

UNITED STATES PRESENCE IN AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ:
A COMPARITIVE ANALYSIS OF
OPINIONS AND POLICY
IMPLICATIONS

by

MICHELE L. WHITEHEAD

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ABSTRACT

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Michele L. Whitehead, M.A.

The University of Texas at Arlington, 2008

Supervising Professor: Alejandro del Carmen

The purpose of this study is to explore undergraduate student opinion regarding the continued presence of the United States military in Afghanistan and Iraq. Using a voluntary survey instrument and quantitative research methodology, this study will attempt to differentiate between variances in opinion among undergraduate students in the Criminology and Criminal Justice Department and non-Criminology and Criminal Justice majors at the University of Texas at Arlington, while examining the impact exposure to various forms of media and academic information has on the formation of perception.

This study also evaluates the potential impact the result of analyzing these variables has on domestic and foreign policy in considering correlations between

knowledge and perception. Little academic research has been conducted to date regarding public opinion concerning the United States continued military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq. Limited student studies surrounding perceptions of previous wars and military conflicts also exist. For the purpose of this study, the United States military presence in both Afghanistan and Iraq will be considered, defined as troops arriving in each country following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The impact of the events of September 11, 2001, the invasion of Afghanistan, and subsequent military efforts with the invasion of Iraq in March of 2003 are among the most significant United States military actions in modern history. Regardless of the motivations of the United States government, the Bush administration, and the military, the continued military presence in both countries as of the date of this writing has and will produce implications that guide domestic and foreign policy decisions for many years to come.

The purpose of this study is to explore undergraduate student opinion regarding the continued presence of the United States military in Afghanistan and Iraq. Utilizing a voluntary survey and quantitative research methodology, the knowledge and perceptions of undergraduate university students will be analyzed to determine if differences in knowledge and perception exist between Criminology and Criminal Justice majors and non-majors at the University of Texas at Arlington, while examining the impact exposure to various forms of media and academic information may have in the formation of opinion.

Little academic research has been conducted to date regarding student opinion or public opinion concerning the United States continued military presence in

Afghanistan and Iraq. This study also considers the potential implications the variables that shape perceptions have on domestic and foreign policy creation.

The implications for practitioners and policy makers in the criminal justice system in regards to terrorism, border security, and issues of homeland security have been at the forefront of debate and discussion in the public policy arena. The perspectives and opinions of current students in the Criminology and Criminal Justice department could reveal information regarding attitudes and influences from media to the classroom that will guide foreign and criminal justice policy decisions.

The objective of this study is to explore perception differences, if any, between differing groups of undergraduate university students based on enrollment in the Criminology and Criminal Justice program or another field of study and evaluate the possible implications for policy development these differences could present. Current scholarly literature is limited in exploring the differing perceptions and overall mass opinion on the continued United States military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq. This study will attempt to contribute to the body of knowledge by adding academic research and findings related to this topic. Additionally, with the current study, the researcher will trail studies conducted on previous wars and conflicts, which utilized convenience samples of undergraduate student populations.

It is also hope that the current research, while limited by sample size, timeliness, and geographic location, may lead to further studies related to Afghanistan, Iraq, the United States' future role in both countries, and factors contributing to the public opinions and perceptions of the next generation of young adults who have chosen paths

of active leadership in governmental and private agencies as indicated by their choice in field of academic study. It is the intention of the researcher to encourage further development of studies relating to Afghanistan, Iraq, the United States military presence in both countries, as well as future studies exploring variables influencing opinion formation in academia.

In the following chapter, Chapter 2, the researcher will introduce literature regarding the formation of opinion, the decision to invade both Afghanistan and Iraq by the United States, current military efforts in both countries, and studies conducted on previous wars and conflicts. In Chapter 2, another focus of the researcher will be specifically on previous studies among university student populations and the impact of information obtained in the classroom setting. In Chapter 3, the researcher details the research methodology for the current study including the selection of subjects. Chapters 4 and 5 conclude with the researcher's summary of the interpretation of the findings from the current study and will address implications of those findings, limitations of the findings, as well as areas for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the current chapter, the researcher will introduce literature regarding the formation of opinion, both from a public and undergraduate student perspective. The researcher will then review literature regarding the decision to invade both Afghanistan and Iraq by the United States, current military efforts in both countries, and studies conducted on previous wars and conflicts. In concluding the review of current academic literature in Chapter 2, the researcher will focus specifically on previous studies among university student populations and earlier research conducted to illustrate the impact of information obtained in the classroom setting.

Introduction

I think we're gonna have to remember September 11 in its reality. Much the same way as we have to remember other horrific events in our history. Because somehow I think it pushes the human consciousness toward finding ways to avoiding this in the future. But if you censor it too much, if you try to find too many euphemisms for what happened, then I think you rob people of the ability to actually relive it and therefore motivate them to prevent it from happening in the future.

-New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani on September 4, 2002
In Memoriam New York City, Channel 4 (Hoskins, 2004, p. 1)

The formation of individual perception and the concept of public opinion have historically been widely debated phenomenon surrounding various types of knowledge acquisition from mass media to academic curriculum. The numerous components of an individual's personality as well as the individual's personal value system have recently

been found to play an increasing role in perception of current events including attitudes on specific issues. It can be argued that equally relevant in the creation of belief and perception is the impact of exposure to various forms of mass media and information obtained, instructed, and reinforced in academia.

Exploring a considerable construct such as the invasion of and wars in both Afghanistan and Iraq including the continued United States military presence in both countries and public opinion regarding the continued presence, it becomes necessary to examine the components of individual values and opinions translating into the formation of public opinion. The forces or variables that influence individual comprehension and understanding, such as mass media, may have a considerable impact on perception.

Perception of the continued United States military presence in both Afghanistan and Iraq as of the date of this writing holds potential implications in regards to formation of future foreign policy for the United States. A comparison of public opinion and perception of events leading to the invasion of both countries rarely includes the continued military presence in both Afghanistan and Iraq. The comparison to previous conflicts and wars involving the United States is present in academic literature and will be reviewed in this chapter.

Finally, limited literature regarding the continued military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq including literature illustrating distinct differences in public opinion regarding the continued presence in the two separate conflicts and countries will be included. An exploration of past student perception studies by the researcher

concerning war reveals the need for the current research study at the conclusion of the literature review.

2.1 Mass Media, Public Opinion Formation, and Public Policy

The intention and specific purpose of mass media is to do just that for which it is named: to reach mass numbers of people with information. While the positive and negative consequences of such far reaching influence will not be debated in this research, it is important to emphasize the implications as they relate to the formation of individual perception and public opinion regarding the continued United States military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq. In exploring any social science construct, it is essential to not only address historical and future implications, but current ones as well.

On an individual basis, some theoretical and behavioral perspectives suggest that people may have difficulty making value choices but often will assign a “hierarchical structure” to this type of decision making (Jacoby, 2006, p. 706). It is in this assignment or ranking of values that the greatest influence on overall attitudes regarding a specific topic is believed to be formed. In a study testing for hierarchical structure in citizen’s value preferences leading to the difficult translation from values to issue attitudes, Jacoby (2006) notes the contradictory results of past issue framing studies and states that despite past attempts to classify and apply theoretical criteria, the empirical relationships between ideals and other behavior are often weak, contradict one another, or are even nonexistent. Whether or not these weaknesses or flaws can be attributed to measurement errors in past studies is unknown and the existence of some type of ranking of values has rarely been tested.

Similarly, the impact of value ranking on the mass public and the formation of public opinion, which was determined by this study to vary greatly due to the differences of individual emphasis and specific importance placed on individual values, cannot be compared among heterogeneous individuals since their hierarchical value structure is likely to differ based on a number of other individual traits and exposure to extremely different experiences during socialization (Jacoby, 2006). Common citizens in Jacoby's study were found to differ in placement or emphasis on some values from those in more powerful, elite positions in society, evidenced in their ranking of values most important to them.

Individuals who represented mainstream society were found to combine values shared with them by members in society's elite, such as liberty, with values specific to their placement as a common citizen in society, such as meeting their own immediate needs. The result was differing values potentially leading to differing attitudes involving the understanding of world events. Therefore, the differences in exposure as well as the individual's perception of what they value to be most important could potentially influence opinion (Jacoby, 2006).

