The Internet and Anti-War Activism: A Case Study of Information, Expression, and Action

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Abstract

This case study examines how traditional and Internet news use, as well as face-to-face and online political discussion, contributed to political participation during the period leading up to the Iraq War. A Web-based survey of political dissenters (N = 307) conducted at the start of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq provides the data used to examine the relationships among informational media use, online and face-to-face political discussion, and political participation among the respondents, who were recruited through blogs, discussion boards, and listservs opposing the Iraq war. Analyses reveal that among these respondents, Internet news use contributed to both face-to-face and online discussion about the situation in Iraq. Online and face-to-face political discussion mediated certain news media effects on anti-war political participation. The study stresses the complementary role of Web news use and online political discussion relative to traditional modes of political communication in spurring political participation.

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Introduction

In response to the threat of war in Iraq, individuals and social movement groups became involved in numerous kinds of participation, including demonstrating for a peaceful resolution to the conflict, contacting editors and politicians, and discussing war-related issues with others. It is believed that the Internet played a vital role

in spurring these activities, because it provided an effective and strategic communication platform that enabled people to disseminate relevant and timely information and share their views via discussion boards, weblogs, and listservs. That is, the Internet provided individuals and groups with an opportunity not only to search for and exchange information, but also to discuss current issues with others who have similar as well as dissenting opinions.

Research has confirmed the crucial roles of news media use and political discussion in predicting various forms of civic and political participation (e.g., McLeod, et al., 1996; Sotirovic & McLeod, 2001). However, research on the role of Internet-based news use and political discussion is only beginning to develop. Given the rapid diffusion of the Internet as well as the increasing use of and reliance on this medium, it seems that certain uses of the Web may shape activism beyond traditional factors. Indeed, some recent research supports this contention, finding that the informational and expressive features of the Internet support collective action (Shah, Cho, Eveland, & Kwak, 2005; Shah, Kwak, & Holbert, 2001). Such research, like most efforts to connect digital media and participation, focuses on traditional modes of public-spirited participation, ignoring political protest participation and more radical forms of direct action.

This case study investigates how news consumption and political discussion among visitors to anti-war weblogs, discussion boards, and listservs may have influenced political participation, with specific attention to the role of the Internet in these processes. A Web-based survey of individuals who were purposively recruited through online channels critical of the Iraq War provides the case study data used to examine these relationships. These respondents, while not representative of the United States population or even a cross-section of Internet users, provide unique insights into the role of the Internet in encouraging anti-war activism, particularly among those who engaged the war through participation in weblogs and other online forums.

The following analysis examines how these respondents engaged in face-to-face and online political discussion, as well as how they used news media such as television, newspaper, and the Web. We examine whether online forms of gaining information and expressing perspectives contributed to political activism regarding the Iraq War. Included in this mix of activities are political protest involvement and direct action. Given the emerging political communication environment via the Internet, this case study aims to shed light on new routes to political action, looking closely at the roles played by face-to-face and online political discussion among weblog visitors opposed to the Iraq War.

Literature Review

News Use and Political Discussion

Past research has related news media use to increased political discussion. Some theorists link both behaviors to a common set of gratifications sought by users. In particular, the "interpersonal utility" function explains that people consume news

content so that they can relay that information to others and discuss issues more persuasively (Greenberg, 1975). Consumption of news and information gained through interpersonal channels may also serve a simple "informational" or "schematic" function. In particular, news media, in a deliberative participation model, can play a vital role in encouraging political talk among people before they engage in opinion formation and political activities (Kim, Wyatt, & Katz, 1999).

The Internet adds some complexity to this dynamic. People can use online news sources in the same way they might use newspaper and television news, but they can also use the Internet to engage directly in the exchange of information and political perspectives through online discussion networks. The changing structure of information dissemination on the Web, most notably the recent explosion in weblog activity, only serves to highlight this difference. Increasingly, news is being distributed by groups with highly linked constituencies, including activist groups (Tsang, 2000).

Given the findings of Sotirovic and McLeod (2001) that "it is the content of the media and not the medium per se that matters for political participation" (p. 287), a connection between Internet news use and face-to-face discussion follows logically from the same theoretical sources as the connections with newspaper and television news use. Indeed, recent research has found that online news consumption leads to increased face-to-face political talk, ultimately culminating in engagement in public life (Shah, et al., 2005). This research also observed crosscutting effects from traditional news sources on the degree of "political messaging" in online environments, alongside the effects of Internet news use on this emerging form of political expression.

