CHAPTER FOUR

TONY'S WAR

Version: June 30/08

Speaking before Parliament in November 1945, British Foreign Minister Ernest Bevin declared that: "[t]he common man is the greatest protection against war" (Holsti, 1996:4). Although Bevin was neither the first nor the last to advance this claim -- it has been a perennial topic of debate among students of international relations -- in fact, ordinary citizens are not invariably united in their opposition to war. When the possibility of engaging in military conflict achieves salience on the political agenda, it often has positional rather than valence characteristics. Public opinion is divided, sometimes deeply. However, it also is clear that attitudes towards a war can shift, sometimes dramatically, with the typical pattern being for enthusiasm to wane as costs escalate, casualties mount, and 'light at the end of the tunnel' fades to black.[1] What had been a position issue becomes a valence one. These stylized facts aside, much remains to be learned about factors that drive public reactions to international conflicts, and how these reactions affect the dynamics of support for political parties and their leaders. In this chapter we address these topics by analyzing British public opinion about the Iraq war.

The war, which began on March 20, 2003, was hotly debated for several months before hostilities commenced, and those debates continued afterward. Indeed, British involvement in Iraq was a topic of controversy throughout the remainder of Tony Blair's tenure as prime minister and beyond. When first advanced, the proposal to invade Iraq split the Labour Party, and the decision to go forward ultimately required a bipartisan parliamentary coalition comprised of Conservatives and a majority of Labour MPs loyal to the prime minister. Bipartisan support notwithstanding, Iraq was seen very much as 'Tony's war'. As discussed in the previous chapter,

public reactions to the conflict had significant effects on support for the prime minister and his party in the period preceding the 2005 general election, and on the political choices voters made in that contest.

We begin by mapping the British public's support for and opposition to involvement in the Iraq war both before hostilities commenced, and in the crucial six-month period that followed. We also consider attitudes towards the war among various demographic and partisan groups. Next, we study factors influencing public opinion about the war. We specify rival *morality, benefits and costs,* and *general heuristics* models, and present the distributions and dynamics of key explanatory variables. The relative explanatory power of the competing models is assessed, and the results of these analyses are used to construct a theoretically attractive composite model. Differences in attitudes towards the war between men and women are considered. Then, we map the evolution of opinion about the war in the run-up to the 2005 election, and study how involvement in the conflict influenced attitudes towards Tony Blair. The conclusion summarises principal findings and discusses their implications for the political fortunes of Mr. Blair and his party.

Divided and Shifting Opinions

Some observers have speculated that American President Bush came into office in January 2001 determined to invade Iraq and depose Saddam Hussein. By so doing he would finish the job that his father had begun over a decade earlier and fulfill the Republicans' 2000 campaign promise to oust Hussein. Although Bush's initial predispositions are unknown, is clear that 9/11 was the crucial precipitating event that ultimately led to the war and British participation in it. The horrific terrorist attacks causing the loss of nearly 3000 lives lent credibility to Bush's argument that rogue regimes engaged in state-sponsored terrorism had to be

confronted in a proactive way. Bush viewed Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq as 'Exhibit A'. The president and his advisors alleged that, in addition to sponsoring al-Qaeda, Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) that he could and would employ. His arsenal supposedly included biological, chemical and, possibly, nuclear devices that could be delivered on short notice. Indeed, setting the stage for what would eventually become a topic of intense controversy, Tony Blair defended his advocacy of Britain's participation in a U.S.-led military action against Iraq by claiming that he had intelligence indicating that Hussein could launch WMDs on 45 minutes notice. Since diplomatic efforts under the auspices of the United Nations had failed repeatedly to address the threat, preemptive military action was required. According to Bush and Blair, the brutal Iraqi dictator was a clear and present danger; he had to go. The risks posed by leaving him in place were simply unacceptable.

Invigorated by the searing memories of 9/11, an emotional debate concerning the advisability of using military action to remove Hussein gained momentum throughout the latter half of 2002. As Bush and Blair quickly discovered, the case for war was a hard sell both abroad and at home. Even long-time allies such as Canada, France and Germany voiced opposition, and pressed for additional diplomatic efforts. In Britain, public opinion was divided but, on balance, skeptical, with an August 2002 ICM poll showing that 50 per cent were opposed to a military attack to remove Hussein, and only 33 per cent were in favour (Figure 4.1). This distribution of opinion remained essentially unchanged as 2002 drew to a close. Then, early in 2003, as Bush and Blair voiced determination that their countries would push ahead -- alone if necessary, opposition among the British public became increasingly strident. Anti-war rallies occurred in several major cities, and high street hoardings and university campuses were covered with anti-war posters. Anti-war sentiment reached its zenith on February 15th when massive protests were

held around the world. Estimates of the number of demonstrators marching in London ranged from 750,000 to two million. These events received enormous publicity in the British media, and they dramatically illustrated Blair's inability to sway public opinion to his point of view.

(Figure 4.1 about here)

However, the situation soon changed again. As it became apparent that war was inevitable, support for the conflict grew. For example, when hostilities began in the third week of March, 54 per cent of the respondents in an ICM survey said that they approved of the action and only 30 per cent disapproved (see Figure 4.1). Approval continued to grow, with an April 2003 ICM survey showing that 63 per cent were in favour and only 23 per cent were opposed. As tracer bullets began to light the night sky over Baghdad on March 20th, a clear majority of the British public had rallied to the cause. Blair's deeds had succeeded -- at least temporarily -- where his words had failed.

(Figure 4.1 about here)

The impression of substantial division and volatility in public opinion about the war is substantiated by other survey data. For example, in our March, April-May, and October 2003 Participation and Democracy in Britain (PDB) surveys conducted by the Gallup organization, respondents were asked their opinions about British involvement. The question was: "Please tell me whether you strongly approve, approve, disapprove or strongly disapprove of *Britain's involvement* [emphasis in question] in a/the[2] war with Iraq?" Echoing the ICM findings, the PDB surveys indicated that public opinion was divided, both before and after hostilities began (see Figure 4.2). Although only small minorities answered that they strongly approved of the conflict, sizable groups (ranging in size from 31 per cent to 43 per cent) stated that they approved. Opposition also was substantial. At the extremes of opinion, the "strongly

disapprove" group was always larger than the "strongly approve" one, although the extent of the difference varies considerably -- from nearly 18 per cent in March before the war began to a low of just over two per cent in late April and early May.

(Figure 4.2 about here)

As hostilities began, who favoured the war? Who was opposed? Answers to these questions are supplied in Figure 4.3. As illustrated, the March and April-May 2003 PDB data indicate that the war's popularity varied only marginally across social classes. *Pace* the late Mr. Bevin, support among the working class no less than that among the middle and upper classes. Similarly, differences among educational groups were extremely modest, with people with the highest levels of formal education being somewhat less enthusiastic than those with less schooling. Again, levels of support were virtually identical in England, Scotland and Wales. Age differences were somewhat greater, with younger and older people being eight to 10 per cent less supportive than middle-aged ones. However, the biggest differences involved gender and partisanship. Consonant with conjectures that women are less likely than men to favour military action, Figure 4.3 shows a 14-point gender gap, with 56 per cent of men, but only 42 per cent of women endorsing the war. Substantial partisan differences are apparent as well. Consistent with their parties' advocacy of the conflict, 59 per cent of Labour identifiers and 53 per cent of Conservative identifiers were supporters. And consistent with their party's opposition, only 32 per cent of Liberal Democrats were in favour. Endorsements among 'other party' identifiers and nonidentifiers also were the exception, with only slightly over one-third of the people in these groups voicing approval.

Indicative of the overall weakness of these several relationships, a logistic regression analysis using all of the socio-demographic variables has a McFadden R^2 of merely .03. The

analysis can correctly predict the approval or disapproval of 60 per cent of the cases, only six per cent more than could be achieved using a naive mode-guessing approach. Adding partisanship helps, but only modestly -- the McFadden R^2 increases to .08 and 64 per cent are correctly classified. British public opinion on the war was divided as the conflict began, but the division did not adhere closely to major socio-demographic and partisan fault lines in the electorate.

(Figure 4.3 about here)

Again similar to their ICM counterparts, the PDB surveys reveal substantial temporal dynamics in opinion. As illustrated in Figure 4.2, there are two distinct shifts. Among respondents interviewed in March 2003 before the invasion began, nearly three-fifths were opposed to the war and slightly over two-fifths were in favor. However, among those interviewed immediately after the invasion, support rose by fully 14 points to 57 per cent and opposition fell to 43 per cent. Although these latter figures changed only marginally in April and May, the October 2003 survey documents a second shift. In a context of mounting controversy regarding the failure to find weapons of mass destruction, intense publicity surrounding the suicide of British weapons inspector, Dr. David Kelly, escalating insurgency and mounting sectarian violence, opinion changed dramatically. In a swing of nearly 17 points, the number supporting the war fell to 38 per cent and the number opposing it climbed to 62 per cent. Although opinion remained divided, the public mood was clearly more negative than it had been only a few months earlier. And, as discussed later in this chapter, this negativism soon became a staple feature of British opinions about the war. However, we first investigate the explanatory power of three competing theoretical models of factors affecting those opinions.

Considering Conflict

Viewed generally, there are two bodies of research on public opinion about international conflict and war. One group of studies, developed primarily by political psychologists, relies heavily on general theories of public opinion (see, e.g., Alvarez and Brehm, 2002; Converse, 1964; Hurwitz and Peffley, 1987; Page and Shapiro, 1992; Zaller, 1992). A second group of studies has been developed primarily by foreign policy and international relations specialists. Although not entirely divorced from general theories of public opinion and the multi-faceted debates they have engendered, these studies focus tightly on specific factors affecting the dynamics of public opinion about major wars and other salient militarized disputes (e.g., Jentleson, 1992; Jentleson and Britton, 1998; Kull, 1995; Reilly, 1987).[3] Both kinds of research inform the models of attitudes towards the Iraq War tested here. And, as is more typical of the first body of research than the second, the explanatory power of the competing models is investigated using individual-level survey data rather than aggregate-level time series data from public opinion polls.

The Morality Model

Echoing Ernest Bevin's remarks cited at the beginning of this chapter, the morality model is motivated by the longstanding conjecture in liberal political thought that the publics of democratic polities are guardians of ethical conduct in foreign affairs. They will support a war only if a convincing normative case can be made for it (Holsti, 1996). Accordingly, proponents of this model would argue that attitudes towards British involvement in war with Iraq were governed by people's judgments regarding the extent to which the conflict was morally justified. Those who believed Britain has a strong moral case for war with Iraq approved of the conflict,

and those who did not believe Britain has a strong moral case opposed it. Thus, the model is specified as:

$$DAPP = f(\beta_0 + \beta_1 MORAL) \quad (4.1)$$

where: DAPP = approval/disapproval of war with Iraq; MORAL = belief that Britain has/does not have a strong moral case for going to war with Iraq; β's = parameters to be estimated.

As Figure 4.4 shows, public opinion was deeply divided over the morality of war with Iraq, and it shifted substantially over the eight months encompassed by the March and October 2003 surveys. In March, just prior to the initiation of hostilities, 45 per cent of the PDB respondents said that they "agree" or "agree strongly" with the statement that Britain had a "strong moral case" for war with Iraq.[4] This figure climbed to 58 per cent immediately after the war began, and eroded only slightly (to 56 per cent) in April and May. However, following the failure to find WMD's and the firestorm of adverse commentary about the war ignited by the Kelly suicide, the percentage believing Britain had a strong moral case for the war fell precipitously, and stood at only 39% in the October 2003 survey.

(Figure 4.4 about here)

The Benefits and Costs Model

This model has conceptual affinities with realist theories of the factors that propel states to take one action as opposed to another in the international political arena. Such theories stipulate that interests -- particularly the expectation of receiving benefits in the form of greater power, security or wealth that exceed the projected costs of action -- govern the decisions of state actors to initiate a war (e.g., Bueno de Mesquita, 1983; Holsti, 1996; Morrow, 2000). The benefits and costs model of public opinion on war similarly assumes that opinions about the advisability of engaging in international conflict are rooted in perceptions of likely gains and

losses. Specifically, the model posits that calculations -- possibly rough-and-ready -- involving the perceived benefits and costs of the Iraq war explain people's support for, or opposition to, the conflict. Incorporating only four explanatory variables, the model is parsimonious. First is an interaction term comprised of two variables -- the anticipated long-run benefits of the war for Britain discounted by estimates of the probability that the enterprise will be successful.[5] The third variable is perceived collective costs, i.e., costs that Britain would incur should it decide to wage war with Iraq. The fourth variable is personal costs as measured by perceived threats to the personal safety of oneself and one's family. Accordingly, the model is:

$$DAPP = f(\beta_0 + \beta_1 PWIN*BENWAR + \beta_2 COSTBR + \beta_3 COSTSELF) \qquad (4.2)$$

where: DAPP = approval/disapproval of war with Iraq; PWIN = probability that a war with Iraq would be successful; BENWAR = anticipated benefits of going to war with Iraq; COSTBR = belief that war with Iraq would seriously damage Britain's interests around the world; COSTSELF = belief that war with Iraq would threaten safety of self and family; β's = parameters to be estimated.

