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Historical Revisionism and Vietnam War Public Opinion

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HISTORICAL REVISIONISM AND VIETNAM WAR PUBLIC OPINION

Abstract

This research debunks the neoconservative claim that the American loss in the Vietnam War can be attributed to a stab in the back from news media and elite protesters. The article shows: 1) creeping disillusionment with the war started with lower classes, not upper ones; 2) even as the U. S. public turned against the war, it retained a dislike for antiwar protesters; 3) news media tend to resist, rather than advance, social movements and protest; and 4) secondary analysis reveals a similar pattern of lower-class war fatigue currently is emerging regarding the Afghanistan War. The article further suggests the oft-quoted Indexing Hypothesis needs to be modified to note that the consensus breakdown necessary to crack mediated resistance need not start with elites, but mediated attention to dissent likely occurs when consensus breakdown expands enough to reach and to include elites.

Bennett (1990), as part of theoretical work in press/state relations, advanced an Indexing Hypothesis, the notion that social movements received mediated attention and can succeed only when elite consensus breaks down. The idea is that mediated content is “indexed” to the acceptable range of debate among political elites. “In this ironic twist on the democratic ideal,” he wrote, “modern public opinion can be thought of as an ‘index’ constructed from the distribution of dominant institutional voices as recorded in the mass media. By adopting such an opinion index, the media have helped create a political world that is, culturally speaking, upside-down. It is a world in which governments are able to define their own publics and where ‘democracy’ becomes whatever the government ends up doing” (p. 125).

The hypothesis certainly has become what Bennett hoped it would be—namely a common framework for those who approach news content from three differing starting points: corporate media interests, organizational efficiency, or the socio-economic backgrounds, assumptions, and biases of news workers (p. 123). A search of Google Scholar at the beginning of May 2010 found 506 citations of his article. Yet, for all that citation, one may need to brush off the Indexing Hypothesis for another purpose, countering current efforts to rewrite the history of public opinion and its influence during the Vietnam War.

The Washington Post (2000) on the 25th anniversary of the fall of Saigon editorialized that the Vietnam War “enjoyed more public support than the blunder theorists care to remember.” The *Post*’s evidence for this point was oblique and indirect, the election of Richard Nixon in 1968 and his re-election in 1972. The editorial overlooks that Nixon ran as a peace candidate in 1968 with a “secret plan” to end the war. By 1972 American ground combat troops had left, and the issue had been reduced to bombing. The *Post* also expressed relief the Gulf War “cured the armed forces of the debilitating Vietnam syndrome.”

A Vietnam Syndrome also is invoked by neo-conservatives who claim the U. S. failure is Vietnam was not in joining the war, but in the public being misled by hostile media coverage and the actions of naïve and juvenile protesters. Morley Safer (2003) has lamented that young military officers are being trained based on the myth the only mistake the U.S. military made was allowing press access. Tony Snow (2000), neoconservative and former antiwar protester himself, used the words cowardly, bored, and narcissistic to describe antiwar protesters; he also claimed the movement was merely “a high-minded way to dodge the draft” and “the next best thing to a dating service.”

No “Stab in the Back” by News Media or “Elite” Protesters

The neoconservative “stab in the back” thesis has gained something of a toehold in national recollection of Vietnam, and reconciliation of national cognitive dissonance regarding that war and American sense of self. *Rolling Stone* in 1987 had Hart Associates survey people aged 18-44; only the oldest members of that age bracket would have been old enough to experience the Vietnam War personally. One in five thought “the anti-war protests and lack of support for the war in the U. S.” as the best explanation for why the U. S. lost the war. Television news also takes a hit in this recollection and reconciliation process. One 1988 survey (Market Opinion Research) found 37 percent agreeing with the proposition, “The Vietnam War showed that if we are ever again to fight a tough war, we will maintain the resolve necessary to win only if we stop TV from bringing the horrors of combat into the living rooms of America.”

