

American Public Opinion toward the Military

Differences by Race, Gender, and Class?

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Armed Forces & Society

Volume 32 Number 1

October 2005 123-138

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Seminar on Armed Forces

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10.1177/0095327X05278168

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This article uses a national survey of Latinos, African Americans, and Anglos (non-Hispanic whites) to test multiple hypotheses for public support of military expenditures, enlistment in the military, and overall evaluations of the military. While polls show that the military is the most respected government institution, it is less clear whether particular sectors of the contemporary public are more or less supportive—especially the growing Latino population. This is important because an ethnic gap in public opinion might lead to future difficulties in securing funding as well as volunteers. The article also examines whether factors such as gender and class are related to military support. The results show that Latinos are more likely than Anglos to encourage young people to enlist, but Latinos are less supportive of military spending. Women are also more likely than men to oppose spending, while the African American and socioeconomic status variables are not significant.

Keywords: *Hispanics; Latinos; military opinion; military recruitment; military spending*

This article tests several possible hypotheses for public support of the U.S. military. Although it is well known that the military is the highest rated government institution in America, far less is known about the attitudes of specific population groups. This has important implications for the contemporary as well as the future military, as American demography is not static. The most recent census revealed substantial population changes with long-term implications for American politics, particularly the growing number of Latinos. If Latinos and Anglos (non-Hispanic whites) have different opinions about the armed forces, for example, there might be important implications for military expenditures and recruitment.

We therefore use a 1999 national survey of Latinos, African Americans, and Anglos to better understand the dynamics of public support for the military. In addition to the diverse sample, this survey also allows for an understanding of military opinion along several dimensions, as attitudes might be more complex than a single question can capture. The questions therefore include not only overall support for the

military but also support for military spending and support for young people enlisting in the military.

The American armed forces are dependent upon public opinion in several ways. First, the services must secure funding through the federal appropriations process. Without strong public support for the military, members of Congress will have less incentive to increase or to maintain funding. Second, the all-volunteer military requires thousands of young Americans to “vote” every year with their feet. This requires the active support of not only these young people but also the relatives, teachers, counselors, and others who influence them. If growing segments of the population are less enthusiastic about the military, the result could be future recruiting difficulties.

The military depends more on public opinion than many other governmental agencies. Environment protection, for instance, will likely suffer if public backing for this goal declines. The Environmental Protection Agency, however, does not need to recruit tens of thousands of volunteers every year to maintain its effectiveness. Therefore, it is imperative to study not only overall support for the military but also the more specific opinions noted above.

One of the key demographic trends in the American population is the declining share of the Anglo population. This is largely due to the growing Latino community, which is reshaping the political and cultural landscape. As a result, the traditional and straightforward bifurcated black-white paradigm on racial questions is now slowly changing into a more complex black-white-Hispanic perspective.

The 2000 U.S. Census found that Latinos were becoming America’s largest minority group. Although the Census Bureau in 1999 estimated that Latinos would be 11.4 percent of the population in 2000, the census revealed that they were 12.5 percent—a figure Latinos were not projected to reach until 2005. This may understate the true Latino population, as the census is an actual count, not an estimate, and many Latinos are noncitizens with incentives to avoid contact with government officials. African Americans, by contrast, were 12.1 percent of the population. More recent data from the Bureau of the Census indicate that the Latino populations grew (in just three years) to 13.4 percent.

Given the substantial levels of immigration from Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean, as well as the relatively high birthrate of Latinos in the United States, the Latino population will only continue to grow. Anglos currently constitute 68 percent of the U.S. population, and in four states they have shifted from majority to plurality status. This article focuses on minority attitudes toward the military, which will be of critical importance as the United States transitions to a society in which no single ethnic or racial group is the majority.

In doing so, the article methodologically follows in a long line of research asking whether African American and Latino political participation is different than that of Anglos. It is well established in political science that voting is correlated with factors such as education and age and, to some extent, with income. Many have tested whether the participation of minority-group members is at a higher or lower rate than their socioeconomic status (SES) would suggest.

Wolfinger and Rosenstone, for instance, showed that while African Americans participated less in the aggregate than did whites, regression results showed no participatory differences in 1974 and slightly higher black participation in 1972.¹ For Latinos, Rosenstone and Hansen found that Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and African Americans were less likely than Anglos to vote in presidential and congressional elections, *ceteris paribus*, although not less likely to engage in some nonelectoral activities.² Verba, Schlozman, and Brady also found almost no statistically significant racial or ethnic differences in political participation.³ Few, however, have sought to understand minority public opinion in the same way.⁴

The goal of this article is therefore to test whether there are any racial or ethnic differences in attitudes toward the military that cannot be explained by demographic and attitudinal factors. As noted above, the article analyzes three different questions on support for the military: overall support, military spending, and enlistment of young people. This is useful because Latino patriotism, for example, might lead to high overall evaluations of the military, but such feelings might not necessarily translate to greater support for military expenditures or for the enlistment of Latino young people.

