
Still Bringing the Vietnam War Home: Sources of Contemporary Student Activism

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This study examined student activism concerning the Persian Gulf War. Results showed that students' reports of their parents' activities during the Vietnam War were strongly associated with students' Gulf War-related activism. Other correlates of activism included attitudes toward war, political consciousness, authoritarianism, and gender-role ideology. After the authors controlled for student attitudes, path analyses confirmed the direct role of parental modeling for children's activism in opposition to and in support of the Gulf War. In addition, parents' antiwar activism indirectly influenced students' antiwar activism through authoritarianism scores and antiwar attitudes. Parents' war-support activism had no such indirect effect on students' war-support activism; however, gender-role ideology, authoritarianism, and prowar attitudes influenced students' war-support activism. The findings support the frequently hypothesized but seldom-studied link between parents' activism and children's later activism.

People's political beliefs and values are shaped in part by the events and issues of their time. For some individuals, and some generations, political ideology is, in turn, central to self-definition (Erikson, 1968; Mannheim, 1928/1952; Stewart & Healy, 1986). Stewart and Healy (1989) proposed a model linking individual personality development and social events; they argued that a person's developmental stage affects how social events are experienced. For example, events experienced in childhood and early adolescence affect fundamental values and expectations about the world. Events experienced in late adolescence and early adulthood affect identity formation around perceptions of opportunities and life choices. Events experienced in early middle adulthood (after work and family commitments have been made) affect behavior, or what people do, but not necessarily their beliefs or identities. Finally, events experienced in

later adulthood (midlife) affect perceptions of new opportunities and choices and may spur revisions of identity. Evidence collected from people who experienced the Depression, World War II, and the women's movement at different ages is consistent with this model (see e.g., Duncan & Agronick, in press; Elder, 1974; Schuman & Scott, 1989; Stewart & Healy, 1989).

According to this model, young adults who came of age during the era of the Vietnam War experienced that war as a cohort-defining event—that is, as profoundly important to their identity development. In addition to developmental factors, the cross-generational transmission of the impact of a social event can moderate children's attitudes. Stewart and Healy (1989) presented secondary analyses that showed that, especially in the absence of strong cohort-defining events in childhood and adolescence, young adults' identification with parents exerts a powerful influence in adult life. Because the parents of the current generation of university students came of age during the Vietnam War era, it might be expected that some contemporary students' political stances were shaped by their parents' experience of the Vietnam War. Moreover, for students with parents directly affected by the Vietnam War, the impact of the

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Persian Gulf War might be magnified. Not only might their parents' attitudes about Vietnam be reflected in their own attitudes about the Gulf War, but their behavioral responses to the Gulf War may have been modeled on parents' behavior about Vietnam. In this study, not only did we examine personality and attitudinal correlates of activism about the Gulf War, but we also looked for the additional impact of parental modeling effects.

The Persian Gulf War

On January 16, 1991, in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, President Bush ordered an intense air bombardment of Iraq, prompting Congress to declare war a few days later. After the January air attacks, there was speculation about the possible duration of the Gulf War and the impending ground war; in the popular press, many in the United States worried that it would become "another Vietnam."

On February 13, 1991, allied warplanes destroyed an underground facility in Baghdad, calling it a military command center. Iraqi officials, however, maintained that it was a civilian bomb shelter. At the time, and possibly because of the first reported Iraqi civilian casualties, there was no popular consensus in the United States regarding the morality of the war. These events in the Persian Gulf offered a unique opportunity to collect data from college students experiencing their first war—students whose parents had experienced a war themselves as young adults. The day after the underground facility in Baghdad was destroyed, we collected data on students' beliefs and actions about the Gulf War, other attitudes, and their parents' Vietnam War experience.

FAMILIES, PERSONAL EXPERIENCES, AND CHILDREN'S POLITICIZATION

Studies of student activism in the 1960s indicated that activist students held views similar to those of their parents (see, for example, Braungart & Braungart, 1990). Viewpoints in the contemporary generation that might be shared by parent and child include attitudes about war, gender roles, authoritarian ideology, and political consciousness. In addition to sharing attitudes that might be related to war activism, parents may have also served as direct models of political activism (Evans, 1979).

Attitudes About War

Students who participated in anti-Gulf War demonstrations were expected to express anti-intervention sentiments and to hold general antiwar views. In contrast, students who participated in war-support rallies were expected to express prointervention sentiments and to endorse war in general as an effective problem-solving

strategy. These different views about war are assumed to have been derived from parents' views about and experiences with the Vietnam War.

Gender-Role Ideology

A large empirical literature supports the notion that men favor war more than women do (Kriesberg & Klein, 1980; Putney & Middleton, 1962; Smith, 1984; Zur & Morrison, 1989). Some theorists have argued that biological differences between women and men cause men to be more aggressive and thus more interested in waging war (see, e.g., Caldicott, 1985). Others have argued that traditional gender roles socialize men to be dominant and aggressive and socialize women to be nurturant and caring (Lewis, 1976; Zur & Morrison, 1989). Based on the latter argument, we expected acceptance of traditional gender-role ideology to be related to war-support activism for both women and men, although perhaps for different reasons.