Moorcraft and Taylor (2008) dismissed the media “stab in the back” thesis. They wrote, “Few who believe that the United States lost the war in the living rooms of middle America seem to question how a democracy could wage war for another five years [post-Tet]—longer than U.S. involvement in World War II—with such alleged hostile media coverage. Nonetheless, the myth of ‘the Vietnam syndrome’ has informed debates about the relationship between war and the media ever since” (p. 214). The tendency to over-inflate the roles of both protests and news media and to deride each as a “stab in the back” is well debunked in several historical books on the matter (Buzanco, 1999; DeBenedetti, 1990; and Fraser, 1988).

A significant and growing body of scholarly work also details how generally news media tend to retard or resist protests rather than advance them (Shoemaker, 1984). Chan and Lee (1984), in fact, developed a protest paradigm that the more protest groups threaten the status quo, the more harshly they will be treated by the media. Protesters face further difficulties in getting noticed by news organizations, not being marginalized by the tendency of journalists to rely on establishment sources, and not being caricatured or deprecated when coverage occurs (McLeod and Hertog, 1998). Boyle, McCluskey, McLeod, and Stein (2005) conducted a content analysis of newspaper coverage of protests, 1960 to 1999. They found that even as the protests in this period became less “deviant” (demanding of the status quo), a high level of critical comment was evident. They wrote, “Perhaps newspapers have become more sensitive to threats to the system, becoming more likely to perform the function of a social control for protests that would barely have registered as problematic just a couple of decades ago” (p. 647).

The “pampered, elite protesters” and “hostile media” theses regarding the Vietnam era already effectively have been shown invalid by several others (Arlen, 1969; Braestrup, 1983; Halberstam, 2003; Streitmatter, 2008). One also could note that the protest movement included a large number of Vietnam veterans and even soldiers on active duty. Cortright (1999) tallied antiwar sentiments during that era, using survey data in a two-volume report compiled by the Research Analysis Corporation for the U.S. Army. It found one in four enlisted men had participated in dissident activities, such as attending a protest or receiving an underground GI newspaper. One in four had engaged in equipment sabotage or insubordination. Some 47 percent of the lower-ranking enlisted soldiers had been involved in some act of war resistance, and 32 percent had done so more than once.

Loewen (1995) went so far as to fashion from public opinion on the Vietnam War an audience test. He presented respondents with a January 1971 Gallup Poll that found 73% of all adults with an opinion supported a congressional bill to require withdrawal of all U.S. troops by the end of the year. He asked respondents to give their best estimate of the percentages by the college educated, those with only a high school education, and those with only a grade school education. Loewen wrote:

Over ten years I have asked more than a thousand undergraduates and several hundred non-students their beliefs about what kind of adults, by education level, supported the war in Vietnam...By an overwhelming margin—almost 10 to 1—audiences believed that college-educated persons were more dovish...However, the truth is quite different. Educated people disproportionately supported the Vietnam War...These results surprise even some professional social scientists. Twice as high a proportion of college-educated adults, 40 percent, were hawks, compared to only 20 percent of adults with grade school educations. And this poll was no isolated phenomenon. Similar results were registered again and again, in surveys by Harris, NORC, and others. Way back in 1965, when only 24 percent of the national agreed that the United States “made a mistake” in sending troops of Vietnam, 28 percent of the grade school-educated thought so. Later, when less than half the college-educated adults favored pullout, among the grade school-educated 61 percent did.

This project concentrates on public opinion of the era, and reveals that public consensus for the war faded long before the government gave up on the war, opposition was strongest in lower not upper classes, and the protesters never were popular, even as many in the public begrudgingly came to concur with their position. This case study draws from my historical work regarding the social movements of antiwar veterans during the Vietnam War era in the U.S. When I re-examined polls from the era, a clear pattern was evident. Antiwar expression first found expression not in elites, but in the lower classes that bore the brunt of the fighting and dying.