Other literature examines the formation of public opinion as a social process and as a part of communication. Individuals' opinions would then depend in many ways upon the social perspective surrounding public issues (Price, 1989). The research contained in Price's study on the social identification of the individual and the effect the communication of group conflict has on the formation of public opinion is rooted in the

works by early theorists such as Cooley in 1909, who “conceptualized public opinion fundamentally as a communication process” (Price, 1989, p. 197).

Early theorists, according to Price (1989), claimed that the individual will test their value judgments and beliefs against those who surround them in society as a type of validation of what they hold to be true on an individual level. The individual receives social cues through communicating with others, which gives them important insight into the formation of their own opinions regarding which opinions will be received favorably in society (Price, 1989). According to Price (1989), when the individual is forming their opinion and attitudes on a particular issue, they are in fact not forming their own opinion at all, but rather deciding which popular stance they will adopt.

In consideration of these processes influencing the formation of public opinion, mass media coverage of an event would have the potential to influence society’s perceptions of outside of public affairs arena. Therefore, the influence of mass media is significant (Price, 1989). This is not to imply on an individual level that public opinion is a formation of the perceptions of those who believe only in a way that is reinforced by society, but rather society’s acceptance of certain beliefs and opinions can serve as reaffirmation on the individual level.

The mass media plays a unique role through the use of reporting to assist society in making sense of complex issues while attempting to present both sides of an issue. Price (1989) contends the mass media, by presenting the reaction of certain groups in society to problems and issues, exerts a great deal of their influence and

ultimately impacts individual opinion through the socialization of information. “Such portrayals, in that they shape people’s perceptions of developing social group relations within the public, may also indirectly shape the course of people’s personal thoughts and actions in response to the issues” (Price, 1989, p. 198).

Recent empirical research regarding the formation of public opinion and mass media addresses the impact of issues represented in the media on individual perception. One theory, known as the spiral of silence proposed by German political scientist Elisabeth Noelle-Newman, states that individuals will refrain from communicating their personal opinions or perceptions regarding specific events unless they are in the company of other like-minded individuals (Price, 1989).

Illustrated in this theory is the belief that an individual will maintain his or her silence if they find themselves in a situation in which mass media reports are considerably against their own perception of the issue. This theory borrows from earlier social theories dealing with the individual’s desire to conform as well as aspects of the influence of mass media on the formation of public opinion.

Certain individual behaviors have been cited among the polling industry and academics as contributing to the formation of specific types of value choices and opinions. For example, those individuals who align themselves with a political party generally accept most of that party’s viewpoints especially in the handling of foreign policy, although there is no majority opinion or stance on the range of foreign policy issues. Political affiliation and partisanship can impact perception and result in stark contrasts in opinion (Yankelovich, 2005).

Religion arguably plays a unique role as a potential factor contributing to the formation of individual perception and public opinion. The frequency of attendance at religious events or worship services is thought to be one such factor. “The views of Americans who frequently attend religious services and the views of Americans who do not, mirror those of Republicans and Democrats, respectively” (Yankelovich, 2005, p. 6). By definition, the study made no distinction as to a specific type of worship or religious service, but rather produced a comparison between regular attendance or non-attendance and the potential impact on individual perception and the formation of mass opinion.

Beyond the examination of the individual and the multiple factors surrounding the formation of individual perception, it is also important to consider external mechanisms that potentially affect the formation of individual opinion. The importance of favorable public opinion in times of conflict or war is evidenced historically. “Little has changed in this basic doctrine of modern war, especially with regard to public opinion, since these principles were offered by Prussian General Carl Von Clausewitz in the 1830s” (Christie, 2006, p. 519).

The role of the mass media can be considered an important component of maintaining the support of the public through the processes of agenda-building and agenda-setting and the importance of gaining popular support for military action or war can be seen as an essential component in the success or failure of a war (Christie, 2006). Restated, a necessary and vital component of a successful war as perceived by society is the formation of public opinion and governmental gain of support from its citizens.

The effect of information obtained from any source of media is thought by some to be on a very basic level central to the formation of public opinion. Information diffusion is defined as the process by which information spreads through a segment of society (Funkhouser & McCombs, 1971, p. 107). In a rapidly increasing market for technology and information, it can be argued that American society receives a tremendous amount of information from the mass media broadcasting to target large audiences.

The results of a study conducted in the early 1970's by Funkhouser and McCombs indicated with news events with a high audience interest, the larger part of the audience will be aware of the event and following it at any given time during its diffusion (Funkhouser & McCombs, 1971). In another study conducted in 1993, Donald Jordan examined the effects information contained in mass media had on the formation of public opinion. The findings from this research study offered more evidence that what is presented in the mass media influences the policy preferences of American society (Jordan, 1993).

Jordan's (1993) study also offered support that varying news sources have a differential impact on policy formation and public opinion. While this study was limited to primarily newspaper and television as sources of media, the careful examination of these two forms of mass media illustrated different levels of impact on public opinion found with varying news sources. It was discovered that news and information obtained from different sources has different types and levels of effects on individual knowledge and perception (Jordan, 1993).

Mass media impacts the opinions of the public; however, it has also been determined that public opinions and perceptions may influence the media and policy formation as well. In a model which borrows from the spiral of silence mentioned previously, it is argued that during times of war the media agenda and government policy may in fact be linked to the voices of the masses. “The model of agenda-operation congruence holds that public opinion plays a key role in influencing media and policy content” (Christie, 2006, p. 523).

If mass media is to be considered as an element in the formation of individual perception and the greater public opinion, there are several areas and interactions recognized as “agenda-setting” and “agenda-building” that may influence opinion as well as policy (Christie, 2006, p. 520). Correlations exist between public opinion, mass media, and public policy although it is debatable which factor influences the other or if there is a distinct interplay between all three elements with one another.

Measures for determining public opinion historically have been limited and potentially flawed. Polls and the polling industry have endured criticism as to their accuracy and reliability as reflections of public thought. Regardless of concerns over polling methodology in the past or currently, some believe the polling industry remains a thriving enterprise because the government and corporate sectors justify their power through this means, which appears to give the public a voice (Reinson, 2006).

One poll addressing American public opinion concerning United States foreign policy indicated Americans were split especially among religious groups and party affiliations. In the era of World War II and throughout the Cold War, Americans

typically presented a more united front on matters of foreign policy, even when opinions and perceptions of domestic politics differed vastly. At the time of this writing, Americans remain divided on issues of foreign policy primarily among party affiliations and partisan lines. This is especially evident when considering the Bush administration and the Global War on Terrorism (Yankelovich, 2005).

As recently as 2006, the American public indicated a shrinking confidence in American foreign policy in general and whether or not the United States “government has the ability to achieve its goals in Afghanistan and Iraq, thwart potential terrorists and secure United States borders” (Yankelovich, 2006, p.115). Changes including information contained in mass media, foreign policy initiatives and campaigns to spread democracy, and perception of events could potentially yield themselves as contributing factors to a shift in public opinion.

Jon Western (2005) wrote, “...public and political support is a function of two critical elements: information flows and the public’s predispositions. How the public perceives a crisis initially and in the near future depends on the information it receives about the nature and severity of the crisis or threat” (p. 5). Western (2005) argues that the elite, who are competing almost constantly for political power, are divided into four distinct categories that illustrate their foreign policy beliefs. The general populous is subject to the information based on the opinion of the elite (Western, 2005).

Scholars have long been divided over whether public opinion emanates from bottom-up rational approaches by the public or top-down manipulative actions by elites. While this debate cannot be resolved here, both bottom-up and top-down theories agree that a key determinant of public attitudes is access to information. (Western, 2005, p. 15).

The mass media, while serving its function of gathering, disseminating, and distributing information, can also be used to further particular agendas or relay a perception of events to the general public. The executive group in power or those in control of this group, at times, can rely on the mass media to gain the advantage in disseminating their information to the greater society (Western, 2005). This interpretation of mass media is not meant to validate or invalidate any notions about the function of media, but rather to introduce the importance and far reaching influence on individual and public perceptions mass media has. The implications in the formation of public opinion are a necessary component in understanding varying perceptions.

When approaching opinion as a subtle dynamic and considering that political opinion often is derived from a collective perception of a group, there can be a battle between the individual perception and societal norms. It is difficult to determine where the line exists between self and the rest of society and one study suggested a duality of opinion (Joslyn, 1997). In consideration of this finding, other areas of media including images and information in pop culture, politics, and the classroom can influence the individual and the beliefs or perceptions of the individual can influence each of these.