On the other hand, egalitarian gender-role ideology challenges the idea that men are born aggressors and that women are nurturant by nature. In addition, because past research demonstrates that antiwar activists came from homes in which mothers were employed (Flacks, 1967) and girls were encouraged to be autonomous (Thomas, 1971), we expected that current antiwar activists (both women and men) would hold egalitarian views on gender roles and would be less likely to support traditional roles.

Right-Wing Authoritarianism

Flacks (1967) discussed three themes of student protest in the 1960s that seemed to be related to the psychological concept of authoritarianism (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950; for a more recent conceptualization of authoritarianism, see Altemeyer, 1981, 1988). The theme of *antiauthoritarianism* in protest was described as a strong antipathy toward what is perceived to be arbitrary rule, centralized decision making, and manipulation; *antidogmatism* was described as a strong reaction against doctrinaire "old Left" ideological interpretations of events; and *anti-institutionalism* concerned a strong distrust of involvement with conventional institutional roles. We expected the antiauthoritarian themes to characterize current antiwar activists, reflected in a general nonauthoritarian personality structure.

Because national actions do not require overt signs of citizen support, war-support activists may see reasons to become active only in the face of antiwar protests. Therefore, war supporters' motivation to act may derive from an authoritarian ideology, one that values obedience to traditional, legal authority and support for the status quo. Similar arguments and evidence are offered in

Keniston's (1967) review of the literature on student political protest.

Political Consciousness

Jennings and Niemi (1981), in their national panel study of young adults and their parents, found that left-oriented political activists tended to be more politically oriented and, in fact, discussed politics more often with their friends and family than did nonactivists. (Because of the small number of right-oriented activists in their sample, Jennings and Niemi did not repeat analyses for them.) In our study, we expected both prowar and antiwar activists to find political events personally meaningful.

Parental Modeling of Political Activism

Studies of 1960s student activists support the idea that there is generational continuity (within families) in political attitudes for activists and nonactivists alike (Acock, 1984; Block, Haan, & Smith, 1969; Braungart & Braungart, 1990; Flacks, 1967; Glass, Bengtson, & Dunham, 1986; Jennings & Niemi, 1968, 1981; Middleton & Putney, 1963). In addition, several researchers have presented evidence supporting the idea that radical students have radical parents (Evans, 1979; Katz, 1968; Thomas, 1971). However, no studies tease apart the influence parental activism has on student attitudes (that, in turn, may lead to student activism) and the direct modeling influences parental activism may exert on student activism.

In this study, we first investigated whether parental activism is related to student activism. Then, in path analyses, we assessed whether there is an association between parental and student activism after controlling for student attitudes. We expected parental activism about the Vietnam War to be associated with children's Gulf War activism, both through sharing a general ideology about war and through direct modeling of the notion that political activism is a valid and appropriate way to respond to social events.

Hypotheses

This study explores links between parents' behavior during the Vietnam War, students' personality and attitude structure, and students' behavioral responses to the Persian Gulf War. Specifically, we offer two hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Participation in anti-Gulf War demonstrations will be associated with having parents who protested the Vietnam War, expressing anti-Gulf-intervention sentiments, holding general antiwar views, endorsing egalitarian gender roles, scoring low on authoritarianism, and being politically conscious.

Hypothesis 2: Participation in Support Our Soldiers (SOS) rallies will be associated with having parents who participated in or supported the Vietnam War, expressing

pro-Gulf-intervention sentiments, holding general prowar views, endorsing traditional gender roles, scoring high on authoritarianism, and being politically conscious.

METHOD

Participants and Procedure

Participants were 66 undergraduates (41 women, 25 men) at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor taking an upper level political psychology course during the spring term of 1991. Each student completed the following measures during a 40-minute session in a group of 10 to 20. The test materials were administered early in the semester so that the students, although presumably interested in politics, did not, for the most part, possess a sophisticated understanding of political psychology research and methodology. In addition, the instructor of the course had not yet discussed the Persian Gulf War in the classroom.

Although we expected gender differences on some measures (e.g., general war attitudes, gender-role ideology), we did not expect them on others. Moreover, we had no reason to expect gender differences in the pattern of relationships between variables. In describing measures and results, we will discuss those gender differences that did occur; however, overall, results for males and females were equivalent and are, therefore, presented combined.

Measures

STUDENT ACTIVISM

Students were asked to indicate whether they had participated in an anti-Gulf War demonstration or an SOS rally during the last 12 months. Of the students, 21% were defined as anti-Gulf War protestors because they had participated in a Persian Gulf War protest demonstration and did not participate in an SOS rally; 27% participated only in war-support activities.