Consensus Breakdown in the 1960s and 1970s regarding the Vietnam War

The American National Election Study in 1964, 1966, 1968, and 1970 asked about what we should do now in Vietnam. In 1964 almost half the respondents said we should “take a strong stand” while 38 percent opted for “keep trying to get a peaceful settlement.” Only 13.5 percent of the respondents said “pull out entirely.”

By 1966, however, the figures for Strong Stand and Peaceful Settlement were nearly identical (44.6 and 44.2 percent); Pull Out was just eleven percent. In 1968, after the Tet Offensive, Strong Stand fell to 37 percent; 41 percent hoped for Peaceful Settlement, but Pull Out doubled to 22 percent. Pull Out achieved a plurality by 1970 with 36.7 percent, 36.2 percent for Peaceful Settlement, and 27.1 percent clinging to Strong Stand.

Public opinion showed a brief surge in war support in reaction to the January 1968 Tet Offensive, but the change did not last long. Gallup found that two weeks after Tet 61 percent called themselves “hawks” on the war, wanting to step up the U. S. military effort. In December the figure was 52 percent. Seven in ten favored continued bombing of North Vietnam, up from 63 percent in October. However, in one sign of wavering, more than six in ten thought the war would end in a compromise. Only two in ten thought the war would end in a decisive U.S. victory. Harris found a post-Tet jump in war support from 61 to 74 percent, but six weeks later it was down to 54 percent. In March Gallup found almost half the respondents saying it had been an error for the U.S. to get involved in Vietnam, doubling the percent that said so in August 1965 (Zaroulis and Sullivan, 1984, pp. 155-156).

CBS News polls also documented the dramatic shift. In 1969 only one in four respondents favored immediate withdrawal of all American troops; 67 percent opposed. By May 1970 the percent favoring immediate withdrawal was up to 36 percent, and opposition slumped to 58 percent. By the end of the next month the numbers had swung even more; 47 percent supported immediate withdrawal, 49 percent opposed. Further, of those who opposed immediate withdrawal, only 29 percent, said “stick it out in Vietnam, and do whatever is necessary to win” while nearly two-thirds wanted a gradual withdrawal, letting South Vietnam take on more of the fighting. Among all respondents 53 percent thought “we are in a war in Asia that we can’t get out of” while four in ten disagreed (Chandler, 1972, p 182).

Consensus Breakdown Led by the Lower Classes

Certainly consensus had broken down, if not outright shifted to a new position, by the late 1960s. It's hard to see, however, that the breakdown overall was elite driven. I cross-tabulated the American National Election Study results with education and discovered those with only grade school educations were the leading war opponents. College educated respondents were the strongest war supporters. I ran a multiple regression (Multiple R = .109, R Squared .012, Std. Error of Estimate 2.350) on desire to withdraw from Vietnam and found strong correlations with the lesser educated and lower income most wanting to withdraw ($p = .004$ and $p < .001$ respectively), though the measure was not statistically significant for a self-reported measure of socio-economic standing.

The same pattern held true in a 1972 exit poll of voters leaving polling places in the Florida primary. Overall, 79 percent of respondents opted for "mostly agree" with the statement "The U.S. government should be moving faster to get out of Vietnam" (Meyer, 1972). This sentiment once again was strongest among the lowest income group (87%) and the least educated (86%). The highest income group (71%) and the college educated (75%) actually were those slowest to decide against the war (Meyer, 1972).

Slowly growing disillusionment with the war also may be found in an April 1973 poll of business and military elites, specifically executive vice-presidents of major United States corporations and military officers attending the five war colleges (Russett & Hanson, 1977). Not surprisingly, military elites thought it was correct for the U.S. to send combat troops to Vietnam, 434 to 171. Business elites tilted the opposite direction, 210 to 299. Some 286 said they'd held their current position since the beginning of the war, but almost as many (264) picked a year between 1965 and 1972 when their opinion formed or changed. At least in this case study elites were not driving the breakdown of consensus. Rather, they were trailing a lower class that had endured the bulk of the draft, danger, and death of the war.