It is even hypothesized by some researchers that American public opinion and mass perception is reflected and influenced through pop culture during a time of conflict and war. From Hollywood's depiction of events during the Cold War era to songs protesting the Vietnam War in the 1960s and 1970s, the popular culture present during times of conflict could potentially influence beliefs surrounding war. Debatably since the end of Vietnam, pop culture including the industries producing film, music,

and other forms of entertainment have made loud statements to either support or protest war efforts and differing forms of military actions.

Following Vietnam, the subject of war was often avoided in movies and other forms of popular culture. “Those in a position to produce movies, TV shows, comics, novels, or memoirs about Vietnam were convinced that Americans felt badly enough without such reminders. It was simpler to consider the war film and war toys casualties of Vietnam than to create cultural products with the wrong heroes, victims, and villains” (Torr, 2002, p. 127).

Slowly, pop culture began to reintroduce war and countries in conflict as topics into the entertainment industry. With the creation of *Star Wars* by George Lucas, the “decontaminating of war” as a subject began when “through a series of inspired cinematic decisions that rescued crucial material from the wreckage of Vietnam” was used as material contributing to the entertainment of the masses once again. Lucas “embraced the storylessness of the period, creating his own self-enclosed universe in deepest space and in an amorphous movie past, ‘a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away” (Torr, 2002, p. 217).

Other pop culture further re-introduced the subject of war in the 1980s with the creation of works such as the *Rambo* films, *Iron Eagle*, *Heartbreak Ridge*, and *Top Gun*. The 1990s and early 2000s produced similar works in the movie industry as well as music, gaming, and other forms of popular culture. “Director Stephen Spielberg’s World War II drama *Saving Private Ryan* was one of the highest-grossing films of 1998. The film was praised for its realistic portrayal of the D-Day invasion of

Normandy, and many viewers and critics say it reminds today's generation of the enormous sacrifices made by the soldiers who fought World War II" (Torr, 2002, p. 153).

Likewise, advertising and marketing are important components of not only the formation of public opinion and perception surrounding war and conflict, but are also integral in attempting to encourage support by participation or protest against specific events. During the previous years, especially in 1979, the Army failed to obtain the number of recruits needed to meet their enlistment goals for the third straight year. "Be all that you can be! blasted television commercials aired throughout the country (United States) in 1981. The Army, concerned that it would not be able to meet enlistment goals, decided to implement a large-scale, costly, and polished marketing campaign," (King & Karabell, 2003, p. 70).

Another potential component or factor in the formation of individual values, perceptions, and the greater opinion of the public is information obtained in an academic setting. "Strong nation-states, such as Singapore and the United States, are adjusting their educational systems to prepare workers for a global economy. However, these governments still want their educational systems to stress loyalty to the nation-state and to teach citizenship within the framework of the needs of the government" (Spring, 2004, p.1).

The significance of historical and current events is an intrinsic element in most academic settings. The belief that a student gains at least a limited understanding of cultures and ways of life differing from their own is translated into an obligation of

higher learning and is usually a requirement at most colleges and universities through the core curriculum required for every student, regardless of academic major. “It is imperative that Americans be informed and reflective about the global society in which they now live. Events taking place in remote countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq have an impact on our daily lives at home” (Guttek, 2006, p. 16).

The importance of the acknowledgment and understanding of other societies arguably is becoming an integral part of education in the United States and will continue to shape United States foreign policy in the future. An awareness of the world including an understanding of the interrelationships between politics, the economy, the environment, and education connects the individual to other people (Guttek, 2006).

The impact of educational information and knowledge obtained in an academic classroom is arguably a contributing variable in the formation of perception and the development of public opinion. In considering this correlation, it is important to note that potential opinion of an individual student based on academic major as an undergraduate in a college or university setting may be influenced by the academic information to which that individual is exposed. This can play a significant role in the examination of public opinion in reference to differences in opinions among student with specific academic majors and individuals enrolled in different programs of study.

To date, limited research is available concerning the impact of academic information as it relates to perception of war. One study cited differences in academic major as being a factor in differing opinion about the Vietnam War, but correlated anti-war attitudes more strongly with specific academic majors than others. “Other factors

such as academic major, age, and social class were less strongly related to pacifist attitudes. Social science and science majors were the most prone to accept pacifist views, with business majors providing the least support” (Handberg, 1962, p. 614).

2.2 Influences on Perception and Comparisons to Previous Wars

In examining war, historical analysis and comparisons are often made when the chain of events leading one country into conflict with another country occur in a similar manner, almost presenting a reflection of wars of the past. When considering public opinion and perception of current events including the invasion and continued United States military presence in both Iraq and Afghanistan, comparisons to previous conflicts under similar circumstances have inevitably been made.

It is uncertain which comes first: public perception of events surrounding conflict and war or specific events occurring taking on the title of current events that form perception of overall military efforts. However, there is likely a correlation between the amount of information the general public receives in this age of “reality television” concerning foreign affairs and the collective opinions of the masses.

An example of the effects specific types of media presentations can have on the way events are committed to memory by individuals is referenced in the following:

Mayor Giuliani’s remarks were made on a television documentary *In Memoriam: New York City*, broadcast to commemorate the lives lost on September 11, 2001. This programme compiles a ubiquitous and also terrifying account using visual and audio functions not only as an instance of commemoration but also as a detailed historical document created from every possible angle: people filmed as they ran. The capacity of the electronic media (through individuals’ use of highly portable and inexpensive equipment) to forge

such a visually comprehensive account poses new challenges for social memory (Hoskins, 2004, p. 4).

Beginning with the Vietnam War in the late 1950s and lasting through the last American troop's withdrawal in late April of 1975, Americans' view of war was impacted by advances in technology, including mass media and television coverage unlike any previous war or conflict. "The Vietnam War-the 'first TV War' or 'living-room war'-was so named against assumptions about who was watching and how" (Hoskins, 2004, p. 13). The result was the creation of an interrelationship or connection between the mass media and the military.

Despite the circumstances of the conflict, the American public had never been exposed to as much mass information or media coverage of a war and this advancement in information acquisition likely produced a new perspective on world events. This concept and importance of the new role of mass media during this point in history can be taken to either extreme. "Vietnam is often used as the benchmark of the widespread use of actuality footage in the televising of war, and the nature, extent and impact of this coverage inhabits a mythical presence in social memory" (Hoskins, 2004, p. 16).

United States citizens who did not actively serve in a military capacity in previous wars such as World War II lasting until 1945 or the Korean War and conflict in the early 1950s, were exposed for the first time to true images from the battlefield during the Vietnam War and information regarding foreign affairs was communicated to the masses including the scope of conflict during the Cold War of the 1940s through the early 1990s (Hoskins, 2004).

The current Global War on Terror including the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States and the continued military presence following the March 2003 invasion of Iraq have both been compared in many ways to previous conflicts. One of the prevailing analyses in current literature is a comparison between public opinion and mass perception surrounding the current war in Iraq and public opinion present during or following the Vietnam War.

In one study, researchers gathered samples from individuals in 2004 and 2005, asking subjects to identify in their opinion whether the war in Iraq beginning with the 2003 invasion was more similar to the events of World War II or Vietnam. The result was a measurement of perception of individuals from five states with differing political affiliations, age, race, and gender. “The Vietnam analogy was chosen disproportionately by those who were alive during that war, though the choice was not limited to exposure to the Vietnam period during what have been called the ‘critical years’ of adolescence and early adulthood” (Schuman & Corning, 2006, p. 78).

Another comparison of the present Iraq war and military occupation is made by stating, “Despite some important differences between the Vietnam and Iraq wars, in each case American troops were sent into a country very different from their own in terms of language, culture and history” (Schuman & Corning, 2006, p. 79). Both wars have also resulted in some levels of frustration among members of the public because fighting an enemy that is difficult to identify can seem impossible to fight using traditional military strategies (Schuman & Corning, 2006).

Researchers acknowledge outside influences in the formation of perception leading to public opinion, but also draw correlations between certain viewpoints that potentially influence individual thought on the continued military presence in Iraq.

