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How Military Recruitment Affects Collective Action and its Outcomes

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Abstract

This paper aims to advance the research on the conjunction of two fields – antiwar protest and casualty aversion – by offering a conceptual development of the role of military recruitment in affecting casualty sensitivity-incited antiwar mobilization. While scholars have shown that sensitivity to losses is not a constant variable and its reflection in the public sphere is affected by political variables such as sense of threat, mission success, number of casualties, and elite consensus, which can be mediated by collective actors. However, the role of the mode of military recruitment in influencing collective action in the military realm has been neglected. It is argued that the mode of military recruitment mediates collective actors' ability to leverage the politics of war to challenge dominant discourse and influence war policy, owing to the cumulative impact of four recruitment-related variables: republicanism, social power, the favoring of 'voice' and bounded discourse. All shape the movement's framing and resources in a way that affect mobilization.

Introduction

How does the mode of military recruitment affect collective action that is motivated by sensitivity to military casualties? This paper is concerned with this issue, and aims to fill a scholarly gap: Scholars have explained how sensitivity to losses has deep social origins and that its reflection in the public sphere is affected by political variables such as sense of threat, mission success, number of casualties and elite consensus (hereinafter: 'the politics of war'), which can be mediated by collective actors. However, the role of the mode of military recruitment in influencing collective action in the military realm has been neglected.

This paper seeks to tackle this scholarly gap and to advance the research on both antiwar protest and casualty aversion by suggesting the conceptual development of the role of military recruitment in affecting antiwar mobilization. It is argued that the mode of military recruitment mediates the ability of collective actors to leverage the politics of war so as to challenge the dominant discourse and influence war policy, owing to the cumulative impact of four recruitment-related variables: republicanism, social power, the favoring of 'voice' and bounded discourse. The theoretical proposition is tested by comparing two cases that focus on mother-based groups: the Cindy Sheehan-led antiwar group *Gold Stars Families for Peace* (*GSFP*) in the U.S. (2004-2007) and the *Four Mothers* (*FM*) movement in Israel (1997-2000).

The Scholarly Gap

Sensitivity to military losses has increased in democratic societies since the 1970s, playing a key role in limiting the state's freedom of operation in deploying the armed forces for military missions. The Vietnam War signified the major turning point. Scholars have offered a variety of explanations for the social origins of this sensitivity. Central to these are: (1) the decline in the sense of external threat with the demise of the Cold War (Smith 2005); (2) the decoupling of citizenship from soldiering (Burk 1995; Turner 2001); (3) the role of technology in nurturing expectations for casualty-free wars (Gelpi 2006: 492); and (4) the impact of the shrinking size of the family in increasing parental and political resistance to military adventures that risk lives (Smith 2005: 500-501).

However, as IR/PS students argue, sensitivity to losses is not a constant variable; its reflection in the public sphere is affected by variables clustered under 'the politics of war', such as: (1) the extent to which the war is portrayed as successful in attaining its original goals (Feaver and Gelpi 2003; Larson 1996: 10-12); (2) the definition of the war's goals in relation to the level of perceived external threat, where the greater the perceived threat and the role of war in eliminating it, the greater the legitimacy for sacrificing human life (see Jentleson and Britton 1998); (3) the public view regarding

the rightness of the war (Gelpi, Feaver and Reifler 2009); (4) the decline of public support as the number of casualties increases (Mueller 2005).

Since changes in military policies toward risk avoidance and mission aversion—that may culminate in force redeployment—often occur when antiwar movements garner mass support (as demonstrated in the cases of the Vietnam War and Israel's First Lebanon War in 1982), collective action must also be taken into account.

Wars that are perceived as failures or whose costs increase (and here casualty sensitivity is relevant) create a political opportunity that changes coalitions and causes shifts in the political environment. These changes may be read by savvy activist entrepreneurs as an invitation to mobilize (Marullo and Meyer 2004; Meyer and Minkoff 2004). As the U.S. experience shows, at least in the area of military policies, only the combination of shifting public opinion together with the joint effect of protest activities and the action of institutional allies in the public space can increase the government's level of responsiveness (Giugni 2004). It is collective actors that divide the elites, activate the media and keep the war on the agenda (Larson 1996: 75-97; Zaller 1992). In turn, divided elites impact the role played by the media in transmitting countervailing elite evaluations that may ignite public debate (Brody 1992: 66). Changing the perceptions of legislators about the public's preferences or their intensity is one way that movements and interest groups try to impinge on public policy when public opinion appears to be wavering (Burstein 1999: 10-17). That is why an exclusive focus on public opinion, elites and media—without factoring in the role of collective actors in affecting policies—cannot provide a complete analysis. The politics of war alone does not have an impact unless leveraged by collective actors.

Here the mode of military recruitment plays a role. Charles Tilly recognized the linkage between military participation, namely, the proportion of the general population in military service, and political participation (1997: 193-215). Reliance on a mass citizen army encouraged patterns of bargaining between the state (during the state-formation stage of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries) and the groups that controlled the human and material resources needed for waging war in a manner that

resulted in the allocation of political and social rights to these groups and. As historian Bruce Porter put it, "the voice of the people is heard loudest when governments require either their gold or their bodies in defense of the state" (1994: 10). With this link between military and political participation, the decision to go to war was conditional on the support of the local community, namely, those directly shouldering the burden of war and the social groups sending their children to military service. War could not be waged without popular consent. However, this argument goes both ways: With the demise of mass armies from the mid-twentieth century, the bargaining space of social groups with state agencies was narrowed. As fewer people participate in the military, governments face less political opposition to preparing for, initiating and waging war autonomously (see Silver 2004; Vasquez 2005). Still, the link between military and political participation implies that sacrifice encourages those sacrificing to monitor how military policies bear the expected fruits in terms of costs, success, and more (Lake 1992). Hence, casualties became the central force behind the potential opposition to war (Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler 2009).

Notwithstanding this linkage, both students of collective action and of casualty sensitivity have refrained from exploring the influence of the mode of military recruitment – the tool regulating the level of military participation – on collective action in the military realm, in this case, on transforming casualty sensitivity into collective action. Most relevant is the impact of recruitment on the institutional politics and public policy that create the space for mobilization, on the prospect for resource mobilization and on the framing of antiwar discourse. Most scholars of collective action who studied the impact of opportunity structure on the likelihood of mobilization have not factored in the role of recruitment, despite the impact of recruitment on the structure of power in society.

