginning during the early all-volunteer force (1979) and ending in 1985 and included a subsection of active-duty enlisted personnel. Across these years, “21% more soldiers than civilians had married” (Lundquist, 2007, p. 205) and the number of ever divorced individuals is higher for enlisted personnel than for civilians. Notably, the participants of this survey were ages 17-21, based on this information, young enlisted members during the beginning stages of the all-volunteer force were more likely than civilians to marry at younger ages and to be divorced (Lundquist, 2007). The differences between these two groups are directly tied to military culture. We know that military culture is impacting choices related to adult relationships for those enlisted in the military, but what about the children who grow up immersed in the military culture?

Adler-Baeder, Pittman and Taylor (2005) also explored relationship patterns in military personnel and their spouses. Similarly to the above study, they examined preexisting data reported by the Department of Defense and available to the public. They
found that 20% of service members experienced divorce. When looking at only those participants from the sample who have ever been married, 27.8% have experienced a divorce. When examining remarried couples, Adler-Baeder, Pittman and Taylor (2005) found that "remarried service members are slightly over-represented among joint service couples and the enlisted ranks" (p.101) and remarried couples are more likely to have children than those who are in their first marriage. For those who are considered to have a lower socio-economic statuses, divorce and remarriage rates are higher. In military terms, that would equate to those who are part of the enlisted ranks. When accounting for gender, this study found that women are more likely than men in the military to be divorced and they are more likely to remain divorced than men of their same age cohorts.

Consistent with other studies, this study reports that military personnel are more likely to marry, divorce and remarry at younger ages than their civilian counterparts. Men who divorce are more likely to remarry than their civilian counterparts and women are more likely to divorce than their civilian counterparts. Notably, the numbers of women in the military who never marry were more than twice that of the U.S. population. Again, these relationship patterns are directly related to the lifestyle of the military. Suggesting that unique aspects of the military influence adult relationship choices. This relationship has yet to be explored in adult children of military families, specifically through the lens of Ego Development.

**Ego Development.** Loevinger (1976) developed the theory of Ego Development which exists along a continuum that spans impulsivity, manipulation, conformity, autonomy and interdependence. The process of developing the ego involves changes in how the individual makes meaning of the world, potentially facilitating better ways of
adapting to the environment (Noam, 1998). According to Loevinger (1998), the ego is the master trait that creates a foundation for the whole personality. Moral judgment, cognitive complexity, cognitive style, impulse control and views of self and others are integrated as the ego develops (Snarey, 1998). In order to synthesize one’s way of making meaning of the world, new information must be integrated with old. The old information is not forgotten or extinguished, but restructured into a new way of understanding (Hauser, Gerber & Allen, 1998).

Information and meaning making is restructured through a sequence of stages that build upon one another. The Impulsive stage (E2) describes an individual driven by physical needs who sees the world, self and others in simple dichotomies. The Self-protective stage (E3) includes individuals who seek immediate gratification and find it difficult to take responsibility, thus assigning blame to external forces. Individuals at this stage also have a fear of being caught and punished for wrongdoings. Individuals in The Conformist stage (E4) accept socially accepted rules, simply because what society approves is right. Those in the Self-aware stage (E5) define their interpersonal relationships in terms of emotions and begin to understand that society’s constructions of what is appropriate may not always be what is best for specific groups. The Conscientious stage (E6) brings about the realization of multiple possibilities, giving the individual a sense of choice. These individuals use reasoning and self-evaluation to make decisions, as opposed to following group norms. The Individualistic stage (E-7) highlights the beginning of acceptance toward individual differences and a realization that individuals can partake in varying roles at the same time. The Autonomous stage (E8) includes individuals that understand that the environment and people are complex
entities, leading to a tolerance for others and their behaviors. The Integrated Stage (E9) is a stage that many people do not reach. This stage has been compared to Maslow's stage of Self-Actualization where an individual realizes their full potential and the full potential of others (Hy & Loevinger, 1996).

Exploring Ego Development changes from adolescence to emerging adulthood, Billings, Hauser, and Allen (2008) collect longitudinal data regarding ego development levels, on adolescents, annually for four years. Adolescents who were identified as having "profound ego development arrest" or a stable ego development level over time were tested for their level of ego development again at the age of 25. Results showed that two-thirds of the adolescents advancing to higher levels of ego development by the age of 25. Billings, Hauser and Allen (2008) attribute this to family interactions and influences that unexpectedly advanced their ego levels. This group was also found to have less favorable peer relationships than other ego development trajectory groups in young adulthood. Though this study was not related to military adolescents as they emerge into adulthood specifically, it is still relevant in that it shows ego development can advance beyond adolescence, even for those without a predicted trajectory to develop via family interactions. It also suggests that ego development is directly related to social relationships in adulthood. For children of military families, this means family dynamics are essential to promoting ego development levels and have the possibility to hinder development. As we know, the family dynamics for military families are influenced by pieces of military culture that civilian families do not face. Are these unique aspects helping to promote ego development or hindering progression? If less optimal social relationships in adulthood are related to ego developmental levels, then it is possible that
the ego levels of adult children of military families have more of an impact on their adult relationships than the influence of military culture.

Ribeiro and Hauser (2009) examined ego development in young adults with and without psychiatric histories. The goal of this study was to explore the relationship between psychosocial functioning and ego development in both groups. Psychosocial functioning in this study explores the following areas: intimate relationships, friendships, mental health, work satisfaction, presence of delinquent behaviors, symptoms of anxiety, and substance use. Individuals with psychiatric histories who had successful psychosocial functioning exhibited ego development more closed to those of the normative group. “Ego development mediated the relationships between psychiatric history and psychosocial functioning” (Riberiro & Hauser, 2009. p.268), suggesting that levels of ego development serve a protective role in terms of psychosocial functioning. For adult children of military families, this suggests that ego development level may play a mediator role in whether the military lifestyle impacts their intimate relationships and friendships.

Counseling Military Families. The current literature on the negative and positive impacts the military culture has on military families and children and the current literature on the Family Life Cycle suggests that the psychological impacts that safety concerns, frequent separations, relocations, and deployment have on children of military families are carried with them as they transition to and progress through adulthood. Current approaches to counseling military families and children focus on situations that the families are currently facing, such as phases of the deployment cycle (Hollingsworth, 2011; Lambert & Morgan, Laser & Stephens, 2010; 2009; Lester et al., 2011; Rotter &
Boveja, 1999). Weiss et al (2010) suggests using a solution focused approach to counseling service members and their families utilizing a genogram to highlight the strength of current relationships, marriages, divorces, remarriages, wars, deployments, rank, branch of the military, injuries, etc. Combining a solution-focused approach with usage of a genogram results in strength-based counseling to understand relational patterns, while fostering a sense of resiliency and adaptability (Weiss et al., 2010).

Saltzman et al. (2011) built a model of mental health services specifically to foster resiliency in military families. "The program, which is administered by trained clinicians, is designed to reduce the likelihood of problematic outcomes form families and family members who are 'at risk' due to stress, trauma or loss..." Saltzman et al. suggest there is a need for intervention in military families in order to foster healthy functioning in terms of communication, affective responsiveness and involvement, role clarity and problem solving (Saltzman et al., 2011).

Another approach to counseling, specifically family counseling, is proposed by Hollingsworth (2011) and called Community Family Therapy. The focus of this approach is to again build resiliency, but this approach extends growth to outside of the counseling room. Hollingsworth suggests the need to foster connections between the family and the surrounding community resources and to empower the family to take part in local leadership. His basis for these suggestions is that families adapt to military life better, if they have a "sense of community" and social support is a key protective factor for families. This model of family therapy is moving in a useful direction; helping military families become connected to their communities and having the counselor take on the role of an advocate for the family or child. Families who are able to come when the
stressors are fresh can benefit from this approach. Unfortunately, not all military families attend counseling while the stressors of the military lifestyle are present. How do we best support military families that come to counseling after years have passed? How do we support children who grew up in this environment and are now adults?

Current stressors and happenings related to the lifestyle of the military certainly need attention by counselors, however, what about the long term implications of posttraumatic stress disorder, relationship struggles, suicidal ideation, and other relational and mental health issues that do not fade away as deployment ends? Specifically, the children carry these experiences with them as they grow older, become adults and start having their own intimate partnerships. At present, it is unknown how to best support this population in their adult years. The current study hopes to uncover best practices for counselors and counselor educators in terms of providing services to adult children of military families, regarding their adult relationships.

Summary. Chapter two reviewed research relevant to the current study in the areas of critical impacts on the Family Life Cycle of active military families and their children. Also highlighted in this chapter is the transition into adulthood and the developmental tasks and experiences we carry with us from childhood and adolescence. The theory of Ego Development was further explored as it gives theoretical basis to the idea that patterns and themes are incorporated into psychological structures as we develop through the lifespan. The literature reviewed above emphasizes the extraordinary conditions that military families and children face throughout the Family Life Cycle. Their experiences are different from civilian families, making them a unique population. Understanding the impacts of military culture on children of military families as they
progress through the Family Life Cycle and establish adult relationships provides an in
depth look into their lives. Surveying and interviewing adult children of military families
in order to hear their perspectives of which patterns and themes from their childhood
related to military culture impact their adult relationships allows for their authentic voices
to be heard. These unique stories will inform counselor educators and counselors about
the unique needs of military children as they develop across the Family Life Cycle. Their
unique needs can be highlighted through course work in counseling programs in order the
best meet the psychological needs of and to understand the common themes across this
population. The next chapter will address the methodology of this study.
Chapter 3

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to explore how growing up in the military culture impacts relationship patterns in adulthood. Specifically, adult children of military families voiced their experiences and thoughts on how being a part of a military family have or are currently impacting their adult relationships. A book entitled Military Brats: Legacies of Childhood inside the Fortress (1996) explored the perceptions of military children as adults. A linked documentary, Brats: Our Journey Home (2006) also explored this topic. However, the book and documentary offered only a broad focus on the life of "military brats" rather than exploring psychological development and sequelae with and beyond growing up in the military. No scholarly research exists that explores adult military children and their experiences in adulthood, with attention to adult relationships.

The current chapter will describe the research design of the current study. A rationale for using mixed methods research will be provided. Also, research questions guiding the study will be highlighted. A description of participants, setting and data analysis procedures will follow.

Brief History of Mixed Methods Evolution

Mixed methodology began in the 1950's as a model combining two forms of quantitative research methods in one study. Some evidence of advocates for and a few examples of research studies using multiple data sources, quantitative and qualitative, as early as the 1970s. However, mixed methods research formally developed during the late 1980s to early 1990s. Writers from different fields, including sociology, management,
nursing, and evaluation, began writing scholarly articles, books and chapters in books about way to link quantitative and qualitative research methods. These writers eventually streamlined their thoughts and developed possible research designs and names for these research designs (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). These antecedents lead to more “systematic attempts to forge mixed methods into a complete research design and to create a distinct approach to research” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 21).

However, such attempts were met with resistance, as individuals questioned whether the philosophical underpinnings of qualitative research and quantitative research that were then seen as opposing could be combined (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Over the past 30 years, the use of mixed methodological approaches has increased “due to (a) the introduction of a variety of new methodological tools (both quantitative and qualitative), (b) the rapid development of new technologies (computer hardware and software), and (c) the increase in communication across the social and behavioral sciences (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Today, different philosophical underpinnings may be linked with a variety of research methods giving mixed methodology room to expand, thus mixed methods research is increasing across disciplines and countries. Not only is acceptance helping this line of research expand, emerging research problems necessitate a methodology that addresses the complexity of modern research questions. Mixed methods research evolved to address this complexity (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Combining quantitative and qualitative research methods “provides the most complete analysis of problems” that researchers wish to explore (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 21).
Specific to counseling research, the need for mixed methods studies is beginning to increase. Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2011) reviewed trends in counseling literature regarding mixed methods studies and found that before May 2002; only 23 articles based on mixed methods research were published in counseling journals. When examining a specific counseling journal from late 2002 through 2010, only 11 mixed methods articles were published. Despite the benefits of using mixed methods research (discussed below) the counseling field is behind the times regarding this third methodological wave. Other professional journals are routinely publishing mixed method articles, others have created special issues focused on mixed methods research and two journals devoted only to mixed methods studies have been developed. Also becoming popular are websites and conferences dedicated to mixed methods research (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2011).

**Definition of Mixed Methods Research**

Creswell and Plano Clark (2007, as cited in Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011) define mixed methodology as the following:

Mixed methods research is a research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry. As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases of the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches, in combination, provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone.
In addition to this definition, Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) add that their definition focuses on mixed methodology that is inclusive of many worldviews, relying on core characteristics of mixed methods research: 1.) collecting and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data; 2.) mixing, integrating or linking the two forms of data by combining or merging them; by having one build on the other; or embedding one within the other; 3.) giving priority to one or both forms of data dependent upon the research focus; 4.) using these procedures in a single study or multiple phases of a program of study; 5.) framing these procedures within philosophical worldviews and theoretical lenses; and 6.) combining the procedures into specific research designs that direct the plan for conducting the study. The above definition and core characteristics will be followed for the purpose of this study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

**Rationale for Using Mixed Methods Research Design**

Mixed Methods research is used for several reasons, including situations in which one data source may be insufficient, results of a study need further explanation, exploratory findings need to be generalized, and an enhanced understanding of one methodology is necessary or theoretical underpinnings or research objectives of a study call for mixed methodology (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In addition to this, Greene, Caracelli and Graham (1989) discovered five purposes for using mixed methodologies: triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation and expansion. The current study is an example of a study that would have an insufficient understanding, if either qualitative methodology or quantitative methodology was used exclusively. This study also seeks triangulation and complementarity, using two methodologies to maximize the strengths and minimize the weaknesses of each approach, and initiation, increasing the
depth of exploration by utilizing perspectives and methods from different paradigms (Greene, Caracelli & Graham, 1989). Understanding patterns in adult relationships, as influenced by childhood culture requires an in depth investigation of more than a few individuals (qualitative research) and of variables too numerous and specific to the individual (quantitative research) (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

In addition to this, the emergent nature of this research topic makes it difficult to know which questions need to be asked to explore adult children of military families' patterns of relationships from a solely qualitative perspective. The same is true for using only quantitative research. Quantitative research alone would also not facilitate a nuanced and rich study of how the military culture has impacted their adult lives (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

As stated above, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative research methods offsets the weaknesses that arise in using one type of methodology. Specific to this study, quantitative research does not often focus on personal biases and interpretations of the researcher (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Because of the researcher's identity as an adult child of a military family, reflecting upon personal biases and how to reduce the influence of personal experiences on the research study is important. Also, the quantitative portion of this research study will allow for the generalization of results to a larger group which is particularly important as adult children of military families have not been explored through scholarly research. Lastly, the terminology and related constructs used in mixed methods research, such as integration and synthesis, are congruent with the theoretical underpinning of this study, the theory of Ego Development. The theory of Ego Development declares that in order to synthesize one’s
way of making meaning of the world, and thus building upon your current Ego levels, new information must be integrated with old, restructuring it into a new way of understanding (Hauser, Gerber & Allen, 1998).

**Challenges to Mixed Methods Research**

Using mixed methodology to explore a research topic can be a challenging task. First, the researcher must be familiar with both qualitative and quantitative methodology, and aware of the unique aspects of both methodologies that add to the rigor of such studies, i.e., reliability and validity in quantitative research and coding and developing themes in qualitative data. Time and resources are another challenge to mixed methods research; as such studies may require extensive time and resources to collect two rounds of data. Researchers utilizing mixed methodology often run into the challenge of convincing others that it is a legitimate form of research. Those who are not fully aware of mixed methodology may see it as a new approach to research, leading to feelings of insufficient time to learn a new methodology. Others may be opposed to mixing research methods based on philosophical grounds. Researchers must fully examine the challenges that may arise through utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies in their research studies in order to decide if it is feasible to overcome these challenges (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

In order to address these challenges, the researcher has been reading scholarly articles and books to further explore the use of mix methods research. Time and resources do not appear to be a challenge, since the researcher has ample time to complete the dissertation process. Also, a member on the dissertation committee suggested the use of a mixed methods approach; therefore those involved in the dissertation process understand
the importance and credibility of using both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

**Research Design**

This study uses a sequential explanatory strategy to explore the impact of military culture on adult relationships. Sequential explanatory design means to "characterize by the collection and analysis of quantitative data in the first phase of research followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data in the second phase that build on the results of the initial quantitative results" (Creswell, 2009, p. 211). The purpose of this design is to explain and interpret the initial results of the quantitative phase with help from the qualitative data. Sequential explanatory design offers an outline of simple steps to follow in collecting and analyzing data. However, having two separate phases of data collection may make this design more time consuming (Creswell, 2009). Sequential explanatory design fits with this study in that it allows the researcher to explore patterns in adult military children through quantitative data and to explain these patterns in further detail through qualitative data.

**Timing.** Because this study is utilizing a sequential explanatory design, data is collected in two phases. The first phase consists of collecting quantitative data through a survey. The survey data are analyzed in order to direct the next phase of data collection. Qualitative data expanding upon the quantitative data are collected in the second phase and then analyzed to help interpret the initial results.

**Weighting.** In mixed methods research, the researcher must decide whether priority will be given to the quantitative or qualitative data collected or if both sets of data hold equal importance (Creswell, 2009). For the purposes of this study, weight will be
given to the quantitative findings. The survey data will inform the researcher how to proceed during the second phase of data collection. For example, the quantitative data will allow the researcher to develop more informed qualitative questions and provide detailed information, such as subgroups in the sampled participants, and the researcher then can further explore participants' perspectives through interview data.

**Theorizing.** Another aspect to consider in developing a mixed methods research plan is whether a theoretical underpinning, implicit or explicit, will guide the entire design (Creswell, 2009). The current study will use an explicit theory to guide both phases of data collection and data analysis. The Theory of Ego Development will be the lens through which the researcher will collect and interpret the data found. Ego Development will be used in the first round of data collection by administering the Washington University Sentence Completion Test (WUSCT) in order to explore participants' level of Ego Development. The WUSCT will be scored and analyzed according to the scoring manual. In the second phase of data collection, random participants will reflect upon their experiences growing up in a military family in an interview format. The researcher will then use the theory of Ego Development to interpret similarities and differences in perceptions of the influence of military culture on adult relationships based on current ego development levels.
Mixed methods notation.

Table 3.1

*Mixed Methods Notation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Product</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QUANTITATIVE Data Collection</td>
<td>Internet-based survey</td>
<td>Numeric data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Data screening</td>
<td>Descriptive stats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting</td>
<td>Purposefully selecting Participants based on</td>
<td>Participants (n=)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative and Qualitative</td>
<td>Quantitative findings, Developing interview</td>
<td>Interview protocol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phases</td>
<td>questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative Data Collection</td>
<td>Individual interviews</td>
<td>Text data (interview transcript)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coding and thematic Analysis</td>
<td>Codes and themes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Interpretation and explanation of quantitative and</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>qualitative results</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>Implications,</td>
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<td>Future research</td>
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**Method.** The first round of data collection consisted of creating an internet-based survey through William & Mary Qualtrics. An informed consent document was included in the survey, and the user had to agree to the information in the consent form in order to continue the survey. This survey included the Washington University Sentence
Completion (WUSCT) Questionnaire as well as questions collecting demographic information. Also included in the online survey were questions regarding adult friendships and adult romantic relationships.

**Participants and Sampling Procedures.** The researcher recruited a sample of 102 adult military children, ages 25 and older, through convenience sampling methods, assessing online communities for adult military children. A convenience sample was appropriate in this situation, as randomly selecting from the entire population of adult military children was not possible and this study did not utilize an experimental design. Participants represented adult military children from the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines. The Coast Guard and Reservist populations experience a different type of experience in the military, mostly living a civilian lifestyle; thus, these populations are not included in this study.

**Instrumentation.** Four instruments were implemented to collect data. These forms included the: 1) informed consent form, 2) demographic questionnaire, 3) adult relationship survey, and 4) the Washington University Sentence Completion Test (WUSCT).

**Informed consent.** The informed consent form (See Appendix A) provided participants with an outline of the study’s purpose, a description of the expectations of each participant, and an explanation of how the researcher would use the results of the study. Participants had the right to refuse to be a part of this study and were informed of that right through this document. Participants were informed that they may also withdraw
from the study at any time. Confidentiality was stressed in this document and informed participants of the steps the researcher will take to protect their confidentiality.

**Demographic questionnaire.** The demographic portion of the online survey (See Appendix B) was used to obtain information about the participants including the following: 1) age, 2) gender, 3) race 4) parent’s branch of the military, 5) education level and 6) level of income. The demographic information was used to determine the impact of specific demographic variables on adult relationships and perceptions of military culture influence upon these relationships. The demographic information provided by participants allowed in the identification of subgroups for the second phase of data collection.

**Adult relationship survey.** The survey questions (See Appendix C) developed by the researcher focused on adult relationships and provided questions exploring the following: 1) to what extent participants believe growing up in a military family has impacted their adult life, adult romantic relationships and adult friendships, 2) the quantity of close friendships and romantic relationships in adulthood, 3) the frequency of contact with friends and romantic partner, 4) the satisfaction participants feel related to these friendships and romantic relationships and 5) the perception of how military culture has impacted adult friendships and adult relationships. This information was used to identify any subgroups of participants related to these questions.

**The Washington University Sentence Completion Test (WUSCT).** The WUSCT, developed by Loevinger and Wessler (1970) is a semi-projective assessment consisting of 36 sentence stems designed to elicit a response that indicates the respondent’s ego
development level. Examples of these statements include, "The thing I like about myself is..." "Raising a family..." and "A good father..." (Loevinger, 1998). Men and women receive different forms of the WUSCT because the sentence stems vary by gender. Participants are simply instructed to complete the sentence stem as they feel appropriate. Both short (18 stems) and long (36 stems) forms of the WUSCT exist; the researcher used the short form in this study. Scores were determined using Loevinger's levels of Ego Development and the accompanying scoring manual, *Measuring Ego Development* (Hy & Loevinger, 1996).

High levels of inter-rater reliability and test-retest reliability have been demonstrated for this instrument (King et al., 2000). Internal consistency of the WUSCT has been reported with an alpha coefficient of .91 for all 36 items (Loevinger & Wessler, 1970). Several studies have examined ego development in relation to other developmental stage assessments, establishing construct and concurrent validity for the WUSCT (Lee & Snarey, 1988; Loevinger, 1998; Manners, Durkin & Nesdale, 2004).

Gilmore and Durkin (2001) reviewed the validity of the WUSCT and the theory of Ego Development, finding strong support for both the instrument's external validity and the soundness the theory. However, research on the WUSCT has indicated a significant positive correlation between the length of the response and the score assigned to the response. A positive correlation was also found between the socioeconomic status of the participant and their scored ego development level (Gilmore & Durkin, 2001). For the purpose of this study, these factors were given great consideration. During the coding, scoring and analysis of the protocol responses, attention was paid to response length. Income level was reported as part of the demographic information provided by
participants and correlational analyses will be computed to determine whether there is a relationship between the two variables.

The research included the WUSCT in the internet-based survey. Participants followed the instructions and completed the sentence as they saw fit. This information was used to explore any relationships between participants' ego development levels and other items on the survey.

**Research questions.**

1. What subgroups exist in adult children of military families with regards to their adult relationships?
2. What subgroups exist in adult children of military families with regards to their perceptions of the influence of military culture on their adult relationships?
3. What subgroups exist in adult children of military families with regards to ego development level?

**Quantitative Data Analysis Procedures**

**The WUSCT.** Participant’s completed sentence stems were coded and scored by a team of six who are trained in using the most current approach to scoring the WUSCT. An expert rater served as a consultant and supervisors to these raters. The scoring team established inter-rater reliability before scoring participant responses. During the analysis of response data, raters paid specific attention to the length of response and perceived verbal abilities of the respondent. Income levels were correlated with scores on the WUSCT to determine where there was a relationship between the two variables.
**Subgroup Data.** In order to determine if subgroups exist in the data collected, the researcher ran multiple correlations using SPSS. As guided by the research questions for the quantitative phase of this study, correlations were run between the following questions: demographic questions and relationships questions, impact questions and relationship questions, ego development levels and relationships questions, impact questions and demographic questions, impact questions and ego development levels, and ego development levels and demographic questions. Also looking forward to interview participant selection, the following questions were correlated: parent’s rank and relationship questions, parent’s rank and ego development levels, and parent’s rank and demographic questions. Once these relationships were explored, the researcher continued to phase two of data collection.

**Qualitative Data Collection**

**Method.** Interview sessions consisted of one semi-structured interview approximately one hour in length with participant. Before the interview was conducted, participants were informed that they have the option to choose a pseudonym. The interviews took place in a location convenient to the participant. The composition of interview questions were guided by the Theory of Ego Development, The Family Life Cycle, data interpretations from phase one of the study and unique experiences of military culture. Interview questions were built around the following topics: conceptualization of relationships, relationship development and the link between military culture and relationships in adulthood. Interviews were recorded by the researcher and sent to a transcription company without identifying information. Once
transcriptions were returned, summaries of the interviews were given to the participants to check for accuracy and for further reflection, if desired.