In addition to these criterion variables, we administered three war-related and three general measures of attitudes and personality as predictors. To minimize the effect of responding to questionnaires about either gender or war ideology, we placed a question that called for an essay response about the Gulf War before various closed-ended attitudinal measures. Because all variables were assessed simultaneously, no secure claims for causality can be made in our regressions. However, following standard labeling conventions (Cohen & Cohen, 1975), we treat student activism as the criterion and the remaining variables as predictors in each of two equations.

WAR-RELATED MEASURES

Accounts of parents' behaviors. To examine the effects of parental behaviors on students' later behaviors, atti-

tudes, and beliefs, participants were asked to recount any actions their mothers and fathers took with regard to the Vietnam War. Specifically, they were asked the following: "Did your mother [father] ever engage in behavior in support of, or in opposition to, the Vietnam War? (for example, did she [he] participate in the war, attend rallies, etc.?) What specifically did she [he] do?" Responses were coded for behaviors only (protesting the war and fighting in Vietnam) and were used to create anti-Vietnam War protest and Vietnam War-support behavior variables. Although participation in the Vietnam War was not necessarily a sign of support (because of the draft), parental participation may have been perceived by children as support and, in any case, was not perceived as antiwar protest or nonaction. Not coded under this category were students who reported that their parents had participated in the war but had not supported it.

It is important to note that we are not making any claims about the veracity of these student reports, although we do make a claim for their validity as a measure of students' perceptions of their parents' activities. In other words, in this study we explored the *conscious* effects of perceived parental modeling. (In a current study, we are looking at the *nonconscious* transmission of values and attitudes by surveying children *and* their parents.)

According to their children, 18% of parents protested the Vietnam War, 6% supported it, and 76% either did nothing or were described as being busy with other responsibilities. According to the U.S. Department of Defense, approximately 12% of men classified as potential draftees served during the Vietnam War (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1992). Participation in the war by the parents of the students in this study was lower than the Department of Defense figures, perhaps because mothers were included, some fathers may not have been potential draftees, and military participation was probably lower among highly educated men, like these students' fathers. Our finding that 18% of parents actively participated in anti-Vietnam War protests is comparable to national rates of student political protest found by other researchers. A national poll by *Newsweek* magazine in 1965 ("Campus '65," 1965) found that 19% of students had picketed, and 29% had participated in a demonstration. Jennings and Niemi (1981) reported that 16% of their subjects had taken part in a demonstration, protest march, or sit-in. Astin and Astin (1992) found that 16% of first-year college students in 1967 participated in an organized political demonstration during their senior year in high school.

Open-ended response to the Persian Gulf War. Data were collected on February 14 and 15, 1991, after air attacks on Iraq had begun but before President Bush ordered the start of a ground war. This was an especially propi-

tious time to collect open-ended responses because of the uncertainty of the situation and the lack of a national consensus regarding U.S. actions. Participants read the following paragraphs and were then asked to express their feelings and opinions about the situation and how they would like to see it resolved.

On August 2, 1990, Iraqi military forces invaded Kuwait. More recently, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein has proclaimed that Kuwait is and will remain a part of Iraq. In response, United States President Bush sent American troops to Saudi Arabia, in coordination with the military forces of other nations, and the Security Council of the United Nations passed several resolutions condemning the Iraqi action.

Acting on the basis of these resolutions, President Bush then ordered military force to be used against Iraq, starting with an intense air bombardment on January 16, 1991. In reply, Iraq has launched several missiles against U.S. and allied forces, and against cities in Israel.

Different people have different reactions to this situation. What are your feelings about it? That is, how do you feel about the Iraqi occupation and annexation of Kuwait? How do you feel about the U.S. and U.N. responses? What should be done now? And how would you personally like to see the situation resolved?

Please express your feelings and opinions, in any way you like, in the space below.

Open-ended responses were coded for the expression of pro- and anti-Gulf War attitudes, indicated by the presence or absence of specific elements listed in Table 1. Because the most sophisticated essays were often complex, enumerating arguments on both sides of the issue, it seemed inappropriate to create a single bipolar score. Instead, two separate indexes were created by summing the number of pro- and anti-Gulf War elements present in the essays. Students received scores ranging from 0 to 5 for both kinds of sentiments. The mean for the pro-Gulf War attitudes scale was 1.66 ($SD = 1.35$). The mean for the anti-Gulf War attitudes scale was 1.42 ($SD = 1.47$).

General war attitudes. Two subscales (the Abstract Justifications of War subscale and the Acceptance of Violence subscale) from Zur and Morrison's (1989) measure were given to students. Using 5-point scales (1 = *strongly agree* to 5 = *strongly disagree*), participants indicated how strongly they agreed or disagreed with statements. Scales were standardized and summed. Items from the scales include "Wars are justified when they are fought for defensive purposes" (Abstract Justifications of War subscale) and "Killing during war cannot be judged by peacetime standards" (Acceptance of Violence subscale). The reliability for the 9-item Abstract Justifications of War subscale was .83; the Acceptance of Violence subscale had a Cronbach's alpha of .74 (on 10 items).