It seems reasonable to believe that those who see Vietnam rather than World War II as the better analogue for the Iraq war will be more supportive of the withdrawal of troops to the extent it becomes an active question for Americans to decide. Thus a collective memory of the Vietnam experience by those who lived through that period could prove to be one factor contributing to a change in individual attitudes and perhaps in a collective policy as well (Schuman and Corning, 2006, p. 86).

Numerous books have been written regarding the political, social, cultural, and international implications and legacy of the Vietnam War. The controversies surrounding the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the aftermath of the invasion have already created the “legacy” of the Iraq War. In this context, it is difficult to avoid connections with Vietnam (Dumbrell & Ryan, 2007).

It is possible the circumstances surrounding the invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the continued military presence in Iraq contribute to the comparison simply due to controversy over the initial involvement of the United States. “Unquestionably, the invasion of Iraq in 2003 was the most controversial American international action since the 1970 Cambodian invasion. We are programmed to look for parallels and connections. Nation building, problems of local support, cultural insensitivity, a tendency to view local issues through global spectacles: possible links between US policy in Vietnam and Iraq seem endless” (Dumbrell & Ryan, 2007, p. 209-210).

In contrast, notable differences have been raised between public opinion and perception between the current war and continued military presence in Iraq and the

Vietnam War. “The Vietnam War bitterly divided the nation, and its echoes haunted to the 2004 presidential campaign nearly forty years after the fact, but as long as American boots were on Vietnamese soil, the majority of Americans supported the war. By contrast, the consensus over the war in Iraq lasted less than a year” (Kaplan, 2006, p. 5).

The comparison between Vietnam, the current war, and continued military presence in Iraq is not the only comparison made to previous wars and conflicts. According to a soldier serving the United States military in the first Gulf War in the early 1990s, the Persian Gulf War officially put the old comparisons and ghosts of Vietnam to rest. “As for its effect on the nation, our victory, we were told had rammed a wooden stake through the heart of ‘Vietnam.’ That undead, undying specter was finally dead and no longer sucking away at America’s jugular” (Vernon, 2001, p. 68).

The war in Afghanistan, however, remains for the most part true to its specified intent in the small amount of research conducted on public opinion of the continued presence in this country. The most frequent comparison to the war in Afghanistan is focused on the basis of its beginning with the terrorist attacks in September of 2001 on United States soil and is often compared to the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December of 1941, which began the United States’ involvement in World War II.

September 11, 2001, just as December 7, 1941, exposed deadly flaws in U.S. national defense, and the events associated with both tragedies served to mobilize the government and citizens. In the days following the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, public trust and confidence in the federal government soared, despite a catastrophic failure to detect and deflect the terrorist attacks (King & Karabell, 2003, p. 1).

Another comparison between the two events relates how the magnitude of September 11, 2001 will impact history and states, “Just as earlier generations of

Americans remember where they were on December 7, 1941, when Pearl Harbor was attacked, all of us will remember for the rest of our lives where we were when we found out about the tragic terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001” (Murtha, 2004, p. 201).

Finally, a comparison between the invasion of Afghanistan and the beginning of World War II, with both events founded on almost instantaneous decision making and as it relates to the larger relationship with the Middle East is made in the following:

In turn, it was argued, the American war on terrorism should become much more proactive than in the past, involving ready use of military force as well as other means, with an almost immediate assault after 9/11 on the Taliban in Afghanistan for their nurturing of Osama bin Laden and his minions. American policy in the Islamic world and Arab Middle East quickly entered a period of indeterminacy from which it still has not recovered, as the invasion and now chaotic occupation of Iraq demonstrate in daily headlines. In other words, it could be argued that the United States did not determine this sudden change in course from a long-time policy of stability in the Middle East but others did by surprise attack, just as on 7 December 1941 (Pranger, 2006, p.21).

Despite efforts made by the Bush administration to include the current Iraq war as part of the Global War on Terror, some researchers identify a differing belief among public perception. “The Bush administration has regarded the Iraq war as part of the war on terror and sees the war on terror as comparable in scope and importance to World War II” (Schuman and Corning, 2006, p.78).

Another important consideration is whether public support and perception of wars is based on the agenda of the military action (i.e. to keep a country from causing initial harm or further damage to American citizens on American soil or to remake the government of another nation) and what role mass media and other forms of information attainment plays in the formation of each. “My central argument is that a new ‘post post-Vietnam’ pattern has emerged in which public support for military force

is neither as generally strong as during the ‘Cold War consensus’ nor as generally weak as during the ‘Vietnam trauma,’ but rather varies according to the principal policy objective for which force is used” (Jentleson, 1992, p. 49).

The current wars in both Afghanistan and Iraq could be viewed not only as labors or efforts in what has been deemed by some to carry the title “the Global War on Terror,” but have also been noted for United States efforts to bring democracy and governmental change in both countries. “The key distinction is between force used to coerce foreign policy by an adversary engaged in aggressive actions against the United States or its interests, and force used to engineer internal political change within another country whether in support of an existing government considered an ally or seeking to overthrow a government considered an adversary” (Jentleson, 1992, p. 50).

The American public is believed by some to react much more favorably to use of force for restraint rather than to enact complete changes to governmental structures or to overhaul entire governments (Jentleson, 1992). However, both wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have elements of variables in which Jentleson (1992) cites in necessitating the use of force; therefore, public opinion and variables or factors influencing that opinion are difficult to interpret.

Finally, the framing effects as a result of mass media coverage regarding information that is emphasized, focused upon, or continually communicated and the relationship between the current military presence in both Afghanistan and Iraq and previous encounters in Middle Eastern conflicts spanning the last sixty years should be explored. “In the early stages of the counterinsurgency in Iraq, military leaders resisted

the release of body count and ‘casualty ratio’ data. However, in the spring of 2004 the U.S. military (and American media) began to focus on the ‘limited’ American casualties in specific operations versus the ‘significant’ number of insurgents killed” (Boettcher & Cobb, 2006, p. 831).

The results of Boettcher and Cobb’s (2006) study demonstrate various ways that information concerning casualties in war and the numbers of American lives lost affect public opinion of and support for “ongoing military intervention” (p. 848) “The provision of information about ‘insurgents killed’ in a particular battle not only changes public perceptions of the success of that specific incident but also alters perceptions of progress in the broader war” (Boettcher & Cobb, 2006, p. 848-849).

Hoskins (2004) goes further to state:

...the actions of war enter publics’ consciousness via the media at their inception, changing forever the nature of social and global understanding of events from distant battlefields. In doing so the media possesses greater capacity- and seemingly greater authority- to shape memory, and, paradoxically, to simultaneously engineer its collapse. More than any other conflict before them, the Gulf Wars are subject to a mediation that affords them a tangible presence that is not peripheral to their history, but defining of it (2004, p. 12).

2.3 Justified Invasion...Should We Stay?

The intersection of mass media, public opinion, and government policy can produce varying perceptions and interpretations on the individual level. Whether the mass media contributes to public opinion formation, public opinion influences creation of government policies, or governmental pressures determine information broadcast or excluded from mass reporting to American society, these and other potential combinations of correlations exist. The acknowledgement of the interplay of these

relationships helps guide researchers into deeper understanding of the multiple factors that contribute to the formation of individual perception and opinion.

The arguments attempting to establish a justification or denying reason for either war with Afghanistan or Iraq are relevant in the context of perception, since this particular issue is subject to many other factors contributing to personal definition and opinion of events. The researcher will attempt to communicate findings within the existing literature concerning the initial invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq in order to list possible influences on American opinion, including economic, religious, and policy implications.

“Over the past thirty years, international state-sponsored terrorism has emerged as a concern for the United States. Although the number of terrorist acts varies from year to year, even during periods of minimal activity terrorism remains a frequent topic in the media and an issue for policy makers” (Kosnik, 2000, p.13).

The use of United States military force in dealing with acts of terrorism was a subject of disagreement before and following the reemergence of Al Qaeda in the attacks in 2001. The use of military force has been more controversial than any other tool the United States has used in an attempt to address acts of terrorism and combat terrorists. Skeptics of the use of military force contend that the use of violence fosters more violence and the terrorist responds to force with more violent acts (Kosnik, 2000).

