

Greetings!

Earlier this year, you participated in a study of social relations and views of the war in Iraq, and indicated that you would be interested in receiving a summary of the findings. We appreciate your help with our research, and we are happy to have the opportunity to tell you about the results. This write-up gives you as an interested participant a look at what we were looking for and what we found. However, this paper has not been peer reviewed. Please do not copy or cite without author's permission. If you would like to ask questions, to comment on what you read, or to find out more, you can contact project staff by phoning (07) 3365-6406, by e-mailing w.louis@psy.uq.edu.au, or by writing to Dr. Winnifred Louis, School of Psychology, McElwain Building / University of Queensland / St. Lucia, QLD 4072. You can also read about other studies that we've done on responses to the war or political decision-making at <http://www.psy.uq.edu.au/~wlouis/>.

SOCIAL RELATIONS AND VIEWS OF THE WAR IN IRAQ (Working paper 2003-s9-v1, 16/7/03)

WHAT WE WERE LOOKING FOR

In general, we were interested in participants' social attitudes and views of the war in Iraq. You may recall however that the questionnaire was quite long! The complexity of the data is not fully explored in this summary, which focuses on two manipulations that were introduced to the questionnaire. Early on in the questionnaire, half of the participants completed a scale measuring perceptions of US national supremacy whereas half of participants completed the same scale focusing on Singaporean national supremacy. The focus on the US was expected to prime a sense of threat and to increase national favouritism in stereotypes and affect, relative to the condition focusing on Singapore. This is theoretically and socially interesting because it illustrates the challenges of maintaining alliances: rhetoric that affirms an ally's power might actually trigger a backlash designed to protect national identification. Later in the questionnaire, half of the participants completed a conflict framing task before a measure of local political identification and activism, whereas half completed the tasks in reverse order. With this task, we were interested in two issues: (1) reactivity in the questionnaire (relating order to identification and frames), and (2) framing in political decision-making (relating perceptions of the war to attitudes and activism). Finally, in this study we were interested in cross-cultural consistencies and inconsistencies between Singaporean and Australian responses. Since we ran similar studies in Australia, we could assess similarities and differences in the two samples. Of course, the Singaporean and Australian samples differed on a number of dimensions and were each unrepresentative of their national population, so analyses of both difference and similarity should be interpreted cautiously!

SOME DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

We recruited 49 people to participate in the study, from a method & stats class in Singapore run by the University of Southern Queensland as part of a distance education program. The data were collected during March 2003 (i.e., while the fighting in Iraq was going on). Respondents were mostly female (69%), ethnically Chinese (69%), and Singaporean (96%), ranging in age from 21-49 with a median of 28. There was great deal of religious diversity in the sample, with 37% identifying as Christian, 18% as Buddhist, 30% as non-religious, Muslim, Hindu, or Taoist, and 14% not indicating a religious affiliation.

WHAT WE FOUND

PRE-MEASURES. Before exposure to the manipulations, we took pre-measures of war attitudes in the context of a larger survey of social attitudes. Participants indicated whether they

supported or opposed diplomatic and military support for the war in Iraq on scales ranging from -4 (personally oppose) to +4 (personally support). Forty-nine percent were opposed to diplomatic support, 27% were neutral on this point, and 24% endorsed it. For military support, 82% opposed Singapore's involvement, 12% were neutral, and 6% endorsed it. On average, then, participants were significantly opposed (below the midpoint of the scale) in both cases ($M_{dip} = -0.78$, $t(48) = -2.52$, $p = .015$; $M_{mil} = -2.71$, $t(48) = -10.47$, $p = .000$).

PART 1: MANIPULATION OF THREAT. Participants at this point completed a 10-item scale measuring perceived national supremacy for either Singapore ($n = 23$) or the US ($n = 26$). These were Likert items (e.g., "Sometimes it is necessary for [the U.S.A./Singapore] to make war on other countries for their own good"), with scales ranging from -3 (strongly disagree) to +3 (strongly agree). It was the administration of the scale itself that constituted the manipulation, but as a matter of interest the scale was reliable ($\alpha = .82$; $S_{cond} = .77$; $US_{cond} = .84$). Participants disagreed with the supremacist statements in both conditions, but the rejection of American supremacy tended to be more extreme than the rejection of Singaporean supremacy ($M_{us} = -1.37$, $M_s = -0.85$; $t(47) = 1.90$, $p = .064$).