Interviews with participants included the following questions:

1.) What do relationships mean to you?
2.) Tell me about the most important relationship in your life.
3.) How did you learn what you need in a relationship?
4.) What did relationships look like in your home growing up?
5.) How did you approach things relationally once you left the home?
6.) Did you go into military? Did you marry into the military? Did you deliberate not go into/marry military?
7.) How might the military component of your personal history have positively impacted the relationships you have/have had in your adult life?
8.) If you could go back and change something relational in your childhood/upbringing, what would it be?
9.) This was a survey about relationship and military culture – is there anything about the two that you’d like to add? Something you’d like to share that we haven’t talked about?

The complete interview guide can be found in Appendix F.

Research Questions. The grand tour question for this study is: What are the impacts of growing up in a military family on adult relationship patterns?

Other, less significant, questions this study attempted to answer are:
• What is the relationship between ego development and adult relationship patterns in adult children of military families?

• Are there differences in the experience of adult military children depending on which parent has/had a military career? (i.e., mother, father or both)

• Are their differences in the experience of adult military children depending on whether their parent was an officer or enlisted?

• Are there differences in the experience of adult military children depending on their generational cohort?

Site and Sample Selection. Purposeful selection of participants is used in qualitative research to ensure that the researcher is involving participants that will provide the best understanding of the phenomenon at hand and of the research questions (Creswell, 2009). This study used a criterion based sample of adult military children. The following variables were taken into account when selecting participants: level of Ego Development, age, ethnicity, gender, parent’s rank at retirement and parent who served in the military.

Participants and Sampling Procedures. Based on the survey results from the first phase of data analysis, the researcher identified participants whose experiences are relevant to the above research questions. The researcher interviewed 8 participants, using level of Ego Development, age, ethnicity, gender, parent’s rank at retirement and parent who served in the military as criteria for selection. The participants represented as diverse of a group as possible in order to highlight diverse perspectives on growing up in a military family.
Setting. Interviews were conducted via internet telephone in order to enable digital recording. Audio files of these interviews were saved for the transcription process. Because interviews are being conducted via the internet, they can occur in a variety of settings. The researcher was located in a convenient location where privacy and confidentiality can be maintained. Interviewees were located in convenient locations as well, ranging from their own home to their work offices.

Researcher's Role. I have a particular interest in conducting this study because of my own experience growing up in a military family. My father served in the United States Army for 20.5 years. My childhood experiences are reminiscent of shopping trips to the PX and Commissary, trips to the on-base pool that were often interrupted by aquatics trainings for the soldiers, rolling down the car windows excitedly to hear the cadence calls of training soldiers, stopping everything at the drop of a dime for the American flag being lowered and the huge Fourth of July celebration we attended every year.

However, not all of my experiences growing up immersed in the military culture were pleasant. My father worked long hours, often causing him to be absent from our family. His involvement with the Persian Gulf War extended this absence and after his final return from Iraq he came back a changed man and this imposed a variety of impacts on our home life. I am proud of my father for the commitment he made to the military and for giving me the experience to grow up in such a unique culture. However, every once in a while I am struck by the thought, “how would my life be different if we were a civilian family?”
Exploring how growing up in the military culture impacts adulthood is particularly important to me because I can see particular aspects of myself and my adult life that are directly related to growing up in this environment. I am passionate about this study because the emerging themes can provide counselors and counselor educators with information that can better prepare counselors in working with this population. My experiences as a family counseling intern have only confirmed my hypothesis that military families have unique needs and adult children of military families carry particular pieces of their childhoods with them that civilian children do not.

Due to my own experiences, I bring certain biases to this study. These biases have the potential to shape the way I collect and interpret my data. The following section describes how I plan to remain objective and highlight the true lived experiences of my participants.

Bracketing. Creswell (2009) asserts that “in the entire qualitative research process the researcher keeps a focus on learning the meaning that the participants hold about the problem or issue” (p. 175). The meaning that the researcher brings to the study or that is ascribed to the phenomena through literature is set aside in order to allow the authentic voices of the participants to emerge. In order to start the process of bracketing my own experiences and ensure to the best of my ability that they do not impact my study, I wrote a personal statement.

Entry. Original access to participants occurred via the internet. I targeted websites that are geared toward adult children of military families. Participants for
interviews were selected from those who filled out the initial survey and indicated they were willing to participate in an interview.

Reciprocity. Participants were entered in a random drawing to receive one of four $25.00 gift cards as a token of my appreciation for participating in this study, if they indicated that they would like to be a part of this process. Participants were given copies of their transcribed interviews to check for accuracy. I also a summary of findings to each participant at the conclusion of the study who input their e-mail address when completing the initial survey.

 Qualitative Data Analysis Procedures

In explanatory mixed methods research, each phase of data is analyzed separately. For the qualitative phase, Cresswell and Plano Clark (2011) suggest “using analytic approaches best suited to the qualitative research questions” (p. 218). Rossman and Rallis (2003) suggest a process for data analysis in terms of qualitative research. This study followed an adapted version of this process, as seen below.

1. Organizing the data/Familiarizing self with data
   a. Cleaning up and organizing transcriptions
   b. Reviewing transcriptions several times

2. Generating Categories and themes
   a. Using inductive meaning categorization based on Ego Development, the Family Life Cycle, survey data and literature on military culture
   b. Identify pertinent categories within the data

3. Interpretation
CHILDREN SERVE TOO

a. Answering the following questions:
   i. “What is going on here?
   ii. What is the essence of the phenomenon?
   iii. What is the phenomenon an example of?
   iv. What is the story these data tell?” (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 287)

b. Alternative Understandings

4. Writing the report
   a. Analytic Memos
   b. Thematic Organization (Rossman & Rallis, 2003)

In order to prepare for the qualitative data analysis portion of the study, the researcher utilized a transcription company to transcribe the interviews with participants. Once the transcriptions were returned to the researcher, the data was read through thoroughly and edited for any errors that may have occurred. Irrelevant information, such as stammering, minimal encouragers, and crosstalk were removed from the documents. Summaries of the interviews were then provided to participants in order for them to check for accuracy and to add any missing information, as they felt necessary. One the summaries were returned, the researcher began to categorize the data, searching for common themes among the eight interviews. These categories were informed by the theory of Ego Development, the Family Life Cycle, phase one of the study, and the literature on military culture. The purpose of these themes was to understand the impact that military culture may have on relationships development and maintenance throughout the lives of adult children of military families. Interpretations were made about these
themes following the above outlined questions aiming to "tell a richly detailed story that...connected participants, events, experiences, or discourses to larger issues, theories or phenomena" (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 289). Very good

**Ethical Considerations**

The current study was approved of the Human Subjects Committee at the College of William & Mary. Participants were treated in accordance with the ethical standards set by the Human Subjects Committee. The Informed Consent form explained all of the rights of participants and showed their intent of volunteering to be a part of this research study. All information was kept confidential. If desired, participants chose a pseudonym to protect their identity. Physical data was stored in a locked location at all times. Data stored on the computer was password protected, allowing only the researcher, transcriptionist and dissertation committee members to have access.

**Informed Critique**

The researcher used a convenience sampling method for this study because the population of adult military children is too large and inaccessible to use random sampling. Thus, there are limitations involving data that is not representative of the entire population. The sample was also limited to those adult children of military families with internet access that choose to be a part of website geared towards military families. Diversity of participants in terms of age, gender, ethnicity and related branch of the military was also limited because of sampling procedures and on the basis of those participants who were willing to complete the interview process. Related to this, individuals were selected based on their answers in the quantitative data to participate in
the qualitative interviews. These participants may not accurately represent all individuals of the quantitative sample.

In the creation of instruments for this study, the author made every effort to conform to general guidelines governing the creation of a questionnaire and interview questions (Gall, Gall and Borg, 2007). However, it is possible that some participants may misread some items resulting in inaccurate information or that participants may answer questions as they perceive is socially desirable.

The strengths of this study outweigh the limitations. Little scholarly research has been done on the developmental implications growing up in a military family. This study has the potential to expand the current body of knowledge of military children and families. Future research may explore other means of sampling this population and build upon the quantitative and qualitative data in this study. Longitudinal studies of military children seem to be ideal in providing information about the developmental paths of this population; also a route of exploration for the future.

Summary

Chapter one provided an introduction and overview of the topic at hand. Chapter two reviewed the current literature supporting future research exploring the impacts of growing up in a military family on adulthood, specifically adult relationships. This chapter described the research design and methodology used in this study, including participants and sampling procedures, two phases of data collection methodology, instrumentation, research questions, hypotheses, and two phases of data analysis procedures. Ethical considerations were also presented.
Chapter 4

Introduction

The following chapter provides detailed information on the findings of this study. First, results from the quantitative phase are examined, highlighting demographic information, relationships survey data, the four impact question results, analysis of the Washington University Sentence Completion Test (WUSCT) and subgroup findings. One hundred and two participants were included in this phase of the study. Second, this chapter reports the findings of the qualitative phase. Eight participants were chosen for interviews. Their individual cases are examined below, as well as, compared to other cases in a cross-case analysis.

Quantitative Results

Participants' Demographic Information. For descriptive purposes the following demographic data were collected: age, gender, race, current occupation, parent who served in the military, parent’s branch of military, parent’s experience with combat, level of education, and household income.

Age. One hundred and two adult children of military families completed the quantitative phase of this study. All participants (N = 102) reported their ages through age ranges. Ages ranged from 25-70 years-old, with 25.5% of participants in the 25-30 range 7.8% in the 31-35 range, 9.8% in the 36-40 range, 10.8% in the 41-45 range, 9.8% in the 46-50 range, 12.7% in the 51-55 range, 5.9% in the 56-60 range, 13.7% in the 61-65 range, and 3.9% in the 66-70 range.
Table 4.1

*Participants' age*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Groups</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25-30</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-50</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-55</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-60</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-65</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66-70</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Gender.* All participants reported their gender (*N* = 102). More females (*n* = 81; 79.4%) than males (*n* = 21; 20.6%) filled out the survey for the quantitative phase of this study.
Participants' gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>79.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Race. All participants reported their ethnicity ($N = 102$). Participants were of Asian, Asian American decent ($n = 2; 2\%)$, Black, African American decent ($n = 2; 2\%$), Latino, Hispanic, Mexican American decent ($n = 6; 5.9\%$), White, Caucasian, European American decent ($n = 89; 87.3\%$), and Other decent ($n = 3; 2.9\%$). The 3 participants who reported having an ethnicity of other, specified their ethnicity as Multi-racial ($n = 3; 2\%$) and Samoan ($n = 1; 1\%$).

Table 4.3

Participants' race

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian, Asian America</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, African American</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino, Hispanic, Mexican American</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, Caucasian, European American</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>87.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Level of education. Level of Education was reported by all participants (N = 102). Education varied from a high school diploma or equivalent (n = 8; 7.8%), some college (n = 16; 71.5%), associate’s degree (n = 3; 2.9%), bachelor’s degree (n = 35; 34.3%), master’s degree (n = 28; 27.5%), post-master’s degree (n = 8; 7.8%), and doctorate degree (n = 4; 3.9%).

Table 4.4
Participants’ level of education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma or Equivalent</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate’s Degree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>34.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Master’s Degree</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate Degree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Household income. One hundred and two participants reported their household income. The income ranges spanned from $0.00 to $80,000+. Four participants (3.9%) reported having a household income of $0-12,000. An income of $12,000-24,999 was reported by 12 participants (11.8%). Seventeen participants (16.7%) reported having a household income between $25,000 and $39,999. An income of $40,000 - $59,999 was reported by 14 participants (13.7%). Ten participants (9.8%) reported a household
income of $60,000 - $79,999. The largest income group was above $80,000 with 45 participants (44.1%) reporting this as their household income.

Table 4.5

*Participants' household income*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Income</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$0-12,000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$12,000-24,999</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000-39,999</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000-59,999</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$60,000-79,999</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$80,000+</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>44.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Parent demographics.* All of the participants (N=102) reported which of their parents served in the military. More fathers (n = 95; 93.1%) served in the military than mothers. Specifically, no participants had just their mothers serve in the military. Seven participants (6.9%) reported having both parents serve in the military. In total, all participants (N =102) had a father who served in the military. Of these fathers, participants reported that they served in the U.S. Air Force (n = 29; 28.4%), U.S. Army (n = 54; 52.9%), U.S. Marine Corps (n = 2; 2%), and U.S. Navy (n = 17; 16.7%). Seven participants (6.9%) report both parents severing in the military, their mothers served in the following branches: U.S. Air Force (n = 1; 1%), U.S. Army (n = 2; 2%), and U.S. Navy (n = 7; 6.9%). Participants with fathers serving in the military (N = 102), reported their father’s rank at retirement as E6 (n = 5; 4.9%), E7 (n = 10; 9.8%), E8 (n = 16;
15.7%), E9 (n = 7; 6.9%), W2 (n = 2; 2%), W4 (n = 2; 2%), O2 (n = 1; 1%), O3 (n = 5; 4.9%), O4 (n = 11; 10.8%), O5 (n = 18; 17.6%), O6 (n = 1 5; 14.7%), O7 (n = 4; 3.9%), O8 (n = 4; 4.9%), and O9 (n = 2; 2%). Participants with mothers who served in the military (n= 7) reported their mother’s rank at retirement as: E2 (n =1; 1 %), E3 (n =1; 1 %), E4 (n =1; 1 %), O2 (n =1; 1 %), and O3 (n =3; 2.9%). Participants with fathers serving in the military (N = 102), reported on their father’s participation in combat deployments. Seventy-one participants (69.6%) reported that their father experienced a combat deployment and 31 participants (30.4%) reported that their father did not experience a combat deployment. Of the 7 participants reporting that their mother served in the military, all of them reported that their mother did not experience combat deployments.

Table 4.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental branch served</th>
<th>Mother</th>
<th>Father</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Branch</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Air Force</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Army</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Marines Corps</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Navy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.7

Parental rank at retirement
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Mother Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Father Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Relationship Survey Results.** Participants were asked questions reporting on their relationships in adulthood. These questions aimed to understand what patterns, if any existed for participants, in terms of these relationships. The results of this portion of
the survey are reported in the table below, and described in further detail in the following sections.

Table 4.8

*Relationship survey results*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many long-term (more than 1 year) romantic relationships (not including marriages) have you had in adulthood?</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>.443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many times have you been married?</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>.847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many times have you been divorced?</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>.740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many biological children do you have?</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many adopted children do you have?</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>.221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many romantic relationships do you currently have?</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>.514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these best describes your current romantic relationship (#1)?</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>.225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often do you interact with your current romantic partner (#1)?</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.45</td>
<td>1.518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How satisfied are you with your current relationship (#1)?</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.87</td>
<td>1.398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these best describes your current romantic relationship (#2)?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>.447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often do you interact with your current romantic partner (#2)?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.80</td>
<td>.837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How satisfied are you with your current relationship (#2)?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.80</td>
<td>.837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many close friendships do you currently have?</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>2.101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often do you interact with your close friend (#1)?</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.22</td>
<td>1.460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#1)?</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.12</td>
<td>.849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often do you interact with your close friend (#2)?</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>1.557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#2)?</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.89</td>
<td>1.091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often do you interact with your close friend (#3)?</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>1.564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#3)?</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.84</td>
<td>1.106</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How often do you interact with your close friend (#4)?  56  2  7  4.34  1.771
How satisfied are you with your close friendships (#4)?  56  3  7  6.00  .934
How often do you interact with your close friend (#5)?  40  2  6  3.93  1.403
How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#5)?  40  3  7  6.05  .815

Note: Values reflected above are likert values, not an actual count. See survey questions for further detail.

Long-term romantic relationship in adulthood. Participants were asked how many long-term relationships (longer than one year) they have had, since they became legal adults at the age of eighteen. Participants (N = 102) reported having 0 long-term relationships (n = 12; 11.8%), 1-4 long-term relationships (n = 82; 80.4%) or having 5-9 (n = 8; 7.8%) long-term relationships in adulthood.

Marriages and divorces. Participants were asked to report how many times they have been married. All participants answered this question (N = 102). Participants reported having 0 marriages (n = 25; 24.5%), 1 marriage (n = 51; 50%), 2 marriages (n = 22; 21.6%), 3 marriages (n = 2; 2%) or 4 marriages (n = 2; 2%). Similarly, participants reported on the number of times they have been divorced. Participants have experience divorce 0 times (n = 67; 65.7%), 1 time (n = 26; 25.5%), 2 times (n = 6; 5.9%), or 3 times (n = 3; 2.9%).

Biological and adopted children. Thirty-six participants (35.3%) reported that they have 0 biological children, 18 participants (17.6%) reported that they have 1 biological child, 34 participants (33.3%) report having 3 biological children, 3 participants (2.9%) report having 4 biological children and 1 participant (1%) reports having 5+ biological children. Other participants reported on their adopted children. Two participants (2%) reported having adopted children. One participant (1%) had 1 adopted
CHILDREN SERVE TOO

child, while one participant (1%) has 2 adopted children. The rest of the participants ($n = 100; 98\%$) report having no adopted children.

**Current romantic relationships.** Participants were asked how many romantic relationships they currently have. At the time of the survey, 26 participants (25.5%) report having 0 romantic relationships, 71 (69.6%) participants had 1 romantic relationship at the time of the survey and 5 (4.9%) participants reported having 2 romantic relationships at the time of the survey. When asked to describe their current romantic relationship participants ($N = 76$) reported it as either a short-term relationship ($n = 4; 5.3\%$), in existence for less than a year or a long-term relationship ($n = 72; 94.7\%$), existing for more than a year. When reporting on how often those with current relationship interacted with their romantic partners, participants ($N = 76$) reported never interacting with their partner ($n = 2; 2.6\%$), interacting with their partner once a month ($n = 4; 3.9\%$), interacting with their partner 2-3 times a month ($n = 2; 2.6\%$), interacting with their partner once a week ($n = 1; 1.3\%$), interacting with their partner 2-3 times a week ($n = 2; 2.6\%$), and interacting with their partner daily ($n = 65; 85.5\%$). Participants varied in terms of satisfaction with this relationship. Two participants (2.6%) reported being very dissatisfied, 2 participants (2.6%) reported being dissatisfied, 1 participant (1.3%) reported being somewhat dissatisfied, 2 participants (2.6%) reported having a neutral stance, 17 (22.4%) participants reported being somewhat satisfied, 20 participants (26.3%) report being satisfied, and 32 participants reported being very satisfied (42.1%).

Those with two current romantic relationships ($n = 5$) reported their second relationship as a short-term relationship ($n = 4; 4.9\%$) or a long-term relationship ($n = 1; 1\%$). In terms of interacting with this partner, these participants report interacting 2-3
times a month \((n = 1; 20\%)\), 2-3 times a week \((n = 2; 40\%)\) or daily \((n = 2; 40\%).\)

Satisfaction regarding these relationships varied from somewhat satisfied \((n = 2; 40\%)\) to satisfied \((n = 2; 40\%)\) to very satisfied \((n = 1; 1\%)\).

**Current close friendships.** All participants reported on how many close friendships they had at the time of the survey. Seven participants \((6.9\%)\) report having 0 close friendships, 10 participants \((9.8\%)\) reported having 1 close friendship, 16 participants \((15.7\%)\) reported having 2 close friendships, 13 participants \((12.7\%)\) reported having 3 close friendships, 16 participants \((15.7\%)\) reported having 4 close friendships, 13 participants \((12.7\%)\) reported having 5 close friendships, 21 participants \((20.6\%)\) reported having 6-9 close friendships, 4 participants \((3.9\%)\) reported having 10-14 close friendships. 1 participant \((1\%)\) reported having 15-20 close friendships and 1 participant \((1\%)\) reported having 20+ close friendships. The 95 participants that had close friendships at the time were asked how often they interact with the first close friendship. They reported interacting less than once a month \((n = 6; 6.3\%)\), once a month \((n = 7; 7.4\%)\), 2-3 times a month \((n = 16; 16.8\%)\), once a week \((n = 16; 16.8\%)\), 2-3 times a week \((n = 31; 32.6\%)\), and daily \((n = 19; 20\%)\). When asked how satisfied they were with this friendship, these 95 participants reported somewhat dissatisfied \((n = 1; 1.1\%)\), neutral \((n = 3; 3.2\%)\), somewhat satisfied \((n = 14; 14.7\%)\), satisfied \((n = 43; 45.3\%)\), and very satisfied \((n = 34; 35.8\%)\).

Eighty-five participants had at least 2 close friendships at the time of the survey. They reported interacting with this second close friend less than once a month \((n = 9; 10.6\%)\), once a month \((n = 13; 15.3\%)\), 2-3 times a month \((n = 20; 23.5\%)\), once a week \((n = 11; 12.9\%)\), 2-3 times a week \((n = 22; 25.9\%)\), and daily \((n = 10; 11.8\%)\). In terms of
satisfaction with this friendship, they reported being very dissatisfied ($n = 1$; 1.2%), dissatisfied ($n = 1$; 1.2%), somewhat dissatisfied ($n = 1$; 1.2%), neutral ($n = 4$; 4.7%), somewhat satisfied ($n = 12$; 14.1%), satisfied ($n = 43$; 50.6%), and very satisfied ($n = 23$; 27.1%).

Sixty-nine participants had at least 3 close friendships at the time of the survey. They reported interacting with this third close friend never ($n = 1$; 1.4%), less than once a month ($n = 12$; 17.4%), once a month ($n = 15$; 21.7%), 2-3 times a month ($n = 11$; 15.9%), once a week ($n = 15$; 21.7%), 2-3 times a week ($n = 11$; 15.9%), and daily ($n = 4$; 3.9%). In terms of satisfaction with this friendship, they reported being very dissatisfied ($n = 1$; 1.4%), dissatisfied ($n = 1$; 1.4%), somewhat dissatisfied ($n = 1$; 1.4%), neutral ($n = 1$; 1.4%), somewhat satisfied ($n = 14$; 20.3%), satisfied ($n = 34$; 49.3%), and very satisfied ($n = 17$; 24.6%).

Forty-six participants had at least 4 close friendships at the time of the survey. They reported interacting with this fourth close friend less than once a month ($n = 14$; 25%), once a month ($n = 7$; 12.5%), 2-3 times a month ($n = 7$; 12.5%), once a week ($n = 7$; 12.5%), 2-3 times a week ($n = 16$; 28.6%), and daily ($n = 5$; 4.9%). In terms of satisfaction with this friendship, they reported being somewhat dissatisfied ($n = 2$; 3.6%), neutral ($n = 1$; 1.8%), somewhat satisfied ($n = 9$; 16.1%), satisfied ($n = 27$; 48.2%), and very satisfied ($n = 17$; 30.4%).

Forty participants had at least 5 close friendships at the time of the survey. They reported interacting with this fifth close friend less than once a month ($n = 8$; 20%), once a month ($n = 8$; 20%), 2-3 times a month ($n = 11$; 27.5%), once a week ($n = 5$; 12.5%),
and 2-3 times a week ($n = 8; 20\%$). In terms of satisfaction with this friendship, they reported being somewhat dissatisfied ($n = 1; 2.5\%$), somewhat satisfied ($n = 6; 15\%$), satisfied ($n = 22; 55\%$), and very satisfied ($n = 11; 27.5\%$).

**Impact Question Results.** Participants were asked four questions that gauged the impact of their military family experiences on certain aspects of their lives. The first question looked at the overall impact that growing up in a military family has had on participants' adult lives. All participants answered this question with their responses ranging from growing up in a military family having a highly negative impact ($n = 2; 2\%$), a negative impact ($n = 14; 13.7\%$), no impact ($n = 4; 3.9\%$), a positive impact ($n = 55; 53.9\%$), or a highly positive impact ($n = 27; 26.5\%$) on their adult lives. The second question asked participants what role growing up in a military family plays in their identity as an adult. Their responses ranged from a large negative role ($n = 3; 2.9\%$) to a small negative role ($n = 8; 7.8\%$) to no role ($n = 5; 4.9\%$) to a small positive role ($n = 39; 38.2\%$) to a large positive role ($n = 47; 46.1\%$). The third question asked about the impact that growing up in a military family has had on friendships in adulthood. Participants responded that their military upbringing has had a highly negative impact ($n = 6; 5.9\%$), a negative impact ($n = 34; 33.3\%$), no impact ($n = 10; 9.8\%$), a positive impact ($n = 39; 38.2\%$), and a highly positive impact ($n = 13; 12.7\%$) on their adult friendships. The fourth question asked about the impact that growing up in a military family has had on romantic relationships in adulthood. Participants responded that their military upbringing has had a highly negative impact ($n = 9; 8.8\%$), a negative impact ($n = 26; 25.5\%$), no impact ($n = 31; 30.4\%$), a positive impact ($n = 27; 76.5\%$), and a highly positive impact.
(n = 9; 9.8%) on their adult friendships. The table below describes the impact questions in more detail.