Latinos, African Americans, and the Military

There are good reasons to think that Latinos might have particularly positive attitudes toward enlistment in the armed forces. Military service has historically played an important political role for Latinos, especially service during World War II. Scholars have noted that for most of the half-million Latino soldiers who served in World War II, this was their “first time away from the standard patterns of American society.”⁵ After fighting against totalitarianism overseas, returning Latino soldiers were disinclined to accept the usual barriers to full political and economic participation and began to act to overcome them.⁶ As Morin observed, “How could we have played such a prominent part as Americans over there and now have to go back living as outsiders as before?”⁷ This “World War II generation” became a vital influence in the postwar Latino community.

The military has also proved useful to Latinos in addressing what Guzmán called “the problem of demonstrating their patriotism.”⁸ Latino loyalty has been questioned from the Mexican-American War to World War II and calls to “intern” Latinos were heard during the Spanish-American War and World War I. One effective response has been to point to the large number of Latino soldiers and sailors and their accomplishments. As Jones noted, “In the United States military service has been used as a legitimizing device by groups traditionally excluded from full citizenship.”⁹

For instance, several Mexican American organizations in California declared in 1966, “Our soldiers of Hispanic and Mexican-American ancestry have received more Congressional Medals of Honor than any other ethnic group during World War II and the Korean Conflict.”¹⁰ A Mexican American advocacy report similarly noted that dur-

ing World War II, “it is a well known fact that the number of war casualties among the Mexican-American soldiers was very high in proportion to the population.”¹¹

For African Americans, there are similar reasons to predict a generally favorable orientation toward military service. A growing literature explores the military experience of African Americans as individuals and a community, and while it is always difficult to generalize the experience of a population, the military is largely thought to have played a key social role for the overall community and a positive personal role for individuals.¹²

For individuals, the contemporary military has been an especially hospitable institution, particularly in comparison to the larger society. As Moskos and Butler noted, “At a time when Afro-Americans were still arguing for their educational rights before the Supreme Court and marching for their social and political rights in the Deep South, the Army had become desegregated with little fanfare.” The results were so successful that “if officers are the executives of the armed forces, the armed forces boast more black executives than any other institution in the country.”¹³

There is also evidence that African Americans have, for some time, perceived the military as more egalitarian than civilian society, particularly in terms of advancement opportunities and economic stability.¹⁴ Not only has discrimination in the military dramatically abated, but such service also provides an avenue for upward mobility that is not always available in civilian society. It provides a standard of living and an array of social services not commonly available for those without higher education, and according to Ricks, “the army may be the only institution in America where we can see what Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society could have been.”¹⁵

Military service may also enable African Americans and Latinos to better succeed in the civilian world.¹⁶ This may be the result of the training received in the military or the postservice educational benefits such as the G.I. Bill. The military may also serve as a “bridging environment”¹⁷ that allows minority veterans to better integrate into civilian society.¹⁸ One of the few previous studies of this topic, however, showed that African Americans were no more or less likely than whites to believe there were opportunities for minorities in the military.¹⁹

Therefore, the first hypothesis of this article is as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Latinos and African Americans are more likely than Anglos to support the enlistment of young people.

On the other hand, respondents from minority communities may be less supportive of military expenditures, as they may see the military as a competitor for scarce resources that might otherwise be used for social programs. In comparison to Anglos, African Americans and Latinos earn less income, possess less saved wealth, and have lower levels of educational attainment. Members of the latter two groups are therefore unsurprisingly more likely to support federal social programs, but they may also perceive a trade-off between guns and butter. For instance, de la Garza et al. found that while the strong majority of Latinos favored greater funding for programs such as education and crime control, less than a quarter favored more defense spending.²⁰

African Americans and Latinos may also recall how the War on Poverty in the 1960s fell victim in part to involvement in Vietnam. Money that might have expanded and sustained many domestic programs instead made its way to the military. As Martin Luther King Jr. observed, “The promises of the Great Society have been shot down on the battlefield of Vietnam.”²¹

This hypothesis is related to Maslow’s “hierarchy of needs” theory.²² He suggested that basic survival needs must be met before people can pay attention to “higher-order” needs. The latter include items such as a clean environment. For Latinos and African Americans, support for military expenditures may not be a top policy priority in the midst of vast unmet social needs. This may explain why Goertzel found that nonwhite respondents were less supportive of military spending than were whites, and Butler and Johnson found that nonblack respondents were more supportive.²³

Therefore, the second hypothesis of the article is as follows:

Hypothesis 2: Latinos and African Americans are less likely than Anglos to support military expenditures.