This research highlights the Internet's potential role in fostering new venues for news or information seeking and political talk among those who oppose government actions (van Dijk, 2000). This leads to the expectation that even among our sample, largely comprised of tech-savvy opponents of the war, both traditional and digital news media will have a positive relationship with the frequency of political discussion, both face-to-face and online.

News Use and Political Participation

Conceptualizations of "participation" have traditionally stemmed from a broad definition of "involvement in the public sphere" (Shah, McLeod, & Yoon, 2001). In practice, this involvement has been operationalized in many different ways. Shah, McLeod, and Yoon (2001) asked respondents to what extent they did volunteer work, worked on community projects, and went to club meetings. Other studies have measured participation by studying patterns of letter writing, membership in formal organizations such as the PTA, or petition signing (Norris, 2002; Putnam, 1995). "Non-traditional" participatory activities, such as marching in a demonstration, have generally been considered part of a separate "protest participation" concept (Barnes & Kaase, 1979).

The present study combines traditional forms of engagement in public life (e.g., contacting media organizations, signing petitions, and displaying political signs) with protest participation activities (e.g., attending a rally and engaging in direct action)

into a broader conception of political participation, specifically within the context of activism in opposition to the Iraq War. There are two primary reasons for this. First, changes in the structure of government over the past several decades have dramatically reduced the effectiveness of "traditional" channels for the populace to target the ruling class. Second, at the same time, privatization and deregulation have had the effect of closing off many public services from the electoral judgment of the people. Accordingly, protest activities have become more and more a part of public discourse, as people attempt to sway organizations that are beyond the reach of the ballot box.[1]

The connection between news use and political participation is somewhat more advanced both theoretically and empirically than the relationship between news use and political discussion. Newspaper news use has been positively related to participation, while television viewing has been negatively related (Putnam, 1995, 2000). While the findings of Sotirovic and McLeod (2001) suggest a positive relationship between political participation and both television and newspaper news use, a more refined analysis by McLeod and Detenber (1999) indicates that the use of a pro-status quo frame in television news reinforces support for administration policies, potentially diminishing the desire to engage in political action against those policies. In the period leading up to and during the initial phases of the Iraq War, Fox News was critiqued for taking an "overtly patriotic approach" in their reporting on the war (Sharkey, 2003). Likewise, Massing (2004) found the coverage on MSNBC to be "mawkishness and breathless boosterism." Systematic content analyses of press coverage of pro- and anti-war demonstrations before and during the Iraq War found that U.S. news media tended to delegitimize anti-war groups while legitimizing pro-war groups (Luther & Miller, 2005). In light of these critiques, it is suspected that all other things being equal among the respondents, television news viewing had a suppressing effect, due to greater identification with the status quo and decreased likelihood of political participation.

Applying the same lens to the Internet again adds some wrinkles. The Internet allows access to a much wider range of news sources than the dozen or so traditional media outlets a typical person might otherwise be able to access. News is immediately available from sources across the globe, and bloggers can act as de facto wire editors for readerships ranging from a few dozen into the millions. A Pew Research Center study indicates that by 2000 the Internet was already beginning to draw attention away from television and newspaper news, especially among young adults, the strongest anti-war advocates (Pew, 2000).

Related to its wider range, the Internet also offers users a more systematic form of self-selection. Users of television or newspaper news can certainly choose to avoid certain types of news stories, but this is often an active decision made after exposure to a small part of the story. On the other hand, Internet news users generally have the option of choosing from a list of headlines, or even having just the stories they want emailed directly to them. Beyond that, they can more readily choose ideologically-motivated sites to visit—a reader who opposed the war could get news exclusively from anti-war weblogs and discussion boards, for example.

Numerous studies have attempted to explain the effects of Internet use on political participation, questioning whether the Internet can promote or impede engagement in public life. For instance, Shah, et al. (2005), exploring the relationship between Internet use and individual-level engagement, found that informational uses of the Internet were positively related to participation in community life as mediated through various forms of political expression. Given this past research and the populations studied in this case, it is expected that Internet news use will have a positive relationship with political participation.

Political Discussion and Political Participation

Following the theory of deliberative democracy, discussion is expected to occur prior to action, so that action will be based on rational and thoughtful ideas. Following this theoretical premise, Jankowski and van Selm (2000) found that political debate and discussion function as a baseline for political engagement. Likewise, McLeod and his associates (McLeod, et al., 1996, 1999; Sotirovic & McLeod, 2001) treat discussion characteristics including frequency of political discussion as antecedents of participation. We adopt this perspective, recognizing the ambiguities and complexities inherent in this model of political discussion and action.