Prior to the change in most American’s perceptions of the possibility of acts of terrorism on United States soil, there were research studies and researchers who supported the use of military action to deal with instances of terrorism against the

United States in certain situations. “Force is not a wise or practical choice against every terrorist threat, but it can be a powerful tool when a terrorist threat seems about to become unmanageable. In such cases, not taking strong action can have devastating ramifications, leaving terrorists with the notion that violence and intimidation are effective” (Kosnik, 2000, p. 15).

Following the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001, terrorism has moved to the forefront of much debate on foreign relations and policy. Many Americans accepted the Bush administration’s expressed necessity for the invasion of Afghanistan in order to send a clear message to countries harboring or supporting terrorists that the United States would not stand for acts of terror. Those individuals outside this school of thought raised important questions about the war in Afghanistan including the continued United States military presence there, however, on a much smaller scale than opponents of the upcoming battle in Iraq.

One important aspect or area of concern to critics of the initial attack on Afghanistan was not entirely related to the use of force or the attack itself, but also the mass media role in documenting and influencing public perception of the events as follows:

The Bush administration’s key claim-that a military attack on Afghanistan was central to punishing the guilty and to the defeat of terrorism-is even within its own terms of reference, open to a barrage of questions. Why no military attacks on the other countries in which Al Qaeda operates, but whose governments are closer to Washington’s? How effective is an aggressive military response in reducing (rather than increasing) terrorist activity? Why does the Bush administration continue to oppose global treaties that might facilitate a ‘war on terrorism’? What role does the U.S. government’s support for various undemocratic and repressive regimes play in fostering anti-American sentiment? And yet U.S. news media have, by and large, not only accepted the view that to

ask such questions is unpatriotic, they have solidified that view (Lewis, Maxwell, & Miller, 2002, p. 126).

Support for military action was arguably granted by the American public in the wake of terrible acts committed on United States soil. The invasion of Afghanistan and the continued military presence in the country as of the date of this writing indicate some successes have been realized, but there is much more work involved should the United States maintain a presence in Afghanistan in the future.

The invasion of Afghanistan could be summarized in this way: “Despite our success in routing the Taliban and Osama bin Laden from Afghanistan, we are in the early stages of a long battle against terrorism. Unless some rogue nation threatens us, I believe that over the long run the war against terrorism will be analogous to the war on drugs—a series of small-scale interdictions and actions taken by the military, intelligence, and law enforcement personnel around the world” (Murtha, 2003, p. 207).

Depending on individual perception of the effectiveness of the war on drugs, this statement can be taken in either a positive or negative context. Overall support for the invasion of Afghanistan in order to hold accountable those individuals responsible for the loss of so many American lives was initially well received.

When exploring the acts of terrorists, researchers note several methods of intervention as integral steps toward preventing further terrorist opportunity. “Upstream interventions—an example might be intervening to disrupt the formation of terrorist training camps, as were evident in Afghanistan. Even remoter examples are attempting to resolve a historical ethnic conflict, or the conditions which bring about the

failure of a state and thus facilitate the hosting of terror” (Roach, Ekblom, & Flynn, 2005, p. 17).

The invasion of Iraq in 2003 has generally been portrayed in a less favorable manner. “On March 19, 2003, President George W. Bush ordered U.S. military forces to invade Iraq in the hope of uncovering a vast terrorist network and seizing weapons of mass destruction (WMD) the United States believed were in violation of United Nations resolutions” (Glad & Dolan, 2004, p. 3).

Whether President Bush and the Bush administration had evidence producing a basis for these claims is beyond the scope of the current study, since the invasion occurred and the question now is not whether or not the United States military should have invaded Iraq. From a historical perspective, an understanding of the events leading to the invasion can be helpful in tracing the possible evolution of perception and public opinion regarding the matter.

President Bush cited as the main reasons for initial invasion of Iraq many things and cautioned, “that ‘Saddam Hussein aids and protects terrorists, including members of Al Qaeda,’ and went on to accuse Iraq of possessing ‘25,000 liters of anthrax, 38,000 liters of botulinum, 500 tons of sarin, mustard, and VX agent, 30,000 munitions capable of delivering chemical agents,’ building ‘mobile biological weapons labs,’ and pursuing ‘five different methods of enriching uranium for a bomb” (Glad & Dolan, 2004, p. 3).

Arguably, this combination of information either helped solidify the perceived necessity of invasion or was a factor in later shifting public opinion of the events negatively when these WMD’s were not discovered. “The majority was inclined to

believe that Iraq has a WMD program and was supporting Al Qaeda. However, most were not persuaded that the case was strong enough to justify taking action unilaterally” (Kull, Ramsay, & Lewis, 2004, p. 569-570).

President Bush was accused by mass media and some in the press of lying about his reasoning for taking the United States into a war in 2003 in Iraq. Many researchers recognize the need to examine and analyze each of the claims made by President Bush separately in order to make judgments concerning the accuracy or inaccuracy of his statements (Pfiffner, 2004).

In one study, the researcher examined several different elements of the reasoning communicated by the Bush administration for invading Iraq. First, “the implication that there was a link between Saddam Hussein, al Qaeda, and the terrorist attacks of 9/11; second, about Iraq’s nuclear weapons capacity; and third, about Saddam’s chemical and biological weapons and his ability to deliver them. The possibility that the intelligence process was politicized is also examined” (Pfiffner, 2004, p. 25).

The findings as a result of this particular study show that “although the record at this early date is far from complete, the article concludes that from publicly available evidence, the president misled the country in implying that there was a connection between Saddam and 9/11. The administration’s claims about Iraq’s nuclear capacity were based on dubious evidence that was presented in a misleading manner” (Pfiffner, 2004, p. 25-26).

Pfiffner (2004) mentions the claims were legitimate and based on evidence that chemical and biological weapons existed in Iraq. The presence of weapons of mass destruction, or WMD's, was a widely accepted belief in the international community even though no weapons had been recovered in late 2003. It was believed and communicated in the findings of this author that Saddam Hussein did not have the ability to deliver these weapons and those claims were exaggerated by the Bush administration to act as a catalyst for the United States military to invade Iraq (Pfiffner, 2004).

The results of the section of Pfiffner's (2004) study concerning whether the intelligence community was under a type of political pressure to frame events in a particular manner were inconclusive. An interpretation of the events leading up to the decision to invade Iraq initially could have included the information and agencies used to collect information supporting the need for immediate use of force in Iraq, but the reality of this pressure or if it existed at all is unknown. "There was circumstantial and inconclusive evidence that in 2002 the intelligence community may have been under unusual pressure to support the administration's goals" (Pfiffner, 2004, p. 26).

Another issue regarding the invasion by the United States the mass media stressed immediately following the decision to take military action and use force in Iraq was the determination to continue with the invasion despite disapproval from the United Nations. "The data show that for the American public UN support was a vital ingredient of the international backing that was seen as essential to the justification if a war with Iraq" (Everts & Isernia, 2005, p. 270).

The United States government used the potential violations of United Nations resolutions as part of the reasoning for invasion, yet was not acting with the support of the United Nations. “From the outset the public was sympathetic to the idea of removing Saddam Hussein, though only a small minority of Americans was ready to go to war with Iraq without UN Security Council approval” (Kull, Ramsay, & Lewis, 2004, p. 569).

The understanding that Iraq posed a threat to the United States was accepted by many American citizens, but an assessment of the type of threat has been noted by some researchers to vary. “While there was a general perception in the United States that Iraq was a threat, people differed in their views of how immediate this threat was. Majorities felt, even in the months just before armed conflict began, that the United States was faced with a long-term rather than an immediate threat” (Everts & Isernia, 2005, p 265).

Polls taken during the year 2005 indicated an increasing but still mixed belief among the American citizenry that the United States had made every possible attempt to solve the conflict with Iraq in a diplomatic fashion. According to Everts and Isernia (2005):

Several arguments have been offered to justify the recourse to war against Saddam Hussein’s Iraq. There are three variants of Saddam-as-threat that are frequently mentioned: first, his human rights record and threat to the people of Iraq and surrounding countries; second, his alleged possession of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and his apparent willingness to use them (or his efforts to acquire them); and third, his alleged links to international terrorism and to the Al Qaeda group in particular. All three, together or separately, provided the George W. Bush administration’s rationale for the war (p. 265).

Further polling included in Everts and Isernia's (2005) article indicated Americans polled in the months following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks believed there was adequate evidence of a Saddam link to terrorists and terrorism to validate a United States military use of force against Iraq.