In light of the expectation that minority communities will have complex and varied attitudes toward the military—more likely than Anglos to support enlistment but less likely to support expenditures—we expect no racial or ethnic differences in the overall evaluation of the military.

Hypothesis 3: Latinos, African Americans, and Anglos provide similar overall evaluations of the military.

Public Opinion and the Military

A number of studies have examined support for military spending, specifically the role of age, income, education, gender, and trust.²⁴ Their findings are discussed in the Models section when the independent variables used in this article are discussed. Only a few scholars have investigated public attitudes toward other aspects of the military, however. Among these are Butler and Johnson, who examined the determinants of five “theoretical perspectives” on the military, including whether there were opportunities for minorities in the military and whether there was an obligation to serve in the military.²⁵ They found that nonblacks did not have unique opinions on either question. There is also relatively little other research on enlistment questions, although Shields examined the determinants of military service.²⁶

Methodologically, the use of survey research is well established in the armed forces literature. Some researchers analyze surveys of the American population with large numbers of observations, such as the General Social Survey or the High School and Beyond Survey. Others conduct mail, telephone, or distributed surveys with a more limited sample, such as military personnel or dependents. Such researchers have explored a variety of attitudes held by military personnel.²⁷ Surveys have also been used to investigate the class basis of service in the Vietnam conflict²⁸ and the influence

of military service on the racial attitudes, political behaviors, and military attitudes of veterans and nonveterans.²⁹ Despite this large body of research, only a few scholars have investigated differences in ethnic and racial orientations toward the military.

One important point is that the September 11 attacks on America have led to changes in public evaluations of government institutions. Does this diminish the contribution of this article, which uses 1999 data, to the understanding of how ethnic and racial groups differentially evaluate the military? One relevant fact is that racial opinion gaps seem to persist even in the midst of large aggregate changes during times of conflict, both in the past and in recent experience. According to a recent Gallup report, “while job approval for President George W. Bush increased substantially among both whites and blacks after 9/11, the gap between these two groups has remained roughly constant. The same general pattern occurred in the aftermath of the Gulf War.”³⁰ Because this article focuses on opinion differences, not aggregate opinion, its conclusions may well be applicable during foreign policy crises.³¹ Even if not, it would still apply to those times when the United States is not directly involved in military conflicts.

Data

This article uses the 1999 National Survey on Latinos in America (NSLA), conducted by the *Washington Post*, the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, and Harvard University. This is a nationally representative sample of 4,614 respondents, including 1,802 Anglos, 2,417 Latinos, and 285 non-Latino African Americans. It is the most appropriate survey for our purposes because it contains three key military opinion questions as well as a large Latino sample. Most national surveys of American political opinion, such as the biannual American National Election Study, do not include a sufficient Latino sample to confidently assess this large and complex population.

Some surveys are problematic because they do not use bilingual interviewers. This loses many Spanish-dominant respondents and thereby generates a Latino sample that is biased in a number of important ways, particularly in terms of SES. In the NSLA, 49 percent of the Latino respondents chose to be interviewed in Spanish, which shows the importance of a Spanish-language option. On the other hand, the relatively small African American sample suggests that statistical results concerning this population should be interpreted with some caution.

The survey is also valuable because it allows for the separate analysis of four major Latino subgroups: Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cuban Americans, and Central and South Americans.³² Some of the literature on political participation tests for subgroup differences, as an aggregate Latino variable could mask substantial variation. Scholars have argued that such analysis is critical because of the many intra-Latino differences. As Trueba noted, “We cannot trivialize the ethnic, social, racial, and economic differences of Latino subgroups.”³³ It might be the case that different subgroups have different opinions about the military.

Cuban Americans, for instance, are unique among Latinos in many of their political and particularly foreign policy views. They are strongly anticommunist and anti-Castro and are more likely to vote Republican than are other Latinos.³⁴ This relatively conservative foreign policy orientation may translate into greater support for the military. The Mexican American and Puerto Rican communities have a long history of service in the U.S. military, which might lead to relatively high evaluations. Respondents of Central and South American descent, by contrast, may have memories of military regimes in those regions, which could lower their support for militaries in general. None of these possibilities has been previously explored.