In doing so, we contend that interpersonal networks are a prime mechanism for the information exchange necessary for political discussion as well as recruitment into political activities and social movement groups. Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) report that two-thirds of all requests for protest participation or community involvement derive from people whom the respondents know personally. Social movement research provides ample evidence to substantiate the role of interpersonal networks in recruitment and participation (della Porta & Diani, 1999; McAdam, 1982; McAdam & Paulsen, 1993; Snow, Zurcher, & Ekland-Olson, 1980). While social movement research substantiates the important role of networks, this research tends to ignore interpersonal discussion among network members, except to say that it exists (della Porta & Diani, 1999; Oliver & Marwell, 1993). The literature on interpersonal networks and political discussion suggest that talk can play a crucial role in encouraging political participation.

There also has been increasing debate about the role of computer-mediated forums, such as weblogs and chat rooms, in supporting political discussion. The discourse suggests that the Internet can play a positive role in facilitating political discussion. However, empirical evidence suggests the need for some skepticism about the quality of political discussion online and about whether opportunities for online discussions will be incorporated by traditional political organizations (Norris, 2003; Tsalinki, 2002). Among the more optimistic studies, Price and Cappella (2002) have found that participation in online discussion forums increased political engagement, measured by voting, and civic participation. Likewise, Shah, et al. (2005) have observed favorable effects of civic messaging—discussion about community affairs over emails and the like—on engagement in community activities when testing static and change models.

Preliminary research suggests that Internet users have more expansive social networks (Uslaner, 2004) and that pre-existing social ties explain strong online ties (i.e., face-to-face and online ties supplement each other) (Kavanaugh & Patterson, 2001; Kraut, et al., 2002; Matei & Ball-Rokeach, 2001; Wellman, Haase, Witte, & Hampton, 2001). The opportunities that online discussion creates may help in the diffusion of protest events and, possibly, permit more heterogeneity in discussion partners, which is important for expanding support for a movement (Knoke, 1990). Supplemented by pre-existing social ties, these online networks may offer strong recruitment possibilities for political activities. Nonetheless, online discussion may also create an ersatz notion of engagement without the benefits attributed to real world connections, adding some complexity to the question of the connection between online discussion and political engagement.

Predicted Model

Given that the connections between information, expression, and action among a non-representative sample of Internet users are being examined, no formal hypotheses for testing are offered in this study. Nonetheless, past research on the effects of news and discussion, coupled with journalistic criticism of television reporting prior to the Iraq War and to the efforts of anti-war social movement groups, provides some important insights about associations among these factors within this context. Accordingly, it is expected that newspaper reading and Internet news consumption will foster increased political expression. This expression may take place face-to-face or in virtual contexts. We do not have the same expectations for television news use, given the widespread criticism of pro-administration coverage during this period and the likelihood of this coverage diminishing the motivation to express or act in opposition to the Iraq War.

It is further expected that discussions among those opposed to the war increased opportunities for recruitment into conventional and protest modes of political participation, as conversation revealed ways to get involved and enact change. Again, we expect that both face-to-face and online political discussion have the potential to foster anti-war activism among this sample. Of course, some of these paths may prove to be blind alleys or dead ends that do not culminate in participation among the respondents. Figure 1 summarizes these assertions about media, discussion, and participation discussed above, in a model regarding the expected relationships among these factors during the period leading up to the Iraq War.

Methods

A Web-Based Survey

The relationships among news media use, political discussion, and political participation were tested using data collected from a Web-based survey conducted between April 13 and May 9, 2003. During this time an ABC/*Washington Post* poll found that 80% of the public supported the U.S. having gone to War with Iraq, with