In an attempt to understand the formation of public support or rejection of the invasion of Iraq, many scholars have looked to theories to guide their interpretation of public perceptions. In one study, researchers argued one theory attempted to reshape the way public opinion is considered to form, stating: "Professors Peter Feaver, Christopher Gelpi, and Jason Reifler's theory of the determinants of public support for war has received a great deal of attention among academics, journalists, and policymakers. They argue that support for war hinges on initial support for military action and the belief in the success of war" (Berinsky & Druckman, 2007, p. 126).

The theory relies upon the dependent variable of individual casualty tolerance as a measure of war support. These researchers also contend that independent variables, such as initial support for war and the evaluation of success of the war may also be interpreted as indications of support for the war in general (Berinsky & Druckman, 2007).

Another theory mentioned among literature regarding the initial United States military invasion of Iraq concerning public opinion surrounding war was found in Mueller's 1973 study of public opinion concerning the wars in Korea and Vietnam. "Though Mueller's book is a comprehensive treatment of several correlates of support

for war, it is best known for presenting his argument on the effects of casualties” (Berinsky & Druckman, 2007, p. 128).

Once again, an analogy to the war in Vietnam is also found among literature and theoretical perspective regarding the invasion and United States military use of force against Iraq in March of 2003. “Mueller argues that support for military action declined as a function of American casualties. This observation led to a conclusion that holds weight with both policymakers and academics: the American public is casualty phobic” (Berinsky & Druckman, 2007, p. 128).

Regardless of the theory or theories to which one subscribes or attempts to disprove, it is almost universally accepted that there are many variables and factors to consider in public opinion and perception formation regarding any war. The outward appearance of personal support such as displaying a yellow ribbon to show support for troops in combat, or the evaluation of the success of the war by participation in various political parties is still not entirely an accurate measure of overall public opinion, since each individual’s opinion formation consists of personal experiences as well.

The researcher must be cautious to not inflict any personal bias into research or leading participants in survey questioning regarding either war in Afghanistan or Iraq. As mentioned in the following, previous research has been flawed in its capacity to rule out all personal biases of the researchers:

FGR (Feaver, Gelpi, and Reifler) measure success by asking: “regardless of whether you think that the President did the right things, would you likely say that the United States is very likely to succeed in Iraq, somewhat likely to succeed, not very likely to succeed, or not at all likely to succeed.” Gelpi et al. emphasize that this item is meant to gauge ‘eventual future success’ and not ‘necessarily assessments of how the war is going right now.’ On their

questionnaire, FGR follow this question by probing the meaning of success by asking respondents which of six (or seven) options 'best describes what 'success in Iraq' means to you?' They find greater than three-fourths of respondents define success as occurring when there is a stable and democratic government in Iraq, when Iraqis provide for their own security, or when Iraqis are able to live peaceful, normal, everyday lives. The other options, which significantly fewer respondents chose, included if Iraq is prevented from producing weapons of mass destruction, is not a threat to its neighbor, and if the economy is rebuilt (Berinsky & Druckman, 2007, p. 132).

Implications of the decision to respond with use of military force in both Afghanistan and Iraq are far reaching according to some who have attempted to interpret religious and economic significance of the invasions of both countries. The United States' past gestures of support offered to countries such as Israel aligned the U.S. in terms of military force as well as religious significance among the viewpoint of much of the Middle East.

"Ervand Abrahamian (professor in the Department of History at Baruch College) has argued that in covering the war on terrorism, the U.S. media abetted the administration's framing of the conflict in depoliticized terms by systematically avoiding any discussion of links between the September 11 attacks and U.S. policy in the Middle East, particularly in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In one tape released after September 11, bin Laden stated that his attacks were aimed not only to destroy the Western 'crusaders' but also to 'revenge our people killed in Palestine'-a position he had taken many times before" (McAlister, 2005, p. 279).

The concept of religion plays a multi-faceted role in the invasion of Afghanistan including the previously mentioned interaction with the Israeli-Palestine struggle. Despite bin Laden's claim the September 11 terrorist attacks were another way they

were fighting for the liberation of Palestine, this division is not the only religious difference between most of the Middle East and the United States.

The primarily Muslim countries were noted for their oppression of women and very limited rights of male citizens. “Within a week of 9/11, Americans were inundated with information about Afghanistan, about Islam, and about the oppression of Muslim women in Afghanistan” (McAlister, 2005, p. 281).

The mass media further published information that potentially influenced public opinion and perception around a need to bring assistance to these individuals who were not able to help themselves because of strict religious and governmental controls. “The images and stories were everywhere, on the covers of *Time* and *Newsweek*, on the nightly news, in women’s magazines, on the *Oprah* show. There was no question that the Afghan government severely limited the education and freedom of both men and women” (McAlister, 2005, p. 281).

This harsh treatment of the Afghan people was conceptualized at times to the American people under the restriction and provisions of their religion and its control of government. “The religiously ultra-conservative Taliban had come to power at the end of a civil war that left much of the population at the mercy of lawless factions. Once in power, the Taliban instituted a particularly oppressive and ideologically driven form of Islamist rule” (McAlister, 2005, p. 281).

The photos of women covered head to toe, wearing burqas to conceal their faces, potentially further promoted the idea to the American public that the Afghan woman was invisible. “As a Muslim woman under the draconian rule of the Taliban,

she cannot be seen uncovered in public, cannot work or go to school, can barely get healthcare, so that Afghan women have one of the highest mortality rates in the world” (McAlister, 2005, p. 280).

Another additional piece of the public opinion framework surrounding the war and invasion of Afghanistan was initially described by President Bush as “a monumental struggle of good versus evil” (McAlister, 2005, p. 278). From the battlefield in Afghanistan to the analysis given about a photo depicting prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib, in which the hooded prisoner was made to stand on a box, arms out stretched in a “classic reference to Jesus on the cross,” the wars in both Afghanistan and Iraq have taken on religious significance on many levels (McAlister, 2005, p. 299).

The impact of the mass media does not only influence public opinion and perception of the American people. The formation of the perception of the entire world and public opinion of the United States is not limited strictly to its own citizens. “The damage done by the Abu Ghraib photographs to the reputation of the United States in the Arab world was incalculable. Just after the first images were aired, an announcer on al-Jazeera commented that ‘the pictures released by the U.S. CBS news network showing repulsive and immoral practices by U.S. soldiers...have caused great shock and dismay” (McAlister, 2005, p. 299).

One Arab newspaper, Al-Quds al-Arabi, was more openly unsympathetic in their criticisms of the American military and put the actions of the United States military into terms of religious and world opinion contexts by stating, “What the U.S. forces did and are doing in Iraq confirms to us what we have always warned of, namely,

that the aim of this invasion and occupation was primarily to humiliate the Arabs and Muslims and was never for changing the Iraqi dictatorship or establishing a model democracy, justice and human rights” (McAlister, 2005, p. 299).

Critics of the invasion of Iraq claim the United States used very little consideration or concern when invading Iraq in 2003 or even in the first Gulf War in the 1990s from a religious or cultural perspective. During the early 1990s, when there was great dispute over oil and oil production, the United States involvement in a conflict that originally began “as an inter-Arab crisis the United States moved massive military forces at the king’s invitation, a decision that was to lead in subsequent years to deep religious unrest in the kingdom and beyond and, ultimately became a major underlying cause for 11 September 2001” (Pranger, 2006, p. 12).

A number of books and articles with severe critiques of the decision to invade Afghanistan and Iraq have been written to date. Among these a commonality exists between perspectives and disapproval, but many differing angles or approaches are found among several works. Several authors and researchers mention the terms propaganda and the propaganda state. “The Iraq crisis and the Iraq War gave notice of the return of the propaganda state. A propaganda state refers to a regime in which the governors, whether official or unofficial, employ a constant stream of messages to propel the population toward some desired condition of right thinking and right acting” (Rutherford, 2004, p. 184).

Once again confronted with a comparison to events surrounding World War II, it was written that, “Since 11 September 2001 the propaganda machine in the US (and

UK) has been cranked up to levels not seen outside the 1939-45 war. It should be no surprise that the content of the propaganda cranked out quietly to selected journalists or with fanfare in the form of several dossiers or grandstanding appearances before the United Nations, should be riddled with deception” (Miller, 2004, p. 1).