Models

As mentioned previously, the dependent variables include three different measures of public opinion on the military. The first question asks, "Do you think government spending on the military should be increased, decreased, or kept about the same?" The second question asks, "Would you advise a young person close to you to join the military, or not?" The third asks the respondent to rank "the military" as an institution on a 4-point scale.³⁵ Only half the respondents were asked this question, however. Because the dependent variables in the first and third questions contained either three or four categories, ordinal probit analysis is used. There are two possible answers for the second question, so logit analysis is used.

The two key independent variables are whether the respondent is Latino or African American. Anglos are therefore the base case against which the racial and ethnic variables are compared. The other independent variables include a variety of standard SES controls. Goertzel as well as Butler and Johnson found that income was associated with support for military spending. Modigliani noted that higher SES individuals were more supportive of international interventionism, although he also found only "limited association between SES and toughness" on military policy. For education, Butler and Johnson, Goertzel, and Kriesberg, Murray, and Klein found that education was associated with opposition to military spending.³⁶

The effect of SES may vary depending on the question. Those with fewer such resources might see the military as a competitor against social programs, in which case they would be unlikely to support additional spending. They could, however, see the military as an opportunity to gain skills, educational benefits, and employment, in which case income and education might be negatively associated with support for enlistment. Morris Janowitz, for instance, noted that the military has long been considered a source of opportunity for lower-SES Americans.³⁷

To further control for some of the class dynamics, we include unemployment as an independent variable. Although unemployment status is not associated with unique political views, those without jobs may be more supportive of this large employer.³⁸ The competition thesis suggests, however, that the unemployed may be less likely to support more military spending.

We will also test whether there is a military gender gap. Researchers have found that women are less supportive of the use of force in foreign policy and are less supportive of military spending.³⁹ Verba, Schlozman, and Brady generally noted that “to the extent that there are opinion differences between the sexes, they tend to be more pronounced on issues like war and the use of violence than on what are often referred to as ‘women’s issues,’” such as the Equal Rights Amendment and abortion.⁴⁰

Butler and Johnson found that men were more likely to believe there were opportunities for minorities in the military, and Cohen noted that men were more interested in the military. On the other hand, Montoya noted that Hispanic women and men were equally supportive of military spending, and Butler and Johnson found no gender differences on this topic.⁴¹

Age is included because research has generally found that older citizens exhibit higher levels of support for the military. Butler and Johnson, Goertzel, and Kriesberg et al. found that it was positively associated with support for military spending. On the other hand, Cohen found that the “military policy public” is younger, and Modigliani noted that age was negatively associated with international interventionism.⁴²

Two attitudinal variables are also included in the model. The first will test whether trust in government is positively correlated with support for this large government institution, as Bartels found that those who most trusted people also supported greater military spending. Second, Bartels, Goertzel, and Kriesberg et al. found that conservative ideology was associated with support for military spending, so we hypothesize that political conservatives will be stronger military supporters than liberals.⁴³

A related factor is religion, which may correlate with conservative or traditional values. Therefore, a dummy variable measures to what degree religion is important in the lives of respondents. Those who are more religious may express more enthusiasm for the military, as support for “God and country” often seems to correspond.

Another variable controls for noncitizen status. Although noncitizens do not vote, they do participate in nonelectoral politics, likely respond to public opinion polls that influence politicians, and may act as local opinion leaders and thereby influence those who can vote. While residents of the United States, they are citizens of other nations and might be less supportive of the military than are Americans.

As this survey was conducted with social not foreign-policy questions foremost in mind, we cannot include in the models several useful attitudinal questions, such as opinions on isolationism, the morality of war, patriotism, ethnocentrism, and others that have been tested in past research.

Results

The first step is to examine the aggregate military opinions of Latinos, Anglos, and African Americans. For enlistment, Latinos are the most supportive (61 percent), followed by Anglos (58 percent) and African Americans (51 percent). Latinos were nevertheless the least enthusiastic about increased military spending (22 percent), with African Americans at 26 percent and Anglos at 38 percent.

Table 1
Logit and Ordinal Probit Regressions of Military Attitudes
(Using Aggregate Latino Variable)

Variable	Join Military	Military Spending	Military Support
Latino	0.445** (0.216)	-0.164* (0.098)	-0.201 (0.146)
Gender	-0.331 (0.202)	-0.216** (0.098)	-0.028 (0.137)
Age	0.014** (0.007)	0.013*** (0.003)	0.000 (0.004)
Ideology	0.238* (0.133)	0.226*** (0.067)	0.150* (0.091)
Trust government	0.195 (0.159)	-0.033 (0.067)	0.401*** (0.110)
Importance of religion	-0.058 (0.114)	0.09 (0.058)	0.226*** (0.083)
Citizenship	0.273 (0.198)	0.389*** (0.102)	0.294* (0.168)
Observations	3,186	3,371	1,667
Adjusted R^2	0.03	0.05	0.04

Note: Because of space considerations, the results for the consistently statistically insignificant variables (income, education, employment, and African Americans), as well as the cut points and intercept, are not presented.