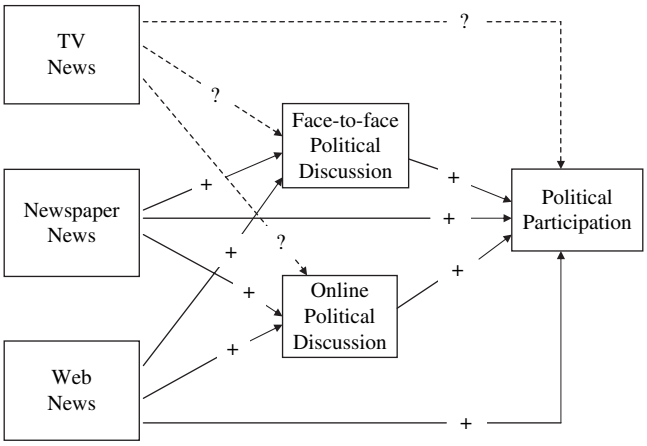

Figure 1 Information, expression, and action (IEA) model

only 18% opposing this military intervention.[2] The concern here is with the 18% that opposed the war and visited anti-war weblogs and discussion boards. The Web-based survey used a snowball sampling technique carried out over the Internet to recruit respondents to the online questionnaire. The invitation to participate in this survey was posted through weblogs (e.g., http://www.kevinsites.net and http://www.blogsofwar.com), online discussion boards (e.g., http://www.urban75.org and http://www.nonviolence.org), and listservs (e.g., moveon.org and freedomforum.org) that generally opposed the Iraq War. It was also distributed as a press release to major anti-war websites, and respondents were asked to distribute the invitation further.

Responses were excluded that were submitted after a pre-determined field period and where fewer than half of the questions contained a response. In total, 307 respondents were used in the data analysis. It is noted that these respondents are not representative of the U.S. population or Internet users. As a preliminary test of whether this approach produced an appropriate sample for the subsequent analysis, a frequency analysis of Iraq war opinion was performed. Notably, 86% of the sample opposed the war in Iraq—almost exactly the opposite of general public support for the War at the time—indicating that the desired respondent group was obtained. Although not a random or representative sample, this purposive approach allowed us to focus on a group of people who were largely opposed to the conflict and used weblogs and other online forums to discuss it.

Measurement

Traditionally, political participation was measured by asking respondents whether they participated in various political behaviors including voting, campaigning, donating, and contacting officials. However, participation has also been measured by asking respondents whether they would be willing to participate in various expressive behaviors, especially speaking up in a public forum and expressing an

opinion to members of the media (McLeod, et al., 1999). Others have asserted the need to include measures of protest participation (Barnes & Kaase, 1979). Regardless of the form of participation, these measures are tapped without regard to the specific issue that spurred action. The measurements in this study are related to issue-specific participation—in this case, social action concerning the Iraq War—trying to combine elements of these different approaches into a unified whole while maintaining issue specificity.

The criterion variable, political participation, was measured by seven items that asked respondents whether or not they engaged in various activities regarding the Iraq War: wrote or called the media to express your views, displayed a sign or banner at your home, contacted an elected official, signed a petition, donated money to an activist organization, participated in direct action, and participated in a protest or rally. An additive index was used to create the dependent variable (Cronbach's α = .83; M = 3.56; SD = 2.39).

For media use, respondents were asked how often they used television, newspaper, and the Internet for news or information about the Iraqi situation (three separate questions). Each item was measured by a six-point scale, where 1 meant "not at all" and 6 meant "everyday" (TV: M = 2.60, SD = 1.82; Newspaper: M = 2.78, SD = 1.73; the Internet: M = 4.10, SD = 1.42).

Face-to-face political discussion combined two network attributes: discussion size and discussion frequency. Discussion size was measured with a single item asking respondents the number of people that they had talked to about politics or current affairs, particularly the Iraqi situation, over the last month either "face-to-face or over the phone." A log transformation of the reported values to resolve the issue of outliers within the distribution of face-to-face discussion network size was used (M = 1.31; SD = .46). Network size ranged from 0 to 2.60. Meanwhile, discussion frequency was measured with six items asking respondents how often they talked about politics face-to-face or over the phone with family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, acquaintances, and strangers. All six items were measured by a five-point scale, where 1 meant "rarely" and 5 meant "often." A mean score of six items was used to create face-to-face discussion frequency (Cronbach's α = .72; M = 2.96; SD = .80). Face-to-face network size and discussion frequency were then summed (M = 4.27; SD = 1.14).