Estimates of the probability of winning the war are measured by asking the PDB respondents to use an 11-point scale ranging from 0 ("very unlikely") to 10 ("very likely")[6] to estimate the likelihood of victory in a war against Iraq. Answers vary over time, with the percentage of March 2003 respondents scoring six or more on the scale increasing from 62 per cent before the war began to 73 per cent afterward. In the subsequent April-May survey, the comparable figure fell to 58 per cent. Reflecting this variation, average scores in the three time periods are 6.5, 7.1, and 5.9, respectively. Given the course of the conflict, the wording of the October 2003 "success" question is necessarily different; respondents were asked to use an 11-point scale ranging from 0 ("complete failure") to 10 ("complete success")[7] to judge the outcome

of the war. At this time only 29 per cent had scores of six or greater, and less than 2 per cent thought that the war had been completely successful. Indicative of growing reservations about British involvement, the average score is only 4.2 points, well below the mid-point (5) on the scale.

Similarly, many PDB respondents disagreed with the proposition that the war would prove beneficial. Figure 4.5 illustrates that even before the war started skepticism was common, with nearly two-thirds (65 per cent) disagreeing with the statement that "Britain will benefit in the long run from war with Iraq." The percentage disagreeing fell slightly (to 59 per cent) in April and May, before rising sharply in October when fully three-quarters (75 per cent) rejected the idea that the war would generate long-run benefits for Britain.

(Figure 4.5 about here)

Concerns about the consequences of the war are also evident in responses to questions about the war's potential collective and personal costs. Once more, there are strong temporal dynamics in the responses. Nearly 60 per cent of those interviewed before the war began thought that it would seriously damage Britain's interests around the world (see Figure 4.6A). This percentage subsequently declined substantially (to 41 per cent) in the April-May survey, before rebounding in October. The pattern for personal costs is somewhat different. Before hostilities began, a clear majority (56 per cent) thought war with Iraq would threaten the safety of themselves and their families (Figure 4.6B). Perceptions of personal threat eroded thereafter -- to 36 per cent and 41 per cent in the April-May and October surveys, respectively -- as it became clear that the war *per se* did not pose an immediate danger to people living outside of Iraq.[8]

(Figure 4.6 about here)

The General Heuristics Model

Similar to the discussion of factors affecting party choice in Chapter Two, the third model of opinion about the war is motivated by the observation that important political choices are often made in contexts of uncertainty. Faced with situations where stakes are high and reliable information about the consequences of alternative courses of action is in short supply, people employ heuristic devices of various kinds to guide their decisions (e.g., Chase, Hertwig and Gigerenzer, 1998; Conlisk, 1996; see also Fiske and Taylor, 1984; Kahneman, Slovic and Tversky, 1982). Over the past decade, political psychologists have focused on the use of heuristics in political decision making and, depending upon the context being considered, a variety of possibilities have been proposed (see, e.g., Bowler and Donovan, 1998; Lupia and McCubbins, 1998; Lupia, McCubbins and Popkin, 2000; Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock, 1991).

Party identification is often designated as a key heuristic. The hypothesis that political parties serve as important sources of information and cue-givers is grounded in the venerable idea that parties are viewed as objects that can be "loved and trusted" (Wallas, 1908). People develop psychological attachments with political parties, and these attachments provide guides not only to how to vote, but also to who and what to believe on important political issues (e.g., Campbell et al., 1960; Bowler and Donovan, 1998; Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock, 1991). Consistent with their parties' positions on the war and analyses presented above, the expectation is that Conservative party identifiers endorse the conflict, and Liberal Democrat identifiers oppose it. An *a priori* hypothesis for Labour identifiers is more difficult to formulate because, although the party leader, Tony Blair, was the chief advocate of invading Iraq, some prominent Labour politicians, including high ranking cabinet ministers such as Leader of the House of Commons, Robin Cook, strongly opposed the idea. Also, Labour's always vocal and oftentimes

influential left-wing activists maintained their record of opposing military conflicts by coming out strongly against the invasion. These intra-party clashes notwithstanding, the survey data presented above (see Figure 4.3) shows that when the war began Labour identifiers actually were more favourably disposed towards it than any other group of party supporters.

As the principal and highly salient spokespersons for their parties, the leaders of major political parties also are important cue-givers. As discussed in Chapters Two and Three, constant media attention helps to ensure that leaders' images can have significant cueing effects for people who seek guidance in times of political crisis and uncertainty (see also Clarke et al., 2004; Clarke, Kornberg and Stewart, 2003; Hurwitz and Peffley, 1987). Here, it is hypothesized that a positive image of Prime Minister Tony Blair, the principal architect of British involvement in the war, prompts support for it. This also should be true for Conservative Leader, Iain Duncan Smith, another prominent supporter. In contrast, since Liberal Democrat Leader Charles Kennedy opposed the war, it is expected that a positive image of him would increase the likelihood of opposing the conflict.

A variety of other heuristic devices such as the mass media, general risk orientations, 'rally effects' associated with the initiation of conflict, age and gender also may be important. Although calibrating media effects on public opinion is notoriously difficult (e.g., Norris et al., 1999), there is widespread consensus that the media are very influential actors in the political process (e.g., Iyengar and Kinder, 1987; Jordan and Page, 1992; Mutz, 1992). In Britain and other mature democracies, the media do not simply provide 'reactive mode' information about current events. Rather, they take proactive political roles, shaping the agenda of debate by deciding what to cover and how to cover it. In the British case, the print media are important because newspaper readership is widespread -- fully 84 per cent of our PDB respondents

reported that they read a paper 'every day' or 'sometimes'. Major newspapers regularly articulate positions on a wide range of political topics, and a number of them have readily recognizable partisan biases. Here, we analyze the impact of readership of pro- and anti-war newspapers on support for/opposition to British involvement in the Iraq conflict.

With respect to risk orientations, the hypothesis is that people consult their generalized attitudes towards risk before making decisions in situations when stakes are high and outcomes are uncertain (e.g., Nadeau, Martin and Blais, 1999; see also Kahneman and Tversky, 1979, 2000; Thaler, 1991; 1993). Rally effects on public opinion are relevant as well. Such effects typically are engendered by a country's involvement in international crises or wars (e.g., Clarke, Mishler and Whiteley, 1990; Edwards and Swenson, 1997; Mueller, 1973; Norpoth, 1987). As noted above, public support for Britain's involvement in the war with Iraq increased sharply immediately after the conflict began. The hypothesis is that involvement in a war initially stimulates a sense of patriotism and/or 'we-them' thinking in people prompting them to rally in support of the conflict and the incumbent government prosecuting it. Although previous research indicates that rally effects vary substantially in magnitude and duration, their impact can be substantial (e.g., Clarke, Mishler and Whiteley, 1990; Marra, Ostrom and Simon, 1990; Mueller, 1973).

Finally, we consider whether political orientations vary by gender and age. Guided by prominent conjectures in the gender and politics and political culture literatures (e.g., Elshstain, 1987; Elshtain and Tobias, 1990; Goldstein, 2003; Inglehart 1989; Inglehart and Norris, 2003), we investigate the hypotheses that, net of other considerations, many women and younger people have political and social beliefs that military action and the use of physical force more generally are inappropriate mechanisms of conflict resolution.

In sum, the general heuristics model is:

$$DAPP = f(\beta_0 + \beta_1 BLAIR + \beta_2 IDS + \beta_3 KENNEDY + \beta_4 LABPID + \beta_5 CONPID + \beta_6 LDPID + \beta_7 OPID + \beta_8 NEWS + \beta_9 GRISK + \beta_{10} WAR + \beta_{11} GENDER + \beta_{12} AGE1824 + \beta_{13} AGE2542 + \beta_{14} AGE4360) \quad (4.3)$$

where: DAPP = approval/disapproval of war with Iraq; BLAIR = feelings about Labour leader, Tony Blair, IDS = feelings about Conservative leader, Iain Duncan Smith; KENNEDY = feelings about Liberal Democrat leader, Charles Kennedy;[9] LABPID = Labour party identification; CONPID = Conservative party identification; LDPID = Liberal Democrat party identification; OPID = other party identification;[10] NEWS = stand on Iraq war taken by daily newspaper;[11] GRISK = general risk orientation;[12] WAR = interviewed before/after hostilities began;[13] GENDER = gender;[14] AGE1824 = 18-24 age group; AGE2542 = 25-42 age group; AGE4360 = 43-60 age group;[15] β's = parameters to be estimated.

Comparing Competing Models

We first consider each of three models of opinion concerning British involvement in the Iraq war separately. Since the dependent variable has four categories ranging from 'strongly approve' to 'strongly disapprove', we use ordered probit (Long, 1997) to estimate model parameters.[16] Recognizing that the flow of causality between attitudes towards the war and feelings about Tony Blair might be bi-directional and create a simultaneity bias (e.g., Greene, 2003), we employ a set of instrumental variables for feelings about Blair in the general heuristics model.[17] The estimates reveal that the morality model behaves as anticipated; people who believe that Britain had strong moral justification for going to war with Iraq were significantly more likely ($p < .001$) than those who did not to approve of the conflict (see Table 4.1, Model A). The model fits the data quite well -- the estimated (McFadden) R^2 is .24, and 61 per cent of

the cases are correctly predicted for the full four categories of the dependent variable. Fully 83 per cent of the cases are correctly classified for the basic approve/disapprove war dichotomy.

(Table 4.1 about here)

The benefits and costs model also performs quite well; all of its parameters are statistically significant ($p < .05$ or better) and correctly signed (Table 4.1, Model B). As hypothesised, the likelihood of approving the war is enhanced by the interaction of perceptions that the conflict will be successful and the belief that Britain will benefit from it. As also hypothesized, both perceived collective and personal costs have negative effects, i.e., as collective and personal costs of the conflict increase, the likelihood of approving the war decreases. And, as calibrated by their coefficients, the impact of collective costs is significantly stronger than that of individual costs ($\chi^2 = 65.54$, df = 1, $p < .001$). The fit of the benefits and costs model is very similar to that of the morality model; the McFadden R^2 is .23 and the 59 per cent of the cases can be correctly classified for the four categories of the dependent variable. Eighty-one per cent are correctly classified across the basic approve/disapprove war dichotomy.

The general heuristics model also has several statistically significant and properly signed coefficients. As anticipated given their respective stands on the war, feelings about Labour leader Tony Blair and Conservative leader Iain Duncan Smith positively influenced opinion about the war, whereas feelings about Liberal Democrat leader, Charles Kennedy, negatively influence it. The effects of Labour and Liberal Democrat party identifications are not significant but, as hypothesized, Conservative identifiers were more likely to endorse the war than nonidentifiers or identifiers with other parties. Some other predictor variables also behave as expected -- people who read newspapers that endorse the war were more likely to favor the conflict, as were risk acceptant individuals and men. However, *ceteris paribus*, people in the

oldest age cohort were less, not more, likely to favor the war than were those in all of the younger age groups. Viewed more generally, the general heuristics model performs reasonably well. The model's McFadden R^2 is .09, it correctly classifies 47 per cent of the cases across the four categories of the dependent variable, and 67 per cent across the approve/disapprove war dichotomy.

A Tournament of Models

Although the results just reported are suggestive, the question "Which of the three rival models performs best?" merits closer scrutiny. A second interesting question is: "If one model outperforms its competitors, is there additional explanatory purchase to be gained by consulting its rivals?" We use two statistical techniques to address these questions. The first focuses the parameterization costs incurred to achieve a given level of model fit (Burnham and Anderson, 2002). As discussed above, fit may be indexed by an estimated R^2 statistic, the McFadden R^2, and the percentage of cases correctly classified. Although informative, these statistics do not account for the different number of predictor variables that the various models use to achieve a particular level of explanatory power.

To account for these differences, we employ a model selection criterion, the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) (Burnham and Anderson, 2002). The AIC discounts the explanatory performance of models by the richness of parameterization required to achieve a given level of fit.[18] Smaller AIC values indicate better performance. AIC numbers for the three rival models of opinions on the Iraq war are presented at the bottom of Table 4.1. These statistics show that the morality model outperforms the benefits and costs model. This finding reflects the fact that, although the morality and benefits and costs models have nearly identical McFadden R^2's, the former model employs only a single independent variable, whereas the latter one employs three

of them. The AIC statistics also indicate that the general heuristics model trails its rivals -- as would be anticipated given its inferior fit statistics and inclusion of a relatively large number (14) of predictor variables.

A model selection criterion such as the AIC provides important insights, but it does not tell us whether a particular model can make a unique contribution to explanation over and above what is provided by its competitors. In the present case, the three competing models are conceptually and operationally *non-nested* -- they have different theoretical motivations and different explanatory variables. It is possible that two or more of the models are complementary, with each explaining a component of the variance in the dependent variable that is unaccounted for by its rivals. Variance encompassing tests can be used to investigate this possibility (Hendry, 1995). In general, when considering two models A and B, there are four possibilities: (i) A encompasses B, but B does not encompass A; (ii) B encompasses A, but A does not encompass B; (iii) A encompasses B and B encompasses A; (iv) neither A nor B encompass each other. Cases (i) and (ii) indicate that one of the encompassed models is redundant, case (iii) indicates that the empirical information at hand cannot distinguish between the models, and case (iv) indicates that both models make unique contributions to explanation.