A. NATIONAL FAVOURITISM. Participants then rated the valence of 19 traits (e.g., arrogant) on scales ranging from -3 (very bad) to +3 (very good) and estimated the percentage of Singaporeans and Americans who possess each trait. The weighted difference scores were rescaled and averaged to form a scale measuring the tendency to stereotype Singaporeans more favourably than Americans ($\alpha = .68$). The degree to which participants felt each of six positive and negative emotions about each group (e.g., admiring) was then measured. Positive emotions were reverse scored, and differences were averaged ($\alpha = .89$). When views to the two groups were compared, a majority of respondents stereotyped Singapore more favourably (53%) and experienced more positive emotion towards Singapore than to the US (67%). Relatively favourable stereotypes towards Singapore and more favourable affect were strongly correlated, $r = .65$, $p = .000$. However, when the threat manipulation was introduced as a between-subjects factor in a MANCOVA with the pre-measured war attitudes as covariates, no difference was observed between the two supremacy conditions in stereotyping and affect, $F(2,44) = .960$, $p = .391$, $\eta^2 = .042$, and no univariate effects were observed, $F_s(1,45) \leq 1.96$, $p_s \geq .17$).

B. WAR ATTITUDES. Participants also evaluated Likert statements regarding reasons for Singapore to support or oppose the 'War on Terror' (e.g., "Singapore has a moral duty to support the War on Terrorism financially") on scales ranging from -3 (personally disagree) to +3 (personally agree). When measures of opposition were reverse scored and combined with measures of support, the reliability proved unacceptably low, $\alpha = .57$. Subscales to assess support and opposition separately were a little more reliable ($\alpha_{support} = .69$; $\alpha_{opposition} = .66$). Across conditions, participants disagreed that Singapore should oppose the 'War on Terror' ($M_{opp} = -0.87$, $t(48) = -5.50$, $p = .000$) but did not significantly endorse or reject support for the 'War on Terror' ($M_{supp} = -0.23$, $t(48) = -1.42$, $p = .16$). The measures of support and opposition were included in a mixed-measures ANCOVA with support/opposition as a repeated measures variable, the threat manipulation as a between-subjects variable, and the premeasured attitudes as covariates. There was no effect of the manipulation, $F(1,45) = 0.11$, $p = .741$, $\eta^2 = .00$, and (more importantly) no interaction of threat x support/opposition, $F(1,45) = .03$, $p = .863$, $\eta^2 = .00$. War attitudes were thus not apparently influenced by the supremacy condition.

C. AUTHORITARIANISM AND DOMINANCE. Participants completed measures of two personality variables that had been related to national favouritism and conservative social views in previous research. Right-Wing Authoritarianism (Altemeyer, 1988) incorporates submission to authority, concern that people who break rules should be punished, and endorsement of traditional values. The variable was measured with 30 Likert items (e.g., "Obedience and respect for authority are the most important virtues children should learn") on scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), $\alpha = .84$. On average, authoritarian values were endorsed significantly, (M

= 4.33, $t(48) = 3.63$, $p = .001$). Social Dominance Orientation (Sidanius & Pratto, 1997) measures people's endorsement of hierarchical social systems with 16 Likert items on 7 point scales (e.g., "It is probably a good thing that certain groups are at the top and others are at the bottom"), $\alpha = .84$. SDO was independent of authoritarianism ($r = .10$, $p = .513$), and participants on average rejected hierarchical values ($M = 3.07$, $t(48) = -7.88$, $p = .000$). Participants' responses to these value/personality scales did not vary as a function of the threat manipulation, $F(2, 44) = .32$, $p = .727$, $\eta^2 = .014$.