Table 4.9

Impact question results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
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<td>How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your adult life?</td>
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<td>1.03</td>
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<td>How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your adult friendships?</td>
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<td>3.19</td>
<td>1.20</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>3.01</td>
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</table>

The WUSCT Analysis Results. Participants were asked to complete the Washington University Sentence Completion test in order to uncover their levels of ego development. A team of trained raters scored their responses. Participants' scores ranged from E3-E8. One participant (1%) was scored at an ego level of E3. Five participants (4.9%) were scored at an ego level of E4. Thirty-eight participants (37.3%) were scored at an ego level of E5. The majority of participants (n = 43; 42.2%) were scored at an ego level of E6. Fourteen participants (13.7%) received scores at an ego level of E7. One participant (1%) was scored at an ego level of E8. In the U.S. population, the modal adult tends to reach a premature plateau at E5 because the stability of the environment acts to restrict further ego development. Assimilation also plays into this plateau, in that people try to assimilate information as often as possible (Hy & Loevinger, 1996). In contrast to the modal level in the U.S. population (E5) the participants of this survey scored a modal stage level of E6.
Subgroup Data Analysis Results. A set of statistical analyses were run in order to uncover any subgroups that may exist in the quantitative data from phase one. The three areas of exploration were subgroups in terms of adult relationship patterns, levels of Ego Development and the four impact questions. Results of these analyses are reported below.

Adult relationship patterns. In order to explore participants’ relationship patterns, correlations were used to analyze the relationships between the four impact questions, number of close friends and interaction and satisfaction with close friends #1–#5. The number of close friends that participants reported is positively and significantly related to satisfaction with close friend #1, r (100) = .368, p < .01, how often participants interact with close friend #2, r (93) = .246, p < .01, satisfaction with close friend #2, r (83) = .376, p < .01, how often participants interact with friend #3, r (67) = .359, p < .01, satisfaction with friend #3, r (67) = .360, p < .05, the impact growing up in a military family has had on participants’ adult lives, r (100) = .224, p < .05, the impact growing up in a military family has had on adult friendships, r (100) = .554, p < .01, and adult romantic relationship, r (100) = .221, p < .05. How often you interact with close friend #1 is positive related to how satisfied you are with friend #1, r (93) = .331, p < .01, how often you interact with friend #2, r (83) = .689, p < .01, friend #3, r (67) = .542, p < .01, and
friend #4, r (54) = .498, p<.05. How satisfied participants’ are with close friend #1 is positively related to satisfaction with close friend #2, r (83) = .712, p<.01, friend #3, r (67) = .435, p<.01, friend #4, r (54) = .537, p<.01, and friend #5, r (38) = .590, p<.01. Satisfaction with close friend #1 is also positively related to the description of how growing up in a military family impacts adult romantic relationships, r (100) = .455, p<.01. Interaction with close friend #2 is significantly related to satisfaction with close friend #2, r (83) = .446, p<.01, interaction with close friend #3, r (67) = .582, p<.01, and interaction with close friend #4, r (54) = .462, p<.01. Satisfaction with close friend #2 is significantly related to satisfaction with close friend #4, r (54) = .683, p<.01, and close friend #5, r (38) = .620, p<.01. Also related to interaction with close friend #2 is the description of how growing up in a military family has impacted adult friendships, r (100) = .393, p<.05. Interaction with friend #3 and satisfaction with friend #3, r (54) = .256, p<.05, interaction with friend #4, r (54) = .526, p<.01, and interaction with friend #5, r (38) = .399, p<.01, and impact on adult friendships have a significant positive relationships, r (67) = .249, p<.01. Satisfaction with close friend #3 is positively related to satisfaction with close friend #4, r (54) = .595, p<.01 close friend #5, r (38) = .616, p<.01, and the impact participants’ perceive on adult friendships, r (100) = .450, p<.05.

Interaction with friend #4 is positively related to interaction with friend #5, r (38) = .638, p<.01. Lastly, satisfaction with friend #4 is positively related to satisfaction with friend #5, r (38) = .472, p<.01, and interaction with friend #5 is positively related to satisfaction with friend #5, r (38) = .407, p<.01. Selected correlations are depicted in the table below.

Table 4.11

*Impact Q’s and friendships interaction and satisfaction*
How many close friendships do you currently have? | Pearson Correlation | How often do you interact with your close friend (#1)? | How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#1)? | How often do you interact with your close friend (#2)? | How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#2)? |
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<td>.246*</td>
<td>.376**</td>
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How often do you interact with your close friend (#1)? | Pearson Correlation | How often do you interact with your close friend (#1)? | How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#1)? | How often do you interact with your close friend (#2)? | How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#2)? |
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How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#1)? | Pearson Correlation | How often do you interact with your close friend (#1)? | How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#1)? | How often do you interact with your close friend (#2)? | How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#2)? |
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How often do you interact with your close friend (#2)? | Pearson Correlation | How often do you interact with your close friend (#1)? | How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#1)? | How often do you interact with your close friend (#2)? | How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#2)? |
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How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#2)? | Pearson Correlation | How often do you interact with your close friend (#1)? | How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#1)? | How often do you interact with your close friend (#2)? | How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#2)? |
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How often do you interact with your close friend (#3)? | Pearson Correlation | How often do you interact with your close friend (#1)? | How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#1)? | How often do you interact with your close friend (#2)? | How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#2)? |
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<td>that growing up in a military family has had on your adult friendships?</td>
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<td>.359**</td>
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<td>102</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.888</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Age was also explored in terms of its relationship with how often participants interact with close friends #1-#5. The relationship between age and interaction with close friend #1 was significant, $r(93) = -.279, p < .01$, as well as with interaction with close friend #2, $r(83) = -.267, p < .05$. Age did not have a significant relationship with interaction with close friend #3, $r(67) = -.181, p > .05$, close friend #4, $r(54) = -.227, p$
> .05, or close friend #5, \( r (38) = -0.014, p > .05 \). The relationship between age and satisfaction with close friends was examined. Age did not have a significant relationship with satisfaction in regards to close friend #1, \( r (93) = -0.141, p > .05 \), close friend #2, \( r (83) = -0.101, p > .05 \), close friend #3, \( r (67) = -0.100, p > .05 \), close friend #4, \( r (54) = 0.241, p > .05 \), or close friend #5, \( r (38) = 0.253, p > .05 \). The relationship between age and number of close friend was a significant, negative relationship, \( r (100) = -0.231, p < .01 \). See table 4.11 for the above correlations.

Gender was also explored in terms of its relationship with how often participants' interact with close friends #1-#5. The relationship between gender and interaction with close friend #1 was significant, \( r (93) = -0.214, p < .01 \). Gender did not have a significant relationship with interaction with close friend #2, \( r (83) = -0.149, p > .05 \), close friend #3, \( r (67) = 0.030, p > .05 \), close friend #4, \( r (54) = 0.104, p > .05 \), or close friend #5, \( r (38) = 0.023, p > .05 \). The relationship between gender and satisfaction with close friends was examined. Gender did not have a significant relationship with satisfaction in regards to close friend #1, \( r (93) = -0.025, p > .05 \), close friend #2, \( r (83) = 0.040, p > .05 \), close friend #3, \( r (67) = 0.177, p > .05 \), close friend #4, \( r (54) = 0.058, p > .05 \), or close friend #5, \( r (38) = -0.135, p > .05 \). The relationship between gender and number of close friend also had no significance, \( r (100) = -0.133, p > .01 \). Table 4.12 depicts the correlations with age and gender.

Table 4.12

_Friendship satisfaction and interaction, age and gender_
The following relationships were explored: age and number of romantic relationships, age and description of romantic relationships, age and interaction with current romantic partner, and age and satisfaction with current romantic partner. None of these relationships were found to be significant. The relationships between gender and the number of current romantic relationships, gender and description of romantic relationships, gender and interaction with current romantic partner, and gender and satisfaction with current romantic partner were explored. None of these relationships were found to be significant. The relationships between Ego Development levels and the number of current romantic relationships, Ego Development levels and description of...
romantic relationships, Ego Development level and interaction with current romantic partner, and Ego Development levels and satisfaction with current romantic partner were also examined. These relationships were found to be not significant.

**Impact questions.** When examining the magnitude and direction of the relationship between Ego Development levels and the four questions gauging the impact of growing up in a military family on participants' lives, identity, adult friendships and romantic relationships in adulthood, there were no significant correlations between Ego level and the impact on adult life, $r (100) = .014, p > .01$, Ego level and identity as an adult, $r (100) = .043, p > .01$, impact on adult friendships, $r (100) = .063, p > .01$ or impact on romantic relationships, $r (100) = -.007, p > .01$.

The way participants described the impact that growing up on a military family has had on their adult lives significantly correlated with how participants describe the role that growing up in a military family plays in their identity as an adult, $r (100) = .697, p < .01$, positively, with 48.6% of variance shared between the two constructs. Similarly, the way participants described the impact that growing up on a military family has had on their adult lives significantly correlated in a positive direction with how participants described the impact of growing up in a military family on their adult friendships, $r (100) = .489, p < .01$, with 23.9% of the variance shared between the two constructs. The way participants described the impact that growing up on a military family has had on their adult lives also significantly correlated with how participants' described the impact that growing up in a military family has had on their romantic relationships, $r (100) = .572, p < .01$, with 32.7% of variance shared between the two constructs. Also, positively correlated were the role growing up in a military family plays in participants' identities as
adults and how participants described the impact of military family life on their adult friendships, $r(100) = .397$, $p < .01$, with 15.8% of variance shared and the impact of growing up in a military family on their romantic relationships in adulthood, $r(100) = .506$, $p < .01$, with 25.6% share variance between the two constructs. These relationships can be seen in the following table.

Table 4.13

*Impact questions correlations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your adult life?</th>
<th>What role does growing up in a military family play in your identity as an adult?</th>
<th>How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your romantic relationships in adulthood?</th>
<th>How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your adult friendships?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.697**</td>
<td>.489**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your adult life?</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>.697**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>102</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your adult life?</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>.489**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.397**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your adult life?</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.488**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
that growing up in a military family has had on your adult friendships?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your romantic relationships in adulthood?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Independent Samples t-tests were run to explore any differences between enlisted service member’s children and officer’s children on how they answered the four impact questions. Group statistics of the t-tests can be found in table 4.13. A significant difference was not found between the enlisted and officer groups, in terms of impact growing up in a military family has had on adult life \( t(96) = .229, p = .819 \). A significant difference was not found between the enlisted and officer groups, in terms of growing up in a military family and its role in your identity as an adult \( t(96) = .233, p = .816 \). A significant difference was not found between the enlisted and officer groups, in terms of impact growing up in a military family has had on adult friendships \( t(96) = -.470, p = .639 \). A significant difference was not found between the enlisted and officer groups, in terms of impact growing up in a military family has had on romantic relationships \( t(96) = -.524, p = .601 \).
### Table 4.13

**Impact Q's & father's rank**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your adult life?</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>.957</td>
<td>.155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>1.020</td>
<td>.132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What role does growing up in a military family play in your identity as an adult?</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>1.111</td>
<td>.180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>1.016</td>
<td>.131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your adult friendships?</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>1.234</td>
<td>.200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>1.202</td>
<td>.155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your romantic relationships in adulthood?</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>1.114</td>
<td>.181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>1.087</td>
<td>.140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A One-way ANOVA was run to determine if there is a significant difference between the three branches (fathers only), in terms of how participants answered the four impact questions at $p < .05$. Examining the Levene's tests for these four analyses shows that equal variances cannot be assumed for the relationship between how participants describe the impact growing up in a military family has had on their adult lives and father's branch in the military ($p = .040$). Equal variances can be assumed between the role growing up in a military family plays in participants' identity as an adult and father's branch ($p = .495$), the impact on adult friendships and fathers branch ($p = .641$) and the impact on romantic relationships in adulthood and fathers branch ($p = .663$). Further examination of the significance values, shows that neither of these three relationships, fathers branch and adult identity, $F(2, 97) = .474, p = .624$, fathers branch and impact on
friendships, $F(2, 97) = .459$, $p = .633$, or father branch and impact on adult romantic relationships, $F(2, 97) = .650$, $p = .524$, is significant.

Correlations were conducted to explore the relationship between the four impact questions, times married, times divorced, number of biological children and number of adopted children. The number of times participants were married showed a significant, positive relationships with number of times divorced, $r(100) = .786$, $p < .01$ and the amount of biological children participants have, $r(100) = .420$, $p < .05$. The number of time participants have divorced significantly, negatively correlated with how participants describe the impact of growing up in a military family on their adult lives $r(100) = -.197$, $p < .05$, how participants described their military upbringing as part of their adult identity, $r(100) = -.205$, $p < .05$, how participants described the impact military culture had had on their adult friendships, $r(100) = -.198$, $p < .05$, and how participants described the impact of growing up in a military family on their adult romantic relationships, $r(100) = -.222$, $p < .05$. Number of times divorced also positively correlated with the number of biological children that participants had, $r(100) = .345$, $p < .01$. The number of biological children that participants have showed a negative relationship with how they describe the impact of growing up in military family has had on their adult friendships, $r(100) = -.220$, $p < .05$. 
Table 4.14

Impact questions as related to marriage, divorce and children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your adult life?</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>How many times have you been married?</th>
<th>How many times have you been divorced?</th>
<th>How many children do you have?</th>
<th>How many adoptive children do you have?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.697**</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>.796</td>
<td>.047</td>
<td>.703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What role does growing up in a military family have on your family life?</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>How many times have you been married?</td>
<td>How many times have you been divorced?</td>
<td>How many children do you have?</td>
<td>How many adoptive children do you have?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.697**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.397**</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>.895</td>
<td>.039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your romantic relationships?</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>How many times have you been married?</td>
<td>How many times have you been divorced?</td>
<td>How many children do you have?</td>
<td>How many adoptive children do you have?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.489**</td>
<td>.397**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.488**</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>-.205*</td>
<td>.063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Significant at the .01 level.
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Growing up in a military family has had on your adult friendships?

| How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your romantic relationships in adulthood? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson Correlation | .572** | .506** | .488** | 1 | -.001 | -.222* | -.107 | .160 |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | .994 | .025 | .285 | .108 |
| N | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 |

How many times have you been married?

| Pearson Correlation | -.026 | -.013 | -.139 | -.001 | 1 | .786** | .420** | -.011 |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .796 | .895 | .163 | .994 | .000 | .000 | .913 |
| N | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 |

How many times have you been divorced?

| Pearson Correlation | -.197* | -.205* | -.198* | -.222* | .786** | 1 | .345** | -.084 |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .047 | .039 | .046 | .025 | .000 | .000 | .402 |
| N | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 |

How many biological children do you have?

| Pearson Correlation | .703 | .530 | .026 | .285 | .000 | .000 | .472 |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .102 | .102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 |
| N | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 |

How many adopted children do you have?

| Pearson Correlation | .147 | .108 | .166 | .160 | -.011 | -.084 | -.072 | 1 |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .140 | .278 | .095 | .108 | .913 | .402 | .472 |

N | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 | 102 |

Note: * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Relationships between the four impact questions, relationship satisfaction and having experienced divorce or not were found to have no significance. Relationships satisfaction did not have a significant relationship with the impact growing up in a
military family had on participants' adult lives, \( r (100) = -0.075, p>.05 \), the role growing up in a military family plays in participants' identity as adults, \( r (100) = 0.136, p>.05 \), the impact military family life has had on adult friendships, \( r (100) = -0.176, p>.05 \) or adult relationships, \( r (100) = 0.170, p>.05 \). Whether participants experienced a divorce or not also had no significant relationship with the impact growing up in a military family had on participants' adult lives, \( r (100) = -0.168, p>.05 \), the role growing up in a military family plays in participants' identity as adults, \( r (100) = -0.137, p>.05 \), the impact military family life has had on adult friendships, \( r (100) = -0.147, p>.05 \) or adult relationships, \( r (100) = -0.193, p>.05 \).

Most participants (\( N = 76 \)) reported that they currently have at least one romantic relationship, and these relationships were explored in terms of how the participants describe them, either long-term or short-term, how often they interact with this partner and how satisfied they are with this relationship. These three areas were examined in relation to the four impact questions. The way participants described the impact that growing up on a military family has had on their adult lives significantly correlated positively with how participants describe their romantic relationship, \( r (74) = 0.231, p<.05 \), with 5.33% of variance shared between the two constructs. The way participants described the impact that growing up on a military family has had on their adult lives significantly also correlated positively with how satisfied participants are with their romantic relationship, \( r (74) = 0.243, p<.05 \), with 5.90% of variance shared between the two constructs. Similarly, the way that participants described the impact that growing up in a military family has had on their romantic relationships significantly correlated with how participants described their romantic relationship, \( r (74) = 0.296, p<.01 \), and how
satisfied they are with this relationship, $r (74) = .429$, $p < .01$. How satisfied participants were with their current relationship positively correlated with how they describe their relationship, $r (74) = .232$, $p < .05$, and how often they interact with this partner, $r (74) = .405$, $p < .01$. No other significant relationships existed between the four impact questions: How participants describe their current relationship, participants’ interactions with their romantic partner and how satisfied they are with their current relationship.

Table 4.15

*Impact questions and relationships satisfaction*

| How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your adult life? | Pearson Correlation | Sig. (2-tailed) | N | How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your identity as an adult? | Pearson Correlation | Sig. (2-tailed) | N | How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your adult friendships? | Pearson Correlation | Sig. (2-tailed) | N | How satisfied are you with your current relationship (#1)? | Pearson Correlation | Sig. (2-tailed) | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your adult life? | Pearson Correlation | Sig. (2-tailed) | N | How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your identity as an adult? | Pearson Correlation | Sig. (2-tailed) | N | How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your adult friendships? | Pearson Correlation | Sig. (2-tailed) | N | How satisfied are you with your current relationship (#1)? | Pearson Correlation | Sig. (2-tailed) | N |
The magnitude and direction of the relationship between age and the four impact questions were explored. Age has does not have a significant relationship with the impact growing up in a military family has had on participants’ adult lives, \( r (100) = -.063, p> .05 \) the role growing up in a military family plays in participants’ identities as adults, \( r (100) = .031, p> .05 \), the impact that growing up in a military family has had on adult friendships, \( r (100) = -.168, p> .05 \), and the impact that growing up in a military family has had on adult romantic relationships, \( r (100) = -.071, p> .05 \).

The relationship between gender and the four impact questions was also explored. Gender has does not have a significant relationship with the impact growing up in a military family has had on participants’ adult lives, \( r (100) = .066, p> .05 \) the role growing up in a military family plays in participants’ identities as adults, \( r (100) = .059, p> .05 \), the impact that growing up in a military family has had on adult friendships, \( r
(100) = .039, p > .05, and the impact that growing up in a military family has had on adult romantic relationships, r (100) = -.070, p > .05.

**Ego development levels.** The magnitude and direction of the relationships between Ego Development levels and demographic information (age, gender, level of education, and household income) were explored. The relationships between Ego levels and age, r (100) = .128, p < .05, and Ego levels and household income, r (100) = .001, were not significant. However, the relationship between Ego levels and gender, r (100) = .252, p < .05, correlated positively with 6.35% of the variance shared between the two variables, and the relationship between Ego levels and level of education r (100) = .221, p < .05 with 4.88% of the variance shared between Ego levels and education. This relationship suggests that women in this sample are higher on Ego Development levels than men in this sample. Household income and age were also found to have a significant, positive relationship r (100) = .259, p < .01, 6.70% shared variance.

The relationship between Ego Development levels and whether or not participants’ fathers were among enlisted ranks or officer ranks in the military were explored through an Independent Samples t-test, t (96) = -2.563, p = .012, \( \alpha = .05 \), finding a significant effect for rank, with officer’s children (M = 5.83, SD = .763) having higher Ego Development levels than enlisted service men’s children (M = 5.39, SD = .916).

A One-way ANOVA was used to determine if there is a significant difference between participants with fathers in the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force, in terms of their Ego Development levels at the .05 alpha level. Fathers representing the
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U.S. Marines and all mothers were left out of this analysis because of their few numbers. Equal variances were assumed, as suggested by the Levene’s test (p = .131). However, significance was not found, F (2, 97) = 1.228, p = .297, suggesting no difference in Ego Development levels based on participants’ father’s branch in the military at p < .05.

Since no mothers experienced combat deployments, the relationship between father’s combat deployment experience and Ego level was explored, finding a nonsignificant relationship, r (100) = -.034, p > .05. A correlational analysis was used to examine the magnitude and direction of the relationships between each of the four impact questions and whether or not participants’ fathers experienced combat deployment. Significance was not found between impact on adult life and combat deployment experience, r (100) = -.027, p > .05, between identity as adult and combat deployment experience, r (100) = -.145, p > .05, between impact on adult friendships and combat deployment experience r (100) = .049, p > .05, or between impact on adult romantic relationships and combat deployment experience r (100) = -.047, p > .05.

The magnitude and direction of relationships between Ego Development levels and the number of biological children participants’ have, the number of adopted children participants have, how participants describe their current romantic relationships, how often participants interact with their current romantic partner and how satisfied participants are with their current relationship. Ego Development levels were not significantly related to the number of biological children, r (74) = -.170, p > .05 or adopted children, r (174) = .002, p > .05 participants have. Ego Development levels were also found to have an insignificant relationship with how participants describe their romantic relationships r (74) = .068, p > .05, how often they interact with their partner r
The relationships between Ego Development levels and number of close friends and Ego Development levels and interactions and satisfaction with close friends #1-#5 were explored. The only relationships that was found to be significant is between Ego Development and satisfaction with friend #5, finding a negative correlation, $r (38) = -.367$, $p < .01$.

The above reported results were turned into subgroups, based on participants’ survey answers. Qualitative participants were selected to match as many of the subgroupings and statistical findings as possible. Subgroups are further discussed in Chapter 5.

**Qualitative Results**

**Participants’ demographic information.** Eight participants were interviewed for the qualitative portion of this study. Ego development levels of E4-E8 were represented by these participants. One participant out of all participants surveyed scored an ego level of E8. On the opposite end of the spectrum, one participant with an ego level of E4 was chosen. For ego levels E5, E6 and E7, two participants were chosen, one from enlisted ranked parents and one from officer ranked parents. Diversity in terms of ethnicity, age and gender was also included in selection, when possible. Six participants identified as White, Caucasian, one participant identified as Asian, Asian American and the final participant identified as Latino, Hispanic, Mexican American. Regarding age, two participants represented the 25-30 age group, two participants represented the 41-44 age
group, one participant represented the 51-55 age group, one participant represented the 56-60 age group, and two participants represented the 61-65 age group. Three males and five females made up the participants of the qualitative phase. Three participants had parents who served in the U.S. Air Force, three participants had parents who served in the U.S. Army and two participants had parents who served in the U.S. Navy. Only two participants experienced both of their parents having military service. Specific demographic information for each participant can be found below in the individual case analyses. The individual case analyses give a brief description of how each participant answered pertinent survey questions, and a summary of the participant’s interview.

**Case analysis 1: Leigh.** Leigh, a 28 year old Hispanic female, who at the time of the interview was in a long distance, long-term partnership for seven years with a female partner. Leigh reported in her survey answers that growing up in a military family had a highly positive impact on her life in general, currently plays a large positive role in her identity as an adult, has had negative impact on her adult friendships and positive impacts on her adult relationships. Leigh’s ego development level was found to be an E5 based on her WUSCT responses. At the time of the survey, she had two close friendships, one in which she interacted with 2-3 times a week and was very satisfied with the relationships and one she interacted with 2-3 times a month and was satisfied with. She also reported having one romantic relationship, with which she felt very satisfied and reported interacting daily with her partner. Leigh’s father was active duty Army for 13 years, and also spent time in the Army Reserves. His career spanned from the time she was born until she was 24 years old. Her mother was active duty Army for ten years, spanning
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from birth until she was 12 years old and is currently still in the Army Reserves. Both of her parents retired from active duty as officers.

Leigh became interested in being a participant in this research because she likes to help out with military research. She is also interested in mental health counseling and working with military families. Her parents “retired from the military, but then decided they missed it, so now they’re back to working as military contractors.” Leigh reports that, her family “never really had a chance to get away from the military” and she “never wanted to get away from the military.” Leigh reflected upon the day she lost her military dependent ID, stating that it “was the worst day ever.” Leigh is interested and involved with military life because it is something she loves.

When asked, “What do relationships mean to you?” Leigh responded, “Relationships are very important.” She then elaborated on her family life. Growing up, she had a very close relationship with her siblings, her cousins and other family members because of the effort it took to keep up friendships, as she was moving from place to place. She reports not putting “too much effort into making those friends” because “growing up military we moved from place to place, base to base and back then, we didn’t exactly have [a social networking site] to keep in touch with everyone. So you had your friends, you made your friends, and then you left your friends and you made new friends.” In adulthood, Leigh believes that friendships are difficult to maintain because she never learned how to gain and maintain friendships in her childhood or adolescence because she always thought she would have to leave them. Leigh’s family is important because family is always there; it is a permanent relationship. She hints to the idea that
she does have a few friendships that have lasted “long enough” that she considers those friends to be a part of her family.

When Leigh started approaching relationships in her early adult life, romantic relationships tended to be long distance relationships with persons in the military. She is in a long distance relationship now finding these types of relationships to be “normal” as “you’re not really supposed to be with the person you love.”

The most important relationships in Leigh’s life are the relationships she has with her parents and her relationship with her partner. Leigh and her partner met through an online forum, becoming friends first, and pursuing a romantic relationship after her partner visited the United States. She described her relationship with her partner as being unique because it is “more permanent,” despite having other friends who have been in her life longer. Leigh calls on her partner for support and day to day conversation, feeling as though her friends are living their own lives and not as connected with her. She also feels her relationship is unique because her partner and herself are “polar opposites” and complement each other well.