Backlash against Protesters Bearing Uncomfortable Reminders

By 1968 U.S. public consensus about the Vietnam War already had fractured. The following survey results reported here were obtained from searches of the iPOLL Databank and other resources provided by the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut. Polling in April showed identical percentages, 41 percent calling themselves hawks, and 41 percent doves (Gallup, 1968a). In February 49 percent thought the U.S. made a mistake by sending troops to Vietnam, compared to 42 percent who disagreed (Gallup, 1968b). Two polls in September found the "mistake" percentage had risen to 54 in 1968 (Gallup, 1968c), then 58 percent in 1969 (Gallup, 1969a).

When the group Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) was presenting media-savvy antiwar protests in 1970 through 1972, the problem no longer could be called elite consensus for the war—consensus had broken down and the breakdown was not led by elites. Instead, the VVAW ran smack into backlash and issue avoidance stemming from the cognitive dissonance and angst the war was generating.

Late in April 1971 many Vietnam veterans threw their medals away at the U.S. Capitol in a well-covered event called Dewey Canyon III. By that time 62 percent of poll respondents thought the

U.S. would have to reach a compromise war settlement with the communists (Louis Harris, 1971a). Some 58 percent thought the war morally wrong (Louis Harris, 1971b). Sixty-six percent wanted their congressmen to vote for a proposal to bring all U.S. troops should be brought home by the end of the year (Gallup, 1971a). The public, however, clearly resented the drumbeat of events, and especially the coverage of events, forcing those conclusions.

Antiwar protesters never were popular during this war. Early in the war only one in four respondents thought the main protester motivations were moral opposition to war, or belief this particular war was wrong (Louis Harris, 1965). Some 34 percent said the protesters just wanted to demonstrate against something, 26 percent called protesters tools of communists, and 14 percent thought the main protest motivation was to avoid the draft. In 1968 two-thirds of respondents disagreed with the proposition the demonstrators in Chicago had their protest rights taken away unlawfully (Louis Harris, 1968) and 56 percent approved of the way Chicago Police dealt with the young people protesting the Vietnam War (Gallup, 1968d). Some 71 percent agreed the “country would be better off if there was less protest and dissatisfaction coming from college campuses” (National Opinion Research Center, 1968).

In 1969 some 77 percent of poll respondents disapproved of public protests against U.S. involvement in Vietnam. Further, 62 percent thought public protests hurt our chances of reaching a peace settlement with North Vietnam; only 13 percent thought it helped. When presented with Nixon’s characterization of a silent majority and war opponents as a vocal minority, respondents opted to think of themselves as Silent Majority as opposed to Vocal Minority, 74 to 21 percent (CBS News, 1969; Chandler, 1972. 165-183). Eighty four percent of white “Middle American” adult respondents thought demonstrators on college campuses had been dealt with too leniently, the same percentage thought the same of treatment of black militants (Gallup, 1969b).

One 1969 study of adult men posed the question, “Tell me if you think about these [nine-item list] as violence. I don’t mean if they lead to violence, but if you think of them as violence in themselves.” Thirty eight percent thought of student protest as per se violence (Survey Research Center, 1969). A 1970 survey of women found 65 percent of them somewhat or strongly opposed to the actions and goals of student protest (Louis Harris, 1970a).

Thirty-seven percent in 1970 even thought protests against the Vietnam War should be declared illegal (Louis Harris, 1970b). Roughly a quarter thought protests hurt our ability to deal with the communists (Gallup, 1970). Harris (1969) phrased the question in terms of “people who picket against the war in Vietnam” and found 59 percent calling them more harmful to American life, only 18 percent said more helpful. President Nixon was so worried about forthcoming April 1971 protests, including antiwar veteran protests, he commissioned a poll about those protests; 65 percent of poll respondents disapproved of the demonstrations (Opinion Research Corporation 1971a).