In a pioneering effort, Joseph Vasquez (2005) integrated theories of collective action with those dealing with casualty shyness and factored in the mode of recruitment. He argued that democracies with conscript armies are more likely to resolve their conflicts, having suffered fewer casualties than democracies with volunteer forces. That is mainly because conscription touches more powerful actors more directly than voluntary service; thus, collective efforts to restrain democracies

relying on conscription are more likely to benefit from actors with both the interests and the political resources to drive politicians to change policies. Nonetheless, though Vasquez identified the linkage between recruitment and collective action, he has not analyzed how the mode of recruitment is specifically translated into collective action.

Vasquez's argument is indirectly corroborated by Kriner and Shen (2010). Though they did not factor in collective action, they focused on public opinion and mapped the distribution of American wartime casualties across socio-demographic variables. They found that Americans respond to casualties by lowering their support for military operations and for military leaders waging them, but not uniformly. Criticism is most intense among citizens who have experienced the costs of war most intimately through the lens of their local communities. However, the costs are disproportionally concentrated in disadvantaged communities, where the residents possess fewer of the resources needed to engage in politics. This decreases the pressures brought to bear on policy-makers to change policies. So, like Vasquez, Kriner and Shen linked social power to the capacity to act politically in a manner that can be related the mode of recruitment, as this mode determines the proportionality of costs. Nonetheless, they overlooked the mediating link of collective action between public opinion and policy outcomes.

To demonstrate the scholarly gap, let us compare two cases that focus on mother-based groups: *GSFP* in the U.S. (2004-2007) and *FM* in Israel (1997-2000).

In April 2004, Cindy Sheehan lost her son, Casey, in an ambush in the Sadr City district of Baghdad. A year later, in August 2005, prompted by the doubts that had arisen regarding the causes of the war and its success, and after the number of fallen had surpassed 1,000, she camped outside President Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas to protest the war. Unexpectedly, Sheehan inspired thousands of people, who formed an antiwar movement, leading her to found *GSFP*. Two years later, disappointed with the results of her antiwar campaign – with the Democrats' support of President Bush's plan to authorize an additional $100 billion to fund the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan rather than ordering an unconditional pullout – she decided to quit the campaign and run for Congress, but lost the 2008 election. *GSFP* was in practice dismantled.

The case of Israel illustrates a different mode of collective action with different outcomes. In 1985, Israel ended the First Lebanon War (1982-1985) when, in response to massive protests, it unilaterally withdrew most of its forces from the area. Nonetheless, between 1985 and 2000, Israel was dragged into a guerrilla war against Hezbollah forces in the security zone that Israel still occupied in the southern part of Lebanon, as a buffer between Lebanon and northern Israeli towns. Given the small number of fatalities (about 15 per year), the army's presence on Lebanese soil did not provoke significant political resistance in Israel. However, following the collision of two military helicopters in February 1997, in which 73 soldiers were killed en route to Lebanon, the middle class-based *FM* movement was founded by four residents of the north, mothers of soldiers who were serving in Lebanon at the time. Though the group later expanded to include men as well, the majority of its members were middle class women, some bereaved, many of whom came from the leftist *kibbutz* movement (cooperative farming communities), with a strong base in the north of Israel (Lieberfeld 2009). *FM* spearheaded an impressive campaign, calling for a unilateral and unconditional withdrawal from Lebanon which ultimately took place in May 2000.

When we compare these two cases, we are struck by the remarkably different outcomes of these movements. It is difficult to attribute exclusive causal significance to social movements when other variables also explain government decisions regarding war. Yet, the key to a movement's success is the ability to form a critical mass for sustainable action. In this regard, there is no doubt that *FM* did better than *GSFP*: while the latter was dismantled following its sense of failure to convince the American public to withdraw from Iraq, the former garnered mass support and persisted until the government withdrew its forces from South Lebanon.

Let us test four politics of war-related variables to demonstrate the underlying explanatory gaps by using these cases: threat, success, casualties and consensus.

Threat

To begin, the level of external threat indeed plays an important role in determining sensitivity to war losses. Clearly, however, the withdrawal from South Lebanon – located about a two-hour drive from the center of the country and controlled by the Shiite Hezbollah – posed a greater risk to Israel's national security than withdrawal from Iraq did for America. Initially, the political elites excluded the possibility of a unilateral withdrawal (Beilin 2008: 44-45) and in 1998 (after the helicopter accident), 64% of Israelis still agreed that the security zone in Lebanon was making a positive contribution to Israel's security and protecting the northern settlements from terrorism (Arian 2000: 24-26). Later, most mayors of northern Israeli towns petitioned the government against a unilateral withdrawal because of the threat it posed to their communities (Eisenberg 1997: 67-68). However, the dovish *FM* group convincingly presented a new perception: soldiers deserved no less security than did civilians along the border (Sela 2007).

In contrast, *GSFP* was dismantled following its failure to convince the American public to withdraw from Iraq, a country thousands of miles away from America, despite the army's lackluster performance there and Americans' traditional willingness to question military thought. Even after the 9/11 attacks had militarized public opinion, these sentiments were still far less deep-seated than the 'nation-under-siege' mentality in Israeli culture. Threat is not an objective entity but a discursive construction mediated through the work of collective actors.

Success

Although 'success matters' – in other words, the likelihood of victory reduces sensitivity to losses, success is also subject to political interpretation. Israel's occupation of South Lebanon was successful in distancing *Hezbollah* from its northern civilian population, or at least that was what the majority initially believed (see Arian, ibid; Kaye 2002/3: 566-568). Especially on the eve of the withdrawal, it seemed that the IDF had improved its methods of anti-guerrilla warfare and Israeli farmers could cultivate their lands along the border in safety (Harel and Issacharoff 2008: 31-32). *FM*, however, convinced the public that it was a pointless war. Unlike Americans' declining optimism about success in Iraq, the Israeli army was not

criticized for its performance. The war's price, rather than its rightness or the army's performance, was the bone of contention.

Similarly, *GSFP* was able to take advantage of the political opportunity to further divide the Democratic Party on the Iraq issue, when the war was portrayed as an experiment in imposing democracy, which implied a transformation from foreign policy restraint to occupation and 'nation building'. In addition, as the number of casualties rose, the group leveraged growing concerns that the war's original goals were unattainable, a sentiment that brought about a legitimacy crisis and increased sensitivity to casualties, which was the post-Vietnam heritage (see Eichenberg 2005; Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler 2005/6). Still, unlike the case of Israel, skepticism was not sufficient to breed a mass antiwar movement. And if it is not enough, while success in Israeli terms was a quiet Northern border, for the Americans, the debate was also about how to measure success in Iraq (Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler 2005/6).