Her relationships with her parents are unique because they are her heroes and she looks at them with admiration. Leigh describes her parents as “amazing role models.” Her mother has been the dominating figure in her parental system, while her father has been there to support her mother. Leigh highlights an example of her parents being her heroes. “They’re wonderful people. They’re good, good people...Many of my interests in strong women in media or books...growing up, I never needed to find anywhere else because my mother was just that hard core. We were in Panama [during] that whole thing
with Operation Just Cause burst out and we weren’t allowed to evacuate. So, my father was sent off because he was an officer so he was taking care of one of the companies. And my mother stayed behind...and...held down the fort. We were only about a mile away from enemy defense forces so we couldn’t get out. So, the women that were left in the area were sent to her for her to protect...Any movie, any book, anything where you see some tough woman kicking ass I was like well, ‘that’s not very impressive because my mom [laugh], she did so much more”. Leigh expected to marry a soldier while she was growing up and assumed that she would not have her partner by her side at all times. In terms of learning about what she needed/wanted in a relationship her parents’ relationship has been a big influence. Leigh was inspired by their relationship to find a partner “who will support [her] through anything and everything and still find time to laugh together.” Another way she learned about her needs and wants in a relationship was through trial and error.

The relationships in Leigh’s home growing up were centered about the idea that family is a priority, making their family relationship, immediate and extended family relationships, very close. When her parents were sent to a temporary duty assignment, the relationships of those remaining at home got stronger with the parent who was left behind. She recalls sleeping in her mother’s bed with her when her father was gone, even during her teenage years. For her family, this was normal behavior. She also reports both of her parents leaving for advanced training at the same time and leaving her in the care of her grandparents. For Leigh’s family, “you would band together while a parent was gone or if they were both gone, you would put that loyalty onto the next person who’s taking care of you, or you’d have a strong friendship who knew what was going on,
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perhaps an ex-military child, and they would know why you were upset.” When asked specifically about a time when both of her parents were gone, she spoke of the following,

“There was only once in my lifetime that I’ve ever been left with someone that’s not family. That was the day we ran out of food and supply for children in the neighborhood during one of the bombings in Panama and only children in arms were allowed to get on the transport with the women to leave to go retrieve food. So I was left in a safe house with some other people and there was bombing... [Someone] there told me that my parents were killed in the bomb along with my brother. So, I remember that quite vividly, was just kind of screaming in horror... and then I’d run up to the window and I’m looking out at the smoke and I see my mom coming out of the smoke screen... So she comes walking out of the smoke and she gets into the house. She bends down and I told her, I yelled at her that she left me. And she swore up and down that she would never leave me again and she never has. So you know, from six to twenty-eight, I have never been left with anyone that’s not family and if I was left with family and I said I was not comfortable, she said ‘fine, come with me,’ and, I was never left alone after that. She promised me.”

Leigh’s story further highlights her parents being her heroes and the important, close relationship that she has with her mother.

Leigh’s parents influence her relationships while she lived in their home. She was not allowed to date while she was in high school. Her parents were very attentive to her peer relationships, and relationships with school personnel, wanting to get to know these people and support these relationships in any way they could. Leigh’s parents did not
play into the division of ranks that seemed to be prevalent in the military at the time. They taught her to accept and tolerate everyone, enlisted, officer, or civilian.

When Leigh left home, she attended a college where many of her high school peers attended as well. She reports that her approach to relationships after she left home was making friends with people first and then becoming romantically involved.

Leigh considered going into the military because she loves the lifestyle, the uniform, traveling and the structure of the military. She would have been joining at wartime and did not want her family members having to worry about her being in harm’s way. Her decision to join was following the passing of her youngest brother, she decided on another career path, avoiding the possibility of her parents losing another child.

Being a part of a military family impacted Leigh’s adult relationships positively in that it made her family relationships very close. She stated, “The military definitely brought us tighter just because we spent so much time alone and isolated together and then we had each other to rely on.” She also believes that being a military BRAT allows civilians to see her and her BRAT background as exotic in terms of romantic relationships. In terms of her relationships at work, it has positively impacted them because she does as she is told without asking a lot of questions or debating the assignment. “[When] someone tells you to do something, you say yes, sir, yes, ma’am, and you do it. You don’t spend a lot of time debating the things. So I get, I get lots of glowing reviews from coworkers and bosses…just because I don’t spend much time debating,” she explains. She also sees this as a negative impact because she has the tendency to take on a lot of work and not ask for help. Overall, Leigh’s experiences with
a military upbringing have influenced her to develop the following belief, "a lot of people spend a lot of time complaining about this and this and I'm like if you're not getting shot at, why are you bitching?," life and environmental circumstance could be far worse. She knows this from firsthand experience.

Leigh would not change anything about her upbringing within the context of a military family. Leigh reports feeling sad that children in military families now are seeing their parents leave frequently, possibly not coming back, experiencing grief and loss and not experiencing the positive pieces of being a military family, such as traveling and having pride in military traditions.

In summary, Leigh focused heavily on the direct links she can see her military upbringing having on her adult life, as evident in the above quotes. The relationships in her life that are most important to her were also a large focus of our discussion. Despite spending part of her childhood in a warzone, Leigh’s military upbringing had a positive impact on both of these areas. In her opinion, "With the tragedy comes a silver lining. Bad things happen but good stuff comes to those who wait. So I don’t think that I would change anything [about my military upbringing]. We did some travelling. I saw Central America. I kept close relationships with my parents; with my family. Every minute that I spent with my brothers, I enjoyed."

Case analysis 2: Dan. Dan is a 28 year old, white male who had been married for a year and a half at the time of the interview. Dan’s wife also grew up in a military family. Dan believes that growing up in a military family has had had a positive impact on his life in general, a small positive role on identity as an adult, a positive impact on his friendships in adulthood, and no impact on his romantic relationships in adulthood. Dan’s
WUSCT identified him to be at an ego level of E7. Other items pulled from the survey data highlight that Dan interacts with his current partner daily and is very satisfied with this relationship. At the time of the survey, Dan had 6-9 close friends. When asked about his top five friendships, he reported interacting daily with three of them, and 2-3 times a week with the other two. He responded that he is very satisfied with each of these friendships. Both of Dan’s parents were in the Navy and retired as officers. His mother served in the Navy for 6 years and his father for 8 years. His parents completed their military service before Dan was born.

Dan was interested in participating in this study because he is always willing to help with research. He feels that is does not take a lot to be involved in research. He hopes that his participation in research studies can help someone in the future. He also stated that he was intrigued by this study because there was an attempt to understand how a connection between childhood and adulthood; how a particular background of family lifestyle could “change or influences what we have today.”

For Dan, relationships mean anyone with whom you are connected, ranging from people he sees walking down the street or driving down the road to others with which he has a deeper connection. He explains that his definition of relationships is broad because relationships do “not need to be, technically, [with] somebody that you know because you’re still connected with them. Dan believes that he is connected in some way with those he encounters. He hopes that his close relationship with others “encourages and strengthens them somehow” while also challenging them and helping them grow. Dan explains, in part, how he came to this definition, “I’ve had relationships in my past that have been detrimental or even toxic and learning from those situations, it’s how you
surround yourself and help yourself stay strong but at the same time, really focuses on helping others to grow.”

The most important relationship in Dan’s life at the time of the interview is with his eight week old daughter. He feels that this relationship is unique in that, you do not choose a child to become a part of your family, as you may choose a friend or a partner. He also feels that he is a very critical part of her life and her development and that their relationship is unique because his daughter cannot survive on her own. Dan describes his transition into this relationship, “the relationship is… interesting… I was so worried about being the father and then when she arrived, I just jumped into it without even thinking. And so I think for me, that’s made me kind of reevaluate how strong a sense of responsibility and love and I don’t want to use the word duty, but there’s just a sense that… I can be such a critical part of her life and her development… Even before she was born… my wife and I were both making decisions about what’s going to not only be helpful for us, but what’s going to be impactful and meaningful for our daughter.”

He also sees his daughter as “an extension of [himself]” and he says with pride, “she’s probably the best thing that I will ever do barring other children that come in, in which case they’ll be tied with her.” Further explaining his most important relationship, Dan states, “I’ve worked with a gentleman when I was doing internship who said that church comes before family. To me, [that] is an old model, it’s an outdated model and it’s one that I can’t live by. So, for me, I need to be an effective father, husband, brother, son, if I hope to be a, a decent [career title] and that father part is really… the big piece right now for me because I’ve done the other ones for so long.” Dan’s relationship with his wife is also important to him because he can be his true self around her. He highlights
this point by saying, "Either the expectations that people have because of my position or I'm a lot in my head with some things. So, I censor myself because of how they might use it later...or interpret it and the like. So, there are a lot of people that don't understand that, people of faith — any faith — are still broken and hardworking people, too. My wife understood that from, from day one and she continues to understand that." Dan's relationship with his wife is also unique in that he can rely on her for support and their relationship is one he views as irreplaceable, whereas friendships and relationships with coworkers can easily be replaced.

Dan learned what he needed in a relationship through trial and error. His parents also influenced what he looked for in relationships because they had an expectation of him to have conversations with them, leading to Dan wanting substance in his relationships with others. Growing up in a church environment also influenced Dan's conceptualization of what he wanted in a relationship. Dan explains the link between his upbringing and his approach to relationships one he left his parents' home,

"Well, growing up, my parents treated me like an equal almost from the get go. They didn't talk down to me a whole lot. They expected conversation, rather than just obedience. I've always been looking for people that have substance, and [who] kind of keep up toe-to-toe, intellectually, or spiritually or whatever kind of avenue it is...the relationships I had with, my brother, he was always someone I could count on and trust and he was always encouraging and there for me, the same way my parents were ...I always had my family and I had the church that we helped start. They were always there to support. When you grow up in that kind of environment...you want to turn around and be that for as many people as
possible. It was just a living experience that...meant a lot to me. By the same
time, in kind of the romantic field, because I had grown up that way, I kind of did
the knight on the white horse kind of thing. I’d find people that were struggling
and broken or without confidence and helped build them up and then, the whole
time, they’d kind of walk all over me. But I was doing it because I was being a
strong, supportive person for them...it took me a lot of [time] to realize that. And
then when I did, it was just a matter of looking for a strong and independent and
supportive person that I clicked with and that’s what I found with, with [wife’s
name].

Relationships in Dan’s home growing up were close. Dan reports having very few
scuffles with his older brother. His family relationships are such that challenge each
other, as well as support each other. Dan elaborates on his family relationships, “Dad was
always full time, once he, left the Navy...he was the, the majority of the income...he’s
busy all the time and so he can’t make it to every, but at the same time, I could count, on
one hand the number of times that he missed anything. He was just always, always there,
always worked around it and, he was just, he was amazing...he'd always be there for me
and my brother. He'd always be there for my mom. My mom and my dad were always
volunteering and helping out with stuff like [Name of non-profit organization] or
homeless shelters...they were just examples that you couldn’t help but want to live up
to... and make them proud of you, but at the same time, it’s not like it was hard to get
them to be proud of you. Because they really...just want you to try your best, doesn’t
matter if you succeed or fail.”
When Dan began dating his parents wanted him to find a relationship that would add to his life positively. Dan reflected on previous relationships that his mother did not feel were up to her expectations, “it’s someone that…your life is going to be better with than not and there really wasn’t anybody that was like that, at least the ones that I dated or brought home that really kind of met the approval until [wife’s name] and I don’t even think it was…” you seem happy with her’ or ‘she seems like a good fit.’ It’s that they kind of fell for her, too…In a lot of ways, I think they also wanted to find a daughter and not just they wanted to find their son his wife. They wanted to find someone that was going to be a part of their family, too.” Dan believes that his parents pushed themselves to work hard in life and not to settle for less than they were capable of accomplishing. They had similar sentiments for Dan and his relationships and Dan reports this is directly tied to their military careers.

Dan did not join the military. It is something he considered, however, after high school, he researched a variety of different career paths. Based on this, his life took him down a different path.

Dan reports that the military has positively impacted his current adult relationships in that his parents, as well as his in-laws, who are also part of a military family, supported him through a move 1100 miles away from his family of origin by helping him to conceptualize it as a military posting. He describes this situation in further detail, “My father-in-law was a career military guy in the Army and so my wife moved around all the time when she was young and then my parents kind of being stationed where they were, we moved around. When we found out that we were moving out here, they helped us kind of frame that… [and] view it as a military posting. That this is not
something that we necessarily would've chosen to do, but it's somewhere you're being assigned...the military framing that my in-laws and my parents help us kind of deal with this situation.” Dan can see the possible negative impacts of this framing as well, calling it “a double-edged sword because I think it's kept our minds on wanting to move back when the reality might be that this is where we need to be for the next few years...it might not just be a two or three-year post. It might be a five or a seven-year post. So, it was great to start with and then it's kind of become this, maybe not an issue yet, but I think it will because I remember back a few months ago, my dad was like yeah, you only have twenty more months till you're moving back here, right? I'm like it, it's not that rigid, Dad, I can't just say, 'Hey, I'm done with my post here. I need to be reassigned'. Uh, it doesn't quite work that way. It might in the military. Not so much with [Dan's place of work]." Some other positive impacts are the values that Dan learned from his parents that he believes may have come directly from their military experience, financial security, everyone carrying their own wait within the family, and relying on your partner for support. Dan reports that these values. “makes our family work, because you know, it doesn't matter...who brings home what money. It's that we need to work together otherwise, it's not going to work.”

The only thing that Dan felt he would change about his military upbringing is that he would have liked to have been more knowledgeable about politics. He lived near DC; however, his parents did not put a big emphasis on politics or government because of their experiences in the military. He does not believe that making this change would impact his adult relationships in any way stating, “I never had a checklist that said my future wife must be a.) Democratic b.) Republican, c.) Independent or Unaffiliated” he
laughed and proceeded to say he’s look at, “what is truth to an individual person rather than a party line or a particular rigid set of definitions.”

During the interview, Dan focused mainly on his most important relationships, i.e., those with his wife and daughter. He also spoke a lot about perceived links between his childhood and adult life. Thought Dan spoke positively about being part of a military family, he did reference some differences in generational cohorts. “[I]t seems like there’s a generational divide...I attend a group that’s...sixty-five plus, all retired – and a lot of them are former military and the kind of attitudes and the things that they carry...like right now, I'm looking at something, I hung up on one of my cabinets and it’s uh, this understanding of Muslims praying, on a street...and then on the other side it has [a football player praying] on a sideline and underneath the Muslims praying, it says, ‘Why is this okay?’ And then next to [the football player], it says, ‘And this isn’t?’ That was sent to me by one of those gentlem.en.”

Part of the issue, he explained, is that a number of the military people he encounters struggle with the idea of a globalized perspective. “[G]iven my position...I have the ability to influence for good or for bad and you kind of walk a line between the people that don’t like even hearing the word ‘Muslim’ because of whatever might have been attached to at 9/11 or something about Afghanistan or somebody that doesn’t like anybody that’s Asian American because of Vietnam or Korea or Japan’s involvement in wars between us... [I]t’s very difficult to speak out against it because I can understand from a military perspective just because of my family and my wife’s family’s involvement in not just my parents’ generation but the generations before had at the time recognizing that we’re all people and we all make mistakes. I think in a lot of ways, it’s
easier to speak to a generation that kind of redefines connection and relationship in larger terms rather than just to people that we talk to.

Case analysis 3: Linda. Linda, a 55 year old, white female had been married for just under 35 years, at the time of the interview. According to the quantitative data, Linda interacts with her husband daily and is very satisfied with this relationship. Linda reported having one close friend, at the time of the survey, which she interacts with less than once a month. She feels somewhat satisfied with this relationship. Through WUSCT analysis, it was found that Linda's ego level is an E7. Linda’s father served in the Army for about 25 years, retiring at an enlisted rank. He was active duty for about 3 years, joined the reserves and then became active duty again, during this time span. Linda was between the ages of 3 and 22 during her father’s military career. For Linda, her military upbringing had a highly positive role on her life in general, plays a large positive role in her life as an adult, had a negative impact on her friendships in adulthood and a positive impact on her adult romantic relationships.

Linda was interested in this study because she has realized the differences between herself and other children of military families and children in civilian families. She says, “I guess as I’ve gotten older, the differences between me and people who were not military kids are maybe more noticeable to me...I guess as you get older, you start thinking about how your life impacts what you think, and do, and feel.” Some of the differences that she has noticed between herself and her civilian acquaintances are not going to school reunions, not having a place to call home, having exposure to the variety of cultures, and living in a variety of places. In Linda’s opinion, “I mean, and this may sound egotistical. But, they are not quite as worldly as I am. I’ve been a lot of places; seen
a lot of things. They tend to have stayed in one, maybe two places and they don’t see the
world the way I see it.” She also believes that “civilian children and adults have a sense
of close extended family.” She had a much different experience growing up, knowing her
extended family (grandparents, aunts and uncles and some cousins) by name only. Linda
feels as if she has a close relationship with her maternal grants parents and a maternal
aunt because she visited them once a year for nine years of her life and lived in the same
location as them for one year of her life. However, she does not feel close to any other
members of her extended family because she “had not had the opportunity or experience
of ‘family’ with them.”

Linda sees friendships as people she knows, reporting that her immediate family
relationships (with her parents and children) are stronger more important relationships.
She reports that this is because she does not know how to make and maintain friendships
at a deeper level. Her definition of a “real friendship involves having a deeper
relationship than just knowing or doing things with someone” and letting another “person
know more about you than just the normal surface sort of things, such as your birthday,
or just having a ‘small talk’ sort of conversation; letting people know ‘the real you’”
Linda reports being able to end friendships “at the drop of a hat,” becoming only
involved with them on the surface level “so if they don’t stick around I don’t really care.”
Linda reports that she “was ‘programmed’ to have friendships that only last for a little
while” by her military upbringing. She feels that she has not had a “real friendship” since
she was in High School. Continuing the conversation about differences between civilians
and military BRATs, Linda states, “I don’t know how civilian people keep these friends
that they have known since preschool…It seems like a huge commitment. I sometimes
wish I had that, but then again, I don’t think I would know how to do it. I belong to two
groups on [social networking site] for the high schools I went to. We all act like we are
such friends, but we really aren’t. How could we be? We haven’t seen or talked to each
other in over 30 years. It’s more like we are all still in the same boat, bound together by
the fact we are military BRATs with more or less the same upbringing and childhood.”

Linda’s most important relationship is with her husband because “in my mind
marriage should be the best, most important relationship, if you are married…it would be
sad to be married and have a different relationship that is more important than the one
with a spouse.” Linda also feels her relationship with her husband is unique from other
relationships in her life in that she and her husband confide in one another and lean on
one another. For her, this is the only relationship she has allowed to be that close to her
and she stated, “It is the only relationship that I would not be okay if it ended.” She
believes that her relationship with her husband is a good relationship because they work
at it. “We are respectful on one another, we care about one another and we make sure we
stay connected”, Linda says.

Linda learned what she needs and wants in a relationship by watching her parents.
Her parents modeled mostly what she wants in a relationship, but also some things that
she would prefer to not have in her relationship. In Linda’s home growing up, family
relationships were strong. Her parents made it clear that their marriage came first, but
they were able to balance this idea with family time and having a strong nuclear family.
She explains, “There was just my brother and myself…We were loved and we were
watched after. We had good relationships with our parents, but in the end we knew their
marriage was number one. We did things as a family. My father was involved in our life. My mother was involved in our life. We were a strong nuclear family.”

Linda’s parents allowed her to start dating at 15 or 16, with a strict curfew and approval of where she was going and who she would be with. Her parents had to meet the boy she was dating before she could go out with him. She was allowed to go to the movies, school dances and sporting events, but could not leave the military installation. At the age of 16, Linda’s family moved to Germany the same rules applied here, however, Linda reports “I don’t think many of us really ‘dated’” speaking of the individuals in her friend group. Linda speaks about her experience after graduating high school, “I left my parents’ house when I graduated high school and they sent me back to the [United] States to be with my grandmother and I was kind of like a fish out of water. I didn’t know anybody…my husband was the first guy that I actually met when I left my parents’ house” and they have been together ever since. Linda and her husband did not join the military because life took them in a different direction; however, Linda’s husband considered joining the military. Linda speaks about her own experience, “When I was in high school, I thought about taking ROTC and my father looked at ‘me and said, “If you are doing this because you think I will approve of it,’ he says, ‘Please do not do that because I don’t want you to do something for me.’ [Laughter] so, I didn’t and I don’t think I would have ever even given [joining the military] a thought.”

In terms of positive impacts on Linda’s adult relationships from her military upbringing, Linda reports being able to get along with anybody and having a high tolerance for differences. She also enjoyed moving around and traveling. If Linda could change one thing about being a part of a military family, “I guess being able to see
grandparents, aunts, uncles... and be a part of a family, a bigger family... I think I would probably have a more sense of who I am... like, where I came from; what made me other than my childhood... My husband has a home town. My husband has family that he's known forever and while I have those people, I mean, I can name cousins and I can name aunts and I can name uncles. I do not know these people, like my husband knows his family. I only know my one aunt and uncle very well; and those cousins. Everybody else, they're pretty much just people that I know are related to me. Hmm, so I think, you know... if we had been able to stay around extended family more, I would have more of a sense of I don't know roots, maybe?” In closing, Linda reiterated her struggle with friendships, “I can be friends with somebody. But it never gets so deep that it would matter if they're gone... I don't know how to have those relationships.”

Linda’s interview and member check focused on her definition of relationships, her relationships growing up in her home and the impacts she sees between her military upbringing and her adult life. While Linda is able to highlight positive impacts on her adult life, it is clear that she can see the negative ones as well. Consistent with her survey answers, the interview highlighted that growing up in a military family has negative impacted her adult friendships.

**Case analysis 4: Wesley.** Wesley is a fifty-nine year old Asian male. His father was in the military and retired as an officer in the Army. His father was in the Army for 27 years, spanning from Wesley’s birth until he was 18 years old. Wesley reports that growing up in a military family has had a highly positive impact on his life in general, a highly positive impact on his friendships in adulthood, and a positive impact on his adult romantic relationships. Wesley is currently married and has been married to his partner...
for 34 years. Wesley reported interacting with this partner daily and being very satisfied with this relationship. He noted that due to deployments, and other career choices his interaction with this partner has fluctuated over the past year, slightly impacting the satisfaction with this relationship, negatively. Wesley has 6-9 close friends. When asked about his top five friends, Wesley reports that he interacts with friend #1 daily and is very satisfied with this relationship, he interacts with friend #2 two-three times a week and is satisfied with this relationships, he interacts with friend #3 two-three times a month and is somewhat satisfied with this relationships, he interacts with friend #4 once a month and is satisfied with this relationship and he interacts with friend #5 less than once a month and is satisfied with this relationship. Wesley’s ego development level was found to be an E6 through the WUSCT analysis.

Wesley was interested in participating in this study because he understands the importance of research focused on military families. He also sees the value in military families traveling to foreign countries and bringing their experiences back to the United States. Wesley is also working on his doctoral studies and understands the research and dissertation process.

For Wesley, relationships mean “the ability to maintain communications at a mental and emotional level.” The most important relationship in his life is the relationship with his wife, who he has been married to a little over 34 years. He speaks about his relationships with his wife, “We’ve been married for 35 years, we were engaged while I was about to become commissioned in the military. She was in the military too. She understood a little bit about the military before we got married and she had said that we could travel around a lot...[H]er values...meshed with...mine, which
were traveling, which was about meeting new cultures, and making me meaningful change in the world...[T]hat’s how we built that importance of our relationship.” His relationship with his wife is unique from other relationships because of the complementary aspects of their personalities, “[W]e have similar interests, so we’re both into the theater, we both sing, we’re both spiritually aligned. We’re both mentally attuned. She is involved in Ph.D. school, and I’m doing mine too, so we’re mentally pretty much compatible. Basically, we’re both pretty active together...Not everything is the same, but complimentary. We’re similar.”

Wesley learned what he needed in a relationship through watching his parents’ relationship with one another. They modeled characteristics such as loyalty, honesty and compassion for others. Relationships in Wesley’ home were strong, close relationships. He noted that his mother and father worked together in their parenting stating, “[W]henever they told us what they wanted...nobody was going around dad’s back talk to mom, or behind mom’s back to talk to dad.” He lived in a variety of foreign countries, which provided an environment for being around family often, “[Living in Japan, Thailand and the Philippines] enabled us or required us to be better as a family. We basically hung around each other because we traveled around the world together and we were close as a family, based on the environmental or external issues.” His family relationships were the most important relationships in his upbringing. When asked how things were different in his home when his father was deployed, Wesley responded, “There was somberness. My dad was in Vietnam and that was the one known war, he had other deployments but they weren’t war related. We found out later they were but he
never advertised it, but when he was deployed in Vietnam for two tours, we were very
closer as a family. There was more seriousness about that.”

In terms of romantic relationships, Wesley began dating after he moved out of his
parents’ house and joined the military. His romantic relationships started at this point in
his life due to living in foreign countries and being involved in extracurricular activities.
However he mentioned his parents’ responses to bringing partners home when he began
to date, “I never dated when I was living in my parents’ house. I was in the military by
the time I started dating... So there’s never any conflict on values or anything, as a matter
of a fact they all liked girls I brought home. They were respectful of my friends and how
I thought it was a very welcoming place to bring people because they role modeled the
values that they wanted me to have and I think because I brought home girlfriends, they
needed to respect that. I felt absolutely aligned with the relationships I had.”