TABLE 1: Components of Anti-Gulf War and Pro-Gulf War Indexes

Category	Indexes	
	Anti-Gulf War Element	Pro-Gulf War Element
View of violence/war	Hate war/violence and/or a pacifist Current opposition to force	War is a necessary tool under some conditions War is justified in this case
View of Saddam Hussein	He was pursuing a rational national policy (in annexing Kuwait)	He was completely unjustified He is ruthless/brutal and a dictator/tyrant He is a crazy person/madman/psychopath He should be removed from office He should be killed
Historical or comparative context	Reference to historical context for Hussein's actions Comparison of this situation with other international situations Mention of an "Iraqi" perspective Mention of possible U.S. motives in involvement	None given
Subjective expressions	Explicit mention of confusion or uncertainty Explicit mention of mistrust of Bush/the government/the media	Explicit mention of faith in experts/the government
Proposal for now	Maximum use of diplomatic possibilities	Greater use of force

As expected from Zur and Morrison's (1989) results, men in the present study scored higher on the combined subscales than did women, $t(64) = 2.06; p < .05$.

GENERAL ATTITUDES AND PERSONALITY MEASURES

Political consciousness. Following Stewart and Healy's (1989) procedure, we presented participants with a list of seven social and historical events and people from the 1960s through the 1990s, and we asked them to rate each event or person on a scale from 1 (*not at all personally meaningful*) to 3 (*very personally meaningful*). Items on the list were the women's movement, Martin Luther King, the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War, the freeing of Nelson Mandela, recent abortion rulings challenging women's right of choice, and the assassination of John F. Kennedy. An index of overall political consciousness was created by summing ratings for "How personally meaningful to you" across the seven events. The mean for political consciousness was 13.62 ($SD = 3.04$). The scale was internally consistent, having a Cronbach's alpha of .72.

Gender-Role ideology. The Feminist Identity Scale (Rickard, 1989, 1990) is a 37-item Likert-type questionnaire (scaled from 1 to 7) that assesses the level of feminist identity development in women. We used the following two subscales:

1. Traditional Gender Role Acceptance subscale, measuring the acceptance of socially prescribed gender roles and behaviors (e.g., "I like being a traditional female [male]")
2. Endorsement of Egalitarian Gender Roles subscale, measuring the judgment of socially prescribed gender roles and behaviors on individual merits (e.g., "As I have grown in my beliefs I have realized that it is more

important to value women as individuals than as members of a larger group of women")

Rickard (1989, 1990) has found that women scoring higher on traditional gender role acceptance were more likely to be involved in Right to Life groups and home-economics organizations than women who endorsed egalitarian gender roles, who were more likely to belong to a Gay/Lesbian Alliance or the National Organization of Women. Attitudes toward nontraditional women have also been examined by Rickard (1989, 1990); women scoring higher on traditional gender role acceptance held more negative attitudes toward working women and preferred works attributed to male artists over those attributed to female artists. For a more complete discussion of the stages of feminist identity development, see Rickard (1989) and Downing and Roush (1985).

Because the scale was developed for use with women, several items had to be slightly reworded to be applicable to men (e.g., "I feel like I have been duped into believing society's perceptions of me as a woman [man]"), and several had to be replaced by items from Rickard's (1989) original 99-item measure (e.g., "It is especially important to me to feel accepted by the men in my life" replaced with "Females get along better in the world if they behave in a feminine manner" in the Traditional Gender Role Acceptance subscale). Results show that the internal reliability of each subscale for men was roughly equivalent to that for women (Traditional Gender Role Acceptance subscale: alpha = .65 for women, .73 for men; Endorsement of Egalitarian Gender Roles subscale: alpha = .62 for women, .57 for men). The means of summed scores for traditional gender role

acceptance and endorsement of egalitarian gender roles were, respectively, 14.56 (on 5 items) and 43.15 (on 12 items); standard deviations were 3.82 and 8.25, respectively. Although there was no gender difference in mean scores on traditional gender role acceptance, the mean for endorsement of egalitarian gender roles was significantly higher among women than among men, $t(63) = 3.61, p < .001$.

Right-wing authoritarianism. Authoritarianism was measured with Altemeyer's (1988) Right-Wing Authoritarianism Scale, which assesses authoritarian aggression, submission, and conventionalism. The authoritarianism scale has been shown to be related to holding punitive attitudes toward lawbreakers, accepting law as the basis of morality, holding prejudiced attitudes, and having a fundamentalist religious ideology (Altemeyer, 1981, 1988). Research has also indicated that contemporary university students scoring high on the authoritarianism scale hold punitive attitudes toward drug users, those who are infected with HIV, and environmentalists (Peterson, Doty, & Winter, 1993). Because of both time constraints and the scale's excellent internal reliability, we used 12 items from the authoritarianism scale. Half the items chosen were worded by Altemeyer in the nonauthoritarian direction to eliminate positive response bias. The overall Cronbach's alpha for the 12 items in our sample was .84. Examples of two items follow:

Some of the worst people in our country nowadays are those who do not respect our flag, our leaders, and the normal way things are supposed to be done.