Casualties

The number of casualties also has limited explanatory power. In both cases, though initial support for the war eroded when casualties mounted, the casualties alone do not explain the differing political outcomes of the two antiwar movements: in Israel, the numbers tapered off to their previous level and even lower after the helicopter accident (Kaye 2002/3: 570). In Iraq, as Gelpi, Feaver, and Reifler (2005/6: 19) showed, after the U.S. transfer of sovereignty to Iraq in 2004, U.S. casualties continued to mount at the same rate as during the occupation period, yet public support for the war rose.

Consensus

Both movements emerged when a relatively hawkish party ruled (Republican/*Likud*) and the movements sought to mobilize the support of, and divide, the minority/opposition dovish party (Democratic/Labor). As Larson (1996) concluded from other cases in the U.S., support for war and willingness to tolerate casualties are based upon a sensible weighing of costs and benefits. What matters most for influencing public opinion is the level of consensus among political leaders regarding the balance of costs/benefits. Larson claimed that in their evaluation, the

public gauges consensus or dissent among leaders to inform their own opinions. As the cases under study here show, an important mediating mechanism between the public and the elites is the work of collective actors in dividing the elites.

In Israel, while the Labor Party initially accepted the IDF's prolonged presence on the Lebanese soil, the shift in public support occurred two months before the general elections in 1999 when the Labor Party, headed by Ehud Barak, challenged the *Likud* government and Barak announced that, if elected, despite his previous opposition to a unilateral withdrawal, he would pull the IDF out of Lebanon within one year, either by agreement or unilaterally (Maoz 2006: 215). In May 2000, Prime Minister Barak ordered the unilateral pull-out.

Similarly, *GSFP* and other antiwar activists drove politicians to question the rationale underlying the war. At the end of 2005, Democratic member of Congress John Murtha, a decorated Vietnam War veteran, prompted a turnaround in Congress by reversing his earlier strong support for the war and proposing that the troops be pulled out of Iraq. Murtha's stance influenced the Democratic Party, which in 2006 reclaimed control of Congress by leveraging public dissatisfaction with the war (Heaney and Rojas 2007: 454-455; Schuman and Corning 2006: 86). However, *FM*'s starting point was less promising than that of *GSFP*, as the Israeli presence in South Lebanon was less debated relative to the debate and protest that preceded the war in Iraq. Also, the level of casualty sensitivity in Israel was still less acute relative to the post-Vietnam impact on the American public. While the First Lebanon War of 1982 indeed elicited unprecedented protest, the protest focused on justification for the war rather than on its cost (Levy 2009); tolerance for sacrifice for a just cause remained high. Thus, in Israel, casualties were a dividing mechanism to a lesser degree.

Examining the impact of politics of war is incomplete without factoring in the opportunity structure through which groups can leverage the politics of war to challenge the government – and through this, to identify additional impediments to mobilization. For the moment, I will ignore the impact of the recruitment model on which my analysis will focus, but two other variables should be considered:

The first is the groups' access to the public sphere and decision-makers, and the responsiveness they can expect. Apparently, Israel's national, proportional representation parliamentary system makes politicians more responsive to public outcry (especially in the 1999 elections, when the Lebanon War was an issue, in which voters voted separately for party and prime minister), while America's regularly scheduled presidential elections, contested by two parties, make it far more difficult for movements' demands to be translated into policies. On the other hand, members of Congress are far more responsive to their constituencies, who elect them directly, than are Israeli Knesset members, because Israelis vote on the national level for a party rather than an individual. Furthermore, because of this system, American legislators are more independent of the executive than in Israel.

Second, distinguishing between conditions particularly relevant to antiwar protestors and more general features of the political environment (as suggested by Meyer and Minkoff 2004) leads to the conclusion that for *FM*, the challenge was to protest in a militarized society that did not tolerate questioning of military logic, especially when voiced by women (see Robbins and Ben-Eliezer 2000). Similarly, *GSFP* challenged the traditional constructions of the stay-at-home mother (Franklin and Lyons 2008:244). Yet, both movements were preceded by other women's movements, which may have had a 'demonstration effect' on them (to use Kitschelt's term, 1986: 62), such as *Mothers against Silence* that appeared in 1982 following the First Lebanon War or *Women Strike for Peace*, which protested the Vietnam war; both of these mobilized motherhood to legitimate their voice. Still, *GSFP*'s starting point was better: it stepped into a vacuum created by rifts within, and dissolution, of the antiwar coalition (see Meyer and Corrigall-Brown 2005: 339-340), that could give rise to the building of new coalitions (Younge, 2007), and thereby became a powerful symbol of the peace movement (Toussaint 2009: 40-41).

In short, the politics of war could have improved *GSFP*'s likelihood of effective mobilization especially as the opportunity structure was more favorable to it than to its Israeli counterpart, and not the reverse. It follows that the politics of war cannot alone account for the differences between the movements. The perceived level of external threat, the success of the operation, the number of casualties and the level of

consensus all matter, but their reflection in the public sphere is transformed by collective actors who reframed the threat, success and costs, and divided the elites. As these movements functioned in the context of different modes of recruitment – the U.S. deployed All Voluntary Forces (AVF), while in Israel conscription is of all Jewish citizens, male and female alike – studying the linkage between recruitment and collective action becomes relevant. It is with this challenge that this paper is concerned.

The next section presents the conceptual framework and is followed by an empirical test by returning to the case studies.

The Role of Mode of Recruitment

The politics of war is transformed into policy outcomes through collective action. The ability of collective actors to make a difference is largely mediated by the mode of military recruitment. Mode of recruitment varies from mass conscription, through selective conscription to voluntary, vocational militaries. Mode of recruitment largely influences the structure of power in society and as such affects the opportunity structure that determines the likelihood of collective action.

Following Kant, citizen armies imply de-concentration of power in the ruler's hands by distributing arms and the cost of bearing arms among the citizenry (see Scarry 1991). Mode of recruitment is more than only a recruitment policy; it refers to the social composition of the armed forces and the power entailed in access to arms (see Kier 1997). Mode of recruitment mediates between the variables of politics of war and the intensity of collective action by affecting the actors' resources and their framing of the issues.