Blaming the messenger also took place. Six in ten said the “press and TV (television) should never have reported statements by the soldiers because all the publicity about My Lai [massacre] can only hurt our cause in Vietnam” (Louis Harris, 1971c). Among 310 respondents who had heard about the Pentagon Papers, nearly four in ten disapproved the *New York Times* decision to

publish the secret, retrospective report on the deceptions and errors leading to the Vietnam War. Twenty-six percent thought the *New York Times* broke the law. Respondents split evenly on whether the *Times* had acted responsibly (Opinion Research Corporation, 1971b). Of course, the press always makes a good scapegoat, especially when it tells people things they'd prefer not to hear, read, or see (Halberstam, 2003, p 126).

At the time when protest groups were riddled with informants, the public still held a favorable law enforcement inclination, and many actually wanted more spying on domestic protests. Forty-one percent of the public in 1971 thought the FBI had not done enough in investigating political and protest groups. Further, 31 percent thought it had not done enough in "having agents or informers pose as members of militant protest groups." For both questions only 14 percent said the FBI had gone too far (Gallup, 1971b).

Protest remained unpopular in 1972. Half the respondents to one survey (Louis Harris, 1972) thought presidential candidate George McGovern had too many ties to radical and protest groups; 31 percent disagreed. Nearly half the respondents to a 1973 Harris survey thought student demonstrators who engage in protests did more harm than good; and 43 percent in the same survey agreed with the rights-chilling statement, "All protest meetings should be reviewed in advance by government authorities to be sure that what people are protesting is legitimate and they will not urge others to overthrow the system."

Two former advisers to former President Bill Clinton, William Galston and Elaine Kamarck, contend the Democratic Party has been saddled with and continues to pay a price for being associated with the counter-culture crowd of the 1960s (Savage, 2005). It matters little that the protesters had stronger moral or political policy positions, their deviant status remained even as their positions were accepted.

A similar "split verdict" on Vietnam War protesters may be found among the press and public in the United Kingdom. Thomas (2008) analyzed the coverage, finding general alarm and a stress on violence, threat, mobs, and hooligans. He wrote, "Press confusion, allied to concern for law and order, also helps explain why reactions to the protests became ever more extreme, panicked and melodramatic as the demonstrations grew in size and violence, and why they [the newspapers] opposed the protests with growing vehemence, even though most newspapers, with the exception of the *Daily Telegraph*, had come to oppose or at least question the American involvement in Vietnam by the end of 1967" (p. 342). He also relays an NOP survey in September 1968 with 56 percent of British respondents wanting political demonstrations banned, while in June of the same year a Gallup survey found 51 percent agreeing with those who wanted America to withdraw from Vietnam.

Schreiber (1976) analyzed U. S. poll data from the Vietnam protest era and concluded that the demonstrations overall had no measurable effect on the decline in public support for the war. He wrote "Vietnam war protesters were unpopular not because they were expressing opposition to the war in Vietnam, but simply because of the behavior in which they were engaged; they were dissenters, deviants, and were evaluated accordingly" (p. 230). He concluded that public opinion was moved by other factors, such as changes in presidential policy, short-term battlefield incidents like the Tet Offensive, and the long-term accumulation of casualties.

I checked Schreiber's conclusions against the American National Election Study for the year 1968, and the points held up well. Overall, two-thirds of Americans disapproved of demonstrations; only 7.2 percent approved of demonstrations, with the remainder having mixed emotions depending on various conditions. More than three in every four respondents who favored taking a stronger stand in Vietnam also disapproved of demonstrations. The figure was two in three for those who advocated continued efforts to get a peaceful settlement. Even among those who wanted to pull out entirely from Vietnam, slightly more than half opposed demonstrations. Withdrawal supporters in the 1968 ANES disapproved protest meetings by better than a two-to-one ratio over those who approved such meetings.