D. NATIONAL IDENTITY AND PERCEPTIONS OF AMERICAN THREAT. A five-item scale measuring national identification (e.g., "How important is your nationality to your sense of self?"; 1 = Not at all; 7 = Very important), $\alpha = .85$, was strongly endorsed by Singaporean participants ($M = 5.00$, $t(46) = 5.67$, $p = .000$). Perceptions of the relationship between Singapore and the US were also measured, including a four-item Likert scale measuring perceived American threat (e.g., "American military force threatens the world balance of power"). The threat scale proved to have unacceptably low reliability, however ($\alpha = .22$). Interestingly perceptions of military, political, economic, and cultural threat covaried only weakly, although on average, respondents felt threatened by the US in every domain (all Ms above scale midpoint, $t_s \geq 3.75$, $p_s = .000$). However, neither national identity nor any of the threat judgements were influenced by the supremacy condition, $F(5,39) = .96$, $p = .454$, $\eta^2 = .11$. The threat perceptions were not significantly related to national identity (r_s ranging from .22 for political threat to -.26 for cultural threat).

E. CORRELATIONAL STATS. To sum up: the manipulation failed to significantly influence identity, threat perceptions, national favouritism, or war attitudes. To find out what did influence war attitudes and national favouritism, the pre-measures, supremacy condition (dummy coded), personality variables, national identity, and threat variables were entered as predictors in multiple regression models with the 4 DVs. Of course with an n of 47 (the 2 non-Singaporeans being excluded from this analysis), and an analysis with 10 intercorrelated IVs, low power and instability may be expected! For stereotyping, the only significant zero-order correlate was national identification, although cultural threat was also marginally negatively correlated with the DV. The final model, $F(10,36) = 2.32$, $p = .032$, could explain 22% of the adjusted variation, with national identification as the only unique predictor. For affect, only national identification was a significant zero-order correlate, although premeasured war support correlated marginally negatively as well. In the full model, $F(10,36) = 1.92$, $p = .07$, 17% of the adjusted variance could be explained, with national identification uniquely contributing along with cultural threat perceptions and low support for the war on the premeasure. For war support, zero-order correlations were significant for the premeasures and (negatively) for political and military threat perceptions of the US. Marginal correlations for the personality measures were also observed. In the full model, $F(10,36) = 2.50$, $p = .021$, 25% of the adjusted variance could be explained, with premeasured war support, social dominance orientation, and low perceptions of political threat each contributing uniquely. For war opposition, only cultural threat correlated (negatively) at the zero-order level, although SDO also correlated marginally positively. In the full model, only 5% of the adjusted variance could be explained, and the model did not attain significance, $F(10,36) = 1.26$, $p = .290$.

F. DISCUSSION. A write-up of the results for the earlier study that we did with Australians is available online at <http://www.psy.uq.edu.au/~wlouis/wl02s1v2.pdf> (you will notice that it's written less technically – participants were first year and non-psychology students). Essentially, in that study, national identity and support for the war were not influenced by the manipulation, as in this study. In the Australian sample, however, the manipulation resulted in increased threat perceptions and relative emotional negativity to Americans, as well as a trend towards more negative stereotyping. Across conditions, threat perceptions predicted Australians' low support for the war, more anti-American stereotypes and more anti-American emotions.

Authoritarianism predicted support for the war, but was not associated with negative stereotypes or hostility. The most interesting pattern emerged for national identification: stronger identification as an Australian was associated with stronger support for the “War on Terrorism” but also with anti-American stereotyping and emotional hostility.

The dissociation between cognitive and emotional support for the US, and views on whether the US should be behaviourally supported in the war, is observed in both samples. Moreover, we see national identification associated with national favouritism in both cases, with personality variables weakly implicated in war attitudes, and threat perceptions related to both favouritism and war support. So there is consistency on many levels. However, in the Australian sample, national identification was also associated with war support, and higher levels of support for the war were observed; in the Singapore sample, neutrality was generally endorsed. Despite sympathy for or disagreement with the US role in the war, most Singaporeans believed Singapore should not actively get involved. To us, this difference reflects the normative quality of intergroup attitudes: the way that views regarding war support or opposition are shaped by the social context. A second difference is that the threat manipulation induced higher national favouritism in the Australian sample, but failed in the present sample. I tend to attribute this to the sample size, which was more than 3x larger in the Australian study (N=166). It may also be the case however that the Singaporean sample experienced both supremacy conditions as threatening to the national identity, in the sense that both sets of statements were rejected.