We use two encompassing tests -- the joint nesting test and Davidson and MacKinnon's (1982) J test. These tests testify that case (iv) is the one that obtains for the competing models of British public opinion about Iraq. For each pairwise comparison of the rival models, the joint nesting tests (Table 4.2, Section I) indicate that a given model does not encompass its rival, and vice versa. Thus, the morality model does not encompass either the benefits-costs or the general heuristics models. And, the latter two models do not encompass the former one. Similarly, the benefits-costs and general heuristics models do not encompass each other. J tests tell exactly the

same story (see Table 4.2, Section II), thereby reinforcing the conjecture that all three models can contribute to an overall explanation of what drives opinions about the war.

(Table 4.2 about here)

This conjecture is buttressed by theoretical work on public opinion formation by Zaller (1992) and others. As noted above, the debate over the war was one where people were exposed to an avalanche of arguments for and against the conflict. When making up their minds about invading Iraq, people were invited to think not only about the morality of the action, but also the benefits and costs, and the likelihood of success. In the run-up to the invasion in March 2003 and throughout most of the remainder of the year, "Iraq" dominated the mass media, with politicians and political activists attempting to make their cases in all of these terms. Anti-war protesters joined the fray, with demonstrations in London and elsewhere receiving enormous publicity. The vigorous, multifaceted debate began months before the invasion, and continued to lead the issue agenda for months afterwards. David Kelly's suicide in July 2003 added a new, lurid, dimension to media coverage, and propelled the creation of an official inquiry (the Hutton Inquiry) into events surrounding his death. Later, publication of the findings of that inquiry in January 2004 refueled the controversy, with opponents of the war loudly proclaiming that the report was a 'whitewash'. Lord Hutton had studiously avoided investigating their often-repeated charges that the Blair government had 'sexed up' intelligence reports to make Saddam Hussein appear to be a much greater threat than was actually the case. The result was another inquiry (the Butler inquiry), charged explicitly with investigating British intelligence leading up to the war. All of these events received great attention in the media. Such a rich and conflicting flow of information is conducive to making a wide variety of considerations relevant for opinion formation and change.

Estimating the parameters in a composite model that includes the predictor variables from the three rival models confirms that each of them contributes to explanation. As shown in Table 4.3, all of the variables in the morality and benefits-costs models remain statistically significant ($p < .05$) and properly signed in the composite model. Judgments that the moral case for war is strong increased the probability of approving the war. Perceived benefits of the war discounted by the probability of winning it also increased that probability. In contrast, perceived collective and personal costs decreased the likelihood of approval. Some variables in the general heuristics model also remained in play. Positive feelings about Prime Minister Tony Blair enhanced the probability of approving the war, and positive feelings about Liberal Democrat leader, Charles Kennedy, diminished it. People who read pro-war newspapers also were more likely to approve. Age was relevant as well, with persons in the 25-42 and 43-60 age brackets being more likely to endorse the conflict. Net of all these factors, there is also a suggestion that risk acceptant people were more likely to approve, with the coefficient for this predictor just failing to reach significance at the .05 level ($t = 1.62$, $p = .052$, one-tailed test). Similarly, the gender coefficient approaches significance ($t = 1.51$, $p = .066$), hinting that men were more supportive of the war than women. We return to how gender affects attitudes towards the war shortly.

Overall, as indicated by the McFadden R^2 (.35) and the percentage correctly classified (66 per cent for the four category dependent variable and 87 per cent for the approve/disapprove dichotomy), the composite model performs better than any of the three component models. Moreover, although the composite model is parameterized more richly than its components, it has a superior model selection statistic. Its AIC value is smaller than the AICs for any of the individual models.

(Table 4.3 about here)

We next gauge the relative impact of various predictor variables in the composite model by calculating the change in the probability of approving the war when each significant predictor is varied from its minimum to its maximum value.[19] For this exercise, other predictors are set at their mean values or, in the case of the party identification dummies at 0, thereby implicitly assuming the respondent does not identify with any party. Changes in calculated probabilities are multiplied by 100 for ease of exposition. The resulting numbers indicate that variables from each of the three rival models had sizable influences on opinion about the war. For example, *ceteris paribus*, as judgments that Britain has a strong moral case for war move from strongly negative to strongly positive, the probability of approving the conflict increases by fully 74 points (see Figure 4.7). Success-discounted perceived benefits and collective costs also exert large effects, with the former increasing the probability of approving the war by 63 points, and the latter decreasing it by 40 points. Party leader heuristics are influential as well, with variations in feelings about Prime Minister Blair raising the probability of supporting the war by 22 points, and variations in feelings about Liberal Democrat leader Charles Kennedy lowering it by 20 points. Probabilities associated with other predictors are less impressive, with their average ability to change the probability of supporting the war being slightly less than 6 points.

(Figure 4.7 about here)

Gender and the War: As observed earlier, theorists have argued that there are significant gender differences in public attitudes towards war, with men being more likely than women to favor military action and other aggressive modes of conflict resolution. This interesting hypothesis merits closer scrutiny. We first investigate the extent of gender differences in approval of the war. As noted above (see Figure 4.3), there is a statistically significant ($p < .001$) 14 per cent difference between the two groups in support for the war in the March and April-

May PDB surveys. Examining the March, April-May and October PDB surveys separately shows that men are consistently more likely than women to approve of the war, with the difference ranging a high of 19 points to a low of 9 points. Also, both gender groups manifest substantial dynamics in their attitudes towards the conflict. Contrary to arguments that women do not react to rally events (for a review, see Clarke et al., 2005), both groups became more supportive of the war as soon as it began. In late March 2003, the percentage of men approving the war increased by over 10 points immediately after hostilities commenced (see Figure 4.8). Among women the increase in support was greater, nearly 14 points. Again, support for the war fell sharply among both groups during the period between the April-May and October 2003 surveys. Among men the decline was almost 21 points, and among women, almost 13 points. In the latter survey, sizable majorities of both groups voiced their opposition.

(Figure 4.8 about here)

The large differences between men and women in approval of the war coupled with the negligible impact of gender in the multivariate models presented above (see Tables 4.1 and 4.3) suggest three possibilities. One is that the effects of gender are indirect, working through other independent variables. A second is that gender differences are the product of men and women placing different weights on various factors that influence their attitudes towards the war. For example, consistent with arguments in the gender and politics literature, it might conjectured that women place greater emphasis on considerations regarding the morality of conflict, whereas men give more weight to benefits, costs and probabilities of success. A third possibility is that some gender-differentiated combination of different values and different weights on the independent variables was at work.

Table 4.4 lends considerable credence to the first possibility. Fully 18 of 20 comparisons in the table are statistically significant and, in every case, the direction of the difference is one that would make men more likely to support the war. For example, just before hostilities began, 53 per cent of the men, but only 39 per cent of the women, thought that Britain had a strong moral case for war with Iraq (see Table 4, Panel A). The difference narrowed in the March post-invasion and April-May surveys, but in both cases men remained approximately 10% more likely than women to endorse the moral case for the invasion. Only in October did this "morality gap" collapse, with large majorities of both groups stating that the war lacked strong moral justification.

(Table 4.4 about here)

There are also impressive gender differences in the appraisal of benefits and costs. Across the four surveys, men were on average 17 per cent more likely than women to believe that Britain would enjoy long-run benefits because of the war, 13 per cent less likely than women to conclude that the war would damage Britain's interests around the world, and 13 per cent less likely to perceive that it posed a threat to self and family (see Table 4.4, Panels B, C, and D). In addition, men were significantly more sanguine than women that the war would be successful (Table 4.4, Panel E). For example, when asked to rate the probability of winning, the average score for men in the March pre-war survey was 7.4 points, and the average for women was only 5.8 ($p < .001$). Only in October did gender differences in these probabilities collapse, with both groups becoming substantially more pessimistic about the prospects of success.

Finally, there are significant gender differences involving the general heuristics model (data not shown). As discussed above, positive feelings about Labour leader Tony Blair substantially increased the probability of approving the war, and positive feelings about Liberal

Democrat leader, Charles Kennedy decreased that probability. Analyses show that men consistently gave higher average scores to Blair, and women consistently gave higher average scores to Kennedy. These differences worked to enhance gender differences in attitudes towards the war.

We investigate the second possibility -- that parameters for explanatory variables in the models of attitudes towards the war varied by gender -- by estimating the composite model (Table 4.3) separately for men and women. Then, we impose equality constraints on the parameters, and test to determine whether there is a statistically significant decrease in goodness of fit.[20] These tests indicate that, with three exceptions, the 21 parameters are not significantly different ($p \leq .05$) for men and women. One exception concerns the 'success-discounted benefits' variable. The coefficient for this predictor is significantly larger ($p < .001$) for men (.043) than women (.035). The other two exceptions are the coefficients for the dummy variables signifying Liberal Democrat identification and Scottish residence. The former is significant for women but not for men, whereas the later is significant for men but not for women. The overall similarity of the models for the two gender groups is also suggested by the percentages correctly classified for the men's and women's models. These differ by only 0.2 per cent for the four-category dependent variable (65.0 percent for men and 65.2 per cent for women) and 0.1 per cent for the summary approve-disapprove dichotomy (86.4 per cent for men and 86.3 per cent for women).

In sum, the story of gender and opinion about the Iraq war is straightforward. Gender mattered largely because men and women had quite different values on important independent variables in a composite explanatory model that works well for both groups. Men and women made different judgments about the benefits, costs and morality of the conflict.

Towards Consensus

Destroying Iraq's military capability and deposing Saddam Hussein and his despotic regime proved to be an easy task. Winning the peace was an entirely different matter. With Hussein's brutal dictatorship eliminated, the U.S. and Britain faced the difficult tasks of building a new democratic political system. It proved extraordinarily difficult, as Iraqi insurgents mounted repeated attacks against American and British soldiers. These attacks took a bloody toll, with military casualties -- especially American ones -- mounting month on month. Insurgents were not content to attack troops; rather, they carried out gruesome murders of American and British civilians working as contractors to rebuild the country. The insurgency was coupled with sporadic, but serious, sectarian violence among rival ethnic and religious groups. Ordinary people suffered mightily. Between the initiation of hostilities in March 2003 and the end of 2005, it is estimated that nearly 40,000 thousand Iraqi civilians were killed. All of this violence received massive publicity in the press and, as it did, support for the war diminished.

The dynamics of attitudes towards the war are tracked in Figures 4.9, 4.10 and 4.11. Figure 4.9 maps the percentages of respondents in YouGov monthly surveys who thought that Britain and the United States were ‘right or wrong to take military action against Iraq’. The figure illustrates the sharp decline in support for the war over the summer and autumn of 2003, followed by a brief and incomplete revival of support at the end of the year when Saddam Hussein was captured. The subsequent decline is substantial, such that at the time of the 2005 general election only 35 per cent believed that the decision to invade Iraq had been ‘right’ and 53 per cent believed it had been ‘wrong’. These numbers were almost the opposite of what had been the case when hostilities first broke out two-years earlier. The impression that the war

became increasingly unpopular is reinforced by the data displayed in Figure 4.10. This figures shows that the percent of DPSB respondents supporting the war declines from 44 per cent when the survey project first began in April 2004 to 36 per cent at the time of the 2005 election to 24 per cent when Tony Blair stepped down as Labour leader in June 2007. In contrast, the group opposing the war increased substantially -- from 51 per cent in April 2004 to 57 per cent in May 2005, and then to 69 percent in June 2007.

(Figures 4.9 and 4.10 about here)

The idea that people were moving toward a consensus that the war was a bad idea is reinforced by the data in Figure 4.11. This figure illustrates the dynamics of DPSB respondents' judgments regarding the success-failure of the war. Three points are noteworthy. First, the average score on a 0 (complete failure) to 10 (complete success) scale is always less than 3.8 over the April 2004 – June 2007 period. Coupled with the data on public opinion during 2003 presented above, these numbers indicate that pessimism regarding the outcome of the war set in quite quickly after it began. Second, as blood-soaked news about the conflict continued month after month, pessimism mounted. Although prognoses that the war would be successful increased modestly in the run-up to the 2005 election, this mini-trend quickly evaporated in the post-election period as the bad news continued. And, as Figure 4.11 shows, it was not just the mean 'probability of success' score that was trending downward. This trend was closely paralleled by decreases in the amount of variability in public opinion. The standard deviation of the probability of success scores were becoming smaller and smaller, indicating that a consensus was emerging. That consensus was that the war could not be won.

(Figure 4.11 about here)

The Costs of Conflict

As the 2005 general election approached, there was wide speculation that Tony Blair's insistence on involving Britain in what had become a very unpopular war had seriously tarnished his image, and would damage his party's electoral fortunes. The proposition is intuitively attractive, but not empirically obvious. Figures 4.12 and 4.13 show why. With the exception of the rally effects associated with 2001 election, 9/11 and the outbreak of the Iraq war, Blair's approval ratings had moved more or less steadily downward since he had led Labour to its 1997 landslide victory (see Figure 4.12). And, as a mirror image, his disapproval ratings had trended upwards, spiking at the time of the September 2000 petrol crisis, and then again during the February 2003 protests against the war. The trend in the balance of judgments about Blair's performance is summarized in Figure 4.13, which also displays cumulative civilian casualties in the Iraq war. This figure clearly illustrates that the negative trend in the balance of opinion about Blair long predated his decision to go to Baghdad. Hence, it is possible that much, or all, of the 'Iraq effect' on his approval ratings is more apparent than real.