My further inspection of the ANES also validated that during the Vietnam War protest era (1964 to 1972) those who disapproved of demonstrations self-identified as lower on a social-class scale (2.76 on a zero to seven scale) than those who approved of demonstrations, 2.92 on the same scale. The same pattern held true for disapproval/approval of protest meetings, 2.66 versus 3.14. The latter difference reached a high standard of statistical significance ($t = 6.7538$, d.f. 2878, $p < .0001$), but the former difference fell short of statistical significance at $p = .1027$. Nevertheless, the data all trend in the same direction—opposition to the war and opposition to the protesters and demonstrations both skewed to the lower classes.

Extension to Afghan War

These Vietnam-era findings led me to conduct secondary analyses of six recent polls about another U.S.-led, long and divisive land war in Asia, the current struggle in Afghanistan. The six polls from the fall of 2009 were: three from CNN, two from NBC News / Wall Street Journal, and one from Gallup / USA Today. The three CNN polls create a clear and compelling case that opposition to the war in Afghanistan is highest among the lower classes. Those opposed to the war consistently had lower mean scores for education, income, and self-reported socio-economic status. Furthermore the same pattern held when the question addressed support or opposition for sending more troops, or seeing the Afghanistan War as comparable to Vietnam. Advocacy for withdrawing some or all U.S. troops draws disproportionately from lower-income and lower-education respondents (Table 1).

Both NBC questions about the war, asked in October and again in December, were scaled so one could run simple regressions to the income and education scales. All results were statistically significant. As income and education rose, respondents were more likely to support sending more troops (Table 2). Gallup in September 2009 also demonstrated a clear respondent pattern regarding President Obama and sending more troops to Afghanistan. The 461 respondents who favored sending more troops had a mean education score of 4.08, versus a 3.73 for the 491 respondents who opposed ($t = 3.5495$, d.f. 950, $p = .0004$). Fewer respondents gave income answers, but the 377 who did and favored more troops, scored a mean of 7.11 on an income scale. The 363 respondents who gave income information and opposed more troops scored a mean 6.25 on the same income scale ($t = 5.0031$, d.f. 738, $p < .0001$).

Conclusions and Discussion

The neo-conservative efforts to rewrite history and to propagate the “hostile media” and “pampered, elite protesters” themes seem to run on their own momentum, immune from data that show both to be false. During the mid-1990s Defense Department officials and President Bush repeatedly complained the public only gets “bad news” about the Iraq and Afghan wars (Hall, 2004). Aday (2010) conducted content analyses of NBC Nightly News and Special Report with Brit Hume on Fox News, concluding both actually had underplayed bad war news from both wars—and that Fox in particular had been sympathetic to the administration and its war effort.

Pilger (2009) put the neoconservative rewrite in proper context when he wrote, “In the wake of the US invasion of Vietnam, in which at least three million people were killed and their once-bountiful land ruined and poisoned, planners of future bloodfests invented the ‘Vietnam syndrome’, which they identified perversely as a ‘crisis of democracy’. The crisis was that the ‘general population threatened to participate in the political system, challenging established privilege and power’. Afghanistan and Iraq now have their syndromes.”

Those syndromes are, of course, mythologies, ones likely designed both to misdirect blame for any errors and to ease the case for future wars. This research has debunked most of the contentions within these syndromes and their “stab in the back” claims. Others have shown that news media often are hostile, not helpful, to antiwar protests. This research project, combined with that of others, shows that antiwar sentiment, at least in the cases of both Vietnam and Afghanistan, was strongest among those in the lower-education and lower-income strata, not any pampered elites.