There still remains debate among many concerning motivations of the United States during the period following the invasion of Afghanistan and the invasion of Iraq in the following years. When the United States invaded Afghanistan, the motivation was not likely to build a democratic government and free citizens from Taliban rule, but rather revenge was considered to be a much more likely motivation (Vanaik, 2007, p. 215).

Further, the invasion of Afghanistan is believed by some to be the stepping stone the United States government and the Bush administration needed to invade Iraq and remove Saddam Hussein from power. “It had been clear for some time that Afghanistan was in ways a sideshow to the Bush administration’s real goal: ‘regime change’ in Iraq, but before that crusade would begin, and even broader set of US global intentions emerged” (Vanaik, 2007, p. 218).

In his first joint session before the United States Senate and House of Representatives since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, President Bush gave his annual State of the Union address. “Bush’s strategic target was clear: ‘regimes that sponsor terror’ had to be kept from ‘threatening America or our friends and allies with weapons of mass destruction,’ and just which regimes he had in mind was clear too,

although he acknowledged that ‘some of these regimes have been pretty quiet since September the 11th. But we know their true nature,’ (Vanaik, 2007, p. 218).

It was during this State of the Union address that President Bush identified his official “axis of evil” including North Korea, Iran, and Iraq “As had become the post-9/11 norm the address was all about fear. The descriptions varied, but each included a scary report of what weapons the evil governments had or sought,” (Vanaik, 2007, p. 218).

Similarly, a number of works exist in support of the invasion and chronicling some of the important developments that have occurred since invading both countries. These supportive works are not reflective of the disapproving literature in describing the more unforgiving criticisms of the decisions to invade both Afghanistan and Iraq.

In one United States ambassador’s words, the reasons for given by the administration for the initial invasion have shifted over the course of the United States military presence in Iraq. Bremer (2006) states, “Our soldiers came to Iraq for no purpose except to depose a tyrant, to help reconstruct a country and to establish order until you could do it yourselves. They have sought nothing for themselves” (p. 396). According to Bremer (2006), the United States intentions in Iraq are to “stay only as long as the Iraqi government wishes” (p. 396).

The importance of the invasion of both Afghanistan and Iraq is related most strongly by those who have visited either country during the wars. The relationship between the invasion of Iraq and the greater war on terrorism is summarized by Bremer (2006) by stating, “The Al-Qaeda terrorists, who receive tactical support from the

insurgents, also have a simple vision for Iraq's future. It is to seize power and install an Islamic terrorist government similar to the one they had in Afghanistan" (p. 397).

Individuals who initially supported the invasion of Afghanistan or Iraq have potentially changed their perspectives also. "I began my research sharing the view, prevailing in Washington through 2002, that forcing 'regime change' on Iraq was our era's grim historical necessity: starting a war would be bad, but waiting to have war brought to us would be worse" (Fallows, 2006, p. 2).

Later, the same author commenting on his work states, "If I could rewrite this 'anticipatory' article with the benefit of hindsight, it would be to reemphasize this point. The central intellectual failure of the people who planned the invasion of Iraq was their inability or unwillingness to imagine where this decision might lead" (Fallows, 2006, p. 4).

One study examined the possible impact of opinion pieces and editorials written in some of the United States' elite newspapers could have on perception in the way they debated the invasion of Iraq. The study explored articles written two months before Congress approved the use of force in Iraq and found that "commentary overall was more critical than supportive of the administration" (Nikolaev & Porpora, 2007, p. 6).

The researchers gave the Bush administration some credit in explaining that a single administration does not act alone and the President was acting with the approval of Congress. "Although the United States may not be as democratic as it perceives itself to be, it is at least a pluralistic society in which even executive decisions reflect

wider societal sanction. So it was in this case. The executive decision under discussion here was authorized by Congress” (Nikolaev & Porpora, 2007, p. 6).

These researchers also did not ignore the importance of the public, media, and government in the debate of wars in the following:

Public debate takes a variety of forms. It includes political leaders making speeches or just commenting informally to the press. It includes the protest activities of social movement organizations. The opinion pages of the press are also one major forum in which public debate takes place. Together, these and kindred practices constitute what Habermas (1989) called ‘the public sphere,’ which he imagined as the steering mechanism of a democracy, the mechanism formative of considered public judgment (Nikolaev & Porpora, 2007, p. 7).

Despite individual perception and personal opinion notwithstanding, there is a great deal of controversy surrounding the initial decisions to invade both Afghanistan and Iraq. Since the aim of this research is not to determine right and wrong, but rather present information that potentially contributes to the formation of perceptions and public opinion regarding a very sensitive topic, the researcher will not attempt to explicate or referee in this area of debate.

In conclusion and before moving to literature concerning the continued United States military presence in both countries, the researcher offers one final excerpt regarding the mixed emotions and opinions surrounding the United States initial use of military force in both Afghanistan and Iraq:

Although the attacks (September 11, 2001) gave rise to a broad outrage, this was not the only thing Americans felt. Nor did Americans uniformly support any one policy response. Initial public reactions to the attacks were varied and unstable: Internet postings and emails offered responses that ranged from anger to grief to numbness, from pro-war to pacifist. Foreign policy in the wake of the 9/11 attacks was also contested and changeable. The ‘war on terrorism’ was part of a larger post-cold war vision that was fractured between two competing

models. One model focused on an inevitable ‘clash of civilizations’ between the West and Islam; the other argued for what might be described as a ‘domino democracy theory,’ which assumed that people in the Middle East and the Muslim world have aspirations to be as much like the West as possible (McAlister, 2005, p. 267).

2.4 Public Opinion and Afghanistan v. Iraq

The debates surrounding public opinion and perception of the necessity of invading either Afghanistan or Iraq at this point in time seem reminiscent of distant memories. With the trial for war crimes and guilty verdict of Iraqi president Saddam Hussein in 2006, his subsequent execution, and the long military battles continuing in both countries as of the date of this writing, the implications of both wars and the continued United States military presence in both countries will likely not be fully understood for years to follow. Similarly, a true picture of public opinion and perception of these events is still evolving as the events continue to unfold.

The continued United States military presence in Afghanistan followed the criteria of what many described as a new kind of war. On September 15, 2001, President George W. Bush said, “This will be a different kind of conflict against a different kind of enemy” (McInnes, 2003, p. 165).

Operation Enduring Freedom and the military campaign that began in Afghanistan on October 7, 2001, leaves an unclear picture in the opinion of some today about what the eventual goal of this use of military force was intended to do. “Two distinct options emerge: The first involved punishing the Taliban for harboring and collaborating with al-Qaeda and was intended to coerce the regime into bringing those involved to justice. The second was to topple the Taliban regime and open up the way

for an alternative government that would allow the US direct access to al-Qaeda hideouts in Afghanistan” (McInnes, 2003, p. 165).

Since the Taliban failed to comply with the United States request, at this point, the second option became the central focus. “The Operation began with air strikes against selected military targets and expanded to include strikes against political and infrastructure targets as well as al-Qaeda bases. Air strikes were complimented by special forces operations and an ambitious raid by US ground forces against the Kandahar compound of the Taliban’s leader, Mullah Omar” (McInnes, 2003, p. 175).

Arguably the war in Afghanistan, which began with military actions described above, was not a war against the Afghan people, but rather against a regime, the Taliban and al-Qaeda. The comparison has been made similarly between Afghanistan and Iraq that one goal of invasion and continued United States military presence in both countries is the specific intent to do away with the past regimes in control of each country, not to exchange blows with the innocent citizens of either country.

In examining literature speculating on the future of Afghanistan, the government, and the people, one researcher noted important elements that should be present in post-war Afghanistan if justice is to exist and remain constant in the country. “The formal justice system of Afghanistan has been influenced, to varying degrees by Western (mainly French) legal thought and moderate Islam, radical Marxism, and by radical interpretations of Islam. These influences, by and large, reflected the values, ideologies, and politics of the various governments that Afghanistan has witnessed since its emergence as a politically organized society” (Wardak, 2004, p. 319).