People should pay less attention to the Bible and other old traditional forms of religious guidance and instead develop their own personal standards of what is moral and immoral. [worded in the reverse direction]

Using a 7-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*), participants indicated how much they agreed or disagreed with each statement. The mean for authoritarianism was 37.36 ($SD = 12.23$). There was no gender difference.

RESULTS

According to Cohen (1988) and Green (1991), with 66 cases and seven predictors we had enough power to estimate large effect sizes (those with a multiple R greater than .50). We examine the correlates of antiwar and war-support behavior in two separate equations for several reasons, although the student activism criteria are negatively correlated and nonactivists contribute variance to both equations. First, antiwar activism and war support were not, either conceptually or empirically, opposite. Second, parents' behavior in the Vietnam War era was relevant to predicting both forms of activism, but

different parental behavior was relevant as a predictor in the two cases.

Intercorrelations of Predictor Variables

Results are presented for men and women combined; separate analyses confirmed the overall pattern of relationships for each, with one exception. For men, general war attitudes were strongly negatively correlated with political consciousness and with endorsement of egalitarian gender roles, but for women they were not. There were few intercorrelations between the predictor variables, except for right-wing authoritarianism (see Table 2). To ensure that authoritarianism was not preventing other variables from explaining variance in the activism criteria, we ran the regressions with and without authoritarianism. The results for the remaining variables were the same. In addition, expression of anti-Gulf War views was related to gender (men expressed more than women). When we ran the regressions with gender as a predictor variable, it partially suppressed the relationship between anti-Gulf War views and attending an anti-Gulf War demonstration. Because our interest focused on attitudinal correlates of activism, we kept attitudes about the Gulf War in the regressions, and gender was excluded.

Anti-Gulf War demonstration. Participating in a demonstration against the Gulf War was correlated with students' reports of parents' anti-Vietnam War activities, expressing anti-Gulf-intervention sentiments in the essay, scoring low on authoritarianism and traditional gender role acceptance, and being politically conscious. In the multiple regression, participation was significantly associated with having anti-Vietnam War activist parents and expressing anti-intervention sentiments (see Table 3).

SOS rally. Participation in an SOS rally was significantly correlated with students' reports of parents' Vietnam War-support activities and expressing prointervention sentiments in the essay. In the multiple regression, participation in an SOS rally was associated with having parents who supported the Vietnam War, expressing prointervention sentiments in the essay, and not subscribing to either traditional or egalitarian gender-role ideology (see Table 4). The prointervention sentiments and the traditional gender role acceptance variables appear to be acting cooperatively to suppress variance unrelated to participation in an SOS rally, thus making both relationships stronger (Cohen & Cohen, 1975). According to Cohen and Cohen (1975), cooperative suppression effects are relatively rare; therefore, we will be cautious in interpreting them.

Path analyses. Although the data were collected concurrently, we were able to specify a hypothesized causal sequence in the prediction of student activism. Thus we

Table 2: Intercorrelations of Predictor Variables

Predictor Variable	Parents' Vietnam War Activism		Students' Gulf War Attitudes		General War Attitudes	Political Consciousness	Gender-Role Ideology		Right-wing Authoritarianism
	Anti	Pro	Anti	Pro			Traditional	Egalitarian	
War related									
Parents' anti-Vietnam War activism	—	-.12	.28*	-.15	-.15	.27*	-.23	.08	-.40**
Parents' Vietnam War-support activism		—	-.10	-.03	.07	.01	.07	.07	.10
Anti-Gulf War attitudes			—	-.53**	-.36**	.17	-.33**	-.09	-.54**
Pro-Gulf War attitudes				—	.25*	-.17	.38**	-.03	.45**
General war attitudes					—	-.17	.19	-.06	.41**
Personality and ideology									
Political consciousness						—	-.28*	.32**	-.46**
Acceptance of traditional gender roles							—	-.09	.45**
Endorsement of egalitarian gender roles								—	-.17
Right-wing authoritarianism									—

NOTE: N = 66.

p* < .05; *p* < .01.

TABLE 3: Multiple Regression on Anti-Gulf War Activism

Predictor Variable	Pearson's r	β	Multiple R
War			
Parents' anti-Vietnam War activism	.52**	.36**	.64**
Anti-Gulf War attitudes	.43**	.26*	
General war attitudes	-.21 [†]	.00	
Personality and ideology			
Political consciousness	.36**	.15	
Acceptance of traditional gender roles	-.27*	-.01	
Endorsement of egalitarian gender roles	.14	.07	
Right-wing authoritarianism	-.46**	-.09	

NOTE: N = 66.