SECTION 2: FRAMING TASK, POLITICAL AFFILIATION, AND ACTIVISM. For this manipulation, we asked students to do two things: (1) list some of the actors in the Iraq conflict and their goals, and rate the power of each actor to achieve their goals, and (2) tell us their own political identity and attitudes, and peace activism. What we did is vary the order of the tasks, so that half of the participants first gave us their political attitudes and behaviour and then evaluated the actors in the conflict, whereas half did the reverse. There were three main goals of the study: (1) relating different ways of framing the conflict to attitudes about the war; (2) among people who opposed the war, relating different ways of framing the conflict to activism; and (3) evaluating whether there would be different frames, or different reports of political attitudes and behaviour, generated as a function of the order of the tasks.

A. POLITICAL ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS. In this section, we had single-item measures of political affiliation and identification, attitudes to the war, and activist identification, along with multiple act criterion measures of past behaviour, and intentions. In political affiliation, respondents’ options were limited! When asked, “if you had to pick a party to vote for in an election tomorrow, which party would you choose to support?” 70% of respondents indicated the PAP (although interestingly 30% of respondents left the question blank or indicated an opposition group of some kind). In rating the importance of the party affiliation on a scale from 1 to 7, respondents did not differ from the midpoint of the scale ($M = 4.36$, $t(46) = 1.53$, $p = .133$). PAP supporters did not differ from non-supporters in rated importance of the affiliation, $t(45) = .57$, $p = .569$, but PAP supporters thought their party had more power (on a seven point scale, $M=6.49$) than non-supporters did ($M=4.50$; $t(45) = -3.48$, $p = .004$). Among the non-supporters, people who identified more strongly with their party also rated it as higher in power ($r = .74$, $p = .003$), but this was not true among PAP supporters who rated it at ceiling virtually unanimously ($r = -.05$, $p = .793$).

Participants rated their party’s position on the war in Iraq on a scale ranging from -4 (opposes the war) to +4 (supports the war). PAP supporters saw their party as supporting the war ($M = 1.55$, $t(32) = 5.18$, $p = .000$) whereas non-supporters saw their party as relatively neutral ($M = 0.50$, $t(13) = .82$, $p = .426$). On this measure, most respondents (60%) personally opposed the war in Iraq, with 15% neutral, and 25% who supported the war. PAP supporters ($M = -1.24$) and non-supporters ($M = -1.57$) were equally opposed to the war, $t(45) = -0.42$, $p = .679$. Participants also

rated the extent to which they thought of themselves as activists. Only 6% of PAP supporters gave an answer above the midpoint of the scale, versus 29% of non-supporters (although the difference in endorsement of the item was not significant because of the high variability, $t(45) = 0.00$, $p = 1.00$). Looking specifically at pro-peace activism in the last month, none of the sample had been to a rally, volunteered time to a peace group, or attended a peace group's meeting. Two respondents (4%) had donated money to a pro-peace group, and 3 (6%) had signed a pro-peace petition. In all, 89% of respondents had not engaged in any of the five pro-peace behaviours, despite their personal opposition to the war. On average, also, people did not intend to engage in activism: when intentions to engage in these behaviours in the next month were averaged ($\alpha = .99$), only 22% intended to engage in any of the behaviours, and PAP supporters and non-supporters were equally unlikely to act, $t(44) = .964$, $p = .340$.

B. PERCEPTIONS OF ACTORS IN THE CONFLICT. In this part of the questionnaire, we asked participants to list the actors in the conflict, describe the actors' goals, and rate the power of each actor to achieve their goals. What we've presented is an analysis of who the actors were and how powerful they were perceived to be. (Coding the goals themselves, while fascinating, is likely to take even more time than the rest of the analyses!) Across the sample, people listed up to 10 actors, with an average of 2-3 each. The most common were the US/Bush (83%), Iraq/Hussein (85%), and the UK/Blair (26%), with the next most common being the Coalition broadly (13%), the UN (15%), and the Iraqi people (13%). The US, the UK, and the Coalition, when listed, were seen as having strong power to achieve their goals, averaging 6.95, 7.33, and 7.33/10 respectively. Iraq, the UN, and the Iraqi people were all seen as weaker (4.45, 4.25, and 4.0). Not one participant listed Singapore as an actor in the Iraq conflict: that is, participants framed the conflict as one in which Singapore was not involved.