Conscription has a stronger impact on collective actors than a volunteer army, due to four recruitment-related variables: republicanism, social power, the favoring of 'voice' and bounded discourse (yet, this theoretical proposition does not imply a

binary distinction between conscription and voluntary forces. All the recruitment-related variables also work under voluntary forces, but to a lesser degree).

(1) *Republicanism*: Collective actors endeavor to create frames that provide a compelling picture of a political problem—in this case, an unjustified, costly or flawed war—and to offer a solution. Frames are "action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns of a social movement organization" (Benford and Snow 2000: 614). Frames function as a tool for legitimizing groups' voices, and for favoring one voice over others when meanings are contested (Della Porta 1999; Steinberg 1998). Framing the discourse helps coalition-building with powerful allies within institutional arenas, which is often the condition for success when public opinion is not enough to exact a response from the government (Giugni 2004). Framing thus plays a major role in shaping the movement's strategy and tactics. Here republicanism matters.

Conscription nurtures, and is nurtured by, republican ideas to a greater extent than when volunteerism governs recruitment. Republicanism means that the state coercively mobilizes its youngsters in return for political and social rights accrued to the social networks that offer up their children to military service (Tilly 1997: 193-215). By linking duties to rights, republicanism encourages the creation of group identity; namely, political discourse about recruitment policy, the group's status within the military, and its expectations during and following service are all constructs that may affect collective identity-making and claim-making (see, for example, Enloe 1980). Ronald Krebs (2006) explains (by drawing on Israel and the U.S.) that military service can enhance minority groups' efforts to gain first-class citizenship status by encouraging their youngsters' recruitment and can frame the rhetoric of claim-making in a manner that corresponds to the prevailing citizenship discourse. At the same time, manpower policies, whether inclusionist or exclusionist, constitute a signal of the extent to which the state trusts the minority group and may respond to its citizenship claims. Thus, republicanism may set the cultural context within which antiwar frames are likely to be developed as a means to legitimize claims to various rights, including the political right to take part in the shaping of military policies.

Moreover, the discourse of republicanism may also provide a stronger context for the glorification of wartime sacrifice. Marvin and Ingle (1999) argued that American society is held together by the sacrificial rituals of warfare and blood and their embodiment is through military funerals, which confer a special status on the death of soldiers. Through this sacrifice, the nation is rejuvenated. It is a way of making sense of individual loss, which is in part a function of the meaning of the political event. Conversely, the absence of clear meaning, or the presence of negative meaning, may exacerbate the sense of loss (Fierke 2004: 484), which may in turn promote collective action, legitimized by the cost. In both cases, however, the discourse of sacrifice legitimates the voice of those who sacrifice. Republicanism enlarges the cycle of those who sacrificeand the state's duty to them, which in turn can be transformed into successful claim-making.

Because of this combination of republicanism and glorification, mothers have a strong proclivity to remain faithful to the femininity of militarized motherhood that not only promotes military values as the appropriate guide for choices that mothers make for their children, but also crafts legitimate motherhood as the main space in which women can undertake legitimate political action (Enloe 2000). Mothers can overcome the cultural barriers that women face in voicing concerns about military-related issues by engaging in the republican exchange between military sacrifice, in the form of motherhood, and political rights, i.e., *republican motherhood*. It is the public's appreciation of their sacrifice that gives mothers access to the military scene from which they have traditionally been excluded by men, who were granted sole authority to speak on military issues (see Elshtain 1995; Tickner 2006).

In addition, collective actors can use the discourse of republicanism to create a community that shares the same fate in war. By framing issues and structuring the mobilization format so that it resonates with their potential allies, collective actors may create the experience of belonging to a common social location through which social identities are galvanized (Gamson 1992). Identity-framing augments a group's ability to recruit members and supporters, gain the ear of the public, make alliances with other groups, and defuse opposition (see Polletta and Jasper 2001). A shared social location increases the density of a social network, which in turn enhances

collective action. When density increases, agents communicate more intensively, share information, develop similar worldviews, and become more inured to calls for them to defect from the cause (Kim and Bearman 1997). Thus, it is no coincidence that organizations of veterans, reserve soldiers, potential draftees and bereaved families, all communities based on shared identities, attract the public's attention during or after a war. Institutions (in this case, state-regulated conscription) affect the formulation of social movement identities and objectives (see Swidler 1995: 37).

Conversely, in a commodified, volunteer army, the exchange between the state and social groups shifts to the level of employer (military) and employees (recruits). The ability of enlistees to support their families is at stake, not their ideological grievances. Soldiers' support for military missions is then "purchased" rather than politically mobilized. As labor is hired through the market, rather than conscripted through coercive state mechanisms, the military, as an employer, must persuade the labor pool that working for it is attractive. Marketing military service means relying on monetary attractions rather than reinforcing the political legitimation of war and war preparation among potential enlistees and their social networks. Material rewards regulate the level of military staffing. In the U.S., for instance, it would appear that very generous financial bonuses have played a key role in enabling the army to meet its recruitment quotas since 2006, to make it possible to implement the administration's decisions to send more troops to Iraq (Korb and Duggan 2007). In such a situation, bargaining over policy and ideological expectations on the group level are limited. Furthermore, the liberalization on which the transition to voluntary service is premised, that underpins the culture of rights and devalues the republican-informed performance of civic duty, undercuts veterans' and parents' capacity for claim-making (Krebs 2006).

(2) *Social power*: As Vasquez (2005) claimed, democracies with conscript armies are more likely to resolve their conflicts with fewer casualties than democracies with volunteer forces. That is because (1) conscription touches more powerful actors more directly than voluntary service, thus collective efforts to restrain democracies relying on conscription are more likely to benefit from actors with both the interests and the political resources to drive politicians to change policies; (2) policy makers' choices

do not only respond to collective action and public opinion, but also anticipate it if they fear that casualties will engender opposition from citizens with access to power. Indirect support for this argument is provided by the study that shows that knowing a military casualty personally significantly increases the likelihood that an individual will criticize the leadership (Gartner 2008). Conscription increases casualty ties and the community of people sharing the same fate is larger.