* $p < .10$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .01$.

For the overall-military-evaluation question, Anglos were the most likely to give a rating of very or somewhat favorable (89 percent), although Latinos (77 percent) and African Americans (72 percent) were largely favorable but by a lesser degree. A key question for this article, however, is whether such differences remain when a variety of demographic and attitudinal variables are taken into account.

Military Enlistment

The first column of Table 1 shows the regression for whether the respondent would encourage a young person to join the military. While Latinos are more likely than Anglos to favor this option, African Americans do not have unique views.

Although such encouragement alone may not necessarily determine Latino enlistments, this suggests that the military need not worry that the changing demography of America will lead to recruitment problems. On the contrary, military recruiters should be encouraged that the growing Latino community is more supportive of enlistment than is the Anglo community, *ceteris paribus*. While a growing Latino presence may have implications for military culture, just as overall Latino population growth is changing American culture, this issue is beyond the scope of the article.

On the other hand, liberals were less likely than conservatives to recommend enlistment, which is in line with expectations. Another group less inclined toward enlistment is the young themselves, who exhibit less enthusiasm than their elders.

There were no class effects, however, as income and education were both statistically insignificant. Although one might hypothesize that those lower on the SES scale might see the military as a provider of employment and educational opportunities, this does not appear to be the case.

Military Spending

The second column shows that Latinos are more opposed to military expenditures than are Anglos. This is generally consistent with past research on racial differences over military spending, which has shown that whites are more favorable.⁴⁴ It also suggests that Latinos perceive a conflict between domestic and military spending.

This finding indicates that Latinos do not have a unitary view of the military. They see the military as providing valuable employment opportunities while, conversely, believing that too much money goes to the military. Both findings are consistent with previous research on the hierarchy-of-needs theory, as Latinos appear to evaluate the military through the lens of how it affects their communities.⁴⁵

On the other hand, the African American variable is once again statistically insignificant. While African Americans are not particularly opposed to military spending, they do not particularly favor it. This is generally inconsistent with previous research. Another similarity with the previous model is that education and income are not significant, although this differs from most previous work on military-spending attitudes.

Women were more likely than men to oppose military spending, which is not unexpected in light of previous research on gender and public opinion.⁴⁶ In addition, expenditures received more support from respondents who were older, were more conservative, and were citizens. While the latter has not been previously tested, the first two findings are consistent with previous research.

Support of the Military

For the measure of overall support of the military, Latinos and African Americans express opinions that are no different than those of Anglos. Three other variables were significant in this regression, however. The more conservative, the more religious, citizens and those who were more trusting of government were likely to give the military relatively high evaluations. This model is discussed in more detail in the following section.

Latino Subgroups

The Latino community is a diverse one, however, and the single Latino variable could mask substantial subgroup variation. In the aggregate, members of all four Latino subgroups are more likely than Anglos (58 percent) to support enlistment, with Puerto Ricans (64 percent) and Central and South Americans (65 percent) being slightly less enthusiastic than are Cuban Americans (69 percent) and Mexican Americans (66 percent). Anglos (38 percent) are more likely to favor increased military spending than are respondents from all four subgroups, with Puerto Ricans (22 percent) and Central and South Americans (13 percent) again being slightly less enthusiastic than are Cuban Americans (25 percent) and Mexican Americans (23 percent). Anglos (89 percent) are also the most likely to provide a very or somewhat favorable overall evaluation of the military, and Cuban Americans (81 percent) are more enthu-

Table 2
Logit and Ordinal Probit Regressions of Military Attitudes
(Using Latino National-origin Group Variables)