Wesley joined the military because it was his easiest path back to the United
States. He also was influenced by his older brothers and their decision to join the
military. He felt their involvement with the military was more influential in his decision
to join the military than his father’s decision to join the military. He speaks about his
decision to join the military saying, “[I]t was the easiest way to get back to the United
States [from the Phillipines]. When my father retired from the army, I was in my junior
year in high school but he then went to California for his graduate degree. I faced the
world on my own. I lived without my father for almost a year and a half and then I joined
the military after high school...I knew it was an option, I already had a scholarship to the
university of the Philippines...and after the first semester I decided to go into the
military...[P]robably the most influential person[s] were my two older brothers, they had
also joined the military...I think they were probably more influential than my father.”

Welsey enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1971 and completed 3 years of enlisted time. In 1977, he was commissioned as an officer, serving 17 years until he retired in 1995 as a U.S. Army Major.

Welsey felt that growing up in a military family positively impacted his adult relationships by teaching him humility and having appreciation for cross-cultural experiences. He adds to this that he and his siblings were first generation Americans, living a much different experience than many other first generation immigrants do, due to the fact that his father was an officer in the military. If Wesley were to change one thing about his military upbringing, he would have preferred to practice all of the languages he learned in childhood and adolescence, so he could continue to use those languages today. In terms of how this may impact his relationships today, he feels that he would be able to "foster relationships that are global in nature” that could benefit his line of work. He continued to say, “I do have lots of friends still but we obviously speak in English, I would have enjoyed to continue writing them and/or calling them in their native language, it’s respectful and it also builds your achievement. Free speech is not do you understand it in English, but also do I understand it in your language.”

Welsey believes that military culture is a subculture of one’s overall culture, stating "... He reported that there is an advantage of growing up in military family because one is able to share this culture with other countries, as ambassadors, stating “I think there’s an advantage in having growing up in a military family...who’s children learn ways of other cultures as they come back and lead adult lives. It is a piece of America that you bring as a military family and we share with other countries, so we’re
ambassadors in the best sense of the word. We also...can bring to American society those traits [acquired] from foreign lands," adding to the richness of American culture.

Wesley’s words highlighted his views of having a positive experience growing up in a military family. He focused on discussing links he saw between his upbringing and adult life throughout the interview. Also, he spoke of his most important relationship in detail.

Case analysis 5: Sherry. At the time of the interview, Sherry is a 65 year old, white female who has been married for 45 years. When looking at the WUSCT, Sherry shows ego levels of E8. Sherry’s father was in the Army Air Corps for 10 years and the U.S. Air Force for 20 year, spanning from the time Sherry was 3 until she was 19 years old. Her father retired as an officer. Sherry’s husband also served in the U.S. Air Force, retiring at enlisted ranks. She reports being very satisfied with the relationship between her and her husband, who she interacts with daily. When asked about having close friendships, Sherry reports having four, one which whom she interacts 2-3 times a month and very satisfied with and three that she interacts with once a month and is very satisfied with. Sherry believes that growing up in a military family has had an overall positive impact on her life, a small positive role in her identity as an adult, and a positive impact on her adult friendships and romantic relationships.

Sherry was interested in participating in this study because she is interested in the “BRAT mentality.” She states, “[T]he subject interests me, the BRAT kind of mentality. I like seeing it come to the forefront a little bit; that people talk about it a little more and the overall subject just kind of interests me - being a BRAT.”
For Sherry, relationships mean supporting one another. She elaborates, “Relationships to me mean friendship, depending on who it is. It means close friendships, building relationships, being there for each other. As far as romantic, probably a lot of the same, friendship to start with and then growing from that...[C]lose family ties whether we're physically in the same place or not or close friendships whether we're in the same place or not.” Her most important relationship is her relationship with her husband of 45 years. Sherry speaks about her relationship with her husband with a tone of endearment, “[My] most important in my life is with my husband. That's not hard at all. [H]e is my rock. He's my hero...[W]e've always been just really tight. I mean really tight...I'm very lucky.” She continues to explain how they began their relationship, “[W]e were living in Japan and my dad got transferred to...an Air Force base between my junior and senior year, and so I started my senior year of high school there and my husband was at the high school and I met him. I admired him for quite a few months from across the campus because I thought he was cute, but then he ended up in a class with me the second semester, and that's when we met and became really good friends. And after a couple of years it turned into love, when he came back from basic training and just kind of took off from there.” When ask what makes her relationship with her husband unique from all other relationships, she stated “[P]eople sometimes they seek out...people that bring out the best in them or something the other person has that they're looking for as a strength...He had strengths that I felt I didn't have, but also he was looking to make a different kind of life than his father provided him and I was looking for a different kind of relationship and life than my parents gave me an example of. And we just kind of came together and it was just right, right from the start.”
When asked how she learned what she wanted/needed in a relationship, Sherry responded that she had to "stumble around to find what [she] did want" in a relationship. She knew she did not want the cold, unaffectionate relationship that her parents modeled for her. She stated, "I was always looking for a lot of affection; people that liked to hug and liked to hold hands, boyfriends before my husband came along that liked to hold hands...because I didn't get a lot of that growing up from either of my parents." Sherry's relationships with her mother and father were pretty distant. Sherry speaks about her relationships with her parents, "I admittedly pushed [my father's] buttons a lot. He had a bad temper and, not that we were beat up or anything, but we were slapped... One time he pulled the phone out of the wall he was so angry, but he was supposedly the officer and a gentleman, so nothing was ever said...It was a distant relationship. I avoided him. I avoided him whenever I could and even after my husband and I got married we avoided my dad and mom where we could and never let our kids ever spend the night with them ... I was not comfortable with that and my husband knows why. He always knew." She later reflects that periods of her relationship with her mother were close; however, their relationship fluctuates, even today. She elaborates, "[M]y relationship with my mom is kind of up and down, still is...I don't call her any more than I have to and I've only seen her once in the last 18 months and that was only for three days. I avoid her now...[S]he was mean even when we were kids in personality, just very cold and snotty kind of comments, hurtful comments, that kind of thing and I'm still afraid of her...I still won't speak up to her. But I just kind of avoid her and she knows she's burnt some bridges. I let her know that before she left that she was very hurtful and said some things that were really terrible...there were times when it was okay. Sometimes I think she was doing the
best she could because she had a really rough upbringing herself.” Sherry’s relationship with her sister grew from a relationship where they fought often into a tight, supportive relationship in adulthood. Sherry reports that when her father was given a temporary duty assignment, the relationships between herself, her mother and her sister would change. Her mother would “open up a little more,” they would go shopping and eat special meals that her father did not prefer.

When Sherry started dating, her parents approach to these relationships was to have strict rules, such as early curfews, not being allowed to date enlisted men’s children because her parents were “very much into the division of ranks”, and not allowing friends or boyfriends over to their house. Sherry reflects that when she was younger, she thought their rules were terrible, but as an adult she can see that they may not have been that extreme. Sherry’s father did not approve of Sherry dating, she says, “He didn’t like it. He didn’t like my husband when he first started coming around mainly because he was Hispanic, but also because I think my dad knew it was really, really serious and that bothered him.”

When Sherry moved out of her parents’ house, she moved into a home with her current husband. She approached her relationship with her husband by “being really affectionate” and showing her love. For her, this was a learning process because she was not used to verbally or physically showing affection. Sherry’s husband was not raised in a military family, however, he chose to join the U.S. Air Force and make a career out of it. Sherry did not make a deliberate decision to marry someone in the military, her husband (a friend at the time) happened to get in touch with her after he finished boot camp and their relationship built from there. She explains, “Even in high school that senior year,
when I met him, I knew there was something different about him that was really special and he says he sensed that, too, but we were both so young still and immature that you know it wasn't clicking as to what it really was, but we always made sure we were on each other's radar for a few years...I don't think that was a conscious decision to choose someone that went into the military because at the time that we became friends even that wasn't even a thought at that point.”

Sherry describes herself as being an introvert. She sees moving around a lot in the context of her father’s military career as a positive impact on her relationships. She felt that moving and living in different places forced her out of her comfort zone and helped her to make friends. “Otherwise, I wouldn't have had any friends,” Sherry states, “I would have just sat in a corner because I tend to be just a very quiet person; perfectly happy with myself, and...I don't feel lonely if I'm by myself. [S]o, [moving due to the military] kind of forced me out of my shell and forced me to make friends because I had to and had to make them quickly and learn to let them go too.”

In her adult life, these skills are still in play, as she sorts out who is an acquaintance-type friend and who is truly a close friend. Sherry would not change one thing about her military upbringing, explaining “I can't really think of anything I would change because...[I]n retrospect I learned from all of it, the positive and the negative and it helped make me who I am, even as old as I am now. It still kind of helped define me and I really can't sort out any one thing because it all contributed.”

Relationships in her home growing up seemed important for Sherry to discuss, as this was the largest focus in our interview. In addition to the interview questions, Sherry added that she hopes in today’s military families that there is more of an outlet for
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children to speak out about bad things that may be occurring at home, without the worry of ruining the military career of their parent(s), as she experienced. She also added that based on her military upbringing, she is able to maintain relationships from a distance. She does not “feel the sense of loss of living away from family” because she’s “always known how to keep the relationship close because that’s the way [she] grew up.”

Case analysis 6: JJ. JJ, a 63 year old, white male, has been married to his current wife for 40 years, at the time of the interview. JJ reports interacting with his spouse daily and being very satisfied with this relationship. JJ’s father served in the Air Force for 31.5 years, spanning from JJ’s birth, until he was 22 years old. JJ served in the Air Force himself for 20 years. JJ believes that growing up in a military family has had a highly positive impact on his life in general, has played a large positive role in his identity as an adult, and a highly positive impact on his friendships and romantic relationships in adulthood. Related to JJ’s adult relationships, he reports having 10-14 close friends. When asked about the top five friendships, he reports interacting with friend #1 once a week and being very satisfied with this relationship, his other four friend interact with him 2-3 times a week and he is also very satisfied with this relationship. The WUSCT analysis revealed that JJ has an ego level of E4.

JJ’s answer for being interested in this study was “I’m a BRAT,” without further explanation, suggesting that he is willing to help out with research related to adult children of military families because he identifies with this population.

For JJ, relationships mean “continuing interaction between one or more people that stretches over a long period of time, or a short period of time.” The most important
relationship in JJ’s life is with his wife of 40 years. He feels that this relationship is unique from all other relationships in his life for indefinable reasons, but also because their relationship has been fun and full of love. These reasons motivate him to work through any issues that may arise in their relationship.

JJ learned what he wanted/needed in a relationship through trial and error. Further explaining, he says, “Those are things that just grow. The relationship either feels good or it doesn’t feel good. You can have a friendship that doesn’t have a long lasting relationship because it doesn’t continue to grow. If your interactions with each other do not grow and stimulate off of each other, then it’s probably a transitory relationship.” He also believes that partners in a relationship must grow together. He learned these ideas from his parents’ relationship.

Family relationships in JJ’s home growing up were good, close relationships, “a lot like my wife and I, he says. When JJ began to date, his parents were fairly lenient in their approach to his relationships. He states, “[M]y parents approach my relationships? As long as I honored and respected the females that I dated, that was fine.” JJ had rules for dating that were relaxed. He could bring females home and his curfew was lenient. JJ’s parents did not have a preference of who he dated, in terms of enlisted of officer’s children. Relationships in JJ’s home did not change when his father was deployed or had a temporary assignment because his father did not experience these separations.

In terms of making friends and romantic relationships once JJ left home, most of his friendships were made during his college years and his involvement in the Corps of Cadets. Aside from this he made a long-lasting friendship with a guy in the band, who is
still his best friend today. Romantic relationships were few and far between for JJ, until he met his wife in one of his classes, during his college career.

JJ joined the military deliberately because of his “spirit of patriotism.” He feels this decision was also in direct relation to his military upbringing. He joined the U.S. Air Force, serving for 20 years, after his time in college.

JJ believes that his military upbringing has positively impacted his adult relationships in that he developed an ethical standard that governs his relationships and helps him maintain his relationships. The only change JJ would make to his military upbringing is that he wishes he could have gone back to Japan with his father, simply because he thinks that it would be fun to go back.

When asked for other additions, JJ commented that, “If you truly follow the military upbringing and the military lifestyle, you are more tolerant...than a lot of other people because of the fact of what you had to do...as a military BRAT.” JJ believes being thrust into a variety of diverse situations is the cause of this tolerance. JJ continued reflecting on parallels between his career and his father’s career, “In my time in the service, my children did not embarrass me. They knew who I was and what I did to a certain extent, but as my father did when he was in the Air Force and I was at home, when he came home he parked his rank at the front door and inside the house he was my dad, he was not Chief Master Sergeant [last name], and I tried to do the same thing in my time on active duty. I dropped my rank when I came home and only used it when I was called upon to use it because I need to separate the two so that we could have a family relationship.”
He notes a particular time when he lives in Hawaii and his "White Anglo-Saxon Protestants" family was in the minority facing difficulties because of their race, "You’re thrust into a lot of different situations and I think my children are a perfect example. While we are white Anglo-Saxon Protestants, we have lived in situations where we were in the definite minority and were treated a lot like the minorities were in the Deep South. When my son…and daughter were accused of being in a gang because they always ate lunch at the same bench at the middle school with the same group of kids, we talked through that, the four of us, and then we let it go because it was not a thing we needed to make a ruckus over. It became a problem when my son was threatened by…some of the local boys in the middle school and the principal said he was not going to do anything about it because he was a local boy and it just so happened that that middle school happened to be on a military installation…I think that is one of the things that we all, the four of us, actually did pride ourselves on the fact that we did accept the circumstances of our situation and yet still maintained a positive relationship with ourselves and our friends and neighbors.” He further notes, “It is not about race, it’s about your own code of ethics.”

JJ’s answers were brief and straight to the point throughout our interview. With that said, the emphasis of his responses focused on his most important relationship and the link he sees between his childhood and adolescence and his adult life. JJ made it clear that his military upbringing positively impacted his adulthood.

**Case analysis 7: Susan.** Susan is a 46 year old, white female who has been married for 18 years. She and her spouse interact daily and she reports being very satisfied with this relationship. Her father served in the U.S. Navy for 27 years, spanning
Susan’s life during the ages of birth through 21, and retiring within enlisted ranks. Susan believes that her military upbringing has had a positive impact on her life in general, plays a small positive role in her identity as an adult, a negative impact on her adult friendships and a negative relationship on her adult romantic relationships. Susan reports having three close friendships, one with whom she interacts 2-3 times a week and feels satisfied with their relationships. The other two friendships, she reports being somewhat satisfied with and interacting with them 2-3 times per week. Susan’s levels of ego development were explored through the WUSCT, she filled out with the initial survey, resulting in an E6 score.

Susan came across this study because she saw it posted online, on a site geared towards adult children of military families. She thought it sounded interesting and felt that she wanted to share her experiences about growing up in a military family.

For Susan, relationships mean “the way you interact with people.” The most important relationship in Susan’s life is her relationship with her husband of 18 years. She also reported her relationships with her children are very important as well. Susan reports that her relationship with her husband is unique because it is “the longest single relationship of my life. [W]hen you’re a BRAT you move around a lot, and you don’t have the relationships…that other people have where you’ve known somebody for a long period of time. I went to a lot of different schools moved around so much…and actually the home that me and my husband own, that’s the longest I’ve ever lived in one place. So that’s definitely different than anything that I’ve been used to in the past.” She also added, “It’s an easy relationship.” She reports that her relationships with her children are
unique for similar reasons, such as, the length of their relationship; however, she adds that the parent-child relationship is unique in and of itself.

Susan learned what she wanted and needed in a relationship through trial and error. She used her past relationships to learn what aspects of each relationship she liked and did not like to move forward in finding her next partner. She also stated that her father modeled behaviors and aspects of his personality that she wanted in her relationships, saying that, “I was lucky that my father – he’s a really good man, but I wasn’t around him as much as most children are around their parents...because he was in the Navy and out to sea a lot...I knew that I wanted someone that was kind like that. It just took finding it.”

Susan lived with her parents, her grandparents and her uncle at different times through her childhood and adolescence, due to her father’s military involvement and her mother’s death. Susan describes the relationships in her home growing up in each of this home, as “white bread” and “Leave it to Beaver.” By this, Susan means that there was not a lot of dysfunction in either of these homes; the relationships were close; and her and her siblings were involved in extracurricular activities. Music was also a big part of Susan’s family. Susan reports that “there was always a layer of stress underneath that was caused by the moving and the fact that my mother had died. Also, the military and my dad and uncle’s careers in it were more important than anything else. We didn’t question things because that was the way it was. There was a ‘suck it up’ mentality...So, on the one side, you have the happy and easy childhood where we did kid things and were treated like children, but on the other side there was a layer of stress we didn’t talk about at all,” showing that her family had its challenges as well. Susan mentioned that she does not like
to dwell on her childhood much stating that, “Everyone has things in their past that they can complain about. We were loved and everyone involved in our upbringing thought they were doing what was best for us.”

In her younger years, Susan recalls separations from her father, “After my mom died, my dad tried to go back to school as much as he could so that he would be around for us more. That had the unintended effect that he would go off to school in another city for 3 months and we'd go to live with my grandparents or an aunt and uncle who were not military. That kind of thing happened a couple of times, but at least he wasn't at sea.” In fourth grade, Susan’s father experienced an unaccompanied tour to Morocco for a year, at which time, Susan and her siblings were sent to live with her uncle who was in the U.S. Army. She traveled with her uncle’s family to his duty stations until her father was able to secure a position on land after she finished eighth grade. She, her cousins and her siblings, who were all close in ages, had close relationships. “The moving, underlying stress, lots of kids in the home to play with, that made us close I think. We didn't need to make a lot of outside friends because we had each other to play with. We all did have our own friends outside the home, but we did a lot of things as a family, too. As younger children I'd say we had less friends, but as we grew, especially into the teenage years we had more outside friends,” Susan expresses as describing the development of her relationships over time.

When Susan started to date, she was living with her father, who was newly remarried. Her step-mother took a more strict approach to her dating life and rules surrounding dating than her father, whose approach was more laid back. She elaborates,
“[M]y new stepmother was very strict. So while they allowed dating --both my parents allowed dating – my stepmother was very strict about...she didn’t want any of us to get pregnant...and [she asked], “Who you going to be with?” and that kind of thing...My dad was very laid back, my stepmother was a little bit more dramatic – we’ll put it that way.” Susan reports that her father did not experience deployments or temporary duty assignments by the time she was dating.

Susan’s speaks about her approach to relationships once she left home was saying, “I pretty much was dating anybody that asked me.” She reports “dating guys that just were not good.” She attributes this to her mentality surrounding relationships of not getting too close to people because she knew she would have to move sooner or later, which is directly related to her military upbringing though Susan believes that this mentality impacted her friendships more so than her romantic relationships. With further reflection through her member check, she attributes her difficulties in romantic relationships to not asserting herself and saying, “I don’t like that you do that, or that the relationship is going in this direction. Stress was normal so, if I was stressed about a relationship it was okay.” In terms of her relationship with her husband, they were friends/co-workers first before pursuing a romantic relationship. Susan stated, “When I met my husband and he was not into drama, it felt strange at first, then I thought, ‘Wow! This is a good thing.”

Susan did not go into the military. She also did not marry into the military. She imagined herself marrying someone in the military, but she met her husband through
work and became friends before pursuing a romantic relationship. It just so happened that
her husband had chosen another professional track.

Susan believes her military upbringing have impacted her positively in that she is
more accepting of diversity. She explains, “I think maybe you’re…a little bit more
patient… Maybe patient’s not the right word… Accepting? Because you’re around a lot
of different people all the time. You grow up on a military base and there’s all kinds of
people living around you. She continues, describing her current situation, “Where I live
in [state name], we don’t have a lot of diversity here, and sometimes people might be a
little bit more nervous of different aspects of diversity than those of us that are military
BRATS are used to because we grew up that way…and it drives my kids crazy, but I talk
to everybody. I’m in the supermarket and I’m talking to the person… [whisper] “Mom!
Do you have to talk to everybody?!?” [Laughter]…I think that happens to a lot of military
kids.” If Susan could change one thing about growing up in a military family, she would
want to move less often. She feels that “I think I’d like to stay in place more than we
did…it was positive for us, moving around – we got to go to Europe…and my parents
always made it like an adventure. But some of the military parents aren’t as adventurous,
and I think that’s really hard on the children when they have to move so much, and
maybe they’re shy…and it’s not as easy for them to talk to people.” When asked how
moving less would impact her adult relationships, Susan responded, “I think it would be
easier to make friendships because I still kind of am a loner. I mean, my husband and I
are very close, but I don’t have a lot of…good girlfriends. I mean, I have some, but it just
seems to be different than people who maybe are used to making lifelong friends…It
seems like I missed the, uh… like the “friends seminar” [Laughter]”
Susan described clear examples of how she believes her adult life is connected to her military upbringing. Overall, her experience growing up in a military family is meaningful to her. However, when she reflects on her adult relationships, she can see the negative impacts it has had.

*Case analysis 8: Cat.* Cat was 41 years old, at the time of the interview. She identifies as a white female, who has been married to her current husband for close to 22 years. Cat interacts with her spouse daily and is very satisfied with this relationship. Her father was in the U.S. Air Force for 26 years, spanning Cat’s life during the ages of birth to twenty. Cat’s husband also served in the military; U.S. Army and is now a GS worker. Cat reports having one close friend with whom she interacts once a month. She is satisfied with this relationship. Cat’s WUSCT responses show that she has an ego level of E5. Cat believes that her military upbringing has had a highly positive impact on her life in general, has played a large positive role in her identity as an adult, had a positive impact on her adult friendships and a highly positive impact on her romantic relationships in adulthood.

Cat was interested in participating in this study because she has seen many surveys circulating on websites geared towards BRATS that are geared toward younger people. She was interested in giving her opinion as a member of an older generation of BRATS.

For Cat, relationships have a variety of meanings and can take a variety of forms. For example, she has life-long friendships and those that come and go. The most important relationship in Cat’s life is her relationship with her husband of approximately
22 years. She believes this relationship is unique from the other relationships she could have chosen from in that her husband is always there for her, supporting her and taking care of her.

Cat learned what she wanted/needed in a relationship through trial and error, watching her parents’ relationship and also watching the relationships of her friends’ parents growing up. Some of her friends came from homes where divorce had occurred. She knew she did not want this for her life or for her children. To her, a marriage is not something you can throw away.

In Cat’s home growing up, her mother was mostly home with her and her siblings, however, her father was supportive and spent time with his children when he was able to do so. When Cat began dating, her parents were pretty lenient, but they did make it clear when they did not like someone she was dating. She does not remember having many rules surrounding dating, other than not being allowed to have boys in her room. She does not recall any changes to relationship, rules, or relationships in her home when her father was away for deployments or a temporary duty assignment.

Cat married before leaving her parents’ home. She was introduced to her husband through some friends when living in Germany. She reflects on the beginning of their relationship, “I wrote my phone number down on a piece of paper you used to wrap up food with and he promptly lost it and misdialed the phone number…and I guess a few days or something later I saw him again and I told him you never called me and he goes, “I tried but I didn't have the right number.” …We just happened to meet back up in the bowling alley and started dating from there.”
Cat did not choose to go into the military. She was planning to join the military, but then she met her husband who was already in the military. She was drawn to join the U.S. Air Force or to marry into the military because she enjoyed being a part of ROTC and she was interested in her husband’s career.

Cat believes that her military upbringing has positively impacted her adult relationships in that she is “a little bit more willing to meet new people.” She is also able to handle moves easily and prefers not to stay in one location for a long period of time, therefore, meeting new people in of interest to her. She expands on this point by saying, “Moving is not a big deal for me. A lot of my civilian friends have thought of moving out of the same town that they’ve been in their entire life [and it] is terrifying. We have been here two and a half years. I was ready to go six months ago...[Y]ou’re more open to meeting people and getting out there.” The only thing that Cat would change about her military upbringing is giving her parents a hard time about moving to Germany.

Cat reflected on her experience with military culture briefly and succinctly. She mostly focused on the important relationships in her life. Overall, her experience of growing up in a military family was a positive one, so positive that she was attracted to join the military or marry into the military in order to continue this lifestyle.

**Common themes across cases.** A cross-case analysis of the individual participants’ interview responses revealed the following common themes: Historical Relationships, Relationships in Practice, and Perspectives on the Military. Each of these themes is described in detail below. Taking a deeper look, these themes are broken into subthemes based on participants’ individual experiences.
Historical relationships. Many participants commented on relationships of their past, specifically speaking about interpersonal bond that existed during their childhood and adolescence. While one participant spoke about friendships in this context, the majority of responses focused on family bonds. Participants reflected upon a range of family relationships, including parental relationships and those with siblings, cousins and grandparents. Three subthemes emerged where participants spoke of relationships in their family of origin, the rules and context for dating their parents applied, and how they were able to decided what they wanted and needed in a relationship. More detail on these subthemes is provided below.

Relationships in family of origin. For participants in this study, family relationships were typically of utmost importance. “[F]amily relationships are pretty much my driving force. The family is the one that’s always there, not the [people] that you meet down the street” (Leigh). They described these relationships as “supportive” (Cat & Dan) and having close bonds (Cat, Dan, JJ, Leigh, Linda, Susan & Wesley). On the flip side of this, one participant one participant described her relationship with her parents as “distant” and “up and down” (Sherry).