Though Vasquez referred to the impact on the number of casualties, his argument is applicable to the impact on military policies at large, as it is grounded on recognition of the linkage between military service and political participation. Conversely thus, insofar as the republican concept of politics is based on the exchange of military obligations for multiple rights, declining levels of military participation, resulting from falling rates of conscription and diminished participation in warfare, imply a reduction of bargaining power that can be expressed by political participation (Silver 2004). Especially as in a vocational army, those who are touched are not only fewer but also less powerful, as casualties are disproportionally concentrated in disadvantageous communities (Kirner and Shen, 2010).

Bacevich (2007) sums up this trend by claiming that

> [w]hen it came to invading Iraq, President Bush paid little attention to what voters of the First District of Massachusetts or the 50th District of California thought. The people had long since forfeited any ownership of the army. Even today, although a clear majority of Americans want the Iraq war shut down, their opposition counts for next to nothing: the will of the commander-in-chief prevails. ... If "they"—the soldiers we contract to defend us—get in trouble, "we" feel little or no obligation to bail them out.

Furthermore, it is not only a matter of social but also of political representation. One of the reasons that Iraq war veterans have been shunted aside, as compared to Vietnam veterans, is that the installation of the AVF produced armed forces with officer corps disproportionately composed of self-identified political conservatives and Republican partisans (Krebs 2008). This is a typical result of phasing out the

draft, which alters the social make-up of the military toward reliance on the lower-middle class and ethnic minorities.

(3) *The favoring of 'voice'*: The 'voice' option is favored over the 'exit' option when those involved have limited alternatives (Hirschman 1970). Thus, because conscription relies on coercion, 'voice' in the form of collective action is favored over 'exit' in the form of emigration or defection. In contrast, in a vocational army based on monetary incentives, 'exit' in the form of 'opting out' is the more favorable option (Tannock 2005).

Therefore, state actors pay more heed to the 'voice' of potential conscripts and their social networks. After all, it is the state that is responsible for those whom it has coerced to sacrifice, as opposed to enlistees in AVFs who have seemingly made a free choice. Military death cannot be presented as the result of free choice but as state-sanctioned death, which also encourages political voice to bargain with the state on the terms of legitimate death.

(4) *Bounded discourse*: In a kind of vicious cycle, the more attentive people are to military-related collective actors, the greater the probability that the actors' discourse will be bound by the limits of the hegemonic genre as a means of attracting support (see Steinberg 1999). This is especially so when the stable dimension of the opportunity structure combined with the sense of external threat might constrain antiwar discourse. Conversely, as Tarrow (1994: 120) argued, dwindling appeal brings movements to identity transformation, namely, "militants raise the walls of their collective identity higher and higher, defining themselves through increasingly narrow definitions of identity and rejecting alliances as a form of 'selling out'." In turn, the more bounded the discourse, thus gaining attention, the more it reinforces the other variables, namely, adherence to the republican framing, preserving power strongholds in the military, and favoring voice over exit.

This is especially so as the discourse of sacrifice is a double-edged sword. It does not only glorify the fallen and their social networks and legitimize the latter's public voice; it may also inhibit this public voice. If society depends on sacrifice as a way of

defining national identity and ensuring social cohesion, then questioning the justification for death is almost taboo. For the families bereaved by war, compliance with this taboo is a source of power, just as it is for other families whose sons and daughters serve in the military. Through it, they are surrounded by an aura of national recognition, honor and admiration. Naturally, the parents seek the comfort of knowing that the cause for which they are suffering (in reality or potentially) is a good one. Breaking this taboo is too costly, thus raising the threshold for embarking on protest activities. Theoretically speaking, parents are partly captive within hegemonic genres (see Steinberg 1999).

For mothers, the dilemma inherent in this trap is even more acute. If women become peace activists, explains Goldstein (2001: 412-413), their actions may feminize peace and thus reinforce masculine militarization. However, if they raise their boys as soldiers, they are merely perpetuating gender norms, namely, that the country needs their sons and they should have patriotism instilled in them (Haytock 2003: 31-54). Mothers, therefore, are motivated to adhere to the republican discourse of militarized motherhood.

Back to opportunity structure: As Kitschelt (1986: 61), who analyzed the role of opportunity structure in furthering or restraining mobilization, argued, "If movements can appeal to widely shared norms, collect adequate information about the nature of grievance against which they protest and raise the money to disseminate their ideas and information, the chances of broad mobilization increase." Drawing from Meyer and Minkoff, (2004), politics of war creates signals that invite actors to act, in this case in response to military losses, costs and failures, and the opportunity structure furthers or restrains their capacity to mobilize. Recruitment-related variables largely influence the structure of power in society and as such affect the opportunity structure. This occurs by helping or impeding collective actors from transforming the politics of war into policy outcomes by appealing to shared norms and mobilizing resources, besides the impact of recruitment on access to, and influence on, decision-makers, as Vasquez predicted.

Nonetheless, high rates of military recruitment may also breed militarization. Militarization has traditionally legitimized high levels of extraction of resources, including human ones, since a 'nation-in-arms' generated from mass conscription is characterized by a blurred distinction between the civil and the military that gives rise to militarization (Ben-Eliezer 1997). So, republicanism paired with militarism may also form a cultural barrier to antiwar challengers. Still, it is safe to assume that, all conditions being equal, when antiwar sentiments run high, republicanism-informed collective actors can gain more.

Defining and measuring a movement's success poses both a theoretical and methodological challenge, especially when it comes to the groups' outcomes in terms of changes in policy. A direct causal relationship between collective action and results cannot always be demonstrated as it is difficult to attribute exclusive causal significance to social movements when other variables also explain governmental decisions regarding war (see Giugni 2004: 29-35). This is especially the case in the military realm, as the international arena may also circumscribe state action.

When it comes to collective action encouraged by casualty sensitivity, the picture is further obfuscated by the doubt whether casualty sensitivity really exists and has a direct influence on popular support for military action. For instance, the argument that 'success matters' means that the public is more concerned with the prospects for victory than with casualties (Gelpi, Feaver and Reifler, 2009). In reality, the public may be more tolerant of casualties than policy-makers and senior military officers (see, for example, Feaver and Gelpi 2003; Record 2000). However, what matters most for policy-makers is the elites' belief about the public's sensitivity, whether real or not. So, when the public shows first signs of intolerance to casualties, decision-makers may hastily translate this into policies that limit the soldiers' risk, without waiting for potential mobilization of collective actors.