Variable	Join Military	Military Spending	Military Support
Mexican American	0.490** (0.238)	-0.111 (0.111)	-0.309* (0.164)
Cuban American	0.748** (0.306)	0.146 (0.198)	0.188 (0.224)
Puerto Rican	0.186 (0.347)	-0.382** (0.162)	0.264 (0.229)
Central and South American	0.428 (0.300)	-0.307** (0.142)	-0.242 (0.246)
Gender	-0.330 (0.202)	-0.216** (0.098)	-0.029 (0.137)
Age	0.014** (0.007)	0.013*** (0.003)	-0.000 (0.004)
Ideology	0.238* (0.133)	0.226*** (0.067)	0.152* (0.091)
Trust government	0.195 (0.159)	-0.034 (0.067)	0.400*** (0.110)
Importance of religion	-0.058 (0.114)	0.090 (0.058)	0.226*** (0.083)
Citizenship	0.309 (0.204)	0.404*** (0.106)	0.234 (0.172)
Observations	3,186	3,371	1,667
Adjusted R^2	0.03	0.05	0.04

Note: Because of space considerations, the results for the consistently statistically insignificant variables (income, education, employment, and African Americans), as well as the cut points and intercept, are not presented.

* $p < .10$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .01$.

siastic than are Mexican Americans (76 percent), Puerto Ricans (75 percent), and Central and South Americans (75 percent).

As before, however, we also want to know whether any opinion differences remain once the control variables are introduced. Table 2 therefore contains new regressions where the aggregate Latino dummy variable has been replaced by four subgroup variables, as the statistical significance of the former might be driven by one particular group or might reflect different opinions by the various groups.

The results suggest that Latinos are not uniform in their assessments of the military. The first two regressions show that Mexican Americans and Cuban Americans are more likely than Anglos to favor military service, while Puerto Ricans and Central and South Americans are less supportive than Anglos of increased military spending. Thus, it appears that these specific subgroup opinions account for the significance of the aggregate Latino variable in the first two models of Table 1.

The third column suggests that Mexican Americans express relatively less support than do Anglos of the military as an institution. It is unclear what might underlie this finding, however, because Mexican Americans also distinctly favor enlistment. As the overall-military-evaluation question was asked of only half the respondents, perhaps the results are an artifact of which respondents were chosen to answer it.⁴⁷

We can investigate this possibility by rerunning the spending and enlistment models using only those respondents who were asked about their overall evaluation of the military. If the survey's randomization process worked, then the statistical results should not change. The use of this sample, however, causes the regression results to

change in several important ways.⁴⁸ This suggests that the overall military evaluation models in both tables should be interpreted with a great deal of caution.

Given these problems, this question might be best dropped from the study. Because there is so little work on the topic, however, it seems useful to include the regressions, along with this detailed caveat, as a point of comparison for future researchers. It is important to note that this randomization problem does not afflict the military spending and enlistment questions, which were asked of the full sample.

Conclusions

Although the military is the most trusted government institution in America, relatively little is known about variation in support along demographic, SES, and gender lines. Although the high aggregate rating may imply nearly uniform popularity, it is possible that some subgroups may express more or less support than do others.

The regression results in the first table suggest that Latinos are more likely to encourage young people to enlist than are Anglo respondents. On the other hand, Latinos are more negative in their support for military spending. Latinos may therefore recognize that the military provides employment opportunities for young people but also understand that military spending may negatively impact funding for social programs.

The regressions in the second table suggest that these attitudes are not characteristic of all Latinos, however, but may reflect the different opinions of specific Latino subgroups. Puerto Ricans and Central and South Americans are more opposed than Anglos to increased military spending, while Mexican Americans and Cuban Americans appear to uniquely support enlistment.

In both tables, African Americans do not exhibit distinctive attitudes about the military. If the only regression were that of overall evaluation of the military, it might be argued that this reflected contradictory orientations. Perhaps positive views of the military as an employer were cancelled out by the understanding that social programs and military spending are often at odds. The first two models in Table 1, however, suggest this is not the case. African Americans are not more or less likely to encourage young people to enlist; neither are they uniquely for or against military spending. While the former finding agrees with research on a similar question, the latter differs with previous analyses of race and military spending.

There are also no class differences in the models. Income and education are not statistically significant in the enlistment, expenditures, or overall support models. While we hypothesized that lower-SES individuals might support enlistment but not expenditures, this did not prove to be the case.

Women are more skeptical than men about the military, as they are less likely to support military spending. This finding is consistent with previous understandings of gender differences on national security issues, such as the use of military force. Furthermore, we found that conservatives are more likely than liberals to support enlistment and expenditures, while the young are less likely than their elders to support either.

In sum, this article shows how race, ethnicity, gender, and class structure public opinion about the military. In addition, there is no simple storyline, such as minority-group or lower-SES opposition to or support for the military. Instead, Latino and African American orientations differ, the attitudes of Latino subgroups differ, and there is little evidence of socioeconomic effects. This points out the importance of using surveys that strive for a multiethnic sample, such as the NSLA, to better understand as much of the American population as possible.