[†]*p* < .10; **p* < .05; ***p* < .01.

expected that parental activism (chronologically first) might shape personality and attitudes, which in turn might shape specific attitudes, which in turn would shape specific actions. We also expected parental activism to have a direct effect on student activism. Similarly, some general personality or attitude variables might also have direct effects.

To test this model, path analyses were conducted with the two activism variables treated as the ultimate criteria. The predictors were Gulf War-specific attitudes (entered first), general attitudes and personality characteristics (entered second as a block), and parental activism (entered last).

Figure 1 presents the results for anti-Gulf War activism. As expected, parental activism predicted student

TABLE 4: Multiple Regression on Support Our Soldiers (SOS) Rally

Predictor Variable	Pearson's r	β	Multiple R
War			
Parents' Vietnam War-support activism	.27*	.35**	.63**
Pro-Gulf War attitudes	.37**	.53**	
General war attitudes	-.09	-.20	
Personality and ideology			
Political consciousness	-.06	-.03	
Acceptance of traditional gender roles	-.11	-.31*	
Endorsement of egalitarian gender roles	-.22 [†]	-.26*	
Right-wing authoritarianism	.16	.09	

NOTE: N = 66.

[†]*p* < .10; **p* < .05; ***p* < .01.

activism directly, as did specific anti-Gulf War attitudes. No other variables had direct effects. However, low scores on authoritarianism predicted specific anti-Gulf War attitudes and were, in turn, predicted by parental activism. Although parental activism was also associated with political consciousness, it did not, in turn, relate to anti-Gulf War sentiments or activism.

Figure 2 presents the results for Gulf War-support activism. Again, parental activism predicted student activism directly, as did low endorsement of traditional and egalitarian gender-role ideology. In addition, acceptance of traditional gender roles and high scores on authoritarianism both predicted specific pro-Gulf War attitudes. Interestingly, parental activism was not associated with any of the general or specific political attitudes.

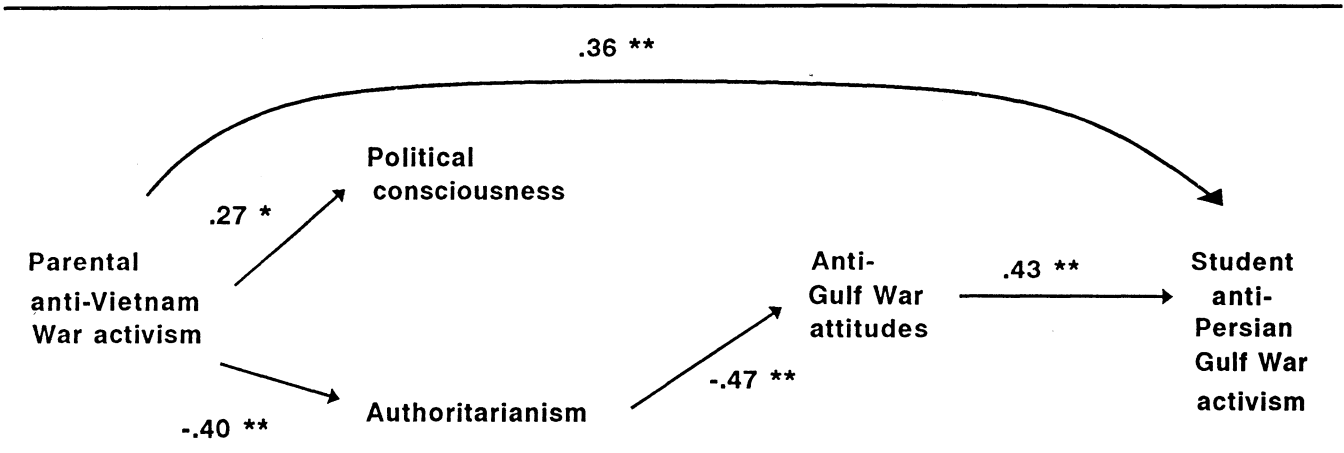


Figure 1 Parental activism, political ideology, anti-Gulf War attitudes and activism.
 NOTE: $N = 66$. Only significant path coefficients are represented. Five ideology variables were entered as a block in the analysis (traditional and egalitarian gender-role ideology, political consciousness, authoritarianism, and general war attitudes). Only those showing significant direct or indirect path coefficients are represented here.
 $*p < .05$; $**p < .01$.