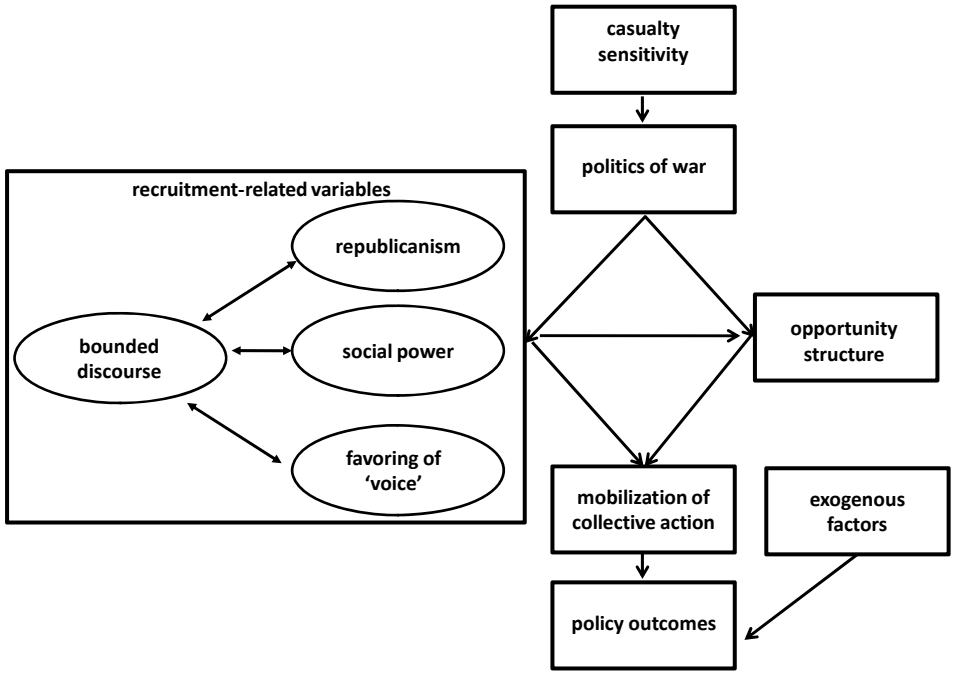
Furthermore, in general, collective actors' initial defeat can be a step in a long-term victory, that may entail unintended results and long-term consequences (Amenta and Young 1999; Marullo and Meyer 2004: 662), and may extend to gaining participation in the policy-making process through recognition of the group by the

government (Rochon and Mazmanian, 1993). To further complicate this issue, as linkage between the conditions that promote mobilization and those that promote political influence can be assumed, the possibility of influencing policy is predicated on the movement's survival (Amenta et al. 2010, 295-6). Alternately, this linkage may lead to erroneous conclusions (Meyer and Minkoff 2004). For instance, in the case of the anti-Vietnam war protest that represented impressive mobilization, the antiwar movement exerted a powerful agenda-setting force on the government and society but was also limited, as extreme forms of public protest had contradictory effects on the direction of congressional voting and certain forms of protest decreased the likelihood of pro-peace outcomes (McAdam and Su 2002).

To bypass this debate, my analysis is confined to the mobilization of collective action rather its success, while the impact on policy outcomes is open to exogenous factors, such as the international arena. A movement's inability to survive and remain active until it has achieved its declared goals indicates its failure (in the case of *GSFP*), even if the failure to impact on the government's decision-making may be determined by forces other than antiwar movements. The opposite is also true. After all, "longstanding organizations in the peace movement industry played an important role in launching and shaping the resurgence of the movement around a new catalyst" (Marullo and Meyer 2004: 662). Viewed from this perspective, the four military-related variables affect the level of mobilization, its intensity and endurance.

In sum, premised on the existing literature, casualty sensitivity is said to create a cultural climate whose reflection in the public sphere is affected by the politics of war transformed into policy outcomes by collective action. My own argument follows from here by claiming that the mode of recruitment mediates collective actors' ability to leverage the politics of war to challenge dominant discourse and influence war policy owing to the cumulative impact of republicanism, social power, the favoring of 'voice' and bounded discourse. Figure 1 sums up the argument.

Figure 1: War-Incited Collective Action



To test this theoretical proposition, let us return to the two case studies.

Empirical Test

An early methodological note: *GSFP* and *FM* represent extreme cases in that while the former was dismantled following its sense of failure, the latter carried on until it achieved its goals, which were later attributed to the group's actions (Hermann 2009: 166).

Comparing extreme cases can yield insights about principles that can be applied elsewhere and illuminate more typical cases (Patton 2002: 232-234, 581). Such a comparison is recommended as part of a multiple-case study that can support the analysis of theoretically contrasting results for predictable reasons (Yin 2009: 61). This is especially so when comparing two groups that represent the same unit of analysis; namely, mothers of soldiers. Other variables can be controlled include gender and the fact that the groups mobilized under a right-wing government. And as the first section showed, the variables clustered under the politics of war, as well as those related to opportunity structure, fall short in explaining variations in the level of

mobilization of both groups, while the mode of recruitment embodies the main dissimilarity between them. Indeed, it was argued that the four recruitment-related variables account for the different levels of mobilization and this section validates this argument.

Beginning with republicanism, *GSFP* endeavored to enter into a republican-style dialogue with the administration and initially framed its discourse around republican motherhood, with the rhetoric of 'bringing the boys back home' becoming widely accepted and motivating broad-based antiwar activities. As Cynthia Enloe related to this group, as mothers, women can claim a kind of legitimacy that government officials never have, because their feelings make them more authentic (cited by Houppert 2006). Bereaved parents became a template for identity-formation based on the legitimate voice that bereaved parents claim in the name of their loss. *GSFP* and other antiwar groups even developed an elaborate 'discourse of betrayal' – in this case of the troops – by reshaping the 'support the troops' discursive legacy that traditionally silenced protest during wartime and turning it against the administration (Coy, Woehrle and Maney 2008). Thus, mothers exemplified one of the only ways that traditional visions of femininity and soldiering could be mediated (Denton-Borhaug 2007).

Still, the effectiveness of republicanism in a war fought by a vocational military was limited for the reasons outlined above; namely, the nature of the contract between the soldier and the state and the impact of liberalization on which the transition to voluntary service was premised.

Proceeding with social power, with the limited participation of the population at large in the AVF, the number of people who might have been empathetic to the *GSFP* position was limited as well. Fewer people were involved in this war than in the Vietnam War, which was fought with a conscripted army (Korb and Duggan 2007).