(Figures 4.12 and 4.13 about here)

We investigate this possibility using both aggregate- and individual-level data. First, we specify an aggregate time series model of the balance of Blair's approval and disapproval ratings. Conceptually akin to the time series model of Labour support in Chapter Three, the 'Blair balance' model includes an error correction term to capture a long-run cointegrating relationship between prime ministerial evaluations and judgements of Labour's competence as managers of the economy.[21] Also included is a variable to assess the short-term effects of these competence judgements, as well as several 0-1 dummy variables to measure the effects of prominent events.[22] In addition to the initiation of the Iraq war, these events include Blair's 'people's princess' speech

at the time of the death of Diana, the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the petrol crisis, the 7/7 terrorist attacks, and annual Labour conferences. The impact of ongoing reports of the conduct of the war is calibrated using monthly data on the number of civilian casualties (see Figure 4.13). If the war was influential net of other considerations, this variable should have a significant negative impact on the balance of Blair's approval-disapproval ratings. In sum, the model is specified as:

$$\Delta BAL_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1*\Delta LABEC_t - \alpha_1*(BAL - c_1*LABEC)_{t-1} + \beta_2*\Delta DIANA_t + \beta_3*\Delta T911_t + \beta_4*\Delta PETROL_t + \beta_5*\Delta IRAQ_t + \beta_6*CIVIL_{t-1} + \beta_7*\Delta T77_t + \beta_8*LABCONF_{t-1} + \varepsilon_t \quad (4.1a)$$

where: BAL = monthly balance (per cent approval - per cent disapproval) of Blair's performance; LABEC = monthly judgements of Labour's economic management competence; DIANA = peoples' princess speech; T911 = 9/11 terrorist attacks; PETROL = petrol crisis; IRAQ = initiation of Iraq war; CIVIL = monthly number of civilian casualties (logged); T77 = 7/7 terrorist attacks; LABCONF = annual Labour conference; ε = stochastic error term $\sim N(0,\sigma^2)$; Δ = differencing operator; α, β, c = model parameters.

We also include an autoregressive conditional heteroskedasticity (ARCH) component in this time series model to investigate the above mentioned possibility that the conduct of the war helped to effect a consensus in public opinion about Blair -- not only did the ongoing conflict lower Blair's approval ratings, but it made those ratings less variable (Enders, 2004: ch. 3). This ARCH component is specified as:

$$\sigma^2_t = \omega + \lambda\varepsilon^2_{t-1} + \gamma CIVIL_{t-1} \quad (4.1b)$$

where: σ^2_t = the conditional variance of the balance of Blair (dis)approval; ω = a constant; ε^2_{t-1} = innovation variance (novel information about volatility) in the balance of Blair (dis)approval at time t-1 (the lag of the squared residual from the 4.1a; CIVIL = monthly number of civilian

casualties (logged); λ and γ = model parameters, with the expectation that λ will be positive and γ will be negative. The negative sign on γ will indicate that, net of other considerations, the conflict in Iraq is working to reduce the variance in public opinion about Blair. Models 4.1a and 4.1b are estimated using maximum likelihood procedures (Quantitative Micro Software, 2007: ch. 29).

Model estimates are presented in Table 4.5. As hypothesized, evaluations of Labour's competence on the economy had a cointegrating relationship with Blair's approval ratings. As indicated by the coefficient for the error correction mechanism (α -.16), the effect was quite weak, meaning that shocks from whatever source had considerable potential to affect Blair's approval. In this regard, the analysis reveals that several major events had sizable, if temporary, effects. Specifically, the 9/11 and 7/7 terrorist attacks had significant positive effects, driving up the balance by almost 20 points and almost 16 points, respectively. The well-received people's princess speech had a smaller positive impact (nearly 9 points), whereas the petrol crisis had a negative impact of nearly 14 points.

(Table 4.5 about here)

As also hypothesized Iraq had three influential effects. First, there was a classic rally, a temporary positive impact of 7 points that occurred when hostilities began. A second, negative, effect then kicked in as bad news about the conflict began to circulate. Parameter estimates indicate that this effect -- working month after month -- was ultimately quite profound. *Ceteris paribus*, over the 22 months separating the Kelly suicide in July 2003 and the May 2005 general election, bad news about the war (as indexed by civil casualties in Iraq) was sufficient to prompt a 27.5 point downward swing in the balance of Blair's approval ratings.[23] A third, more subtle, effect was to reduce the variance in those ratings. The ARCH process behaves as expected, with

civilian casualties in a given month reducing the variance in the balance of Blair's approval ratings in the subsequent month. This process can be seen graphically in Figure 4.14 where the bars representing the conditional variance in the balance of these ratings are much smaller for the shaded portion of the graph that represents the period of the Iraq war up to the 2005 general election. Expressed in nontechnical terms, the numbers summarized in Table 4.5 and Figure 4.14 testify that the bloody, protracted conflict in Iraq worked to build a consensus -- a negative consensus -- on Blair's performance as prime minister.

(Figure 4.14 about here)

The impact of the war on Blair's image at the time of the 2005 general election is assessed using data from the 2005 BES pre- and post-election panel survey. We specify a model with feelings about Tony Blair as measured on a 0-10 scale as the dependent variable. Independent variables include set of predictors that will be employed in the party choice analyses developed in Chapter Five, where we consider factors affecting voting behaviour in the 2005 election. These variables include an index of people's evaluations of the Iraq war as well as their emotional reactions to the conflict.[24] Also included are measures of party identification, perceptions of party best on most important issues, party-issue proximities, economic evaluations and perceptions of party best on the economy, emotional reactions to the economy and the national health services, and several demographic control variables (age, education, ethnicity, gender, region, and social class).[25] Given the quasi-continuous nature of the dependent variable, we estimate model parameters via OLS regression.

The results, displayed in Table 4.6, reveal that feelings about Blair were affected by several variables including party identification, perceptions of parties' abilities to handle important issues, and party-issue proximities. The findings do not surprise -- Labour identifiers,

people thinking Labour is most capable on important issues, and people placing themselves close to Labour on position issue scales being more sanguine about Blair than who identified with other parties, selected another party as best on their most important issue, or were closer to another party on position issues. The effects of economic evaluations, perceptions of party competence on the economy and emotional reactions to the economy are also as expected. Those who offered positive evaluations, viewed Labour as most capable, or had positive emotional reactions tended to like Blair more than did those who offered negative evaluations, saw another party as most capable or felt negatively about the economy. Demographic characteristics were in play as well, with older people, ethnic minorities, women, and working class people being more positively disposed towards Blair, and residents of the Midlands (relative to residents of Greater London) being less positively disposed. Net of all of these effects, evaluations of the Iraq war have a significant, properly signed, impact ($\beta = .77$, $p < .001$) on feelings about Blair. People who evaluated the war positively tended to like him, and those who evaluated the war tended to dislike him. Controlling for these evaluations, emotional reactions to the conflict are not significant ($p > .05$).

(Table 4.6 about here)

Iraq thus had the hypothesized impact on Blair's public image when voters went to the polls in 2005. However, how large was that effect? To answer that question, we set all of the continuous predictors in the Blair affect model to their mean values and all dummy variables to 0. We then allow scores on the Iraq evaluation scale to vary from their minimum to their maximum values, and compute changes in feelings about Blair. To place the result in comparative perspective, we perform similar computations for all of the other significant predictors in the Blair affect model. The results (see Table 4.6) show that changing evaluations

of the war are capable of changing feelings about Blair by 3.45 points on his 0-10 point affect scale. This is relatively a large change, being exceeded only by changing proximity to the Labour Party on position issues (4.26 points). None of the other changes exceed two points. As we will see in Chapter Five, *ceteris paribus*, a change of this magnitude in feelings about Blair is capable of effecting a large change in the probability of voting Labour in 2005. Evaluations of the war thus had sizable, but indirect, effects on party choice. In the event, the large bulk of these evaluations and, hence, the effects they produced, were negative.

Conclusion: Conflict and Consensus

In this chapter, we have mapped the dynamics of public opinion about the Iraq war, and analysed the impact of those dynamics on support for Tony Blair. We have also investigated the effects of rival morality, benefits and costs, and general heuristics models public opinion about the war. Key predictor variables in all three models have statistically significant effects. These results provide an empirical warrant for estimating a composite model that includes the three specific models. Model selection criteria testify that the composite model is superior to its components. Also, although there are significant differences in men's and women's scores on all key explanatory variables, the effects of most of them are statistically indistinguishable for the two gender groups. Thus, women were more negatively disposed to the war largely because they saw fewer benefits, more costs, a lower likelihood of success, and a weaker moral case for the conflict.

The composite model also provides insight for understanding aggregate-level shifts in support for/opposition to it. The initial positive shift and subsequent negative shifts in public opinion were matched by parallel changes in the values of major explanatory variables. These movements are explicable in light of the flow of information about the conflict to which the

British public was exposed. Following a classic public opinion rally when hostilities began, the American- and British-led 'coalition of the willing' quickly dispatched Saddam Hussein's conventional forces. But, then, bad news began to accumulate. Weapons of mass destruction went undiscovered, and Iraqi insurgents began a campaign of guerilla warfare against Allied forces combined with terrorist attacks on Iraqi collaborators and Western civilians in Iraq. Bloody sectarian strife broke out. Sizable shifts in key predictor variables -- judgments about the morality of the war, its benefits and costs, and its likelihood of success ensued.

Viewed generally, present findings suggest the theoretical utility of composite models for explaining the distribution and dynamics of public opinion about salient and controversial political issues such as the Iraq war. As the Iraq debate unfolded, multiple considerations were in play. Citizens were exposed to -- indeed bombarded by -- sharply contrasting arguments about the morality, benefits and costs, and likelihood of success of the conflict. Political leaders and media commentators made normatively charged, oftentimes impassioned, cases for and against the war in *all* of these terms. Politicians and pundits became part of the message -- their images providing cues about who and what to believe. Given this diverse flow of information, one would expect all three types of factors -- moral considerations, (success-discounted) benefits and costs, and heuristics -- would influence individual opinion of the war, and aggregate shifts therein. The political context was one where the public was encouraged to invoke a variety of considerations when deciding how to judge a proposed military venture, the outcome of which was very difficult to forecast. By incorporating these diverse considerations, the composite model tells a compelling story -- one that should have applicability in political contexts characterized by vigorous debate about highly salient issues and great uncertainty about the consequences of alternative courses of action.

Evolution of public opinion about the war had important consequences for Tony Blair and the Labour Party. As casualties continued to mount and no end to the conflict could be discerned, opinion turned against the war. Increasingly the war became a valence issue -- increasingly people were against it and the emerging consensus was that Blair was to blame. As the 2005 election approached, Iraq had become a distinct liability him and, indirectly, for his party. In the next chapter, we will investigate these indirect effects, and thereby calibrate the impact of 'Tony's war' on Labour fortunes in 2005.

Endnotes

1. See, e.g., Almond, 1950; Alvarez and Brehm (2002); Chittick, Billingsley and Travis (1995); Holsti (1996); Hurwitz and Peffley (1987); Jentleson (1992); Jentleson and Britton (1998); Jordan and Page (1992); Kull, 1995; Marra, Ostrom and Simon (1990); Meernik and Ault (2001); Mueller (1973); Ostrom and Job (1986); Page and Shapiro (1992); Peffley and Hurwitz (1992); Reilly, 1987; Richman, Malone and Nolle (1997); Zaller (1992).

2. The phrase 'a war with Iraq' was used in interviews conducted before the war began. Then, the phrase was changed to 'the war with Iraq'.

3. For example, Jentleson (1992) argues that the American public is more likely to support the use of military force when the principal policy objective is to restrain aggression rather than to change a political regime. Assessments of the legitimacy of the action, perceptions of its likelihood of success, and a general sense of risk aversion are the principal reasons. These three factors are incorporated in the models tested below.

4. The question used to measure opinions regarding the morality, benefits, and costs of the war reads: 'Next, I'm going to read you some statements. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each of them. How about: "(a) "Britain will benefit in the long run from going to war with Iraq;" (b) "War with Iraq threatens the safety of my family and myself;" (c) "There is a strong moral case for Britain going to war with Iraq;" (d) "War with Iraq will seriously damage Britain's interests around the world"'. The order of presentation of the statements was randomized across interviews. Statement (a) measures perceptions of collective benefits of the war; statement (b) measures perceptions of personal threats posed by the war; statement (c) measures opinions regarding morality of the war; statement (d) measures perceptions of the collective costs of going to war. For purposes of multivariate analysis of approval/disapproval of the war (see below), responses to (a) to (d) are coded: (i) 'strongly agree' = 4; (ii) 'agree' = 3; (iii) 'disagree' = 2; (iv) 'strongly disagree' = 1.

5. Discounting benefits by the probability of attaining them is fundamental to the structure of expected utility models (e.g., Schoemaker, 1982). A similar discount is also a feature of the Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) model of attitude formation.

6. The question wording is: 'Now please think of a scale from 0 to 10 where 10 means *very likely* and 0 means *very unlikely*...(a) How likely do you think it is that a [the] *war against Iraq* will be successful?' Again, the phrase 'a war against Iraq' was changed to 'the war against Iraq' once hostilities began.