Similarly, online discussion also combined two network attributes: discussion size and discussion frequency. Discussion size was measured with a single item asking respondents the number of people who they had talked to about politics or current affairs, particularly the Iraqi situation over the past month via the Internet, including email and electronic bulletin boards. Likewise, a log transformation of the reported values to treat outliers who sharply skewed the distribution was done (M = 1.20; SD = .74). Online discussion size ranged from 0 to 3.30. Meanwhile, discussion frequency was measured with six items asking respondents how often they talked about politics via the Internet with family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, acquaintances, and strangers. All six items were measured by a five-point scale, where 1 meant

"rarely" and 5 meant "often." A mean score of six items was used to create online discussion frequency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .65$; $M = 2.10$; $SD = .78$). Online network size and discussion frequency were then summed ($M = 3.30$; $SD = 1.40$).

Established demographic characteristics such as gender, age, education, and income were controlled in this model (see Appendix 1 for descriptive statistics). In addition, ideology, perceived war consequences, and war support of respondents were used for control variables that could influence the level of news media use, political discussion, and participation and account for potentially spurious relationships among them. Ideology was addressed by asking respondents whether they were liberal or conservative on economic and social issues, respectively. Each item was measured by a seven-point scale, where 1 was "very liberal" and 7 was "very conservative." A mean score of two items was created ($r = .48$; $M = 2.21$; $SD = 1.14$).

Predicted war consequences were measured by five items asking the extent to which respondents agree or disagree with the following statements: The war with Iraq will: weaken America's national security, undermine international relations, destabilize world politics, help ensure the safety of Americans, bring democracy and freedom to Iraq. All items were measured by a five-point Likert scale, where 1 meant "strongly disagree" and 5 meant "strongly agree." (For the exact question wording, see Appendix 2.) The last two items were reversed and then a mean score of five items was calculated (Cronbach's $\alpha = .89$; $M = 3.32$; $SD = .35$). Finally, war support was determined by a single variable: asking respondents whether they supported or opposed the Iraq War. This item was measured by using a seven-point scale, where 1 meant "strongly oppose" and 7 meant "strongly support" ($M = 1.88$; $SD = 1.55$).

Analytical Procedure

In order to examine the relationships among news media use, political discussion networks, and political participation around the Iraq War, regression path analyses were employed. We first residualized demographics, ideology, predicted war consequences, and war support on the variables used in the regression path model. Thus, in this path model, each path presents a regression coefficient value that controls for the effects of all of the residualized variables.

Results

Prior to running the regression path models testing the relationships among news consumption, political discussion, and political participation around the Iraq War among respondents, the partial correlations among the media use variables after residualization were examined. The partial correlation between newspaper reading and television news viewing was .30 ($p < .001$), between newspaper reading and Internet news use .13 ($p < .001$), and between television news viewing and Internet news use was .19 ($p < .001$). These coefficients indicate that while there were modest relationships between modes of news consumption within this sample, there was also

considerable independence, suggesting that these media have unique effects. A similar analysis was conducted for the two forms of political discussion, in this case controlling for the residualized factors and news consumption, which is antecedent to discussion in our predicted model. This yielded a moderate correlation of .34 ($p < .001$) between face-to-face and online political discussion, suggesting that while some people discussed political across venues, many in the sample favored one of the venues over the other.

As can be seen in Figure 2, regression path analysis revealed that newspaper news use was significantly and positively related to face-to-face political discussion among respondents ($\beta = .29$, $p < .001$), whereas television news use was not significantly related to face-to-face political discussion. As expected, Web news use was positively and significantly related to both face-to-face and online political discussion ($\beta = .18$, $p < .01$ and $\beta = .37$, $p < .001$, respectively). Notably, television news use did have a negative relationship with political participation ($\beta = -.11$, $p < .05$), suggesting that the favorable treatment of administration policies on television news programs may have reduced the intention of some respondents to participate. Neither newspaper use nor Web revealed any direct relationships with political participation in these data. Instead, the effects of these variables operate on participation indirectly through their influence on political discussion.

Additionally, the analysis showed that face-to-face political discussion had a positive and statistically significant relationship with political participation ($\beta = .44$, $p < .001$). Analysis also revealed that online political discussion had a significant and positive relationship with political participation ($\beta = .26$, $p < .001$). These