Participants added to the description of these relationships by explaining any changes that may have occurred in these relationships during deployments or temporary duty assignments. Cat, Linda, JJ and Susan, report not recalling any differences during these time periods, some of these reports were due to the fact that their parents did not experience these periods of separation. Leigh, Sherry and Wesley saw definitely changes in their relationships during times of separation. Leigh and Sherry reported their relationships with those family members who stayed behind becoming stronger. Leigh
noted that they "banded together." Wesley's experience was a bit different. He spoke about his father's deployment to Vietnam, remember a sense of somberness and seriousness among family members because they knew his deployment was war related. Leigh mentioned relying on friends for support during trying times, but preferred those friends had an understanding of the military lifestyle or experienced it with themselves.

**Approach to relationships (parental).** In order to explore what approaches to relationships were modeled for participants by their parents, participants were asked to explain how their parents responded to their first romantic relationships, as they begun to date. The majority of participants (Cat, JJ, Leigh, Linda, Sherry, & Susan) commented on the rules that their parents set forth about their dating. Cat, JJ, and Susan reported at least one of their parents being lenient, enforcing little to no rules. However, Leigh, Linda and Sherry report their parents having strict rules, or at least they thought so at the time. Examples of these strict rules included, "If I mentioned that I liked a boy...I was never allowed to go out with him alone" (Leigh), and strict curfews (Leigh, Linda, & Sherry). Susan reported her step-mother applying strict rules to her dating, requiring detailed information about where and with whom she was going to be. Dan noted his parents were fairly lenient about his dating life, as long as he was dating someone of which they approved. Their standards for this were finding "someone that...your life is going to be better with than not" (Dan). Wesley reported that he did not date while he was living in his parents' home; however, when he did begin to date, his parents respected his choice of partners.

**Wants and needs in relationships.** Coming to understand what one wants or needs in a relationship is an individual process. All participants commented that they learned, at
least partially, about their own personal desire or needs in a relationships through watching their parents' relationship. Some participants explained the aspects of relationships that were modeled by their parents that they would like to adopt for their own relationships, "[T]he relationship between my mother and father is... pretty amazing and I've not seen that anywhere else. I definitely want something like them where ...they've been together thirty years now and they still play together" (Leigh) and others reported aspects that were modeled by their parents that they did not want in their relationships, "I knew I didn't want what my parents had, which was a really cold and unaffectionate kind of relationship" (Sherry). Several participants noted that they learned what their ideal relationship was based on trial and error (Cat, Dan, Sherry & Susan); having romantic relationships and learning from them. Cat, Dan and Leigh noted that witnessing other relationships (i.e., having friends whose parents divorced, or experiencing a support church environment) help them develop relational preferences.

**Relationships in practice.** Participants spoke of their personal definition of relationships, their style of approaching relationships when they left their parents' home, and of their most important current relationships. This theme focuses on individuals' ownership of -- autonomy ----- current relationships, as opposed to the "other focus" in Historical Relationships theme. Whereas the Historical Relationships theme focused on the impact of witnessing relationships during ones formative years, this theme looks more closely at individuals' unique ways of making sense of relationships.

**Defining relationships.** How one defines a relationship is an integral piece of one's interpersonal meaning making processes. Many definitions emerged through the interviews. Connection, interaction and multiple forms of relationships were the most
common definitions. Connection was mentioned in a few participants' definitions. Dan described relationships as "anyone you are connected to." Wesley further nuanced this definition by speaking to communication as the connecting piece, defining relationships as "the ability to maintain communications of a mental or emotional level." Participants reported relationships as being, "continuing interaction between two or more people" (JJ), or "the way you interact with people" (Susan). According to participants, relationships can take many forms, noting differences between romantic relationships, friendships and relationships with coworkers. "[F]riend-wise, I think I see relationships just as acquaintances...people I know. I have family relationships are stronger" (Linda).

Approaching relationships (on own). Participants did not elaborate extensively on how they approached relationships when they moved out of their parents' home. Part of this was due to their current marriages being the first relationships they begun after moving out. This was true for Cat. She states, "I got married and left their house... I didn't leave until I was married." Linda experienced a similar situation "I left my parents' house when I graduated high school and they sent me back to the States to be with my grandmother...my husband was the first guy that I actually met." Sherry reported knowing her husband in high school, before she left her parents' home, stating, "[H]e went in the Air Force and went to boot camp. He came back and got in touch with me and that was it. From there on that's when we became involved." Other participants also reported a "friends first" approach to relationships. Leigh comments, "I always end up falling for a friend. I made friends with guys and then we'd date for a little while, or I went back to a boy from high school who had joined the military and he went off to Iraq and came back all studly and wanting to date and I'm like, 'fine, why not?'"
Important relationships. The majority of participants stated that their marriage or long-term partnership was the most important relationships. When asked what made these relationships unique, participants reported a level of support that was different (Cat, Dan, Leigh, & Linda), having complementary personalities (Sherry & Wesley), and a permanence different from other relationships (Cat, Leigh & Sherry).

Some participants reported their relationships with their children (Dan & Susan) or parents (Leigh) as paramount. All important relationships were reported to be someone within their immediate family. Dan chose his relationships with his infant daughter as the most important relationships saying that it is unique in that, “I can be such a critical part of her life and her development,” showing how important it is for him to support her and make sure her needs are met. Leigh stated that she chose her parents, who she considers heroes, as being tied with her partner as her most important relationship.

Perspectives on the military. Participants were very candid about their perspectives on their upbringing, regarding the military. In terms of relationships, friendships were mentioned in this context more frequently than in the above themes. Three subthemes emerged from participants’ responses highlighting direct links between their military upbringing and adult life, a desire for military connection, and changes they would have made to growing up in a military family.

Childhood-adulthood link. Participants universally agreed that the childhood exposure to military culture has impacted them as adults. Participants commented on aspects of their military upbringing that impact all of their adult relationships. JJ, Leigh, Linda, Susan and Wesley made comments related to their upbringing teaching them
tolerance for difference because they were exposed to a variety of places and cultures. Linda states, “I can probably get along with anybody. There are very few people that I have ever met that I could say, ‘I don’t really want anything to do with you’. I can get along with anybody and I can tolerate quite a bit.” Adding to this sentiment, Susan said, “You grow up on a military base and there’s all kinds of people living around you…sometimes people might be a little bit more nervous of different aspects of diversity than those of us that are military BRATS are used to because we grew up that way.” Taking this one step further, Wesley states that families “whose children learn ways of other cultures...come back [to the United States] and lead adult lives. It is a piece of America that you bring as a military family and...share with other countries,” suggesting that military families share American culture with other countries and share the culture of other countries with fellow Americans.

Many participants commented on the positive impacts military culture has had on their immediate family. Linda noted, “I have family relationships [that] are stronger with my children and my parents, but family relationships outside of my immediate family are not very close, I guess I should say...they're kind of acquaintance type relationships” and Wesley mentioned being close to his family members during his childhood and adolescence because they traveled and moved around the world together, due to their military involvement. Dan reported that his parents’ military upbringing helped him and his wife cope with a recent move that put them far away from their families of origin.

Participants spoke about the impact the military lifestyle had on their adult friendships. Cat and Sherry comment how they have seen the positive impacts on their adult friendships, Cat saying, she’s “more willing to meet new people” and Sherry
stating, “I still only count a few people as my friends...I make friends, but I’m able to sort
out who is just a friend-friend and who is going to be a really good close friend, and my
really good close friends I can count on one hand and they're the ones that count to me,
and I think being a brat and moving around I was able to sort that kind of relationship out
fairly quickly.” Sherry also mentioned that without her military upbringing, she may not
have any friends because it forced her out of her comfort zone in order to make friends.
Other participants noted that they struggle with making and maintaining friendships, due
to their military upbringing. Leigh stated, “[B]ack then, we didn’t exactly have [social
networking sites] to keep in touch with everyone. So you had your friends, you made
your friends, and then you left your friends and you made new friends...So as I got older
...it got a little more difficult to really maintain those friendships... because I never
learned really to do it when I was young because I always thought I was just going to
leave them again.” Linda had a similar feeling, she said, “I can be friends with somebody,
but it never gets so deep that it would matter if they're gone and...I don’t know how to do
that. I don't know how to have those relationships.” Susan also reported difficulty with
making and maintaining friendships by saying, “I think it would be easier to make
friendships because I still kind of am a loner...I don’t have a lot of like good girlfriends. I
mean, I have some, but it just seems to be different than people who maybe are used to
making lifelong friends.” She continued to say that she believes she missed the “friends
seminar,” emphasizing that she never learned the skills to have close friendships.

*Desire for military connection.* A few participants mentioned a desire to stay
connected to the military lifestyle following their parents had retired or they moved out of
their parents’ home. JJ noted a “spirit of patriotism” that drove him to join the military
himself. Wesley’s decision to join the military was based on the influence his brothers’ military careers had upon him. Cat debated going into the military, but instead married someone with a military career, and Dan married a fellow military BRAT. Leigh expressed a desire to stay connected to the military lifestyle more heavily than other participants. She said, “My parents retired from the military but then they decided they missed it, so now they’re back to working as military contractors...and we’ve never really had a chance to get away from the military and I’ve never wanted to get away from the military. Losing my ID card at twenty-one was the worst day ever. That was really awful and though I didn’t join the military myself, I wanted to always kind of keep around it just because I love it so much.” Leigh has gone through trainings to work with children of military families and has a desire to continue this work in the future. Linda, Sherry and Susan did not mention a desire to stay connected to the military, as life took them on different paths.

Changes to upbringing. Participants were asked what; if anything they would like to change about their upbringing related to the military. Leigh and Sherry decided that they did not want to change anything. Sherry stated, “I can't really think of anything I would change because I learned you know in retrospect I learned from all of it uh the positive and the negative” and Leigh made a similar comment, saying, “Bad things happen but good stuff comes to those who wait ... I don’t think that I would change anything.” If they could make changes to their upbringing, Cat, JJ, Linda, and Susan would make changes related to travel or moving. Cat stated that she would not have given her parents a hard time about moving to Germany, suggesting that it wasn’t as bad as she thought it was going to be and JJ reported wanting to have gone back to Japan with his
father. Linda mentioned travel; however, she mentions that it was a positive experience for her and her siblings because her parents turned moving into an adventure. Linda on the other hand, reports how moving damaged her relationships with extended family. She stated, “If we had been able to stay around extended family more, I would have more of a sense of...roots. I don’t have that sense.” Wesley wishes that his family would have utilized the languages they learned while travel more so in the home, so he could use those languages today for business relationships and friendships. Dan reports that his parents did not teach him about politics or governmental activities, due to the perspectives on the military. He wishes this were not the case, but does not feel it would impact his relationships today.

Summary

Chapter 4 reported results of the quantitative and qualitative phases of this study. Demographic information, relationships survey data, the four impact question results, analysis of the Washington University Sentence Completion Test (WUSCT), subgroup findings, individual interview analyses and cross-case analyses were reported. Chapter 5 will discuss these results in relation to the research questions at hand and relevant literature.
Chapter 5

Discussion

The present study used a sequential explanatory mixed methods design, seeking to address six research questions, three quantitative and three qualitative. The quantitative questions focused on exploring subgroups in the survey data; uncovering any groups that may have answered questions similarly. The qualitative questions focused on exploring the impacts of growing up in a military family on adult relationships. The differences and similarities in participants’ interview responses regarding their levels of Ego Development, generational cohorts, and father’s rank in the military at retirement are explored.

Quantitative research questions. Due to the lack of research on the topic at hand, the quantitative phase of this sequential explanatory mixed methods design sought to be exploratory in nature. The goal was to discover any subgroups that may exist in the survey data, clustering certain individuals together based on their responses to survey questions, demographic information, or levels of Ego Development. The researcher specifically wanted to explore subgroups that may exist in terms of relationship patterns, related to how participants answered the relationship questionnaire portion of the survey, as well as subgroups that may exist related to perceptions of the impact of military culture on participants’ adult lives, and subgroups that formed related to Ego Development levels. Subgroups were explored predominantly through correlational analyses, examining if the way participants answered one survey question was related to another, i.e., participants’ who reported being in the 25-30 age cohort were more likely to
report having a high number of close friendships than other age cohorts. The subgroup findings are discussed below.

Research question one: what subgroups exist in adult children of military families with regards to their adult relationships? Regarding participants’ adult relationship patterns, relationships were found between variables collected in the survey data. A positive relationship was found between the number of close friendships participants reported and the perceived impact of a military upbringing on adult life. A positive relationship was also found between the number of close friendships and how participants perceived the impact growing up in a military family has had on their adult friendships and adult relationships. Another positive relationship was found between interaction with close friend #1 and participants’ descriptions of the impact a military upbringing had on their adult romantic relationships. Interaction with close friend #2, and #3 and participants’ descriptions of the impact a military upbringing had on their adult friendships were also positively related.

The above mentioned relationships suggest the existence of high/high subgroup of participants with positive perceptions of the impact military culture has had on their adult lives, and adult relationships, a high number of adult friendships and a high level of satisfaction with at least one friend or high frequency of interaction with friends and positive perceptions of the impact military culture has had on their adult lives and adult relationships. These data also suggest an existence of a low/low subgroup, in which participants have negative perceptions of the impact military culture has had on their adult lives and adult relationships and low numbers of adult friendships, a low level of satisfaction with at least one friend, or a low frequency of interaction. A positive
perception of the impact military lifestyle has had on adult life can be connected to a strong relationship with at least one close friend in adulthood.

Related to satisfaction with close friend #1, is the report of satisfaction with close friend #2-#5, in a positive manner. Satisfaction of other friendships was shown to positively relate to one another, as well. These relationships suggest a consistent level of satisfaction with at least five close friendships in adulthood. Therefore, strong satisfaction with at least one close friend may suggest strong, satisfying relationships with other close friends and weak satisfaction with one close friend may suggest less satisfying relationship with other close friends. Interaction and satisfaction were positively related to one another for close friendships #1, #2, #3, and #5, suggesting a reciprocal interaction between interaction and satisfaction.

Interaction with one friendship was also found to be related positively with interactions in other friendships, i.e., interaction with close friend #1 was positively related to interaction with close friend #2, #3, and #4; interaction with close friend #2 was positively related to interaction with close friend #3 and #4, etc. Not only do the above relationships suggest consistency across friendships, in terms of interaction frequency and satisfaction, but they further nuance the high/high and low/low subgroup, breaking participants into subgroups of high interaction/high satisfaction, moderate interaction/moderate satisfaction and low interaction/low satisfaction.

Demographic information was also used to explore subgroups related to relationship patterns. A negative relationship between age and interaction with close friend #1 and close friend #2 was found, suggesting that older participants interact with
their two close friends less often than younger participants. Age also showed a negative relationship with number of close friends, suggesting that older participants have fewer close friends than younger participants. The relationship between these variable suggests two subgroups delineated by age.

Gender was also used to explore subgroups in the quantitative data. A significant, negative relationship was found between gender and interaction with close friend #1. Males were coded at a lower number than females, so this relationship suggests that the females in this sample are more likely to interact with their closest friend at a higher rate than the males in this sample. Gender breaks into two subgroups, males and females.

The subgroups found suggest that there are definite clusters of participants based on their relationship patterns. A high/high and low/low subgroup have been found describing a variety of variables, a subgroup of older generational cohorts had been found, and younger generation cohorts and subgroups based on gender have been found. Participants in the qualitative phase were chosen to reflect these subgroups, as closely as possible, in order to explore the experiences of each of these subgroups in further detail.

Research question two: what subgroups exist in adult children of military families with regards to their perceptions of the influence of military culture on their adult relationships? The four impact questions were used to gauge participants' perceptions of how military culture has impacted their adult lives and relationships. Positive relationships were found between the four impact questions in the following ways:

1.) Impact on adult life positively with role in adult identity
2.) Impact on adult life positively with impact on adult friendships
3.) Impact on adult life positively with impact on adult romantic relationships
4.) Role in adult identity with impact on adult friendships
5.) Role in adult identity with impact on adult romantic relationships

These relationships suggest subgroups similar to the high/high and low/low subgroups of relationship patterns, where participants with a positive perspective on the impact of military upbringing on their adult life or a feeling that their military upbringing plays a large role in their adult identity, tend to rate other impact questions positively.

Demographic information was used to explore subgroups in the participants, in terms of the impact questions. Negative relationships between number of divorces and role in adult identity, impact on adult friendships and impact on adult relationships were found, suggesting subgroups of participants who have experienced divorce and who have not experienced divorce. Another piece of demographic information that was found to significantly relate to specific impact questions was whether participants were currently in a long-term or short-term relationship. This variable was positively related to impact of adult life and impact on romantic relationships. Similarly, romantic relationship satisfaction was related to the impact questions in that it positively correlated with impact on adult life. A positive relationship was also found between long-term or short-term relationships and satisfaction with this relationship, with long-term relationships being coded higher than short-term relationships. The above relationships suggest subgroups of long-term and short-term relationships as well as subgroups of high romantic relationships satisfaction and low romantic relationships satisfaction.
Research question three: what subgroups exist in adult children of military families with regards to ego development level? The theory of Ego Development consists of six stages, resulting in six levels of Ego Development. All of these stages were seen in the pool of participants of the current study, suggesting eight separate subgroups from the start. However, the researcher looked to further explore how participants may be divided into subgroups based on their Ego Development levels. Quantitative data regarding Ego Development levels was explored in order to find any subgroups that may exist.

Ego development was found to have a positive relationship with gender. Again, females were coded with a higher number than males, suggesting higher Ego Development levels in females. Level of education and household income also had a positive relationship with Ego Development, a finding that is consistent with findings of Gilmore and Durkin (2001) stating a positive correlation was found between the socioeconomic status of the participant and their scored ego development level which may also be related to educational attainment.

Participants were divided into two groups, children of enlisted service men and children of officer service men. When looking at their Ego Development levels, the data indicated that children from families with fathers in the officer ranks had higher levels of Ego Development than children from families with fathers in the enlisted ranks.

Participants were chosen for the qualitative phase of the current study based on the above subgroups. Emphasis was placed on the age, gender and Ego Development
level subgroups. However, the high/high and low/low subgroups related to friendships and the four impact questions were considered in the selection process as well.

**Qualitative research questions.** The qualitative phase of this study aimed to understand the impacts of military culture on adult relationships through the eyes of these participants. Participants were interviewed and asked to reflect on past and current aspects of their lives related to the military and their relationships. Three major themes emerged, Historical Relationships, Relationships in Practice and Perspectives on the Military. Themes and subthemes are discussed below in relation to the original research questions and the overarching theoretical underpinnings of the study.

*The grand tour question: what are the impacts of growing up in a military family on adult relationship patterns?* Based on the cross-case analyses, it is evident that being a part of a military family as a child impacts one’s life as an adult. These findings are consistent with the Family Life Cycle’s (McGoldrick, Carter & Preto, 2011) assumption that unresolved stressors, family patterns and histories are carried throughout the family life cycle. Participants believed that these family patterns and histories impacted their family relationships and friendships in adulthood both positively and negatively. Some participants also noted that they carried with them a sense of tolerance and acceptance of differences, impacting all of their relationships.

Adult relationship patterns in children of military families have not previously been explored. In terms of relating the findings of this study to the current body of literature, the logical comparison is with adult relationship patterns of military personnel. Military personnel have been found to marry at younger ages (Martin & McClure, 2000)
they are also more likely to divorce (Lundquist, 2007) and remarry (Adler-Baeder, Pittman & Taylor, 2005) than their civilian counterparts. Those at enlisted ranks are even more likely to have divorced and remarried. It was found in the quantitative portion of this study that 24.5% of participants had never married, 50% have married one, 21.6% have married twice and 2% have married three times. Only one participant of the qualitative phase has never married; however, she is in a seven year long relationship. Other participants married between the ages of 19 and 28, with the average age being 22.5. The qualitative data also indicated that 65.7% of participants have never experienced divorce, 25.5% have experience one divorce, 5.9% have experienced two divorces and 2.9% have experienced three divorces. No interview participants had experience divorce or remarriage, showing differences between this sample and previous research studies.

Family relationships, either with their family of origin, or the families they have since created, were found to take precedence for most participants, as opposed to friendships. Interestingly enough, previous research states that balancing career and family life is very difficult for military personnel and that family life is often seen as a competing priority in the lives of military personnel, as both family and the military take up significant time and energy (Drummet, 2003; Martin, McClure, 2000). One participant noted that this was not the case in his family of origin or in his own family when he served in the military. He stated, “[A]s my father did when he was in the Air Force and I was at home, when he came home he parked his rank at the front door and inside the house he was my dad, he was not Chief Master Sergeant [last name], and I tried to do the same thing in my time on active duty. I dropped my rank when I came home and only
used it when I was called upon to use it because I needed to separate the two so that we could have a family relationship[s] (JJ). If military families find it difficult to balance their military careers and family life, based on participants’ responses, it does not seem to impact long-standing close bonds between family members.

The finding that family relationships change during separations is consistent with previous research conducted by Drummet (2003). Separations bring stress to military families surrounding shifting roles and boundaries for the stay-at-home parent and children (Drummet, 2003). For Sherry and Leigh, these shifting roles and boundaries resulted in closer relationships with the children and stay-at-home parent. During war-related separations, Ryan-Wegner (2001) highlights the threat of war; “a pervasive stimulus that becomes part of everyday life” (Ryan-Wegner, 2001, p. 239) adds significant stress to children of military families. When responding to an open-ended question about the United States going to war, active duty children expressed a concern about their parent or themselves dying in the war more often than other children, suggesting that children of military families understand the potential threats of being in harm’s way. Wesley noted that a sense of somberness and seriousness came over his family, as his father was deployed to Vietnam. His family’s experience is consistent with Ryan-Wegner’s (2001) findings. Further, fear and anxiety is heightened by the media and informal communication on military bases, specifically with regard to death or harm to a military service member (Cozza, Chun & Polo, 2005); directly relating to Leigh’s experience where she was informally told that her parents and brother were killed in a bombing in Panama, although the report was not accurate.
Participants reported impacts on their adult friendships. The majority of these reports were describing the negative impacts of struggling with making and maintaining friendships, consistent with research on children of military families. Bradshaw, Sudhinaraset, Mmari and Blum (2010) found that children of military families experience strains on their relationships with peers, reporting that initiating and sustaining friendships is very difficult. Friends will pull away once they know the student is leaving, and joining already established social networks is challenging (Bradshaw et al., 2010). One parent in this study focused on his own experiences growing up in a military family saying, “I still have problems with relationships,” specifically friendship (Bradshaw, et al, 2010, p.91). These experiences sound similar to the experience reported by participants in this study. Leigh stated, “[Y]ou had your friends, you made your friends, and then you left your friends... and it got a little more difficult to really maintain those friendships...as I got older just because I never learned really to do it when I was young.”

Generally, participants would make no changes or only minor changes to their military upbringing. One participant, Linda spoke to the fact that she would change moving and traveling so often, so she could stay connected with her extended family. Previous research related to Linda’s feelings about her father’s career, in that the more moves a family experiences, the less satisfied they are with the Army (Burrell et al., 2006). Also related to travel and moving, Burrell, Adams, Durand and Castro (2006) found that foreign residence has a negative impact on the psychological and physical well-being of military spouses. Satisfaction of being a part of the military as reported by spouses of military personnel is also negatively related to living in a foreign country (Burrell et al., 2010). This seems distinct from the children’s perspectives: Cat, Susan and
JJ reported that they enjoyed their experiences abroad and JJ even has a desire to go back to foreign countries.

**Integration of quantitative and qualitative findings.** The researcher utilized the qualitative phase of this study to further explore information that the quantitative phase may not have captured. Based on this, the subquestions of the qualitative phase, listed below, sought to integrate the data and findings from both phases.

- What is the relationship between ego development and adult relationship patterns in adult children of military families?
- Are there differences in the experience of adult military children depending on which parent has/had a military career? (i.e., mother, father or both)
- Are their differences in the experience of adult military children depending on whether their parent was an officer or enlisted?
- Are there differences in the experience of adult military children depending on their generational cohort?

The quantitative data indicated that participants did not significantly differ in terms of their perspectives on military culture and its impacts on their adult lives, or adult relationship patterns when examined by age, or Ego levels, parent(s) in the military, or parental rank. The qualitative data are consistent findings and expand upon it to show no differences in any of the experiences explored in the interview process based on the above mentioned variables. In fact, cross-case analysis demonstrated more similarities than differences and the differences found did not prove to be related to any of the quantitative variables. Although similarities and differences were described in Chapter 4 (see Common Themes between Cases), the following tables highlight examples of the
similarities between participants, as related to the variables the research questions sought to explore. In order to compare participant responses across generational cohorts, the ages of participants are in parentheses beside their names.

In considering Ego levels and their relation to participants' interpersonal patterns in adulthood, it is clear that individuals' patterns are similar. In the below example, participants specify that they learned about their relationship preferences from watching their parents' relationship. When the time came to approach their own relationships, participants stated that they met their current partners early on in their dating experience.