One question for future research brings this work back where it started, a needed clarification to the Indexing Hypothesis. The clarification is that consensus breakdown needn’t start with elites. However, it seems reasonable that mediated attention will peak and mediated sympathy for protest will emerge when policy doubt reaches elites. This case study leaves to others those tallies of mediated attention and correlations related to public opinion, but the re-examined poll data can direct researchers to productive tracks and away from the neoconservative effort to rewrite history.

Table 1. CNN Polls, Afghan War, Fall 2009, Means by Education, Income, and SES.

(Oct. 2009) Favor or Oppose the War in Afghanistan?							
	Scale	Mean	N	Std. Dev.	T	d.f.	p
Favor	Education*	3.19	485	.891	5.2870	1006	<.0001
Oppose		2.88	523	.965			
Favor	Income**	5.72	420	1.995	6.3482	881	<.0001
Oppose		4.82	463	2.198			
Favor	SES***	2.20	484	1.076	4.115	1008	<.0001
Oppose		2.48	526	1.084			
(Oct. 2009) Favor or Oppose Sending More Troops?							
Favor	Education	3.14	492	.906	3.7113	1000	.0002
Oppose		2.92	510	.968			
Favor	Income	5.72	419	2.027	6.0191	875	<.0001
Oppose		4.83	458	2.173			
Favor	SES	2.21	491	1.074	3.8036	1002	.0002
Oppose		2.47	513	1.091			
(Oct. 2009) View Afghanistan War as Part of War on Terror or Separate?							
Favor	Education	3.11	365	.931	2.7152	523	.0068
Oppose		2.86	160	.948			
Favor	Income	5.49	315	2.086	3.9666	458	<.0001
Oppose		4.65	145	2.162			
Favor	SES	2.30	366	1.090	1.7675	527	.0777
Oppose		2.48	163	1.062			
(Oct. 2009) View Afghanistan War as Like the War in Vietnam?							
Vietnam	Education	2.88	526	.969	5.1116	1005	<.0001
Not Vietnam		3.18	481	.886			
Vietnam	Income	4.95	456	2.181	4.3848	879	<.0001
Not Vietnam		5.58	425	2.076			

Vietnam	SES	2.45	530	1.075	3.5323	1008	.0004
Not Vietnam		2.21	480	1.082			

(Nov. 2009) Favor or Oppose the War in Afghanistan?

Favor	Education	3.17	478	.892	2.7296	976	.0065
Oppose		3.01	500	.939			
Favor	Income	5.83	416	2.061	4.7841	868	<.0001
Oppose		5.14	454	2.182			
Favor	SES	2.32	478	1.105	1.5562	976	.12
Oppose		2.43	500	1.105			

(Nov. 2009) If Barack Obama decides to send about 34-thousand additional U.S. troops to Afghanistan, would you favor or oppose that decision?

Favor	Education	3.16	552	.894	3.2302	993	.0013
Oppose		2.97	443	.956			
Favor	Income	5.81	488	2.063	5.3810	885	<.0001
Oppose		5.04	399	2.188			
Favor	SES	2.31	552	1.085	2.2732	993	.0232
Oppose		2.47	443	1.126			

(Nov. 2009) If Obama decided to send a smaller number of additional U. S. troops, would you favor or oppose that decision?

Favor	Education	3.17	478	.892	2.7296	976	.0065
Oppose		3.01	500	.939			
Favor	Income	5.57	388	2.191	1.4331	878	.1522
Oppose		5.04	492	2.132			
Favor	SES	2.31	429	1.108	1.9723	987	.0489
Oppose		2.45	560	1.105			

(Dec. 2009) Favor or oppose the U. S. war in Afghanistan?

Favor	Education	3.09	528	.961	3.1613	1117	.0016
Oppose		2.89	591	1.135			
Favor	Income	6.01	538	2.268	4.9682	1127	<.0001
Oppose		5.31	591	2.449			

Favor	SES	2.45	524	1.148	2.0474	1105	.0409
Oppose		2.59	583	1.125			

(Dec. 2009) Regardless of how you feel about the war in general, do you favor or oppose President Obama's plan to send about 30,000 more U. S. troops to Afghanistan?