7. The question re: probability of winning the war question was changed in the October 2003 survey to read: 'Using a scale from 0 to 10 where 10 means a *complete success* and 0 means a *complete failure*, how would you rate the war against Iraq?' For purposes of the multivariate analyses, missing data were recoded to mean values.

8. Although many people did not believe the war posed a threat to their personal safety, they also believed that it was unlikely that the 'war on terrorism' would be won in the foreseeable

future. On a 0 ('very unlikely') to 10 ('very likely') scale indicating 'how likely it is that the war against terrorism will be won in the next few years?', average scores in the March pre-war, March post-war and April-May surveys were quite low -- 3.9, 4.0, and 3.7, respectively. The average score then fell to 2.8 in October ($F = 34.69$, $p < .001$).

9. Feelings about party leaders are measured using 0-10 feeling thermometer scales. The question is: 'Using the 0 to 10 scale, where 10 means *strongly like* and 0 means *strongly dislike*, how do you feel about...(a) Tony Blair; (b) Iain Duncan Smith; (c) Charles Kennedy'. For purposes of the multivariate analyses, missing data were recoded to mean values.

10. Party identification is measured using the standard BES question, 'Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat or what?' Responses are converted into a series of 0-1 dummy variables, with nonidentifiers as the reference category.

11. Respondents who read a daily newspaper taking a pro-war stand were coded +1; those who read a daily newspaper taking an anti-war stand were coded –1, and all other respondents were coded 0. Pro-war newspapers included the Daily Mail and the Scottish Daily Mail, Express, Scotsman, Sun, Telegraph, and Times. Anti-war newspapers included the Daily Record, Guardian, Independent, Mirror, and Scottish Mirror.

12. The general risk orientation question is: 'Generally speaking, how willing are you take risks? Are you very willing, somewhat willing, somewhat unwilling, or very unwilling to take risks?' For purposes of the multivariate analyses, the responses were coded: 'very willing' = 4; 'somewhat willing' = 3; 'somewhat unwilling' = 2; 'very unwilling' = 1.

13. The war rally variable is coded 0 for March 2003 respondents interviewed before hostilities began. All other respondents are coded 1.

14. Men are coded 1, women 0.

15. Age group variables are 0-1 dummies for those aged 18-24, 25-42, and 43-60. These groups are designed to capture different socialization experiences corresponding to whether a person first entered the electorate during the 'Blair era', the 'Thatcher-Major era', or the 'Wilson-Callaghan era', respectively. People aged 61 or older constitute the reference category.

16. The dependent variable is scored: 'strongly approve' = 4, 'approve' = 3, 'disapprove' = 2, 'strongly disapprove' = 1. Model parameters are estimated using STATA 10MP's OPROBIT procedure. Given that the October survey was conducted several months after conventional warfare had ceased, and that it uses an alternative, retrospective question about the success of the conflict, parameters are estimated using the March and April-May data.

17. Instrumental variables include party identification, feelings about Charles Kennedy and Iain Duncan-Smith, national and personal economic evaluations, emotional reactions to national and personal economic conditions, general risk orientations, newspaper readership, timing of interview (pre-post start of Iraq war), age cohorts, education, gender and social class.

18. AIC = -2log(L(θ|y)) + 2K, log(L(θ|y)) is the natural log of the likelihood function, and K is number of parameters. See Burnham and Anderson (2002).

19. Probabilities are calculated using the CLARIFY program for STATA (Tomz, Wittenberg and King, 1999).

20. Parameter equality tests are performed using STATA's 'TEST' procedure.

21. Labour's economic managerial competence is measured as the percentage citing Labour in response to the question: ' If Britain were in economic difficulties, which party do you think could handle the problem best -- the Conservative Party or the Labour Party?' in the monthly PDB and DPSB surveys.

22. The dummy variables are scored 1 for the month in which the event occurred, and 0 otherwise.

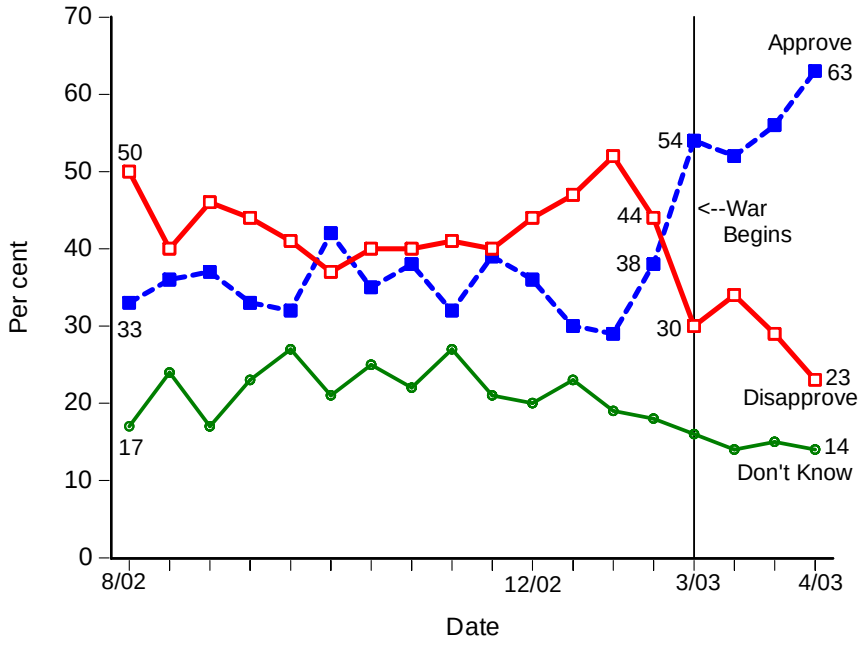
23. There were 9973 civilian casualties when the Kelly suicide occurred in July 2003 and 27802 at the time of the 2005 general election. The natural log of the difference of these numbers is 9.79. The total effect of this increased number of casualties is -.45/(1 - .84) * 9.79 = 27.5 where -.45 is the short-term impact of civilian casualties and .84 is the computed coefficient for the lagged endogenous variable in the rearranged Blair approval error correction model.

24. Evaluations of the Iraq war were measured using the results of an exploratory factor analysis of responses to the following questions: (a) 'How well do you think the present government has handled the situation in Iraq?' Responses to (a) were scored 'very well' = 5, 'fairly well' = 4 'neither well nor badly' or 'don't know' = 3, 'fairly badly' = 2, 'very badly' = 1; (b) 'Using a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 means a complete failure and 10 means a complete success, how would you rate the war in Iraq?' (c) Please tell me whether you strongly approve, approve, disapprove, or strongly disapprove of *Britain's involvement* in Iraq?' (emphasis in original). Responses to (c) were scored 'strongly approve' = 5, 'approve' = 4, 'don't know' = 3, 'disapprove' = 2, 'strongly disapprove' = 1. Item (a) is from the pre-election survey, and (b) and (c) are from the post-election survey. The factor analysis yielded one factor with an eigenvalue greater than 1, and a factor score variable was computed. Emotional reactions to the war were measured by giving respondents a list of four positive (happy, hopeful, confident, proud) and four negative (angry, disgusted, uneasy, afraid) words and asked to choose which words described their feelings 'about the situation in Iraq'. The emotional reaction to Iraq variable is the number of positive words minus the number of negative words designated. Similar variables are constructed for emotional reactions to the economy and the NHS;

25. Other predictor variables in the model are constructed as follows: (i) *issue-proximities* -- respondents were asked to place themselves and Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties on 0-10 scales for the following dimensions: (a) left-right, (b) tax-spend, (c) EU membership, (d) crime-rights of the accused. The issue-proximity variables are the average absolute distances between the respondent and each of the parties on the four dimensions; (ii) *party best on most important issue* -- respondents were asked: 'As far as you're concerned, what is the *single most important issue* facing the country at the present time?' (emphasis in original).

Respondents supplying an issue were then asked: 'Which party is best able to handle this issue?' 0-1 dummy variables are created for Labour, the Conservatives, the Liberal Democrats, and all other parties. Respondents not designating a most important issue, those stating that no party was best able to handle the most important issue, those stating they did not know which party is best, are the reference category; (iii) *party identification* -- see note 10 above; (iv) *economic evaluations* -- economic evaluations were measured using the results of an exploratory factor analysis of responses to these questions: (a) 'How does the financial situation of your household now compare with what it was 12 months ago?' (b) How do you think the general economic situation in this country has changed over the last 12 months?' (c) 'How do you think the financial situation of your household will change over the next 12 months?' (d) 'How do you think the general economic situation in this country will develop over the next 12 months?' Responses were scored: 'lot worse' = -2, 'little worse' = -1, 'don't know' = 0, 'little better' = 1, 'lot better' = 2. The analysis yielded one factor with an eigenvalue greater than 1, and a factor score variable is computed; (v) *emotional reactions to the NHS and the economy* -- respondents were given a list of four positive (happy, hopeful, confident, proud) and four negative (angry, disgusted, uneasy, afraid) words and asked to choose which words described their feelings about the NHS (the economy). The emotional reactions variables are the number of positive words minus the number of negative words designated; (vi) *socio-demographics* -- age is age in years; ethnicity is a 0-1 dummy variable with respondents designating themselves as 'white British' scored 1, and all others scored 0; gender is scored male = 1, female = 0; region of residence is a series of 0-1 dummy variables with Greater London as the reference category; social class is the six-category Registrar General (RG) classification. Respondents not able to be classified using the RG scheme who have a spouse/partner are given the spouse/partner's RG classification.

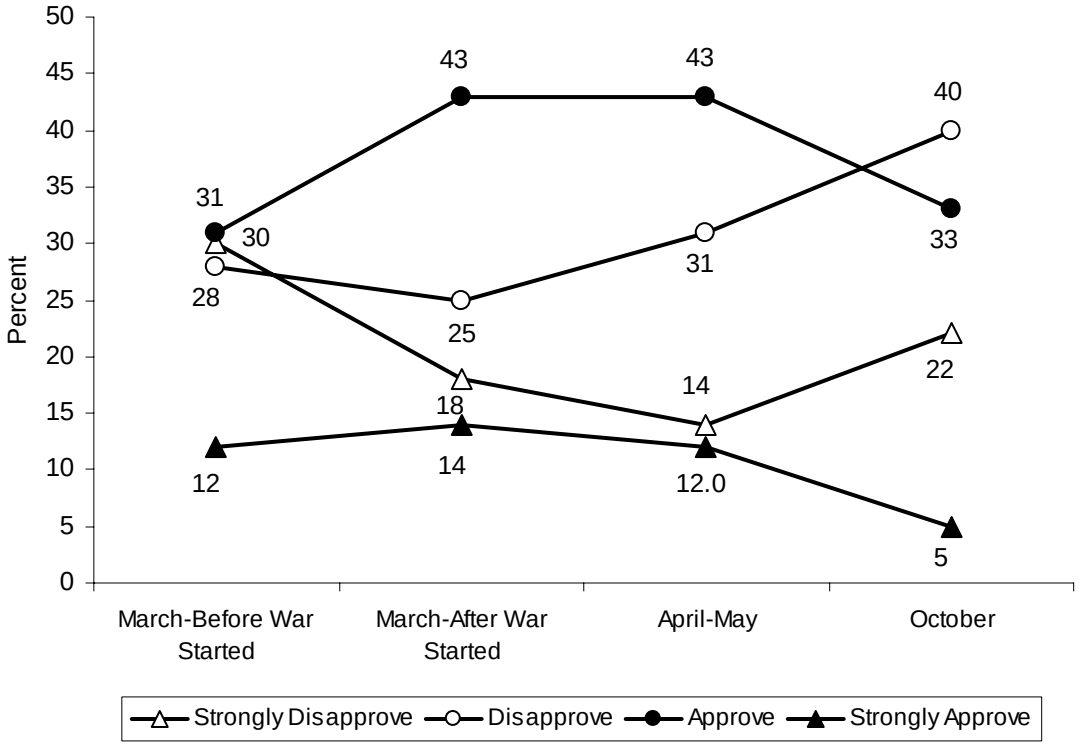
FIGURE 4.1 APPROVAL/DISAPPOVAL OF MILITARY ATTACK ON IRAQ TO REMOVE SADDAM HUSSEIN, SEPTEMBER 2002-APRIL 2003



Note: Question asked before war began is: 'Would you approve or disapprove of a military attack on Iraq to remove Sadam Hussein?' After war began question is: 'Do you approve or disapprove of the military attack on Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein?'