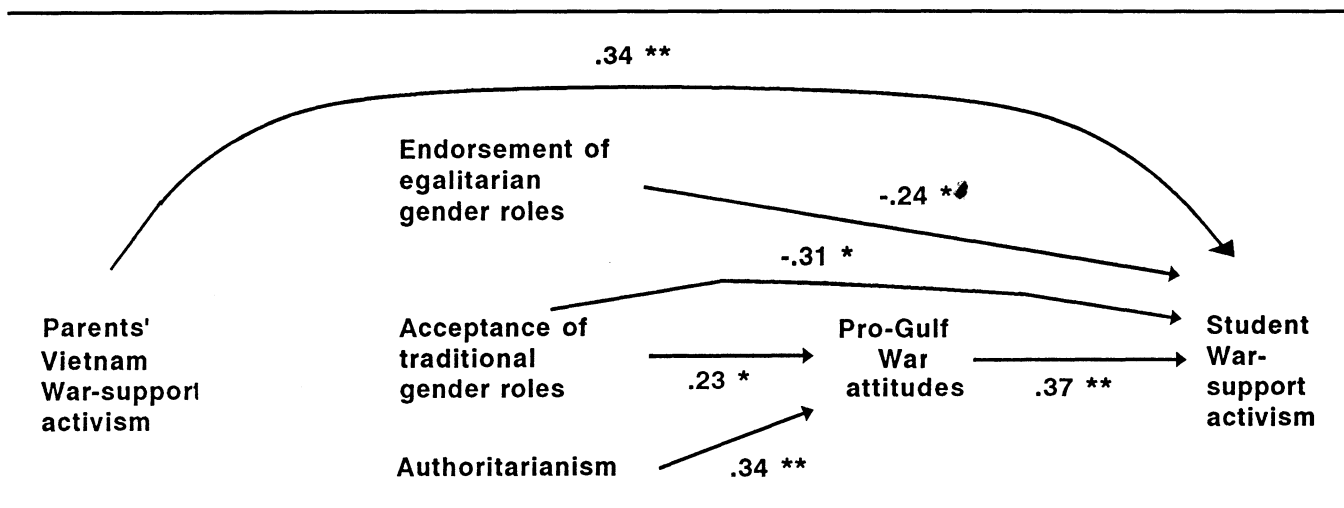


Figure 2 Parental activism, political ideology, pro-Gulf War attitudes and activism.
 NOTE: $N = 66$. Only significant path coefficients are represented. Five ideology variables were entered as a block in the analysis (traditional and egalitarian gender-role ideology, political consciousness, authoritarianism, and general war attitudes). Only those showing significant direct or indirect path coefficients are represented here.
 $*p < .05$; $**p < .01$.

DISCUSSION

Parental Modeling Effects

Students' responses to the Persian Gulf War were closely related to their perceptions of their parents' responses to the Vietnam War, even after controlling for general political beliefs and values parents and children may share. Results from the path analyses confirm the direct modeling role of parental activism for both pro-Gulf War and anti-Gulf War activism. Interestingly, parental activism was associated with political consciousness and authoritarianism for anti-Gulf War activists but not for war-support activists. Future research should aim

to clarify whether this difference is specific to war-related activism or points to a more general pattern of difference between left-oriented and right- or centrist-oriented parental political socialization.

Attitudes About War

Specific sentiments about the Gulf War expressed in the open-ended answers were associated with type of student activism undertaken in response to the Persian Gulf War. Not surprisingly, anti-Gulf War protestors expressed anti-intervention sentiments in their essays, and war-support students expressed prointervention sentiments. Interestingly, however, those students who at-

tended an SOS rally did not necessarily support war and violence in the abstract (as indicated by low scores on Zur and Morrison's [1989] scale). A closer look at the students' general war-support scores shows that women who attended SOS rallies scored as low as women who protested against the war. However, men who attended SOS rallies scored significantly higher than both women attending SOS rallies and men protesting the war, $t(16) = -2.84, p < .01$, and $t(12) = 2.93, p < .05$, respectively.

Examining the SOS rally participants' essays about the Gulf War, we find that men and women seemed to have different motivations for supporting the soldiers that are consistent with traditional gender-role ideology. In other words, men expressed support for the efficacy of war in general as a solution as well as the importance of a forceful response to Iraq's actions. For example, one man wrote, "I cannot help but staunchly support the President's decision to authorize his *right* to use force in attempting to force Saddam Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait. The free world cannot idly sit and watch as another U.N. member—a sovereign nation—is brutally sacked and looted." This participant emphasized the right of the president to use war to solve problems, and he advocated using force to solve this particular problem. On the other hand, women who attended SOS rallies were more likely to stress the need to support the troops already committed to the war, while expressing an antipathy for the use of war itself as a solution: "I also don't believe war is a good solution. Unfortunately, war appears to be the only alternative to some people, or the only option they are willing to take. Since the U.S. is at war, I believe we must support our troops, their families, their friends." For men who attended SOS rallies, support for soldiers was accompanied by strong arguments for the use of war in general as an efficacious problem-solving strategy. For women, support of soldiers was evident despite an expressed distaste for the use of war as a way to resolve disputes.