(i) **RELATIONSHIP TO WAR ATTITUDES.** We found that overall attitude to the war did not predict the complexity of the representation significantly, in terms of number of actors ($r = .14$, $p = .349$), nor were those who had mentioned particular actors different in war attitude than those who had not ($F(1,45) < 1.96$, $ps > .169$). People who supported the war did also perceive higher power for the US ($r = .44$, $p = .006$) and the UK ($r = .61$, $p = .036$). But no relationship between attitudes and power perceptions was observed for other actors.

(ii) **RELATIONSHIP TO ACTIVISM IN OPPONENTS.** Focusing on those who opposed the war ($n = 29$), we looked at whether those who engaged in activism were likely to frame the conflict differently than those who were opposed to the war without having acted politically. We found no significant differences in any variable – the number of actors listed, or the likelihood of mentioning any particular actor, or the power ratings for particular actors.

(iii) **EFFECTS OF ORDER ON CONFLICT FRAME AND ACTIVISM.** We found that order had no effect on conflict framing, and no effect on self-rated activism, and activist behaviour or intentions. On the other hand, we observed a marginal interaction for evaluation of the political ingroup as a function of party affiliation and the order of the tasks, $F(1,44) = 3.34$, $p = .074$, $\eta^2 = .07$. PAP non-supporters tended to rate their affiliation as more important to them if they thought about the war and then evaluated their party ($M=4.90$) compared to if they evaluated their party first ($M=3.71$), whereas PAP supporters tended to rate their party as more important to them if they evaluated it first, before they thought about the war ($M=4.59$) compared to after ($M=3.94$). Government supporters' affiliation was undermined by a focus on the war, in other words, while opposition supporters' affiliation was reinforced.

C. DISCUSSION. A write-up of the results for the earlier study that we did with Australians is available online at http://www.psy.uq.edu.au/~wlouis/wl0603_1.pdf (again, you will notice that it's written less technically). Essentially, in that study, the manipulation showed the same (weak) effect on rated importance of the political party, with government supporters' identities declining in rated importance after focus on the war, and opposition-affiliated respondents showing stronger identity. Another similarity is that in both studies those who

supported the war perceived the US as more powerful than those who did not. But there were also important differences in conflict frames in the 2 samples. In the present study, Singaporeans concurred on a 2- or 3-party frame (US / UK / Coalition vs Iraq), and not a single respondent saw Singapore as playing a role in the conflict. In the Australian sample, frames were more differentiated as a function of identities (political & activist), attitudes and behaviour. Most Australian opponents of the war listed Australia as an actor, with different power and interests than the US/Coalition, whereas most supporters did not. Among opponents of the war, Australian activists perceived the conflict between the US and Iraq as more unequal, compared to people who opposed the war but didn't act. Activists also listed more actors in the conflict in general, and were specifically more likely to see anti-war nations, politicians, or peace organisations as playing a role. Presumably, Singapore's neutrality and political cohesion allowed a relatively consensual conflict frame to develop. However, the low base rate of activism and the low N may also have prevented us from detecting meaningful differences as a function of political attitudes and identities.

SUMMARY

In this study, then, participants generally opposed the war personally and tended to favour Singapore over the US both cognitively (i.e., in stereotyping) and affectively (emotionally). However, regardless of both personal attitudes to the war and level of national favouritism, most respondents did not believe Singapore should actively support or oppose the US in the war. Few respondents who opposed the war personally had engaged in any anti-war activism, and in the conflict framing task no participants saw Singapore as playing a role in the war. For us, some of the most interesting aspects of the data involve the attitude-behaviour discrepancies (e.g., personal/attitudinal opposition to the war combined with political/behavioural neutrality), which are very common in studies of political decision-making.

THANKS AGAIN...

So that's a description of what we found in this study! If you have any questions, or would like a copy of the longer write-up when we get that done (in several months) please get in touch. You can also read about other studies that we've done on responses to the war or political decision-making at <http://www.psy.uq.edu.au/~wlouis/>. And thank you again for your participation and interest!

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