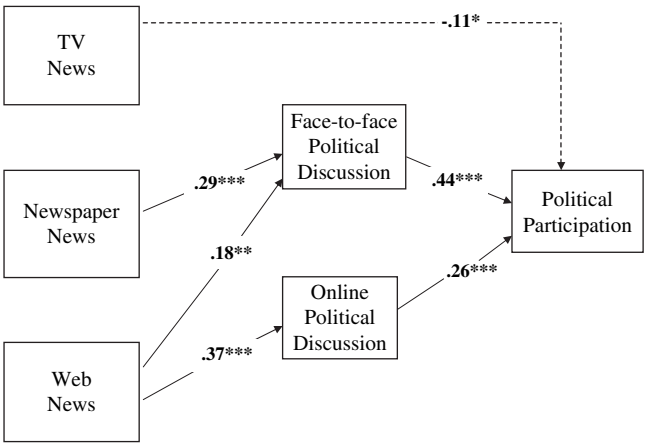

Figure 2 Information, expression, and action (N = 307)
Notes: Demographics, ideology, perceived war consequences, and war support were controlled. Values are standardized regression coefficients. Non-significant paths are not shown in path diagram.
*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$

results indicate that within this sample, online discussion was not a blind alley or a dead end, but instead served as a conduit to political participation that rivaled the more traditional face-to-face method. In sum, the results of this case study data suggest that the Internet played an important role in spurring activism among individuals who opposed the war above and beyond what would have been explained by their demographic characteristics, their ideology, their concerns about the war, and their opinion about the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq.

Discussion

Regression path analyses of the data collected from this purposive sample revealed that Web news use was positively related to both face-to-face and online political discussion about the Iraq War, whereas newspaper news use was only positively associated with face-to-face political discussion, and television use was unrelated to the discussion variables. Face-to-face and online political discussion, in turn, had positive links with political participation around the impending war. For this population of Internet users who were largely opposed to the conflict and used weblogs and other online forums to understand it, these political discussion networks mediated the effects of news media use on political participation, with online and face-to-face discussion channeling the effect of newspaper and Web news use. Notably, television news use was negatively associated with political participation, suggesting that the content of television differed qualitatively from the seemingly more critical and questioning tone of newspaper and Internet content. These effects encouraged and channeled political talk—face-to-face and online—into political participation in opposition to the war.

These analyses suggest that traditional and emergent electronic discussion networks contributed to political participation around the Iraq War among this case study's respondents—opponents to the Iraq War who used the Internet as a tool to understand the conflict through weblogs, discussion boards, and other online forums. These results stress the importance of online political discussion as a complement to face-to-face political discussion for political activism, especially when individuals oppose the actions of government and find themselves in the opinion minority. In addition, we found that Web news use by the respondents of this case study played a vital role in contributing to both face-to-face and online discussion, which then led to participation around the Iraq War. This provides some evidence that the sources of news available online spurred political conversation in both interpersonal and online contexts during this period among those opposing the war.

Although this inquiry is intended as a detailed case study of the Internet and antiwar activism around the Iraq War, the results generated from this sample have some broader implications. First, this study stresses the importance of the Internet as a resource for the mobilization of citizens into various types of political participation. This supports the findings of other recent research on the role of the Internet as

both a source for news information and a sphere for public-spirited discussion (Shah, et al., 2005). Second, given that social movement mobilization theories ignored the role of discussion frequency and network size, this study contributes to an understanding of how discussion networks mobilize people in social activism. The distinction between social networks and political discussion networks deserves further exploration.

Nonetheless, this case study has some important limitations. The sample used in the study is not representative of a general cross-section of the population, although a general cross-sectional sample would not have permitted insights into the role that the Internet played in activating those with dissenting opinions into political activism. The purposive snowball sampling technique used in this survey provided us with only one view into the mobilization of protests and other forms of political activism around the Iraq War. Whether the relationships observed were representative of the more general phenomena of anti-war activism remains open to question. Of course, this is not a dynamic that can be studied at just any time, so concerns about generalizing these findings must be traded against the unique insights that these time-dependent data provide. Future research that adopts a case study approach to study online phenomena may benefit from the use of complementary research methods such as virtual ethnography.

In a related vein, another limitation is the measurement of political participation, which did not distinguish whether certain political activities such as donating money, sending letters, contacting officials, and signing petitions took place online or through more conventional means. It also did not measure new types of online political activities such as "virtual" marches or hacking targeted Web sites (Brunsting & Postmes, 2002). Future research must consider the role of the Internet as not only a conduit to political participation but also an arena for political action. Furthermore, the very notion of political participation in this study was conceptualized and operationalized in a manner that combined conventional and protest participation. Although the individual items comprising this scale performed well in terms of reliability, future research should consider whether media and talk predict these modes of participation differentially.