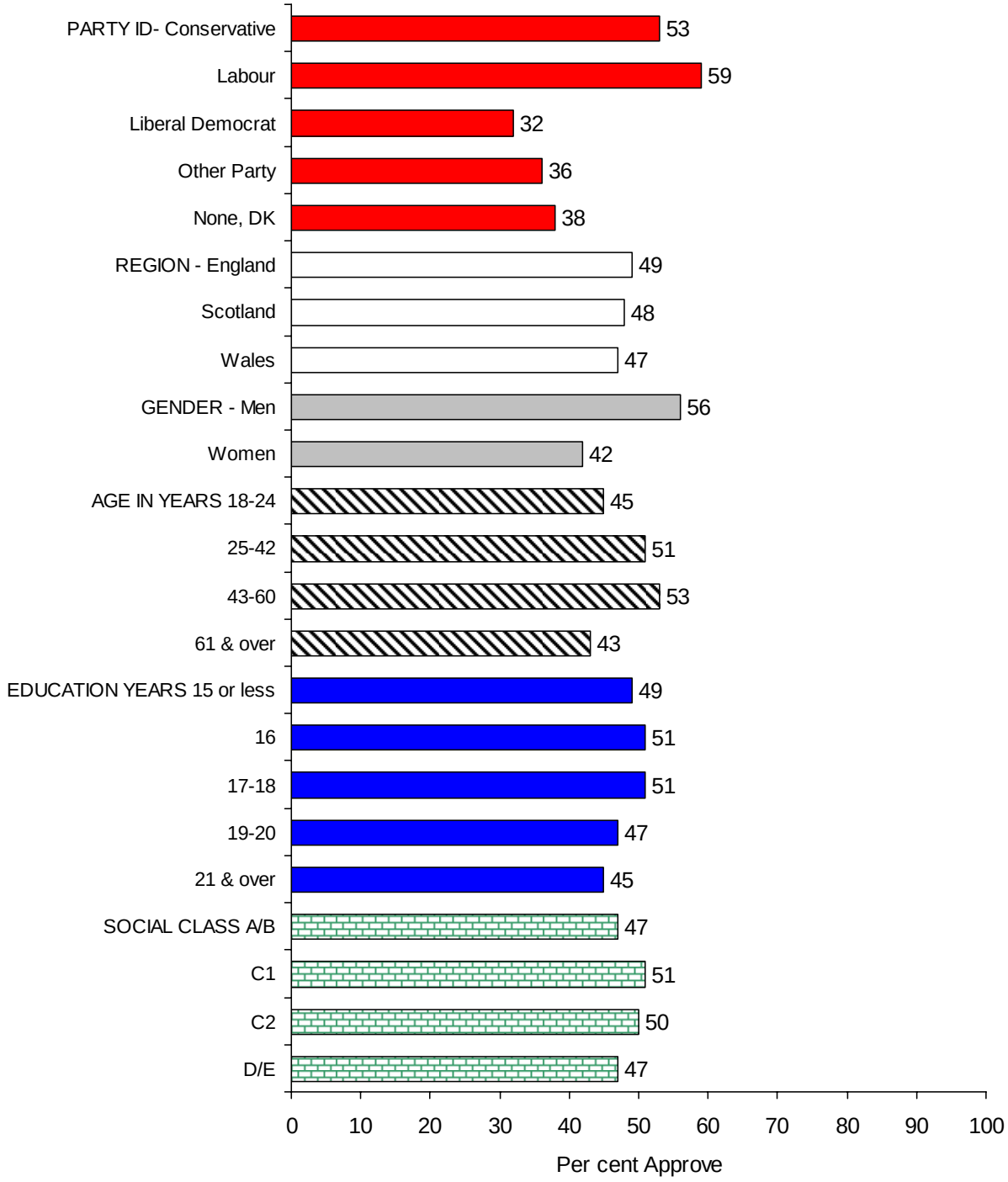
Source: ICM monthly polls.

Figure 4.2 Approval/Disapproval of Britain's Involvement in War With Iraq, March-October 2003



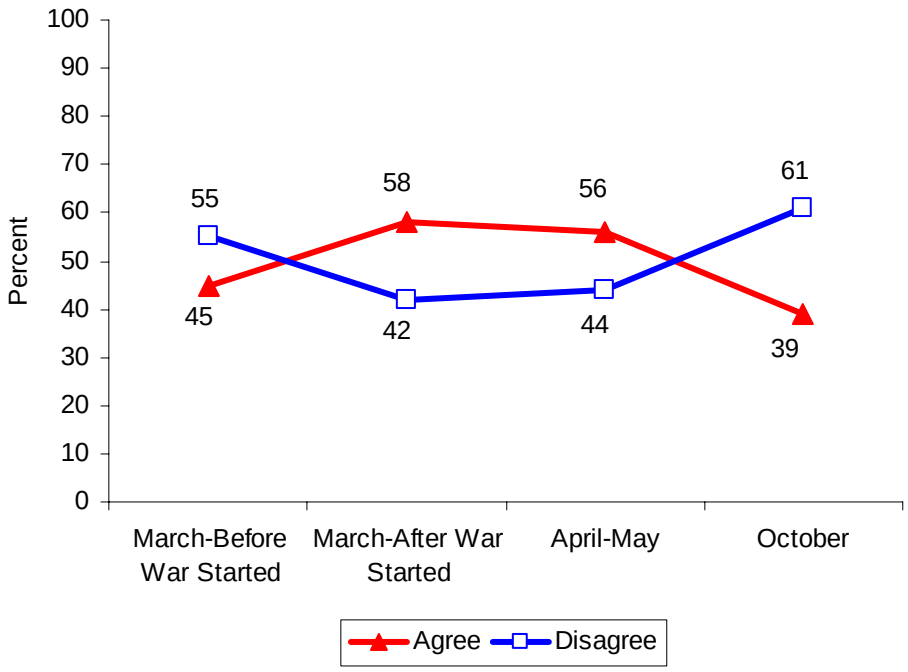
Source: March, April-May and October 2003 PDB surveys.

FIGURE 4.3 WHO APPROVED THE IRAQ WAR, MARCH - APRIL 2003



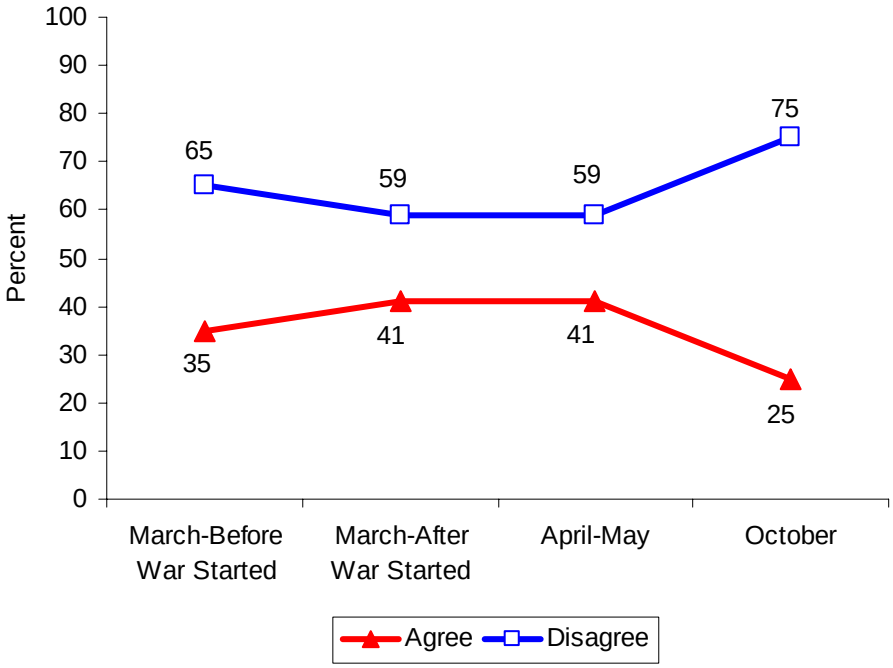
Source: March and April-May 2003 PDB surveys.

Figure 4.4 Britain Has a Strong Moral Case for War With Iraq, March-October 2003



Source: March, April-May and October 2003 PDB surveys.

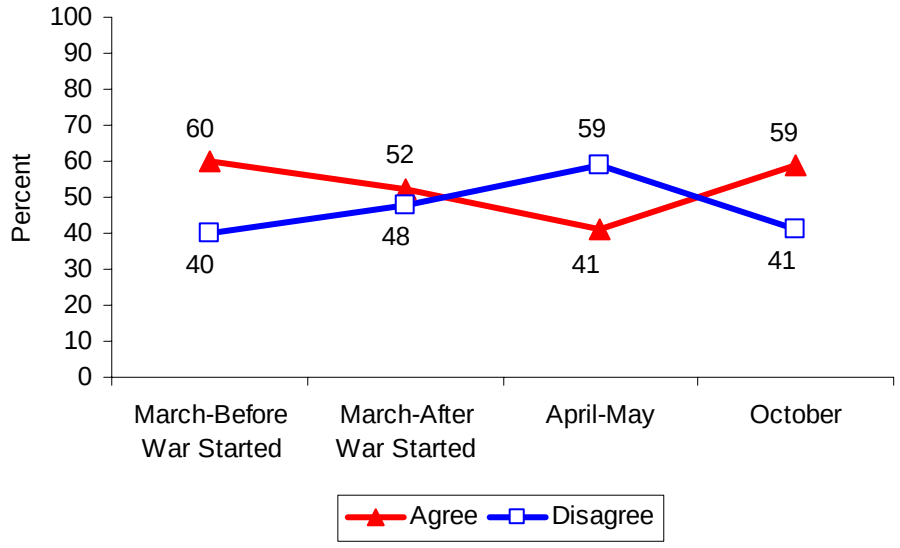
Figure 4.5 Britain Will Benefit in the Long Run From War With Iraq, March-October 2003



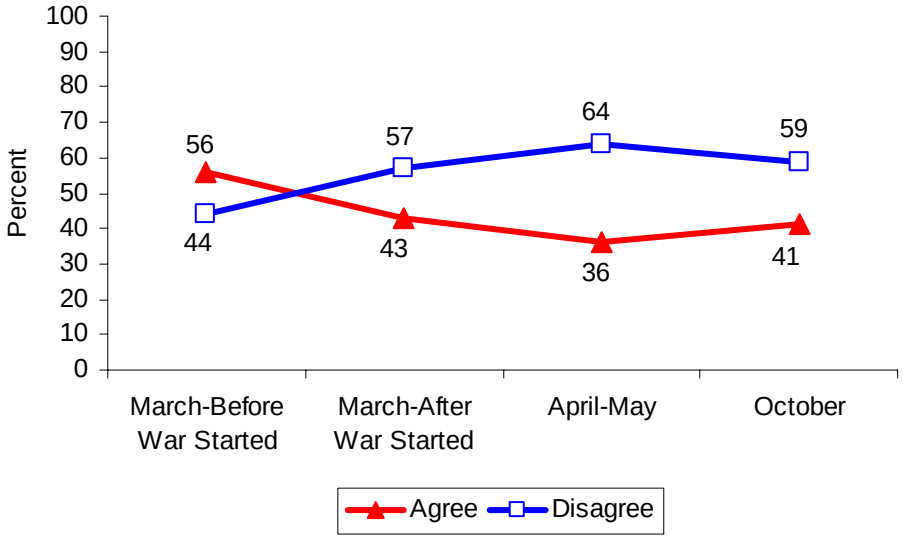
Source: March, April-May and October 2003 PDB surveys.

Figure 4.6 National and Personal Costs of War With Iraq, March-October 2003

A. War With Iraq Will Seriously Damage Britain's Interests Around the World



B. War With Iraq Threatens the Safety of My Family and Myself



Source: March, April-May and October 2003 PDB surveys.

Figure 4.7 Effects of Significant Predictors in Composite Model on Probability of Approving War With Iraq