Favor	Education	3.07	732	1.020	3.2242	1138	.0013
Oppose		2.86	408	1.113			
Favor	Income	5.98	732	2.322	5.8385	1138	<.0001
Oppose		5.13	408	2.417			
Favor	SES	2.47	725	1.141	1.8480	1126	.0649
Oppose		2.60	403	1.116			

(Oct. 2009) Keep same number of troops, withdraw some, or withdraw all?

(Education)	Mean	N	Std. Dev.	ANOVA
Keep Same	3.21	97	.776	Sum Squares = 14.549, d.f.=2
Withdraw Some	2.97	171	.973	Mean Square 7.275, Fisher F
Withdraw All	2.76	233	1.009	value = 7.963, p < .0001

(Income)	Mean	N	Std. Dev.	ANOVA
Keep Same	5.16	88	2.133	Sum Squares = 33.865, d.f.=2
Withdraw Some	5.04	156	2.236	Mean Square 16.932, Fisher F
Withdraw All	4.54	207	2.129	value = 3.604, p = .028

(SES)	Mean	N	Std. Dev.	ANOVA
Keep Same	2.37	98	1.116	Sum Squares = 8.936, d.f.=2
Withdraw Some	2.33	171	1.106	Mean Square 4.468, Fisher F
Withdraw All	2.61	235	1.062	value = 3.777, p = .024

* Education scaled: 1 Never finished high school, 2 High School Graduate, 3 Some College, 4 College Graduate.

** Yearly Income scaled: 2 Less than \$25,000; 3 \$25,000 to \$30,000; 4 \$30,000 to \$40,000; 5 \$40,000 to \$50,000; 6 \$50,000 to \$75,000; 7 \$75,000 to \$100,000; 8 \$100,000+.

*** Socio-Economic Status scaled: 1 very upscale, 2 upscale, 3 downscale, 4 very downscale.

Table 2. NBC/WSJ, Afghan War, Fall 2009, Regressions by Education and Income.

NBC Oct. 2009, Support/Opposition* to Increasing Troop Levels by Education**

R ²	Res. Sum Sq.	df	Mean ²	F	Beta	t	p
.019	3105.415	889	3.493	17.474	-.139	-4.180	<.0001

NBC Oct. 2009, Support/Opposition to Increasing Troop Levels by Income***

R ²	Res. Sum Sq.	df	Mean ²	F	Beta	t	p
.040	3491.359	748	4.668	31.567	-.201	-5.618	<.0001

NBC Dec. 2009, Support/Opposition to Increasing Troop Levels by Education

R ²	Res. Sum Sq.	df	Mean ²	F	Beta	t	p
.027	3252.351	924	3.520	25.271	-.163	-5.027	<.0001

NBC Dec. 2009, Support/Opposition to Increasing Troop Levels by Income

R ²	Res. Sum Sq.	df	Mean ²	F	Beta	t	p
.044	3529.442	802	4.401	37.124	-.210	-6.093	<.0001

* Support/Opposition scaled: 1 strongly support, 2 somewhat support, 3 somewhat oppose, 4 strongly oppose.

** Education scaled: 1 Grade School, 2 Some High School, 3 High School Graduate, 4 Some college but no degree, 5, vocational training or two-year college, 6 Four-year college bachelor's degree, 7 Some postgraduate work but no degree, 8, Two or three years' postgraduate work, 9 Doctoral/law degree.

*** Income scaled: 1, less than \$10,000; 2, \$10,000 to \$20,000; 3, \$20,000 to \$30,000; 4, \$30,000 to \$40,000; 5, \$40,000 to \$50,000; 6, \$50,000 to \$75,000; 7, \$75,000 to \$100,000; 8, \$100,000+.

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