Notes

1. Raymond Wolfinger and Steven Rosenstone, *Who Votes?* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1980), 90-91.
2. Steven Rosenstone and John Mark Hansen, *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America* (New York: Macmillan, 1993).
3. Sidney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry Brady, *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).
4. Although see Donald Kinder and Lynn Sanders, *Divided by Color: Racial Politics and the Democratic Ideal* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); and Rodolfo de la Garza, Angelo Falcon, and F. Chris Garcia, "Will the Real Americans Please Stand Up: Anglo and Mexican-American Support of Core American Political Values," *American Journal of Political Science* 40, no. 2 (May 1996): 335-51.
5. Carl A. Allsup, *The American G.I. Forum: Origins and Evolution* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982), 16. He noted that the military did not officially count the number of Latino soldiers, as for many years the military coded them as "white." This figure represents the number of Spanish-surnamed people who served in the armed forces during World War II. Gómez-Quirón estimated the number at four hundred thousand. Juan Gómez-Quirón, *Chicano Politics: Reality and Promise, 1940-1990* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1990), 34.
6. Miguel David Tirado, "Mexican American Community Political Organization: The Key to Chicano Political Power," *Aztlan* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1970): 53-78; and Mario T. García, "Americans All: The Mexican American Generation and the Politics of Wartime Los Angeles, 1941-45," in *The Mexican American Experience: An Interdisciplinary Anthology*, ed. Rodolfo de la Garza, Frank Bean, Charles Bonjean, Ricardo Romo, and Rodolfo Alvarez (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985), 201-12.
7. Raul Morin, *Among the Valiant: Mexican-Americans in WWII and Korea* (Alhambra, CA: Borden, 1966), 277.
8. Ralph Guzmán, *The Political Socialization of the Mexican American People* (New York: Arno, 1976), 96.
9. Ellen Jones, *Red Army and Society* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1985).
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15. Thomas E. Ricks, "The Military: The Great Society in Camouflage," *Atlantic Monthly*, December 1996, 24-38, 24.
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19. John Sibley Butler and Margaret Anne Johnson, "Attitudes of Americans towards Issues of Military Service," *Journal of Political and Military Sociology* 19, no. 2 (Winter 1991): 273-91.
20. Rodolfo de la Garza, Louis DeSipio, F. Chris Garcia, John Garcia, and Angelo Falcon, *Latino Voices* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1992).
21. Christian Appy, *Working-class War: American Combat Soldiers and Vietnam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 19.
22. Abraham Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* (New York: Harper & Row, 1954).
23. Ted Goertzel, "Public Opinion Concerning Military Spending in the United States: 1937-1985," *Journal of Political and Military Sociology* 15, no. 1 (Spring 1987): 61-72; and Butler and Johnson, "Attitudes of Americans."
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28. Allan Mazur, "Was Vietnam a Class War?" *Armed Forces & Society* 21, no. 3 (Spring 1995): 455-59; and Thomas Wilson, "Vietnam-era Military Service: A Test of the Class-bias Thesis," *Armed Forces & Society* 21, no. 3 (Spring 1995): 461-71.
29. Butler and Johnson, "Attitudes of Americans"; Christopher G. Ellison, "Military Background, Racial Orientations, and Political Participation among Black Adult Males," *Social Science Quarterly* 73, no. 2 (June 1992): 361-78; George Lawrence and Thomas Kane, "Military Service and Racial Attitudes of White Veterans," *Armed Forces & Society* 22, no. 2 (Winter 1996): 235-55; and David Leal, "It's Not Just a Job: Military Service and Latino Political Participation," *Political Behavior* 21, no. 2 (June 1999): 153-74.

30. Frank Newport and Joseph Carroll, "Poll Analysis: Despite Sharp Increase in Bush Approval since 9/11, Race Gap Persists," *Gallup News Service*, January 8, 2002, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/releases/pr020108.asp>.

31. It is also important to keep in mind that while attitudes often dramatically change during such times, they eventually return to precrisis status. Opinion differences by subgroups also exhibit a similar pattern of reversion. Although the senior Bush received African American approval ratings in the 70 percent range during the Persian Gulf War, in the following year, he received only 10 percent of the African American vote. In addition, there is currently a large black-white opinion gap on whether this war was worth fighting. According to a recent Gallup report, "The current results about whether it was worthwhile to fight the war show major differences between black and white Americans, and between men and women. While whites say the war was worthwhile by a margin of 67% to 27%, blacks take the opposite point of view by 51% to 37%. Indeed, on virtually all questions about U.S. participation in the Persian Gulf War (as with most military conflicts) asked by Gallup over the years, the views of blacks and whites reflect deep differences—with blacks generally much more opposed than whites. By a two-to-one margin, 61% to 33%, blacks today oppose sending American troops to remove Saddam Hussein from power, while whites express support by 56% to 38%. During the Persian Gulf War, similar divisions were found." David Moore, "Poll Analysis: Americans Believe U.S. Participation in Gulf War a Decade Ago Worthwhile," *Gallup News Service*, February 26, 2001, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/releases/pr010226.asp>.