Table 5.1
_Ego level and relationships in practice_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Ego Level</th>
<th>Quote 1 Learning relationship wants and needs</th>
<th>Quote 2 Approach to relationship upon leaving parents' home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JJ (63)</td>
<td>E4</td>
<td>&quot;I think that's the way I learned from growing up [My father] and my mother broke a lot of stereotypes...in the Deep South. [Y]ou just have to grow with the relationships. You need to do [continue to grow] in order to improve yourself.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;[I] dated; didn't have a lot of long relationships because things didn't work out, until I hooked up with my wife.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wesley (59)</td>
<td>E6</td>
<td>&quot;[M]y parents; they were role models. They role modeled, things like loyalty, honesty...and compassion for people.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;I never dated when I was living in my parents’ house, I was in the military by the time I started dating...That would be my relationship [with my wife].&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherry (65)</td>
<td>E8</td>
<td>&quot;I knew I didn't want what my parents had, which was a really cold and unaffectionate kind of relationship.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;I married at age 20 and I went straight from my dad's house to my husband's&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although the research questions of this study did not seek to examine perspectives on the military in terms of participants' Ego levels, the qualitative analysis process highlighted a finding consistent with the theory of Ego Development (Loevinger, 1970). Participants described very similar life stories regarding their military upbringing, the perceived impacts of this upbringing and any changes they would make to their upbringing; however, the language used to describe these experiences and meaning making related to these happenings differs based on Ego levels. The process of developing the ego involves changes in how the individual makes meaning of the world (Noam, 1998). In order to synthesize one’s way of making meaning of the world, new information must be integrated with old. The old information is not forgotten or extinguished, but restructured into a new way of understanding (Hauser, Gerber & Allen, 1998). Participants' responses provide evidence that changes in meaning making are seen across Ego levels. An example is portrayed in the table below.

Table 5.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Ego Level</th>
<th>Quote Changes to Upbringing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JJ (63)</td>
<td>E4</td>
<td>&quot;Growing up I would wish to have gone back, and gone to Japan with my dad on the three year assignment that he went to....I just think it would be fun to go back.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wesley (59)</td>
<td>E6</td>
<td>&quot;I would have preferred that we speak all the languages we learned growing up...As a parent, I would want my parents to have kept us speaking the languages just at home...The value of learning a foreign language is immense...I could foster relationships that are global in nature. I do have lots of friends [from other countries] still but we obviously speak in English, I would have enjoyed to continue writing them and/or calling them in their native language, it's respectful and it also builds your achievement. Free speech is not do you understand it in English, but also do I understand it in your language.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sherry (65) E8 “I can't really think of anything I would change because I learned in retrospect I learned from all of it; the positive and the negative and it helped make me who I am...It still kind of helped define me and I really can't sort out any one thing because it all contributed.”

Addressing the second subquestion, when looking at parental involvement in the military, specifically which parent had the military career, perceptions of the experiences brought forth in the interview process were similar. Leigh and Dan were the only participants with two parents that served in the military involved in the qualitative portion of this study. In the example below they are compared with one participant who experienced her father’s military career. Each participant noted that their family relationships take precedence over other relationships. When asked about their most important relationship, each participant chose a family member (i.e., parents, a child or long-term partner, based on the unique aspects of their relationships regarding support. Participants also reported difficulties making and maintaining relationships. Despite differences in parental involvement in the military, these participants show similarities across the three major themes discovered in the qualitative research analysis.
### Table 5.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Parent(s) with military involvement</th>
<th>Quote Historical Relationships</th>
<th>Quote Relationships in Practice</th>
<th>Quote Perspectives on the Military</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leigh (28)</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>&quot;The family always should be first priority...&quot; [Family relationships are pretty much my driving force. The family is the one that's always there, not the [people] that you meet down the street.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;It's a three-way tie between my parents and my partner because I lost my siblings. But [my partner is] the one that I'm going to call when I wake up in the morning or [when I] go to bed at night or if something happens at work or at school...just because I like to talk to her about stuff.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;So you had your friends, you made your friends, and then you left your friends and you made new friends...So as I got older...it got a little more difficult to really maintain those friendships...because I never learned really to do it when I was young.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda (54)</td>
<td>Father</td>
<td>&quot;[F]riend-wise...I see relationships just as acquaintances; people I know...Family relationships are stronger&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;That would be my marriage...We are very close. We confide in each other. I lean on him. He leans on me.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;I don’t know how civilian people keep these friends that they have known since preschool...It seems like a huge commitment. I sometimes wish I had that, but then again, I don’t think I would know how to do it.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan (28)</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>&quot;I've worked with a gentleman when I was doing internship who said that [work] comes before family. To me, [that] is an old model, and it's one that I can't live by. So, for me, I need to be an effective father, husband, brother, son, if I hope to be a, a decent [career title]&quot;</td>
<td>The most important relationship in my life. I think right now it's with my daughter, who is eight weeks old today...I can be such a critical part of her life and her development...She can't make it on her own.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;[M]y mother-in-law's moved like fifteen times since [high school] and [my wife's] kind of the same way. She likes keeping up with folks. And for me, I didn't even take my roommate's email address from college and we lived together for three years&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When looking at participants across themes based on their parents’ rank, similarities are once again highlighted. Participants reported having close, supportive
CHILDREN SERVE TOO

relationships in their home growing up. Again, participants stated that family relationships were those they considered to be of utmost importance. In the Perspectives on the Military theme, participants noted that they had a desire for military connection in adulthood ranging from marrying someone in the military to marrying a partner who grew up in a military family to wanting to stay a part of the military culture.

Table 5.4

Parental rank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Parent(s)</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Quote Historical Relationships</th>
<th>Quote Relationships in Practice</th>
<th>Quote Perspectives on the Military</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cat (41)</td>
<td>Enlisted</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;My mom generally stayed home most of the time to take care of the kids while my dad did his thing with the Air Force. He didn't really have to do a lot of TDY himself, like other parents did, but [they were] always supportive of each other [and] always doing stuff with the kids.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Currently that would be with my husband...no matter where he's at he's always here, he's always supportive and no matter what I need it doesn't matter if he's away he makes sure I'm taken care of.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;No, I was going to [go into the military], but I met him so. If I never met him, I definitely would have.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan (28)</td>
<td>Officer</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Dad was always full time, once he left the Navy...he was the majority of the income...he's busy all the time and so he can't make it to every, but at the same time, I could count on one hand the number of times that he missed anything. He was just always, always there...he'd always be there for me and my brother. He'd always be there for my mom.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;The most important relationship in my life. I think right now it's with my daughter, who is eight weeks old today...I can be such a critical part of her life and her development...She can't make it on her own.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;My father-in-law was a career military guy in the Army and so my wife moved around all the time when she was young.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan (46)</td>
<td>Enlisted</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;[Having] lots of kids in the home to play with, that made us close I think. We didn't need to make a lot of outside Oh, that would be my marriage. I've been married for...almost 18 years. I would count that and my children as the</td>
<td>&quot;I always thought I would end up with a military person, because that's what I knew.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Despite participants having varied experiences with their parents' military careers, the qualitative findings highlight similarities across cases. Historical relationships, Relationships in practice, and Perspectives on the military unite the stories of the eight interview participants.

**Limitations of the Study.** Chapter 3 included an informed critique of this study. This section serves to elaborate on this critique and examine procedural limitations in more detail. Limitations related to the sample, survey data, and interview data are explored.

**Sample.** Reporting the limitations of this study is complicated by the fact that the study used a mixed method research design. Something that is seen as a limitation in quantitative research could be seen in a positive light from a qualitative perspective. One of these issues is generalizability. Convenience sampling methods were used for the
quantitative portion of this study; due to this, the data are not representative of the entire population of adult children of military families. In fact, the sample was largely White, Caucasian (87.3%), and female (79.4%). This differs from the Department of Defense (2010) statistics on children of military families, in that current children are 50.8% males and 49.2% females. Statistics were not collected on children’s race or ethnicity. However, when looking at the statistics for current active duty members, their ethnicities break down as the following: 70% white, 17% Black or African American, 3.7% Asian, 2.1% Multi-racial, 1.7% American Indian or Alaska Native, .6% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander and 4.9% other/unknown (Department of Defense, 2010). Based on these data, the sample of the current study is not representative of the full population of adult children of military families. Another limitation to generalizability is that only adult children of military families with internet access that chose to be a part of a website geared towards “military BRATs” were a part of this study.

When looking at the qualitative procedures, individuals were selected to participate in the interviews based on their answers in the quantitative phase. The researcher’s intent was to utilize a typical case sampling in order to generate case analyses that were representative and comparable. During the selection of participants for the qualitative phase, it was difficult to match children of enlisted and officer ranks from the same branch of the military for comparison because of the other variables that the research wished to represent, such as age, gender, and Ego levels. Therefore, comparisons between adult children of enlisted members and officers may be limited. The chosen participants do not accurately represent all of the demographics of participants from the quantitative phase.
With that being said, the goal of qualitative research is not generalizability. In fact, it is the responsibility of the individual to determine if results from a qualitative study are applicable to other circumstances (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2010). The same could be said for the qualitative phase of this study.

Survey data. The researcher made every attempt to adhere to regulations regarding the creation of the survey utilized in this study. The survey for this study was reviewed by a professional with more experience in creating and collecting survey data. Despite these safeguards, it is possible that participants' answers were swayed by social desirability or perceived intent of the research study. Participants may have misunderstood questions, or perceived them in a different way than the research intended, leading the participant to respond in a fashion that differed from the original intent of the researcher.

Interview data. To prepare for the interview process, the researcher conducted practice interviews and refined the interview guide based on this experience. This revised interview guide was used to generate qualitative data. Despite these precautionary steps, some conversations were initiated by the researcher based on participant answers. These conversations were not consistent across interviews. Some participants were also given a more thorough explanation of questions in the interview guide, due to their lack of understanding or evidence of being challenged by the question. Although the individual and cross-case analyses did not show differences in intent behind these varying conversations, there is a possibility that they impact participants' responses.
The researcher also utilized an outside transcription agency. Although the researcher listened to audiorecordings and edited the transcriptions as necessary, the transcribed information could have impacted the clarity, quality and accuracy of participants’ responses.

While there are differences and similarities in some participants’ interview responses, it is difficult to say that these commonalities, or lack thereof, are based on the variables examined: ego levels, age, parents’ rank, and parent involved. Other compounding factors existed that could impact participants’ responses, such as, negative relationships in family of origin, the birth of a new child, and deaths of family members.

**Implications and recommendations.** Although the current study may not represent all adult children of military families, it certainly represents the stories, experiences, and struggles of some. As stated in Chapter 1, the intent of this study is to continue the efforts that are being made to support military families through the enjoyable yet trying military lifestyle. Therefore, examining the implications for counseling practice and future research is important.

**Implications for counseling practice.** Mental health counselors have the potential to see clients from all walks of life. A typical procedure for beginning counseling work with an individual or family is to collect demographic information through an intake process. The findings of this study and previous studies suggest that adult children of military families have faced unique experiences, suggesting that collecting information on immersion in military culture is both relevant and necessary to developing an appreciation and understanding of this cultural and family experience. Such an inquiry
can be done simply by adding a question or two to already established intake paperwork. For example:

- Did either of your parents serve in the United States Armed Forces?
- Did you or do you currently serve in the United Stated Armed Forces?

If a client checks yes to either of these questions, counselors may seek more detailed information, such as which parent served, the branch in which they (the parents or client) served and the duration of their (the parent or client) service. Collecting this information can reveal any unique experiences that may have impacted their adult relationships. While the qualitative interview participants of this study largely had positive responses to their military upbringing, the assumption that this is true for all adult children of military families cannot be made. The major themes found in this study highlighted that for some adult children of military families family relationships may be the most important relationships in their lives. For counselors, this is particularly important to note as family counseling is an avenue to explore when working with this population. The importance and comfort of family relationships may translate into the important and comfort of the counseling process when family members are involved. Participants also indicated that they learn what they want and need in relationships based partially on what their parents modeled in their home. Parents either modeled behaviors and relational aspects that their children wanted to adopt in their own relationships or that the wanted to exclude from their relationships. Family counselors can utilize having all family members present to foster healthy, positive relationship between the parental unit in order to ensure children of military families have positive role models for their
relationships of the future. Family counseling can also be conducted with adult children of military families and their own partners and children in the same regard.

Support systems are often explored in counseling to alleviate life stressors. For adult children of military families, it appears that the logical hierarchy of support is in this order: immediate family relationships (parents, and siblings), extended family relationships (grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins), friends with experience in a military family or an understanding of military culture, and friends outside of the previous description. Several participants noted that they have struggled with making and maintaining friendships throughout their lives. It is hard to know whether family relationships are important because outside support is scarce or if friendships are limited because they are deemed unnecessary or less important due to their lack of permanence. In either case, the role of the counselor when working with adult children of military families could be to take a teaching role that helps clients develop the skills necessary to meet friends and create meaningful friendships, however clients define “meaningful.” Here it is assumed that clients would want to build skills to make and maintain friendships. This may not be the case. Another approach counselors can take is to simply respect the interior focus on the family. Currently, children who are growing up in military families are facing similar experiences with making friends and leaving their friends. A preventative approach that counselors, especially Professional School Counselors, may be able to take with this population is to again, teach them skills that will allow them to make meaningful peer relationships, but also to utilize technology in order to maintain these friendships. These skills can be taught in group formats, if resources are limited. Facilitating conversations between two peers, whose friendship
may be threatened by traveling or moving, about how to stay connected the on another can be helpful. With social networking sites, e-mail, and video conferencing applications linked to cell phones and mobile mp3 players, less effort is required to communicate with someone far away. Teaching children (and adults) to utilize these approaches to stay connected might alleviate some of the struggles that participants reported about friend relationships.

Also of importance is the fact that adult children of military families may have a desire to stay connected to the military lifestyle. Adult children of military families were immersed in the values and norms of the military culture during their formative years. It makes sense that these traditions are often deeply rooted and sought out later in life and that a desire to be around people with knowledge of or experience with the military exists. Counselors must be knowledgeable of military culture in order to provide resources, such as online forums, groups in the area, etc. that may be of interest to their clients, especially in areas far from military installations.

Some participants of this study mentioned not having a “home.” Counselors can explore how this sense of being rootless plays into their friendships, romantic relationships, and other aspects of their lives. If clients acknowledge having a sense of not having a home, they may not be aware of how or if this feeling is impacting other areas of their lives. Counselors can help to explore in greater detail what not being rooted or connected to a certain place means for the individual client (and their families).

Being aware of issues that adult children of military families face is only the first step in continuing much need support. Counselors have the ability to advocate for this
population in their local community and/or on the national level. Bringing attention to the unique experiences that this population faces, positive and negative, in any capacity, puts us one foot forward in helping military families.

**Implications for future research.** Because this study was the first of its kind, attempting to explore the long term implications of growing up in a military family, future research must be conducted to further this exploration. First, this study can benefit from being replicated with a civilian population, in order to understand, if the relationship patterns (i.e., learning from your parental relationship, marrying at a young age, difficulties with friendships, etc.) are in fact unique to adult children of military families.

Second, this study attempted to look at generational cohort differences in their experiences with military culture related to relationships. However, participants were 25 or older in order to make sure they were able to have adequate time to develop relationships in adulthood. Another study could look at younger generational cohorts, possibly gaining access to children and adolescents, or working with participants as young as 18, in order to explore similarities and differences between older generations and the newest generations of military children. Too far away to be relevant.

Experiences for younger generations are different, as more dual military families exist, technology keeps family members more connected during deployments and temporary duty assignments and deployments are more frequent. These changes may lead to differing perspectives on relationships and the military lifestyle. These generations are also more likely to utilize social networking sites and other means via the internet to keep
in contact with friends after moving. Will family relationships still be a top priority, if friendships are still in existence through technology?

Third, it may be of use to replicate this study in a fashion that has a more in depth qualitative phase. More representative and applicable themes could emerge by interviewing a larger portion of the sample or each person in this study. Adding to this, replicating the current study in a way that collects a more representative sample of adult military children (through accurate race/ethnicity proportions, and gender proportions) can expand generalizability of the results.

Fourth, two research studies can be conducted in order to examine friendship and romantic relationships separately. During the interview process information was a bit convoluted. A researcher could really examine impacts of the military culture on friendships and romantic relationships in greater depth and detail by focusing solely on one or the other. The same can be said for exploring the perspectives of participants about their military upbringings. A general study could explore basic perceptions outside of the context of adult relationships. This would give a researcher the chance to really explore the differences and similarities in participants' meaning making of growing up in a military family.

Fifth, a study of the impacts military culture has on Ego Development levels could expand the current body of knowledge on military families. Military families would have to be given the Washington University Sentence Completion Test in a longitudinal format, preferably before exposure to military culture and after exposure has occurred for a set amount of time. A study such as this could also explore Ego levels of
individuals before attending initial military trainings (i.e., boot camp) and after exposure to the military lifestyle has occurred for a set time. Ego Development can also be examined in the context of jobs, specialized trainings, temporary duty assignments, deployments. What impact may these different aspects of the military have on Ego levels? Researchers would need to account for other compounding factors that may influence Ego Development levels. For this study and any of the above listed studies, comparisons between race, gender, age and other demographic information can be explored.

Summary

The intent of this study was to further understand the implications of impacts military culture may have on children of military families, specifically, exploring adult children of military families in the context of their adult relationships. The themes emerging from this study (Historical Relationships, Relationships in Practice, and Perspective on the Military) and their respective subthemes are only the beginning of understanding the Family Life Cycle of children from military families. The implications for counseling and research above highlight the path that we must travel upon in order to continue aiding military personnel, their families and especially their children with support and resources they may require. Mental health professionals have the ability to support military families through key moments in their lives and researchers have the ability to explore and uncover data that justify and inform supportive services for this population. Overall, the data suggest positive impacts, but there is far more to explore with regards to the long-term implications of growing up in a military family. Many
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people understand military service, as the service of individual; however, the children serve too.
Appendix A - Informed Consent

I am willing to participate in a study of the adult relationships of children of military families. I understand that this study is being conducted by Interviewer, a doctoral candidate in Counselor Education and Supervision at the College of William and Mary.

As a participant in this study, I am aware that I will be asked to complete the research instruments included in this survey. The research instruments are: a demographic questionnaire; a relationship questionnaire; and the Washington University Sentence Completion Test. The questions included on these instruments include sensitive topics, such as, sex, sexuality and intimate relationships. I am also aware that I may be contacted at a later date to participate in an interview to further discuss my responses to this survey.

I am aware that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. The assessments and demographic questionnaire will be confidential and identified by a code that I will choose for instrument matching purposes. No identifying information will be reported in the study results.

By participating in this study, I understand that there are no obvious risks to my physical or mental health. I understand that a copy of the results of the study will be given to me upon request. The investigator in this study may be reached by contacting Interviewer, (757) 221-2363, kjheyward@email.wm.edu

Confidentiality Statement:

As a participant in this study, I am aware that all records will be kept confidential and my name will not be associated with any of the results of this study.

If I have any questions that arise in connection with my participation in this study, I should contact Dr. Victoria Foster, the Chair of Ms. Heyward’s Doctoral Committee at (757) 221-2321 or vafost@wm.edu. I understand that I may report dissatisfaction with any aspect of the research to Dr. Thomas Ward, Chair of the School of Education Internal Review Committee at (757) 221-2358 or tjward@wm.edu or Lee Kirkpatrick, chair of the Protection of Human Subjects Committee at the College of William and Mary at (757) 221-3997 or lakirk@wm.edu.

By clicking agree, I acknowledge that I fully understand the above statements, and do hereby consent to participate in this study.
Appendix B – Online Survey – Demographics

Q1 Hello, and thank you for taking the time to visit this survey.
You are eligible to take this survey, if:
You are 25 years or older AND
Your mother, father or both have served in the United States Military AND
Your parent served in the United States Air Force, United States Army, United States Navy, or United States Marines Corps
This survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Please, remember that there are no right or wrong answers to these questions. Answer each question to the best of your ability. I understand that your time is valuable. At the end of this survey, if you choose to enter contact information, you will be entered to win one of four $25.00 Visa gift cards.
Your participation is greatly appreciated.
    ☑ I meet the conditions and agree to continue. (1)
    ☑ I do not meet the conditions or elect not to participate. (2)

If I do not meet the condition... Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q2 I am willing to participate in a study of the adult relationships of children of military families. I understand that this study is being conducted by Interviewer, a doctoral candidate in Counselor Education and Supervision at the College of William and Mary. As a participant in this study, I am aware that I will be asked to complete the research instruments included in this survey. The research instruments are: a demographic questionnaire; a relationship questionnaire; and the Washington University Sentence Completion Test. The questions included on these instruments include sensitive topics, such as, sex, sexuality and intimate relationships. I am also aware that I may be contacted at a later date to participate in an interview to further discuss my responses to this survey, if I agree and include contact information at the end of this survey. I am aware that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. The assessments and demographic questionnaire will be confidential and identified by a code that I will choose for instrument matching purposes. No identifying information will be reported in the study results. By participating in this study, I understand that there are no obvious risks to my physical or mental health. I understand that a copy of the results of the study will be given to me upon request. The investigator in this study may be reached by contacting Interviewer, (757) 221-2363, kjheyward@email.wm.edu Confidentiality Statement: As a participant in this study, I am aware that all records will be kept confidential and my name will
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- Agree (1)
- Disagree (2)

Q3 Age:
- 18-24 (1)
- 25-30 (2)
- 31-35 (3)
- 36-40 (4)
- 41-45 (5)
- 46-50 (6)
- 51-55 (7)
- 56-60 (8)
- 61-65 (9)
- 66-70 (10)
- 71-75 (11)
- 76-80 (12)
- 81-85 (13)
- 86-90 (14)
- 91-95 (15)
- 96-100 (16)

Q4 Gender:
- Male (1)
- Female (2)

Q5 Race:
- Asian, Asian American (1)
- Black, African American (2)
- Latino, Hispanic, Mexican American (3)
- Native American, American Indian (4)
- White, Caucasian, European American (5)
- Other (6)

Q6 Please, specify race:
Q7 Level of Education:
- Grade School (1)
- High School Diploma or Equivalent (2)
- Some College (3)
- Associate’s Degree (4)
- Bachelor’s Degree (5)
- Master’s Degree (6)
- Post-Master’s Degree (7)
- Doctorate Degree (8)

Q8 Household Income:
- $0-12,000 (1)
- $12,000-24,999 (2)
- $25,000-39,999 (3)
- $40,000-59,999 (4)
- $60,000-79,999 (5)
- $80,000 and above (6)

Q9 Current Area of Occupation:
- Architecture & Engineering (1)
- Art, Design, Entertainment, Media & Sports (2)
- Building & Grounds Maintenance Occupations (3)
- Business & Financial (4)
- Community & Social Service (5)
- Computer & Mathematical (6)
- Construction (7)
- Education & Library (8)
- Farming & Forestry (9)
- Food Preparation & Serving (10)
- Health (11)
- Installation, Maintenance & Repair (12)
- Legal (13)
- Life, Physical & Social Sciences (14)
- Management (15)
- Military (16)
- Office & Administration (17)
- Other (18)
- Personal Care & Service (19)
- Production Occupations (20)
- Protective Occupations (21)
- Sales (22)
- Student (23)
- Transportation & Material Moving (24)

Q10 In which branch of the military did you serve (or are you currently serving)?
Q11 Which of your parents served (or is currently serving) in the military?

- Father (1)
- Mother (2)
- Both (3)
- Neither (4)

Q12 Father's Branch of Military:

- U.S. Air Force (1)
- U.S. Army (2)
- U.S. Coast Guard (3)
- U.S. Marines Corps (4)
- U.S. National Guard (5)
- U.S. Navy (6)

Q13 Father's Rank at Retirement:

- E1 (1)
- E2 (2)
- E3 (3)
- E4 (4)
- E5 (5)
- E6 (6)
- E7 (7)
- E8 (8)
- E9 (9)
- W1 (10)
- W2 (11)
- W3 (12)
- W4 (13)
- W5 (14)
- O1 (15)
- O2 (16)
- O3 (17)
- O4 (18)
- O5 (19)
- O6 (20)
- O7 (21)
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Q14 My father participated in combat deployment.

- True (1)
- False (2)

Q15 Mother's Branch of Military:

- U.S. Air Force (1)
- U.S. Army (2)
- U.S. Coast Guard (3)
- U.S. Marines Corps (4)
- U.S. National Guard (5)
- U.S. Navy (6)

Q16 Mother's Rank at Retirement:

- E1 (1)
- E2 (2)
- E3 (3)
- E4 (4)
- E5 (5)
- E6 (6)
- E7 (7)
- E8 (8)
- E9 (9)
- W1 (10)
- W2 (11)
- W3 (12)
- W4 (13)
- W5 (14)
- O1 (15)
- O2 (16)
- O3 (17)
- O4 (18)
- O5 (19)
- O6 (20)
- O7 (21)
- O8 (22)
- O9 (23)
- O10 (24)

Q17 My mother participated in combat deployment.

- True (1)
- False (2)
Q18 How many long-term (more than 1 year) romantic relationships (not including marriages) have you had since you were 18 years old?

- 1-4 (1)
- 5-9 (2)
- 10-15 (3)
- 15+ (4)

Q19 How many times have you been married?

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 5+ (6)

Q20 How many times have you been divorced?