Along with the issue of numbers, the political identity of the servicepersons and their parents was also a variable. Data disclosed on the eve of the group's appearance revealed that less than 40% of the soldiers who died in Iraq came from densely

populated counties; the rest came from small communities. In terms of location, counties disconnected from urban areas tend to have higher death rates, regardless of population size. Small rural counties had a death rate nearly twice that of counties that had the same size population but were part of metropolitan areas. This map of fatalities demonstrates that the armed forces were disproportionately drawn from rural communities, where employment opportunities are limited (Cushing and Bishop 2005). Furthermore, in communities that suffered the highest casualty rates, the proportion of college-level educated individuals is almost 40% lower than in those communities that did not suffer casualties in this war (Kriner and Shen 2010: 31). Hence, when socioeconomically disadvantaged communities pay a disproportionate share of war's fatalities, as reflected in the pursuit of positions in combat units that might be expected to suffer losses, political apathy is more likely to emerge because the people posses fewer resources needed to engage in politics (ibid).

Given that prior political views play an important role in parental responses, the more the military draws on minorities and lower-middle class groups, the more politically conservative military personnel of all ranks become (Ricks 1997). Rural counties are more politically conservative, while minority groups identify strongly with military missions in a way that somewhat limits their ability to challenge the discourse of sacrifice (for indications, see Halverson and Bliese 1996; Miller and Moskos 1995). *GSFP* attracted primarily white, middle-class parents whose proportion in the AVF was not sufficient to form a critical mass. To recall, Bacevich (2007) captured the apathy of affluent and well-educated voters.

As is typical of a vocational army, the dominance of 'exit' over 'voice' and the insignificance of categorical bargaining affected the methods used by antiwar groups. An illustration of this point is the 'Opt Out Campaign' that challenged the recruitment efforts of the Bush administration in high schools following 9/11 by disputing the standard sales pitch in terms of material rewards (Tannock 2005). This exit-oriented strategy further distanced parents from the scene of protest. Viewed from another perspective, vocationalization of the military may also pull the carpet out from under the theme of 'dying for nothing', by which the son's death is politically leveraged. Sheehan was criticized for disrespecting her son's choice to serve and using his death

for a purpose that went against what he stood for (Franklin and Lyons 2008: 243). In a conscripted army, such criticism cannot gain legitimacy.

When the war touches fewer people and leaves privileged groups uninvolved, the driving force for collective action is reduced, and those who embark on such actions may fail to construct sufficiently dense networks in a country as large as the United States. In turn, these recruitment-related variables also account for the failure to frame a discourse that accorded with the American consensus. The discourses of sacrifice and motherhood undoubtedly imposed constraints and limitations on collective actors, especially given the patriotic tone that dominated the discourse: September 11th was a catalyst for intensifying the use of the language of sacrifice and instilling it into the war culture (Denton-Borhaug 2010).

Initially, *GSFP* internalized these limits by endeavoring to build upon the identity of motherhood embedded in the discourse of sacrifice. However, Sheehan herself strayed from the mainstream and departed from the original frame. She began calling for disobedience, chastising the Democratic Party, expressing a pacifist message that equated the death of Americans with that of Iraqis, claiming that "this country is not worth dying for" (Ghannam 2005), and cooperating with the more radical elements in American politics, for example, by touring Venezuela. This approach alienated potential supporters and powerful allies within the institutional arenas, a point that both Sheehan's critics and supporters clearly noted (see, for example, Franklin and Lyons 2008; Horowitz 2006; York 2005; Younge 2007). Even other parents challenged the framing of the protest around the discourses of motherhood and sacrifice, accusing Sheehan of dishonoring the fallen sons by claiming that soldiers were 'dying for nothing' (Gordon 2005; Kovacs 2005), and even demonizing her as a 'bad' mother who was neglecting her living children and thus could not authoritatively speak as a mother (Knudson 2009). To a large extent, Sheehan gradually re-shaped her identity as a radical leftist or a world citizen (Hynes 2007), rather than as an American patriot. She shifted from being a bereaved mother to a politician. As Cynthia Enloe argued, "We want to make her the naïve mother, and if we hear that she is really politically conscious we start to doubt the authenticity of her maternal message" (cited by Houppert 2006).

It follows again that republicanism may have opposite impacts: it may encourage organizing around the maternal status of the sacrificers by legitimizing their voice and creating their shared social location, but at the same time, it may encourage counter action by other parents who feel that their status is being jeopardized by subversive discourse. This is the double-edged nature of the discourse of sacrifice. Discourse framing is therefore critical as the challenge is to leverage motherhood for political voice without undercutting the status of other mothers.

Discursive repertoires are often fashioned through ongoing interaction between a challenger, the collective actors and the holders of power (Steinberg 1999). Sheehan may have re-shaped her political tone because she felt she had to do so to rally more people to her cause. Still, it seems reasonable to assume that the group's alienation from other bereaved families and the fact that the administration ignored *GSFP* accounted for her reframing her identity. Furthermore, declining support and radicalization are mutually generating: With the relatively narrow social base of the AVF, the upper-middle class had "forfeited any ownership of the army" in Bacevich's words, and lost much of its interest in the human costs of the war. Thus, the military arena was left to more conservative groups that inculcated the military way. Conversely, had the *GSFP* gained the middle class's attention to the war's costs, it could have encountered a cultural barrier on its way toward radicalization. Ultimately, the alienation of allies isolated *GSFP* and sealed its fate.

FM offers a different story but with the same recruitment-related variables.

First, republicanism matters. Claim-making was based on the shared social location of mothers of soldiers legitimizing their voice by framing it around republican motherhood. To a large extent, *FM* sought to extend the traditional and accepted role of mothers as protecting their children—this time from unnecessary combat—rather than putting forward a feminist agenda (Weiner 2002). Despite the unprecedented tone of protest articulated by the mothers, the movement cleverly utilized the established rules of the game. It embedded itself in the mainstream of military thought by focusing on the means and the inherent costs, rather than the ends: it targeted the politicians, not the popular IDF; it rejected the idea that soldiers should

refuse to serve and it refrained from emphasizing the harm the war caused to Lebanese civilians (Lebel 2006: 169-170; Lieberfeld 2009: 382-384).