Gender-Role Ideology

Students participating in anti-Gulf War demonstrations rejected traditional gender roles, but they neither rejected nor endorsed egalitarian gender roles. The results for rejecting traditional gender roles seem consistent with findings (Flacks, 1967; Thomas, 1971) that leftist activists grew up in homes in which mothers rejected traditional gender roles. The lack of an association between egalitarian gender-role ideology and anti-Gulf War activism may suggest that these young men and women are not as confident, as a group, about their endorsement of egalitarian gender-role ideology.

As hypothesized, SOS activists (like the anti-Gulf War activists) did not endorse egalitarian gender roles.

Counter to our hypothesis (and also like the anti-Gulf War activists), participants in SOS rallies also rejected traditional gender roles. However, the negative relationship between traditional gender role acceptance and participating in an SOS rally appears only when the expression of prointervention sentiments is added in. We can interpret this suppressor effect as distinguishing between activist and nonactivist students who share traditional views. Thus acceptance of traditional gender roles is associated with nonaction, on the one hand, but also with pro-Gulf War sentiments (which are, in turn, associated with action), on the other. The path analysis confirms this same pattern of relationships; acceptance of traditional gender roles was associated both with nonactivism and with expression of pro-Gulf War attitudes (which are associated with activism).

Authoritarianism and Political Consciousness

Our finding that anti-Gulf War demonstrators tend to score low on authoritarianism is consistent with Flacks's (1967) discussion of the antiauthoritarian themes that characterized many 1960s protests. In addition, the data are consistent with Altemeyer's (1988) finding that members of left-wing political parties elected to the legislature in Canada were significantly less authoritarian than their counterparts on the Right.

Consistent with Jennings and Niemi's (1981) findings about the political involvement of left-oriented activists, our anti-Gulf War demonstrators tended to find certain historical events very personally meaningful. Antiwar activists found the events in the list more meaningful ($M = 18.64$) than did either prowar activists ($M = 16.17$), $t(30) = 2.19, p < .05$, or nonactivists ($M = 15.76$), $t(46) = 3.37, p < .01$. Prowar and nonactivists did not differ significantly on this measure, $t(50) = .45, ns$. However, because the events on our list were oriented more toward the Left, we should not assume that SOS demonstrators find all social and historical events less meaningful than do antiwar activists. Future research using a more balanced list of events can clarify the relationship between awareness of political events and political activism.

Limitations and Future Directions

Our study, although contributing to an understanding of the intergenerational effects of social events, has three characteristics that might affect its generalizability. First, our participants were college students. Although our hypotheses focused on young adults (making college students an appropriate sample), college students might have more free time to take part in political activities relative to others in their cohort who have full-time work and family responsibilities. In addition, college students may not feel the real physical threat of

a war and may protest or support it based on moral reasoning or some other abstract grounds. To a working-class person, however, U.S. participation in a war might represent a very real threat to physical well-being, especially if there is talk of a draft. Therefore, not only might levels of participation differ for a less educated sample of young adults, but reasons for participating may differ as well.

On the other hand, although young adults with work and family responsibilities may have less free time to respond to a social event, they may have more personally at stake in a response. This effect may have been minimized in this case, because the war did not last long. However, this argument should be applicable to social events that represent ongoing struggles, such as the efforts of women and of men of color to secure equal rights. Looking at how different groups respond to social events and at the different meanings of these responses will provide a more complete understanding of the correlates of young adult activism.

Second, the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor may be a more politically active university than other colleges in the United States. Students choosing to enroll in a political psychology course, furthermore, may be the more politically interested students in a school with a higher-than-average number of politically aware students. However, even in this relatively politically conscious group, the majority of students did not participate in either an antiwar or a war-support rally, allowing us enough variance to distinguish among the students.

Third, although the timing of our study was serendipitous, it may limit its generalizability to certain time periods surrounding a social event. As stated earlier, measures were administered during a period of great uncertainty regarding the morality of the Gulf War. We compared essays written several days later by a similar group of undergraduates and found that the opinions expressed in the latter essays showed much less variance, perhaps reflecting the widespread support the war had gained in those few days following the bombing of the underground facility in Baghdad. In times when there is more national consensus or when students have time to independently formulate opinions, the relative role of other individual characteristics (such as parental modeling, personality, and ideology) may be increased or diminished (see Gergen & Ullman, 1977, for a discussion of how inconsistency in findings about student activists may be related to "historic perishability"). Again, pursuing these questions in the lives of activists engaged in ongoing struggles should clarify these issues.

As mentioned earlier, in an ongoing study we are investigating the various ways parents may transmit political attitudes and values to their children, even without intending to do so. We are considering how specific

attitudes and values are communicated intergenerationally, as well as how general attitudes, consistent with a certain ideology or attitude structure, are passed on.

Finally, further investigation of the factors that distinguish nonactivists from people who take an active stance toward their social environment, regardless of political ideology, is warranted. What roles do political socialization, parental modeling, and personality structure play in the development of a passive or active stance? Examining these issues with both right- and left-oriented activists and nonactivists during times of uncertainty and national consensus will contribute to an understanding of social change and status quo maintenance.

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