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 5+ (6)

Q21 How many biological children do you have?

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5+ (5)

Q22 How many adopted children do you have?

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 5+ (6)
Appendix C – Online Survey – Relationship Questionnaire

Q23 How many romantic relationships do you currently have?

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5+ (5)

Q24 Which of these best describes your current romantic relationship (#1)?

- Short-term romantic relationship (less than 1 year) (1)
- Long-term romantic relationship (more than 1 year) (2)

Q25 How often do you interact with your current romantic partner (#1)?

- Never (1)
- Less than Once a Month (2)
- Once a Month (3)
- 2-3 Times a Month (4)
- Once a Week (5)
- 2-3 Times a Week (6)
- Daily (7)

Q26 How satisfied are you with your current relationship (#1)?

- Very Dissatisfied (1)
- Dissatisfied (2)
- Somewhat Dissatisfied (3)
- Neutral (4)
- Somewhat Satisfied (5)
- Satisfied (6)
- Very Satisfied (7)

Q27 Which of these best describes your current romantic relationship (#2)?

- Short-term romantic relationship (less than 1 year) (1)
- Long-term romantic relationship (more than 1 year) (2)

Q28 How often do you interact with your current romantic partner (#2)?

- Never (1)
- Less than Once a Month (2)
Q29 How satisfied are you with your current relationship (#2)?

- Very Dissatisfied (1)
- Dissatisfied (2)
- Somewhat Dissatisfied (3)
- Neutral (4)
- Somewhat Satisfied (5)
- Satisfied (6)
- Very Satisfied (7)

Q30 Which of these best describes your current romantic relationship (#3)?

- Short-term romantic relationship (less than 1 year) (1)
- Long-term romantic relationship (more than 1 year) (2)

Q31 How often do you interact with your current romantic partner (#3)?

- Never (1)
- Less than Once a Month (2)
- Once a Month (3)
- 2-3 Times a Month (4)
- Once a Week (5)
- 2-3 Times a Week (6)
- Daily (7)

Q32 How satisfied are you with your current relationship (#3)?

- Very Dissatisfied (1)
- Dissatisfied (2)
- Somewhat Dissatisfied (3)
- Neutral (4)
- Somewhat Satisfied (5)
- Satisfied (6)
- Very Satisfied (7)

Q33 Which of these best describes your current romantic relationship (#4)?

- Short-term romantic relationship (less than 1 year) (1)
Q34 How often do you interact with your current romantic partner (#4)?

- Never (1)
- Less than Once a Month (2)
- Once a Month (3)
- 2-3 Times a Month (4)
- Once a Week (5)
- 2-3 Times a Week (6)
- Daily (7)

Q35 How satisfied are you with your current relationship (#4)?

- Very Dissatisfied (1)
- Dissatisfied (2)
- Somewhat Dissatisfied (3)
- Neutral (4)
- Somewhat Satisfied (5)
- Satisfied (6)
- Very Satisfied (7)

Q36 Which of these best describes your current romantic relationship (#5)?

- Short-term romantic relationship (less than 1 year) (1)
- Long-term romantic relationship (more than 1 year) (2)

Q37 How often do you interact with your current romantic partner (#5)?

- Never (1)
- Less than Once a Month (2)
- Once a Month (3)
- 2-3 Times a Month (4)
- Once a Week (5)
- 2-3 Times a Week (6)
- Daily (7)

Q38 How satisfied are you with your current relationship (#5)?

- Very Dissatisfied (1)
- Dissatisfied (2)
- Somewhat Dissatisfied (3)
- Neutral (4)
- Somewhat Satisfied (5)
CHILDREN SERVE TOO

- Satisfied (6)
- Very Satisfied (7)

Q39 How many close friendships do you currently have?

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6-9 (6)
- 10-14 (7)
- 15-20 (8)
- 20+ (9)

Q40 How often do you interact with your close friend (#1)?

- Never (1)
- Less than Once a Month (2)
- Once a Month (3)
- 2-3 Times a Month (4)
- Once a Week (5)
- 2-3 Times a Week (6)
- Daily (7)

Q41 How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#1)?

- Very Dissatisfied (1)
- Dissatisfied (2)
- Somewhat Dissatisfied (3)
- Neutral (4)
- Somewhat Satisfied (5)
- Satisfied (6)
- Very Satisfied (7)

Q42 How often do you interact with your close friend (#2)?

- Never (1)
- Less than Once a Month (2)
- Once a Month (3)
- 2-3 Times a Month (4)
- Once a Week (5)
- 2-3 Times a Week (6)
Q43 How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#2)?

- Very Dissatisfied (1)
- Dissatisfied (2)
- Somewhat Dissatisfied (3)
- Neutral (4)
- Somewhat Satisfied (5)
- Satisfied (6)
- Very Satisfied (7)

Q44 How often do you interact with your close friend (#3)?

- Never (1)
- Less than Once a Month (2)
- Once a Month (3)
- 2-3 Times a Month (4)
- Once a Week (5)
- 2-3 Times a Week (6)
- Daily (7)

Q45 How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#3)?

- Very Dissatisfied (1)
- Dissatisfied (2)
- Somewhat Dissatisfied (3)
- Neutral (4)
- Somewhat Satisfied (5)
- Satisfied (6)
- Very Satisfied (7)

Q46 How often do you interact with your close friend (#4)?

- Never (1)
- Less than Once a Month (2)
- Once a Month (3)
- 2-3 Times a Month (4)
- Once a Week (5)
- 2-3 Times a Week (6)
- Daily (7)

Q47 How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#4)?
CHILDREN SERVE TOO

Q48 How often do you interact with your close friend (#5)?

- Never (1)
- Less than Once a Month (2)
- Once a Month (3)
- 2-3 Times a Month (4)
- Once a Week (5)
- 2-3 Times a Week (6)
- Daily (7)

Q49 How satisfied are you with your close friendship (#5)?

- Very Dissatisfied (1)
- Dissatisfied (2)
- Somewhat Dissatisfied (3)
- Neutral (4)
- Somewhat Satisfied (5)
- Satisfied (6)
- Very Satisfied (7)
Appendix D – Online Survey – Impact Questions

Q50 How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your adult life?
- Highly Negative Impact (1)
- Negative Impact (2)
- None (3)
- Positive Impact (4)
- Highly Positive Impact (5)

Q51 What role does growing up in a military family play in your identity as an adult?
- Large Negative Role (1)
- Small Negative Role (2)
- None (3)
- Small Positive Role (4)
- Large Positive Role (5)

Q52 How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your adult friendships?
- Highly Negative Impact (1)
- Negative Impact (2)
- None (3)
- Positive Impact (4)
- Highly Positive Impact (5)

Q53 How would you describe the impact that growing up in a military family has had on your romantic relationships in adulthood?
- Highly Negative Impact (1)
- Negative Impact (2)
- None (3)
- Positive Impact (4)
- Highly Positive Impact (5)
Appendix E – Online Survey – Washington University Sentence Completion Test

Q54 Complete the following sentences.
Q55 When a child will not join in group activities...
Q56 Raising a family...
Q57 When I am criticized...
Q58 A man's job...
Q59 Being with other people...
Q60 The thing I like about myself is...
Q61 Complete the following sentences.
Q62 My mother and I...
Q63 What gets me into trouble is...
Q64 Education...
Q65 When people are helpless...
Q66 Women are lucky because...
Q67 A good father...
Q68 Complete the following sentences.
Q69 A girl has a right to...
Q70 When they talk about sex, I...
Q71 A wife should...
Q72 I feel sorry...
Q73 A man feels good when...
Q74 Rules are...
Q75 You have now completed all of the items on this survey. Please, submit your contact information below, if you are willing to participate in an interview elaborating upon your survey answers or if you would like to be entered in a drawing to win one of four $25.00 Visa gift cards. Also, specify below why you are including your contact information. You will also find the option of providing a pseudonym that will be used throughout the research process as an additional way to protect your confidentiality.

Name: (1)
Phone Number: (2)
E-mail Address: (3)
Pseudonym, if desired: (4)

Q76 I am willing to:

☐ Be entered to win one of four $25.00 Visa gift cards. (1)
☐ Be contacted for an interview elaborating upon my survey answers (2)
Appendix G – Interview Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee Information</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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10.) List demographics info above
11.) What interested you in this study?
12.) What do relationships mean to you?
13.) Tell me about the most important relationship in your life.
   a. Draw out specifics/demographics/historical data here
   b. What makes this relationship stand out from all the others?
   c. What qualities make this unique?
14.) How did you learn what you need in a relationship?
   a. If they do not understand question: When we’re growing up, we learn by observing. We see relational patterns at home, at friends’ houses – even on television. What relationships in the past might you have used to build your idea of what a good relationship is?
15.) What did relationships look like in your home growing up?
   a. Further explanation, if needed:
      i. Draw a picture of what Mom & Dad were like.
      ii. How did they approach relationships?
      iii. What were the relationship rules in the household?
      iv. What was dating like?
      v. When could you start?
      vi. Did you have to bring people home?
      vii. Curfews?
      viii. Things you were/weren’t supposed to do?
      ix. Image you had to uphold?
      x. Military children as partners more acceptable?
   b. Looking back on all that you mentioned, how were things different during deployment?
16.) How did you approach things relationally once you left the home?
17.) Did you go into military? Did you marry into the military? Did you deliberate not go into/marry military?
18.) How might the military component of your personal history have positively impacted the relationships you have/have had in your adult life?
19.) If you could go back and change something relational in your childhood/upbringing, what would it be?
   a. How might that influence your relationships today?
20.) This was a survey about relationship and military culture – is there anything about the two that you’d like to add? Something you’d like to share that we haven’t talked about?
Interviewer: Alright, so I just wanted to check a couple things before we start the formal interview. I pulled some of the information from the survey that you filled out and I just wanted to double check that they were correct.

Wesley: Okay.

Interviewer: So on your survey you chose that you were between 56 and 60 years old, is that correct?

Wesley: That’s correct.

Interviewer: Do you mind giving me your specific age?

Wesley: Fifty-nine.

Interviewer: Okay, I have that you identify as a male and also that you identify as Asian is that correct?

Wesley: That’s correct.

Interviewer: Okay, so looks like your father was the one in the military, he was in the Army, and at retirement, he was an officer.

Wesley: That’s correct.

Interviewer: Okay.

Wesley: I was also in the army, I don’t know if that makes a difference.

Interviewer: Sure, I’ll make a note of that. How long was your father in the service?

Wesley: Twenty-seven years.

Interviewer: Alright, and what about you?

Wesley: Twenty-four.

Interviewer: Okay, so when your father was in for 27 years, what age range were you?

Wesley: I was born all the way till 17.

Interviewer: Okay, let me see if there’s anything else, I want to double check. It looks like you identify your current relationship as a long-term relationship.

Wesley: Yes.

Interviewer: And how would you describe that, I feel like you know, long-term relationship could mean a lot of things. Are you married? Are you with the same person for a number of years, how would you describe that?
Wesley: Married forever.

Interviewer: Okay.

Wesley: It’ll be 35 this year.

Interviewer: Excellent okay, it looks like you also said that growing up in the military, the impact it had on your life in general was a highly positive impact.

Wesley: Yes.

Interviewer: It had a highly positive impact on your friendships in adulthood and a positive impact on your romantic relationships in adulthood, is that correct?

Wesley: Yes it is.

Interviewer: Well my next question for you is how did you learn what you needed or wanted in a relationship?

JJ: Uh you know those are things that just grow. The relationship either feels good or it doesn’t feel good. You can have a friendship that doesn’t have a long lasting relationship because it doesn’t continue to grow. If your interactions with each other do not grow and stimulate off of each other, then it’s probably a transitory relationship.

Interviewer: Okay, so for you it’s, relationships are really about growing together.

JJ: That’s correct.

Interviewer: Okay, how did you learn that that’s what relationships are?

JJ: Actually, I think that’s the way I learned from growing up. You know my father, man he really had one, two, three, four assignments actually before I left home. One of which was for seven years and um, he and my mother broke a lot of stereotypes in that town, it was in the Deep South and um, it’s um, it’s one of those things, it’s either you just have to grow with the relationships and if you go not grow then the, you yourself do not continue to grow and you need to do that in order to improve yourself.

Interviewer: Okay, so it sounds like you learned that from your father.

JJ: And mother, both.

Interviewer: And mother okay, so that kind of brings me to my next question, which is what, did relationships look like in your home growing up?

JJ: A lot like my wife and I except my mother in later years got really strange. We figured that was because of her drug habit that she got into because she was involved in an automobile accident and had prescription abuse by doctors. So other than that you
know, my brother, sister, and I at the time we were home we were good together. We enjoyed each other, we did things, and we planned things like we kicked our parents out of the house for their 25th wedding anniversary and made them take a second honeymoon.

Interviewer: Okay, so it sounds like your family relationships were pretty close when you were growing up.

JJ: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay and if you could think back to when you started dating and starting to form your own relationships outside of the family, how did your parents approach those relationships?

JJ: Uh, my parents approach my relationships as long as I honored and respected the females that I dated, that was fine.

Interviewer: Okay so were there like any rules around dating such as curfews or if you could bring people home or not etc.?

JJ: I could bring people home, there were curfews but that was the spirit of the time in the 60's, curfew was around uh, 11:00 on Friday night, 12:00 on Saturday night and 8:00 on Sunday night.

Leigh: There was once that we were left. It was a traumatic happening. There was only once in my lifetime that I've ever been left with someone that's not family and that was the day, uh, we ran out of food and supply for children in the neighborhood during one of the bombings in, in Panama and only children in arms were allowed to get on the transport with the women to leave to go retrieve food. So I was left in a safe house with some other people and there was, there was bombing and one of the workers there or one of the kids there told me that my parents were killed in the bomb along with my brother. So I, I remember that quite vividly, was just kind of screaming in horror and just, you know, wailing and all that, carrying on as, as you would and then, uh, I'd, you know, run up to the window and I'm looking out at the smoke and I see my mom coming out of the smoke screen. I'm like well, that's total, you know, Lifetime movie moment right there. So she comes walking out of the smoke and she, you know, gets into the house. She bends down and I told her, you know, I, I yelled at her that she left me. And she swore up and down that she would never leave me again and she never has. So you know, from six to twenty-eight, I have never been left with anyone that’s not family and if I was left with family and I said I was not comfortable, she said fine, come with me. And, I, I was never left alone after that. She promised me.

Interviewer: Okay. Well, it sounds like your mom and you and your mom have a really strong relationship. And you know, she kept, she kept her promise – said she would never leave you alone and she hasn’t done that again and I could certainly see why. That seems like it was a pretty traumatic experience for you and probably for her, as well.
Leigh: Oh yeah.

Interviewer: So, going back to what you said about not being able to date while you were in high school. I am wondering how you started to approach things relationally once you left the home.

Leigh: How I managed to approach... Sorry, what?

Interviewer: Things relationally. So how did you approach relationships once you left your parents' home?

Leigh: Very carefully. No. I mean, I wasn't allowed to date in high school but there were still the ones that I liked. I did Crawl (?), I did Homecoming, I did all that sort of stuff. I was in love with the same boy for like six years and we finally dated briefly once we were in college. We ended up at the same college together. So you know, once leaving high school, I was still surrounded by the people from high school anyway. So it wasn't very different to, to, you know, to move into a romantic relationship with them at all. And the meeting other people, I always end up, you know, falling for a friend. So I made friends with guys and then we'd date for a little while. Or I went back to a boy from high school that, who had joined the military and he, you know, went off to Iraq and came back all studly and wanting to date. And I'm like, why not? So we did for a year so, but he was gone almost the entire year, too. But I think that's why it went so well just because he was gone. [Laugh]

Interviewer: Okay. So, so you kind of said that your approach to romantic relationships was that you were friends with the person first and then it turned into something that was more than friendship.

Leigh: Correct.

Interviewer: Okay, so you mentioned that you didn't go into the military. You did date, a few people or the one person you mentioned that was in the military and you also mentioned that your parents really talked you out of going into the military once you said that you were considering doing that is there anything else that kept you from going into the military?

Leigh: Uh, yeah. I did Junior ROTC and I did ROTC.

Interviewer: Mm hmm.

Leigh: And I was, uh, quite involved in ROTC in college when my, my, my youngest brother passed away.

Interviewer: Okay.
Leigh: And by the time this happened, I was the only left and I, I did not want to, join the military and then have my, my parents or, you know, the rest of the family suffer a little bit more thinking that I would be in harm's was because I was deliberately joining the military during wartime. So pretty much, uh, a lot of stuff had happened to my siblings and in the final death, pretty much said alright, fine, I will not join the military and I won't be a cop so you don't have to worry too much about my, my duties. I can get killed anyways, but why not, uh, let's not court disaster here.

Interviewer: Sure, okay. That makes sense. So what was it that attracted you to wanting to go into the military?

Leigh: I loved it. I love the life, I love the uniform, I like the, the chain of command and knowing what you were doing and having proper duties, uh, travelling, having them pay for your schooling, everything about it. All of the commercials say, I was all for it. I ate that up.
Appendix I – Sample Interview Summaries

Interview Summary – Dan

Dan is a 28 year old, white male who had been married for a year and a half. Dan’s wife also grew up in a military family. Both of his parents were in the Navy and retired as officers. His mother served in the Navy for 6 years and his father for 8 years. His parents completed their military service before Dan was born.

Dan believes that growing up in a military family has had a positive impact on his life in general, a small positive role on identity as an adult, a positive impact on his friendships in adulthood, and no impact on his romantic relationships in adulthood.

Dan was interested in participating in this study because he is always willing to help with research. He feels that is does not take a lot to be involved that that it can help someone in the future.

For Dan, relationships mean anyone with whom you are connected. For him this means people he sees walking down the street or driving down the road, as well as others he has a deeper connection with. He hopes that his relationship with others “encourages and strengthens them somehow” while also challenging them and helping them grow.

The most important relationship in Dan’s life at the time of the interview is with his eight week old daughter. He feels that this relationship is unique in that, you do not choose a child to become a part of your family, as you may choose a friend or a partner. He also feels that he is a very critical part of her life and her development and that their relationship is unique because his daughter cannot survive on her own. He also sees his daughter as “an extension of [himself].” Dan’s relationship with his wife is also important to him because he can be his true self around her, he can rely on her for support and their relationship is one he views as irreplaceable, whereas friendships and relationships with coworkers can easily be replaced.

Dan learned what he needed in a relationship through trial and error. His parents also influenced what he looked for in relationships because they had an expectation of him to have conversations with them, leading to Dan wanting substance in his relationships with others. Growing up in a church environment also influenced Dan’s conceptualization of what he wanted in a relationship.

Relationships in Dan’s home growing up were close. Dan reports having very few scuffles with his older brother. His family relationships are such that challenge each other, as well as support each other. When Dan began dating his parents wanted him to find a relationship that would add to his life positively. Dan reflected on previous
relationships that his mother did not feel were up to her expectations. Not only were his parents looking for someone that would be a good fit for Dan, but they also wanted someone they could fit into the family as their daughter. Dan believes that his parents pushed themselves to work hard in life and not to settle for less than they were capable of accomplishing. They had similar sentiments for Dan and his relationships and Dan reports this is directly tied to their military careers.

Dan did not join the military. It is something he considered, however his life took him down a different path.

Dan reports that the military has positively impacted his current adult relationships in that his parents, as well as his in-laws, who are also part of a military family, supported him through a move 1100 miles away from his family of origin by helping him to conceptualize it as a military posting. The only thing that Dan felt he would change about his military upbringing is that he would have liked to have been more knowledgably about politics. He lived near DC, however, his parents did not put a big emphasis on politics or government because of their experiences in the military. Some values that Dan learned from his parents that may have come directly from their military experience were: financial security, every one carrying their own weight within the family, and relying on your partner for support.

Interview Summary – Sherry

At the time of the interview, Sherry is a 65 year old, white female who has been married for 45 years. Sherry’s father was in the Army Air Corps for 10 years and the U.S. Air Force for 20 year, spanning from the time Sherry was 3 until she was 19 years old. Sherry believes that growing up in a military family has had an overall positive impact on her life, a small positive role in her identity as an adult, and a positive impact on her adult friendships and romantic relationships.

Sherry was interested in participating in this study because she is interested in the “BRAT mentality.”

For Sherry, relationships mean “being there for each other” and supporting one another. Her most important relationship is her relationship with her husband of 45 years. Sherry’s relationship with her husband is unique from other relationships in her life, in that they complement each other well. “He had strengths that [she] felt [she] didn’t have.

When asked how she learned what she wanted/needed in a relationship, Sherry responded that she had to “stumble around to find what [she] did want” in a relationship. She knew
she did not want the cold, unaffectionate relationship that her parents modeled for her. Sherry’s relationship with her mother and father were pretty distant. She reflects that periods of her relationship with her mother were close, however, their relationship fluctuated, event today. Sherry’s relationship with her sister grew from a relationship where they fought often into a tight relationship in adulthood. Sherry reports that when her father was TDY, the relationships between herself, her mother and her sister would change. Her mother would “open up a little more,” they would go shopping and eat special meals that her father did not prefer.

When Sherry started dating, her parents approach to these relationships was to have strict rules, such as early curfews, not being allowed to date enlisted men’s children, and not allowing friends or boyfriends over to their house. Sherry reflects that at the time she thought their rules were terrible, but as an adult she can see that they may not have been that extreme.

When Sherry moved out of her parents’ house, she moved into a home with her current husband. She approached her relationship with her husband by “being really affectionate” and showing her love. For her, this was a learning process because she was not used to verbally or physically showing affection. Sherry’s husband was not raised in a military family, however, he choose to join the U.S. Air Force and make a career out of it. Sherry did not make a deliberate decision to marry someone in the military, her husband (a friend at the time) happened to get in touch with her after he finished boot camp and their relationship built from there.

Sherry describes herself as being and introvert. She sees moving around a lot in the context of her father’s military career as a positive impact on her relationships. She felt that moving and living in different places forced her out of her comfort zone and helped her to make friends. In her adult life, these skills are still in play, as she sorts out who is an acquaintance-type friend and who is truly a close friend. Sherry would not change one thing about her military upbringing.

In addition to the interview questions, Sherry added that she hopes in today’s military families that there is more of an outlet for children to speak out about bad things that may occurring at home, without the worry of ruining the military career of their parent(s). She also added that based on her military upbringing, she is able to maintain relationships from a distance. She does not “feel the sense of loss of living away from family” because she’s “always known how to keep the relationship close because that’s the way [she] grew up.”
All looks good; just one spelling error (not should be now). I have been married for 22 years come June 2, 2012. Thanks for giving me the opportunity to give my opinion!

Cat

I had to think about this overnight. Its odd to read about your life like this and something wasn't sitting quite right that I had to think about.

In paragraph 5, I said there was not a lot of dysfunction in the home. In some sense that was right, none of my parents (meaning grandparents or aunts and uncles I lived with) suffered from alcholism or were abusive. We did all the right things -- going to church, scouts, etc. Music was big in my family -- playing it, singing, etc. But there was always a layer of stress underneath that was caused by the moving and the fact that my mother had died. Also, the military and my dad's and uncle's careers in it were more important than anything else. We didn't question things because that was the way it was. There was that "suck it up" mentality. That can be stressful too. So on one side you have the happy and easy childhood where we did kid things and were treated like children, but on the other side there was a layer of stress that we didn't talk about at all.
I was concerned that my childhood was sounding too idealized when it wasn't really. But I also don't like dwelling too much on it. Everyone has things in their past that they can complain about. We were loved and everyone involved in our upbringing thought they were doing what was best for us.

At the end of paragraph 6 you ask when my father was deployed. When I was little, in the Navy there was sea time and land time. If you were on land for a certain amount of time then you had to go back to sea. The exception in those days was if you were in school. That didn't count against your land time. Apparently that has changed now. After my mom died, my dad tried to go back to school as much as he could so that he would be around for us more. That had the unintended effect that he would go off to school in another city for 3 months and we'd go live with my grandparents or an aunt and uncle who were not military. That kind of thing happened a couple of times. But at least he wasn't at sea. When I was in 4th grade my dad was sent on an unaccompanied tour to Morocco for a year. We went to live with my aunt and uncle who was in the Army. We traveled to his duty stations also. From there my dad went to sea duty. We stayed with my uncle until the summer after I finished 8th grade when my dad finally pulled a land duty with housing. He didn't end up going back to sea at all. He went back to school at some point and had a land job that was important enough that they kept him there. When I was in college it caught up with him and they were going to send him back to sea. He was in his 26th year in the Navy at that point and didn't want to go back to sea so he retired.

Then in paragraph 7 talking about relationships. I think moving and not getting close to people had more of an effect on my friendships than my dating relationships now that I think more about it. I think my problem in relationships was that once I said I'd date this or that guy I would just put up with whatever happened. Instead of saying I don't like that you do that, or that the relationship is going in this direction I would keep it to myself. Stress was normal so if I was stressed out about a relationship that was okay. When I met my husband and he was not into drama it felt strange at first, then I thought "Wow!" this is a good thing.

I think that's it. I'm sure this is too much to include in your paper, but I thought I'd let you know a little more of the story. If you have any other questions, just let me know.

Good luck, Susan
# Appendix K – Coding System

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Note: Themes and subthemes are shown. Brackets collapse into individual codes. Large squares indicate more prevalent themes for individual cases.
References