The well-established model of republican motherhood was now reframed and utilized to challenge the war by capitalizing on the symbol of the male fighter as needing to be shielded from participation in a pointless war because of its cost. This approach was particularly successful because, since the First Lebanon War, maternal status had gradually become a legitimate tool for collective antiwar action (Hermann 2009: 93-94), especially with the empowerment of the family's role in supporting its son-soldier (see Herzog 2004). Hence, motherhood became a significant social category as a mediator between the military and the son. The same social category that had been deployed for marginalizing women in the past was now leveraged for the sake of political mobilization (see Helman 1999).

Furthermore, although right-wing speakers and former military commanders publicly discredited the movement as an emotional and irrational 'maternal voice' that lacked the ability to judge security issues and was demoralizing the military, it was this very framing of the movement that was instrumental in incorporating it into the consensus. Due to its treatment as a depoliticized group within the acceptable frame of motherhood, rather than as a civil, feminist, or peace movement, the movement could gain legitimacy and public attention (Lemish and Barzel 2000). As with *GSFP*'s initial steps, naïveté bred support. By accepting the constraints and limitations that the discourses of sacrifice and motherhood imposed on collective actors in Israel, *FM* was able to build a large coalition including politicians and retired generals – the powerful institutional allies needed to achieve the movement's goals. But framing is not enough. Social power matters as well.

Here, the social composition of the conscripted military, that is, the number and social status of the social actors affected, was translatable into resources that could be mobilized to initiate collective action. About 65% of the casualties in the helicopter accident came from the secular middle class – the social stratum from which antiwar protest has traditionally emerged since the 1970s – because air transport was used mainly for elite units, which were dominated by soldiers from the upper-middle class

(Levy 2007: 130-131). The accident kindled a protest that attracted the social networks to which the fallen soldiers belonged, namely, middle class groups with the time, organizational resources, skills and access to power needed to establish an effective protest group. Furthermore, *FM* originated in the north of Israel with a solid base in *kibbutz* communities, which are typified by their strong, cohesive social ties (Weimann 1982), that could be translated into collective action.

Unlike for *GSFP*, 'exit' was not an option in a conscript army and could not delegitimize criticism by invoking the choice of those who chose service over 'exit'. 'Voice', in the form of collective action, dominated the discourse. Parents opted for convincing decision-makers to set alternative policies rather than encouraging their sons to 'opt out', a choice that was illegal or at least socially illegitimate under the Israeli draft regime. Conscription, especially when it affected more established groups, expanded the population that might be receptive to *FM*'s voice.

An attentive public leads to discourse framing that may limit the tone of antiwar sentiments, thus maintaining the coherence of the protestors. In contrast to *GSFP*'s experiences, because it was embraced by mainstream actors, the *FM* movement's dialogue with the political system did not reframe an identity that was distanced from that of motherhood, acting in accord with one dominant paradigm (motherhood) to question/subvert another one (military thought). Indeed, while the notion of republican motherhood dominated the movement's discourse from the beginning, group members challenged the traditional subordination of motherhood to the requisites of the collective. Nevertheless, this reframing was averted due to the movement's success in creating an effective dialog with the mainstream (see Weiner 2002: 49-51). Coalition building was translated into conformity.

Table 1 sums up the comparison as presented in this and the first section:

Table 1: Comparing the Movements

The variable		***GSFP***	***FM***
Opportunity structure		more favorable	less favorable
Politics of war	**Sense of threat**	low	high
	Success	highly debated	partly debated
	Casualties	increased, but support for the war increased as well	decreased, but support for the war decreased as well
	Consensus	initial debate and high casualty sensitivity under right-wing government	initial consensus and medium casualty sensitivity under right-wing government
Recruitment-related variables	**Republicanism**	initial use of republican motherhood	adherence to republican motherhood
	Social power	limited because of AVF and its social composition	substantial, in a middle-class based conscripted army
	Favoring of 'voice'	exit-style opting-out	adherence to 'voice'
	Bounded discourse	straying from republican motherhood	coalition-building translated into conformity

Although *FM*'s starting point was less convenient in terms of opportunity structure and the politics of war, the recruitment-related variables tipped the scale. Due to these variables, the movement could rely on middle-class resources and power, favor 'voice' over 'exit' and, mainly, perfect the framing of republican motherhood and adhere to it in a manner that was instrumental in mobilizing support. An initial social base supportive of this protest constrained the movement to keep its relatively mainstream tone, thanks to which it became very effective, and prevented it from the radicalization and marginalization that became the fate of *GSFP*.

Conclusions

This paper aimed at advancing the research on the conjunction of two fields – antiwar protest and casualty aversion –by offering a conceptual development of the

role of military recruitment in affecting casualty sensitivity-based antiwar mobilization. While the impact of politics of war on casualty sensitivity has been discussed in the literature, which also paid much attention to the mediating role of collective action, the role of the mode of military recruitment in influencing collective action in the military realm has not been adequately analyzed, with the exception of Vasquez's partial contribution. It was argued that the mode of military recruitment mediates collective actors' ability to leverage the politics of war to challenge dominant discourse and influence war policy, owing to the cumulative impact of four recruitment-related variables: republicanism, social power, the favoring of 'voice' and bounded discourse. All shape the movement's framing and resources in a way that affects mobilization. Recruitment-related variables thus largely influence the structure of power in society and as such affect the opportunity structure. This theoretical proposition was tested by comparing the cases of *Gold Star Families for Peace* and *Four Mothers*

Different impacts of the protests cannot be exclusively accounted for by the politics of war. Collective actors may, to some degree, balance out the impact of the politics of war. The reflection of this cluster of variables in the public sphere is transformed by collective actors whose prospect for mobilization is mediated by the impact of recruitment-related variables, as much of their power derives from the mode of recruitment.

Recruitment-related variables should be further investigated through a comparative perspective to study their impact on antiwar collective action. The current study should be read as a pilot study that focuses on a comparison of two, albeit extreme, cases; therefore, a broader validation effort is necessary. Likewise, an interesting venue for future research may be testing the role of these variables as intervening variables, influencing not only collective action but also, simultaneously, the politics of war. Here, the level of threat, military performance and other variables that determine the degree of public support for a war can be analyzed as discursive patterns from which agents produce meaning. Because different groups produce different meanings and have varying abilities to translate them into political action, the social composition of those who sacrifice and their social networks is also crucial, especially

given the transition from conscripted to vocational armies, with the social alteration of the ranks that this entailed.

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