These findings also suggest broader agendas of research on the Internet and anti-war activism, especially the need to connect our results with protestors' efforts to gain media coverage and media portrayals of these protestors (Kowal, 2000; Shoemaker, 1984). In particular, protestors face inherent dilemmas in terms of media relations when they adopt sensationalizing forms of activism to seek publicity or form coalitions with groups that prove to be poor representatives, visually and otherwise, when they are featured on television or in the blogosphere (Domke, Perlmutter, & Spratt, 2002; McLeod & Hertog, 1992; Perlmutter & Wagner, 2004). These factors may play some part in the dynamic revealed here, and may contribute to public opinion and media representations that have long challenged protest groups. The sense of disassociation this dynamic may produce is itself a worthy topic of inquiry (Hwang, et al., 2006).

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Notes

1 Norris (2002) found that, in eight postindustrial nations, the number of people who had signed a petition rose from 32% in the mid-1970s to 60% in the mid-1990s, and the number who had participated in a demonstration rose from 9% to 17%. Furthermore, she found that the population of protesters had begun to normalize—that is, today's protester population more closely resembles the general population than did the protesters of the 1970s.

2 This result is based on an *ABC News* and the *Washington Post* poll conducted April 9, 2003, in which 509 adult nationals were asked whether they support or oppose the United States having gone to war with Iraq. The poll results are archived at Lexis-Nexis (http://Web.lexis-nexis.com/statuniv).

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Descriptive Statistics for Demographics

	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	167	54.9
Female	137	45.1
Age		
10s	16	5.2
20s	171	55.9
30s	59	19.3
40s	33	10.8
50s	21	6.9
60s	6	2.0

(continued)

Appendix 1 *Continued*

	Frequency	Percent
Education		
Less than a high school degree	4	1.3
High school degree	7	2.3
Some College	89	29.1
Associate's degree	15	4.9
Bachelor's degree	100	32.7
Graduate degree	91	29.7
Income		
<$20.000	105	34.2
$20.000 – $40.000	95	30.9
$40.001 – $60.000	32	10.4
$60.001 – $80.000	33	10.7
$80.001 – $100.000	17	5.5
>$100.000	25	8.1

Appendix 2: Question Wording

[Gender] What is your gender?
[Age] How old are you?
[Education] What's the highest level of education you've obtained?: High school degree, some college degree, associate's degree, bachelor's degree and graduate's degree.
[Income] What was your total household income for 2002?: less than $10,000; more than $10,000; more than $30,000; more than $50,000; more than $70,000; more than $90,000?

[Ideology]

Economic Ideology: The terms "liberal" and "conservative" may mean different things to different people, depending on the kind of issue one is considering. In terms of economic issues, would you say you are generally: very liberal, liberal, somewhat liberal, moderate, somewhat conservative, conservative, or very conservative?

Social Ideology: In terms of social issues, would you say you are generally: very liberal, liberal, somewhat liberal, moderate, somewhat conservative, conservative, or very conservative?

[Predicted War Consequences] Please identify the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. The war with Iraq will…

a. Weaken America's national security
b. Undermine international relations
c. Destabilize world politics

d. Help ensure the safety of Americans
e. Bring democracy and freedom to Iraq

[War Support] Please choose the number that best corresponds to your level of opposition or support for the U.S. led coalition's war with Iraq.
[News Media Use] How often have you consulted the following sources for news or information about the Iraqi situation?

a. Television
b. Newspaper
c. Internet

[Face-to-face Political Discussion]

Size: Now I'd like you to stop and think about the people that you have talked to about politics or current issues, particularly the Iraqi situation. Over the last month, about how many total people would you say you have talked to face-to-face or over the phone?
Frequency: How often do you talk about politics face-to-face or over the phone with…

a. Family member
b. Friends
c. Co-workers
d. Neighbors
e. Acquaintances
f. Strangers

[Online Political Discussion]

Size: Still, thinking about the people that you have talked to about politics or current issues over the last month, particularly the Iraqi situation, about how many total people would you say you have talked to via the Internet, including email and electronic bulletin boards?
Frequency: How often do you talk about politics via the Internet with…

a. Family members
b. Friends
c. Co-workers
d. Neighbors
e. Acquaintances
f. Strangers

[Political Participation] Please indicate whether you have engaged in any of following activities as a response to the Iraqi situation: (check all that apply)

a. Written or called the media to express your views
b. Displayed a sign or banner at your home

c. Contacted an elected official
d. Signed a petition
e. Donated money to an activist organization
f. Participated in direct action
g. Participated in a protest or rally

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