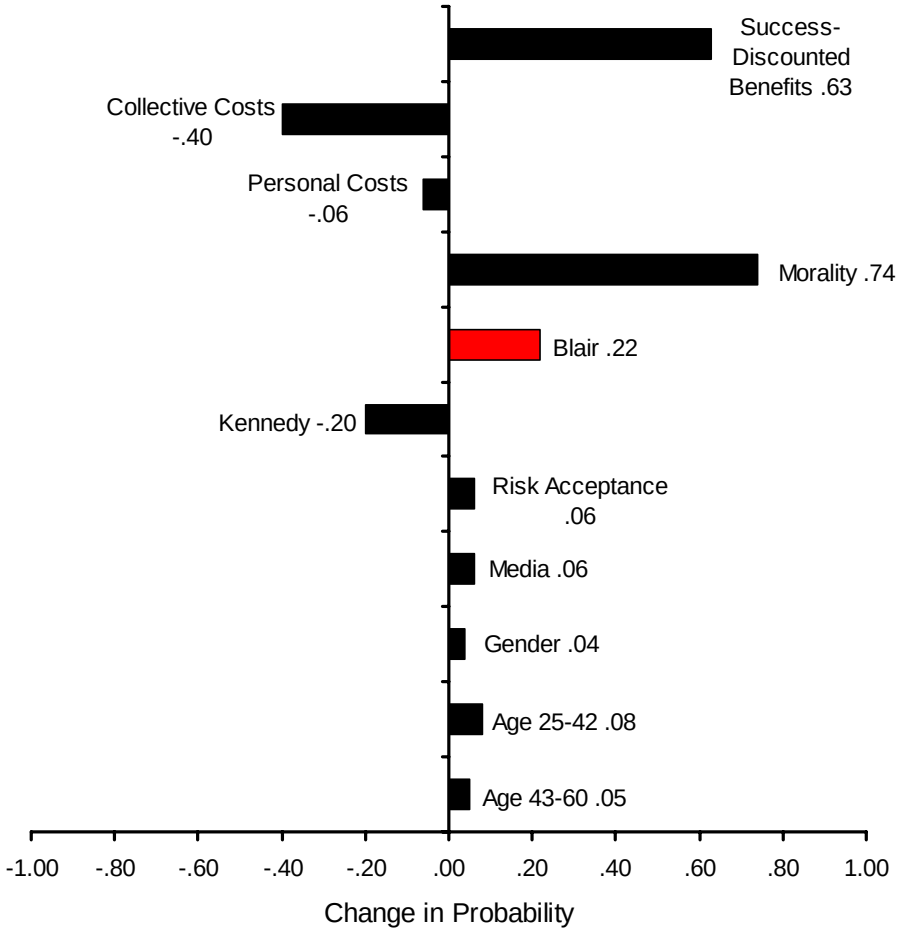
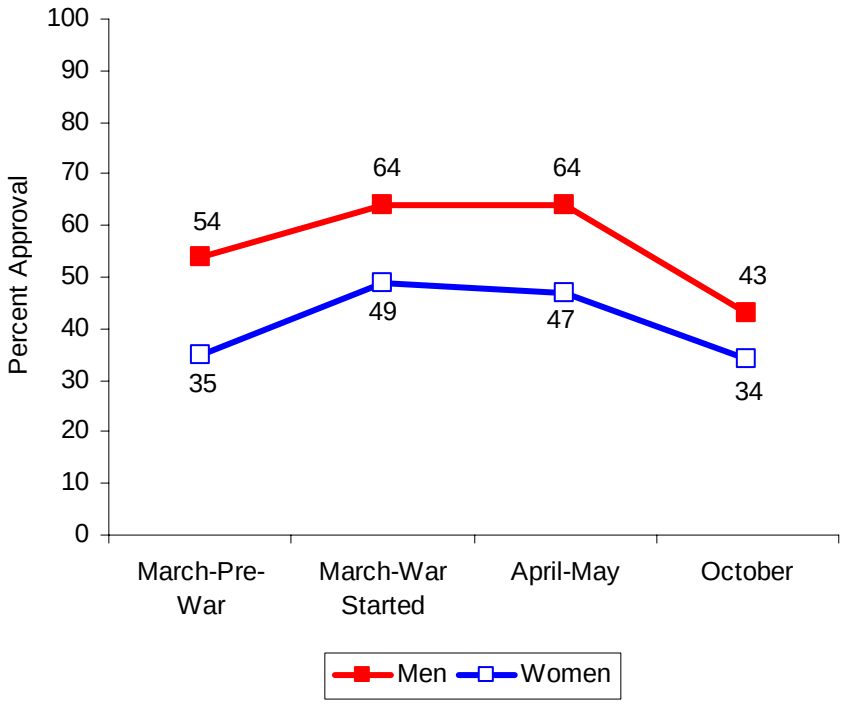
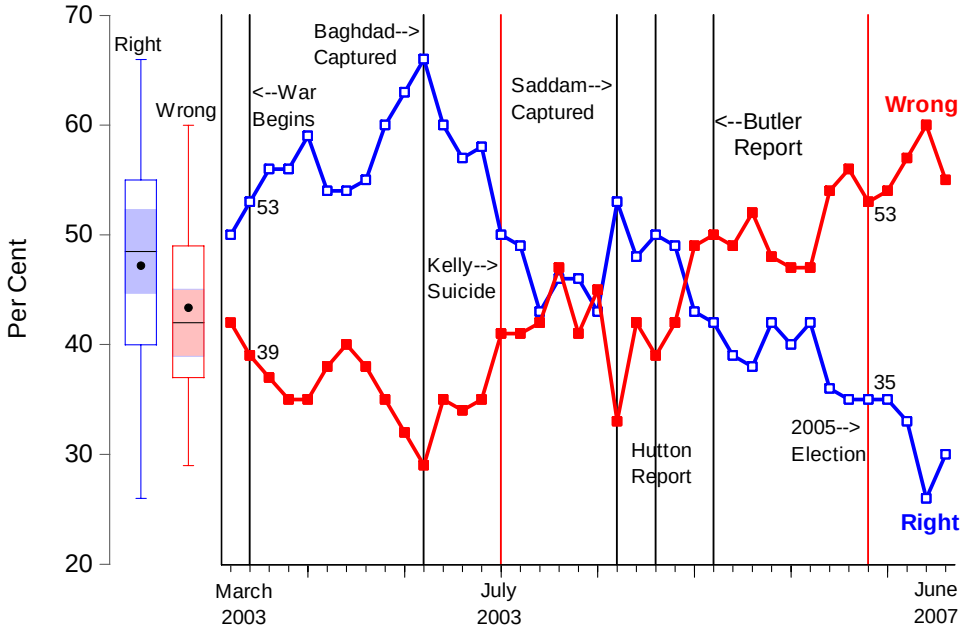


FIGURE 4.8 DYNAMICS OF OPINIONS TOWARD WAR WITH IRAQ BY GENDER, MARCH-OCTOBER 2003



Source: March, April-May and October 2003 PDB surveys.

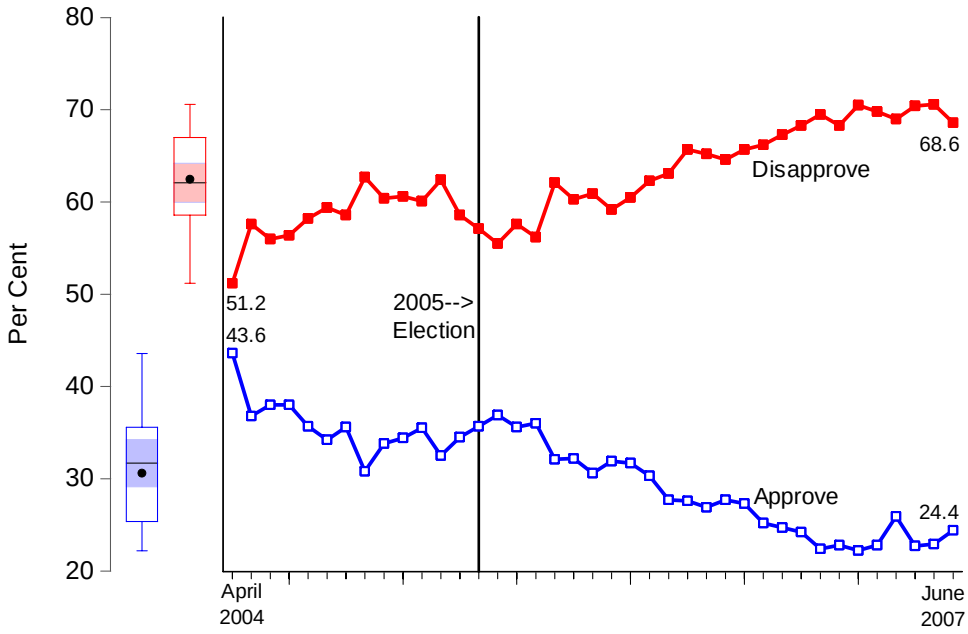
FIGURE 4.9 MILITARY ACTION AGAINST IRAQ RIGHT OR WRONG? MARCH 2003-JUNE 2007



Note: Question is: 'Do you think the United States and Britain are/were right or wrong to take military action against Iraq?

Source: YouGov monthly surveys.

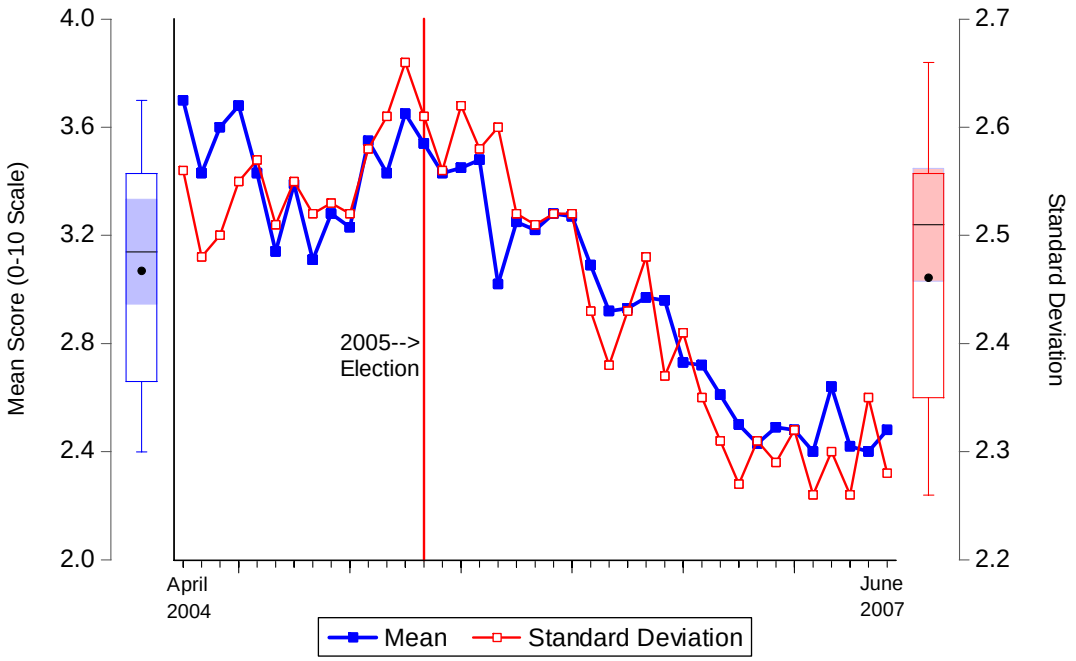
FIGURE 4.10 APRROVAL OF THE WAR AGAINST IRAQ, APRIL 2004-JUNE 2007



Note: Question is: 'Please tell me whether you strongly approve, approve, disapprove or strongly disapprove of Britain's involvement in the war with Iraq?'

Source: DPSB monthly surveys.

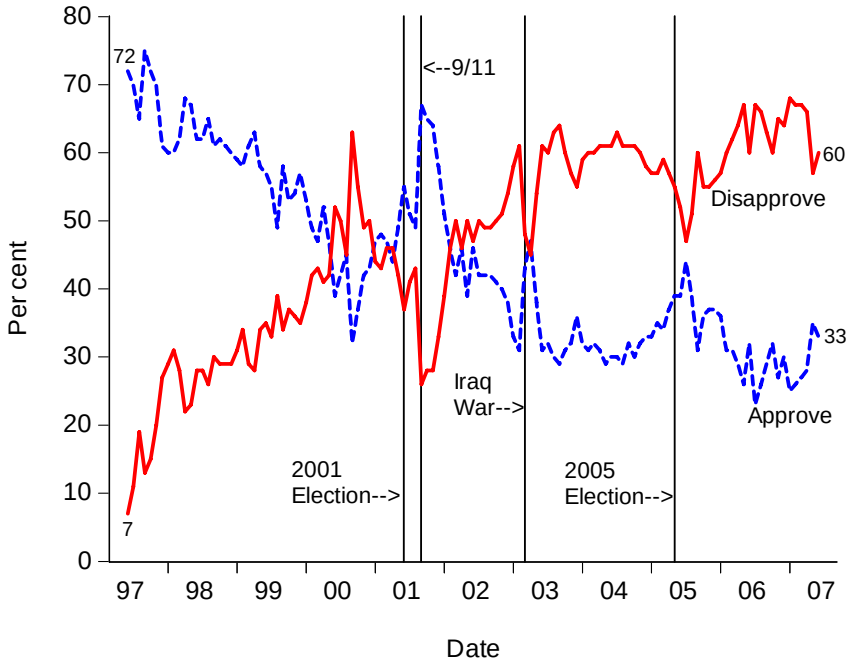
FIGURE 4.11 RATING THE SUCCESS OF THE WAR AGAINST IRAQ, APRIL 2004-JUNE 2007



Note: Question is 'Using a scale from 0 to 10 where 10 means a complete success, and 0 means a complete failure, how would you rate the war against Iraq?'

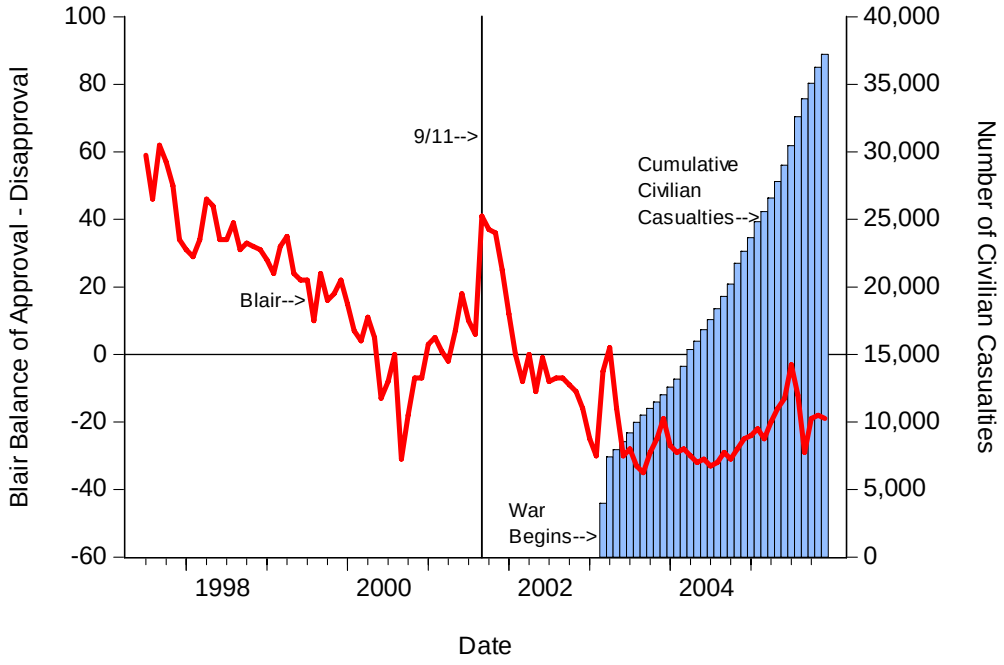
Source: DPSB monthly surveys.