32. There are almost eight hundred Mexican Americans, three hundred Puerto Ricans, three hundred Cuban Americans, and six hundred Central and South Americans in the analysis. The data are weighted using the measure provided by the National Survey on Latinos in America.

33. Enrique Trueba, *Latinos Unidos: From Cultural Diversity to the Politics of Solidarity* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), 33.

34. Kevin Hill and Dario Moreno, "Second-Generation Cubans," *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 18, no. 2 (May 1996): 175-93.

35. "Now I'm going to read you the names of some institutions in American society. Please tell me if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of each one. . . . Is that very favorable/unfavorable or somewhat?"

36. Goertzel, "Public Opinion"; Butler and Johnson, "Attitudes of Americans"; Kriesberg and Klein, "Elites and Increased Public Support"; and Andre Modigliani, "Hawks and Doves, Isolationism and Political Distrust: An Analysis of Public Opinion on Military Policy," *American Political Science Review* 66, no. 3 (September 1972), 960-78.

37. Morris Janowitz, "Basic Education and Youth Socialization in the Armed Forces," in *Handbook of Military Institutions*, ed. Roger W. Little (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1971), 167-210.

38. Kay Lehman Schlozman and Sidney Verba, *Injury to Insult: Unemployment, Class, and Response* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979).

39. Tom Smith, "The Polls: Gender and Attitudes toward Violence," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 48, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 384-96; Keith Poole and L. Harmon Zeigler, *Women, Public Opinion, and Politics: The Changing Political Attitudes of American Women* (New York: Longman, 1985). In general, women are often considered to be more liberal than men. They express more-liberal opinions on social welfare programs and general ideology but are also more conservative than men on traditional-values issues, such as school prayer, sex education, drug use, alcohol laws, and pornography (Shapiro and Mahajan). While women of all races have served in the American armed forces for some time (B. Moore), there are proportionately fewer female than male veterans, although it is unclear whether military service leads to greater support of the military. Robert Shapiro and Harpreet Mahajan, "Gender Differences in Policy Preferences: A Summary of Trends from the 1960s to the 1980s," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 50, no. 1 (Spring 1986): 42-61; Goertzel, "Public Opinion"; and B. Moore, *To Serve*.

40. Sidney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry Brady, *Voice and Equality* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

41. Butler and Johnson, "Attitudes of Americans"; Bernard Cohen, "The Military Policy Public," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 30, no. 2 (Summer 1966): 200-11; and Lisa Montoya, "Latino Gender Differences in Public Opinion: Results from the Latino National Political Survey," *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 18, no. 2 (May 1996): 255-76.

42. Butler and Johnson, "Attitudes of Americans"; Kriesberg and Klein, "Elites and Increased Public Support"; Goertzel, "Public Opinion"; Cohen, "Military Policy Public"; and Modigliani, "Hawks and Doves," 964.

43. Bartels, "American Public's Defense Spending"; Goertzel, "Public Opinion"; and Kriesberg and Klein, "Elites and Increased Public Support."

44. Goertzel, "Public Opinion"; and Butler and Johnson, "Attitudes of Americans."

45. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*. One issue is whether Latinos express relatively low support for military spending because they see a tradeoff between guns and butter or because of partisan affiliations. As there is no question directly testing a guns-versus-butter orientation in the survey, one strategy is to create a separate regression with only Latino respondents that tests support for military spending. We can include variables for party affiliation and for whether Washington or the individual should be responsible for the standard of living of Americans (which is the closest question in the survey on support for federal social programs). Both variables are statistically significant, thereby suggesting that both factors are associated with Latino attitudes toward military spending.

46. Women may also be less likely to recommend enlistment, although the coefficient is just below conventional levels of statistical significance (.101).

47. It is not clear from the survey materials why this was done.

48. The aggregate Latino variable is no longer significant in the spending model; the Puerto Rican and the Central and South American measures are no longer significant in the spending model; the Central and South American variable is now significant in the enlistment model; and the African American variable is now significant in the spending model.

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