FIGURE 4.12 TONY BLAIR'S PRIME MINISTERIAL APPROVAL RATINGS JUNE 1997-JUNE 2007



Source: Gallup and YouGov monthly polls.

FIGURE 4.13 BALANCE OF BLAIR'S APPROVAL-DISAPPROVAL RATINGS AND CUMULATIVE CIVILIAN CASUALTIES IN IRAQ JULY 1997-DECEMBER 2005



Source: Gallup and YouGov monthly polls and www.iraqbodycount.org

FIGURE 4.14 CONDITIONAL VARIANCE IN BALNCE OF BLAIR'S APPROVAL AND DISAPPROVAL RATINGS, JULY 1997-DECEMBER 2005

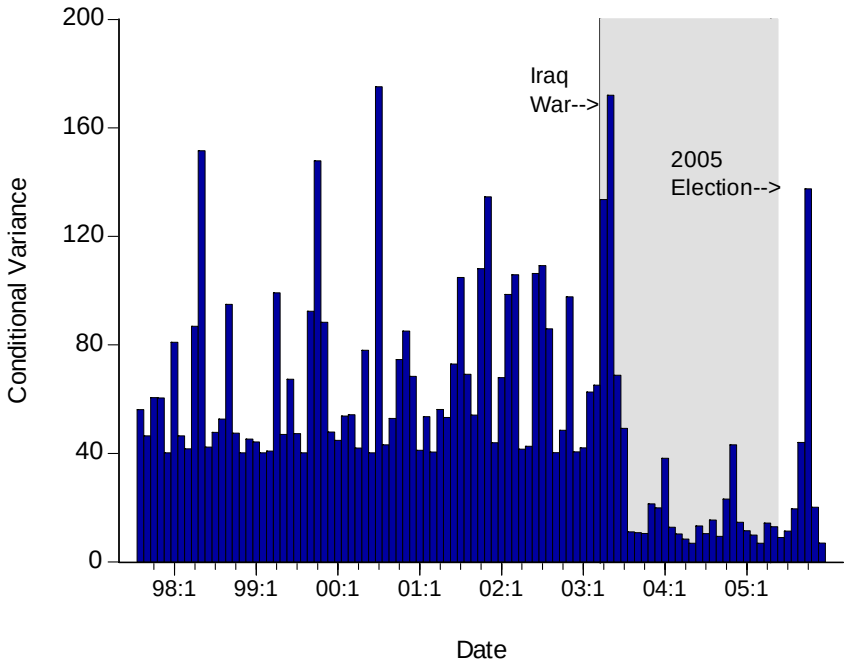


Table 4.1 Ordered Probit Models of Attitudes Towards the War In Iraq, March and April-May 2003 Surveys

	Model A		Model B		Model C	
	Morality		Benefits & Costs		Heuristics	
Predictor Variables	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.
Probability of Winning x Benefits to Britain	xx	xx	.06***	.003	xx	xx
War Poses Personal Threat	xx	xx	-.05*	.02	xx	xx
War Damages British Interests	xx	xx	-.35***	.03	xx	xx
Strong Moral Case for the War	.78***	.02	xx	xx	xx	xx
General Risk Orientation	xx	xx	xx	xx	.06*	.03
Party Leaders:						
Tony Blair	xx	xx	xx	xx	.19***	.01
Iain Duncan Smith	xx	xx	xx	xx	.04***	.01
Charles Kennedy	xx	xx	xx	xx	-.11***	.01
Party Identification:						
Labour	xx	xx	xx	xx	.07	.09
Conservative	xx	xx	xx	xx	.311***	.09
Liberal Democrat	xx	xx	xx	xx	.02	.10
Other	xx	xx	xx	xx	-.02	.13
Media Consumption	xx	xx	xx	xx	.07***	.02
Age Cohort:						
18-24	xx	xx	xx	xx	.48***	.11
25-42	xx	xx	xx	xx	.31***	.07
43-60	xx	xx	xx	xx	.30***	.07
Education	xx	xx	xx	xx	-.03	.02
Gender	xx	xx	xx	xx	.28***	.05
Region:						
Scotland	xx	xx	xx	xx	.07	.09
Wales	xx	xx	xx	xx	.05	.11
Social Class	xx	xx	xx	xx	-.02	.02
Date of Interview	xx	xx	xx	xx	.200**	.072
Cut Points: τ_1	-1.05***	.07	-1.40***	.12	.56***	.17
τ_2	2.31***	.08	-0.20	.11	1.50***	.17
τ_3	4.06***	.10	1.60***	.12	2.93***	.17
Log-Likelihood	-1938.70		-1961.76		-2274.23	
McFadden R^2 =	.24		.23		.09	
Percent Correctly Classified: four categories =	61.3		58.6		47.1	
two categories =	83.3		80.5		66.9	
Akaike Information Criterion	3879.81		3929.28		4584.47	

N = 1972

*** - $p \leq .001$; ** - $p \leq .01$; * - $p \leq .05$; one-tailed tests for all parameters except cut points.
xx – variable not included in model.

Table 4.2 Encompassing Tests of Rival Ordered Probit Models of Attitudes Towards the War In Iraq, March and April-May 2003 Surveys

I. Joint Nesting Tests	χ^2	df	p
A. Cost-Benefit Model Versus Morality Model			
Does Cost-Benefit Model Encompass Morality Model?	530.74	1	.000
Does Morality Model Encompass Cost-Benefit Model?	488.71	3	.000
B. Cost-Benefit Model Versus Heuristics Model			
Does Cost-Benefit Model Encompass Heuristics Model?	95.38	18	.000
Does Heuristics Model Encompass Cost-Benefit Model?	806.77	3	.000
C. Morality Model Versus Heuristics Model			
Does Morality Model Encompass Heuristics Model?	152.35	18	.000
Does Heuristics Model Encompass Morality Model?	905.77	1	.000

II. J Tests	t	df	p
A. Cost-Benefit Model Versus Morality Model			
Does Cost-Benefit Model Encompass Morality Model?	22.29	1	.000
Does Morality Model Encompass Cost-Benefit Model?	21.17	1	.000
B. Cost-Benefit Model Versus Heuristics Model			
Does Cost-Benefit Model Encompass Heuristics Model?	9.30	1	.000
Does Heuristics Model Encompass Cost-Benefit Model?	26.83	1	.000
C. Morality Model Versus Heuristics Model			
Does Morality Model Encompass Heuristics Model?	12.29	1	.000
Does Heuristics Model Encompass Morality Model?	28.49	1	.000

Table 4.3 Composite Ordered Probit Model of Attitudes Towards the War In Iraq, March and April-May 2003 Surveys

Predictor Variables	β	s.e.
Probability of Winning x Benefits to Britain	.04***	.003
War Poses Personal Threat	-.05*	.02
War Damages British Interests	-.27***	.03
Strong Moral Case for the War	.58***	.03
General Risk Orientation	.05	.03
Party Leaders:		
Tony Blair	.06*	.03
Iain Duncan Smith	.01	.01
Charles Kennedy	-.05***	.01
Party Identification:		
Labour	-.02	.12
Conservative	.09	.10
Liberal Democrat	.07	.10
Other	-.20	.14
Media Consumption	.04*	.02
Age Cohort:		
18-24	.04	.12
25-42	.21**	.08
43-60	.13*	.08
Gender	.09	.06
Education	.01	.02
Region:		
Scotland	.12	.10
Wales	.04	.12
Social Class	-.02	.03
Date of Interview	.12	.10
Cut Points: τ_1	0.394	.207
τ_2	1.926***	.212
τ_3	4.073***	.224
Log-Likelihood	-1634.08	
McFadden R^2 =	.35	
Percent Correctly Classified: four categories =	65.8	
two categories =	86.5	
Akaike Information Criterion	3312.17	

*** - $p \leq .001$; ** - $p \leq .01$; * - $p \leq .05$; one-tailed tests for all parameters except cut points.

Table 4.4 Gender Differences in Attitudes Towards War With Iraq, March-October 2003
(Percent Agreeing With Statement)

A. Britain Has a Strong Moral Case for War With Iraq

	March-Pre	March-Post	April-May	October
Men	53.4	62.8	61.1	40.4
Women	39.2	53.0	50.8	37.5
Difference	+14.2*	+9.8**	+10.3***	+2.9

B. Britain Will Benefit in Long Run From War With Iraq

	March-Pre	March-Post	April-May	October
Men	48.3	48.8	50.9	30.0
Women	24.7	31.9	32.2	21.2
Difference	+23.6***	+16.9***	+18.7***	+8.8**

C. War With Iraq Threatens Safety of My Family and Myself

	March-Pre	March-Post	April-May	October
Men	45.1	35.7	32.3	34.7
Women	63.5	49.9	38.9	46.6
Difference	-18.4**	-14.2***	-6.6*	-11.9***

D. War With Iraq Will Seriously Damage Britain's Interests Around the World

	March-Pre	March-Post	April-May	October
Men	51.3	42.2	35.7	56.8
Women	66.1	61.3	46.1	61.6
Difference	-14.8*	-19.1***	-10.4***	-4.8

E. How Likely Britain Will Be Successful in Iraq War (Mean Scores)

	March-Pre	March-Post	April-May	October
Men	7.4	7.5	6.4	4.4
Women	5.8	6.7	5.5	4.0
Eta	.27***	.15***	.19***	.01**

*** - $p \leq .001$; ** - $p \leq .01$; * $\leq .05$.

Source: March, April-May and October 2003 PDB surveys.

Table 4.5 The Dynamics of Balance of Tony Blair's Approval and Disapproval Ratings, July 1997-December 2005

Predictor Variables: Mean Equation	B	s.e.
Labour Economic management competence	.60**	.22
Error correction mechanism(t-1)	-.16**	.06
People's princess speech	8.53†	6.19
9/11 terrorist attacks	19.93***	3.98
Petrol crisis	-13.93**	5.33
Iraq war begins	7.04*	3.85
Iraq civilian casualties (logged)(t-1)	-.45*	.25
7/7 terrorist attacks	15.69***	1.82
Annual Labour conferences(t-1)	2.92†	1.92
Constant	-2.76	1.72
Adjusted R^2	.30	

Durbin Watson d = 2.12, p > .05
Ljung-Box Q autocorrelation (12 lags), χ^2 = 11.60, p = .48
Jarque-Bera normality, χ^2 = 1.29, p = .53
White heteroskedasticity, χ^2 = 40.82, p = .07

Predictor Variables: ARCH 1 Process	B	s.e.
Innovation variance ε^2(t-1)	.51*	.24
Iraq civilian casualties (logged)(t-1)	-4.71**	1.71
Constant	40.13***	11.33

Note: estimated via maximum likelihood, BHHH algorithm, normal distribution.

*** - p $\leq$ .001; ** - p $\leq$ .01; * - p $\leq$ .05; one-tailed test.
† - p $\leq$ .10, one-tailed test.

Source: Gallup, MORI and YouGov monthly polls, and www.iraqbodycount.org.

Table 4.6 Regression Analysis of Factors Affecting Feelings About Tony Blair at Time of 2005 General Election

Predictor Variables	β	Change in Feelings About Blair‡
Age	.01***	.99
Education	-.04x	-.16
Ethnicity	-.41**	-.41
Gender	-.38***	-.38
Region†:		
South East	-.10	
South West	.01	
Midlands	-.29*	-.29
North	-.09	
Wales	-.16	
Scotland	-.18	
Social Class	-.22**	-.22
Party Identification:		
Conservative	-.23*	-.23
Labour	.63***	.63
Liberal Democrat	.27*	.27
Other Party	-.29*	-.29
Party Best on Most Important Issue:		
Conservative	-.17x	-.17
Labour	.74***	.74
Liberal Democrat	-.43**	-.43
Other Party	-.48**	-.48
Party-Issue Proximities:		
Conservative	-.02x	-.51
Labour	.17***	4.26
Liberal Democrat	-.05*	-1.02
Economic Evaluations	.26***	1.71
Party Best on Economy	.84***	.84
Iraq Evaluations	.77***	3.45
Emotional Reactions:		
Economy	.15***	1.09
Iraq	.04	
NHS	.06*	.48
Constant	1.82***	
Adjusted R^2 =	.53	
N = 2906		

*** - $p \leq .001$; ** - $p \leq .01$; * - $p \leq .05$; x - $p \leq .10$, one-tailed test

† - Greater London is the reference category.
‡ - change in feelings about Blair when predictor variable is changed from its minimum to its maximum value.