Some of the elements present in these earlier forms of government are important to maintain in Afghanistan on many levels culturally. These elements should be considered in attempts to rebuild a form of government, according to Wardak (2008): “These are shari’a (Islamic law), traditional institutions of informal justice (jirga), the Afghan interim legal framework, and human rights principles” (Wardak, 2004, p. 319). This article claims that Americans attempting to maintain a presence in Afghanistan must also strive to be sensitive and aware of historical events concerning the history of the country.

“However, since the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan in 1979, the country has been used as a battlefield between competing global and regional powers and groups- a battlefield between the former Communist USSR and the Capitalist West (mainly the USA) in the 1980s; in the 1990s a battlefield between Pakistan, the Arab Gulf countries, on the one hand and Iran and Russia on the other; and more recently a battlefield between foreign Muslim extremist groups and a right wing US administration” (Wardak, 2004, p. 321).

In this particular research study, it was determined that the formation of a well rounded government taking all historical and cultural considerations into account would be necessary in order to ensure successful formation of a government in Afghanistan prepared to meet the needs of its people through the 21st century (Wardak, 2004). This information is helpful to individuals participating in the efforts to rebuild, however, illustrates no concept of American public opinions on the labors currently in progress and scheduled by the United States military.

Conflicting opinions and dissimilarities in the Global War on Terror in Afghanistan and Iraq, including the continued United States military presence in each country, were also cited among the literature. “The war in Iraq differed from the war in Afghanistan in almost every imaginable way. American military and civilian leaders had been thinking about such a war since 1991” (Kagan, 2006, p. 323).

According to Kagan (2006) there were other critical differences between the two wars and the successive, lasting military presence in each country. “...there was no confusion in anyone’s minds about the objective of the war in Iraq. George Bush intended to remove Saddam from power and to install a stable, democratic government in his place. Still another critical difference is that an enormous amount of work went into efforts inside the government and outside to think about the probable post-war situation in Iraq and to plan intelligently for the transition from hostilities to the desired political objective—a free, democratic, and independent Iraq” (Kagan, 2006, p. 323-324).

One study exploring public opinion and speculating about perceptions concerning future United States military presence in both Afghanistan and Iraq, noted that “in general, the American public pays very little attention to international affairs, a condition that does not seem to have been changed by the events of September 11, 2001. It seems to apply a fairly reasonable, commonsensical standard of benefit and cost when evaluating foreign affairs, and is about as accepting of involvement in foreign affairs as ever, but it does not have—and never has had—much stomach for losing American lives in ventures and arenas that are of little concern to it and does not value foreign lives highly” (Mueller, 2003, p. 1).

In reference to public opinion surrounding the continued United States military presence in Iraq and Afghanistan, Mueller (2003) says, “When the value of the stakes does not seem to be worth additional American lives, the public has shown a willingness to abandon an overextended or untendable position with little concern about saving face. However, if they are not being killed, American troops can remain in peace-keeping or nation-building ventures virtually indefinitely—for the most part, nobody will even remember they are there” (p. 1).

While this somewhat harsh assessment of public perspective on war seems to generalize for overall public opinion, the role of public perception following the Cold War is increasing in terms of foreign policy. “And, as in the past, public opinion will play an important role in this process: as Ole Holsti (Political Science Professor at Duke University) has suggested, ‘we may be moving into a period in which the relationship between public opinion and foreign policy takes on added rather than diminished significance.’ Indeed, it has already shown itself to be a notable impelling factor in some of the key policy decisions of the period” (Mueller, 2003, p. 1-2).

Another study conducted surrounding public opinion and the war in Iraq including the continued United States military presence in the country asked, “How, then, does the public judge a leader during wartime when the outcome of that war is yet unclear? The connection between news from the front and the performance of the incumbent is often ambiguous, providing elite discourse with considerable room to shape the formation of political judgments” (Voeten & Brewer, 2006, p. 810).

The hypothesis of the study was there is a correlation between public opinion and perception of political leaders based on whether that public feels a past decision to go to war or to remain in conflict had merit in the public view. The “decision maker” model illustrating this potential co-relationship between public opinion of conflict and abilities of political leadership is also thought by the researchers to be subject to limited influence of the opinions of the elite, including the media (Voeten & Brewer, 2006).

“To summarize, we expect that, compared to perceptions of its success, support for the war in Iraq is shaped to a greater extent by relatively unconstrained elite discourse and hence to a lesser extent by events and casualty reports. As consequence, aggregate opinion about the war’s success is likely to be more volatile than opinion about its merits” (Voeten & Brewer, 2006, p. 813).

The two main findings as a result of this study conducted after almost three years following the invasion by the United States military on public opinion and perceptions surrounding Iraq were, “(1) that events and casualties accounted for considerable variation in support for the war and the president and (2) that shifts in war support accounted for shifts in presidential approval ratings better than did shifts in perceived war success of even shifts in Bush’s job approval on Iraq” (Voeten & Brewer, 2006, p. 827).

The study also found similarities to past studies concerning the formation of public opinion regarding war. “Like other observers, we suspect that war support is shaped in part by the signals, or cues, that elites send and that these signals are only partly constrained by reality. Research on previous wars—including World War II, the

Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the 1991 Gulf War—indicates that the nature of elite discourse about a war is a key determinant of changing patterns in both war support itself and presidential approval during war time” (Voeten & Brewer, 2006, p. 827-828).

2.5 Student Perceptions and Student Opinion Studies

In preparing to review the research methodology utilized and interpret the findings for the current study, it is important to address previous studies found in academic literature conducted with subjects drawn from university student populations generally and in those which the operationalization of variables influencing perceptions of wars specifically took place. One of the purposes of the current study is to explore the impact of various types of information acquisition, specifically information that may be obtained in an academic setting, and attempt to correlate exposure to various types of information with the formation of perception.

A study on group identification as variables or factors influencing mass opinion conducted in 1942 attempted to determine whether individuals judge the perceptions and perspectives of larger groups in terms of smaller groups they closely identify themselves as a being a part of. The study consisted of 92 university students, who were asked to give their opinions or perceptions on a number of issues in order to determine whether their responses were consistent with responses selected by the rest of their gender group (Travers, 1942).

The researchers in this study hypothesized that males and females would provide differing responses based on their identification in a gender group. The

findings of this study did not reveal strong group identification based on gender for either sex. This particular study was significant in opening doors to further research on the importance of group interaction, collective sentiment, and the formation of opinions, but is especially important in regards to the current study because it utilized a convenience sample of university students who held opinions that could be integral in determining future policy formation and attitudes (Travers, 1942).

In exploring limited literature encompassing research conducted specifically on student perceptions, one study addressing student reactions to the Cuban Crisis following the discovery of missile installations in Cuba in the fall of 1962 attempted to measure the reactions of undergraduate college students to the American naval quarantine, which had been determined to have far reaching implications and effects on the attitudes of society. The findings, published in the fall of 1964, implemented the use of several scales to measure patriotism, armament-disarmament, intellectualism-materialism, ethnocentrism, liberalism-conservatism, and included the collection of the participant's social backgrounds (Chesler & Schmuck, 1964).

The student responses indicated similar comprehension or cognitive awareness of the events in Cuba and the actions of the United States in response to the discovery of missile installations. However, the findings revealed differences among the subjects in their perceived emotions attached to the event. Student subjects who indicated their perceived fear were also more likely to favor non-aggressive responses and minimal sanctions (Chesler & Schmuck, 1964).

Another correlation revealed in the findings of the Cuban missile study, indicated that students who favored campus demonstrations supporting President Kennedy's response also held more libertarian views in considering dissent in national emergencies overall (Chesler & Schmuck, 1964). This study connects many of the variables that other researchers have identified in influencing opinion formation, but with the inclusion of university students as the subjects.

An additional study included aggregate data on the Vietnam War and attitudes of the public longitudinally over a nine year period (from 1964-1973) and responses were separated into demographic categories including sex, age, race, religion, political party affiliation, and social status which included education (Lunch & Sperlich, 1979). Initially, researchers discovered a period where individuals expressed a "rally around the flag" viewpoint in their responses, in which support for the military action of the United States was at the highest point over the nine year period (Lunch & Sperlich, 1979, p. 25).

Arguably, in relationship to the current study, the findings of this study dealing with correlations in education could be considered the most relevant. Without considering other variables, such as gender or race, researchers in this study based their social status category on previous studies that found education, income, or occupation to illustrate little difference in public opinions surrounding the Vietnam War (Lunch & Sperlich, 1979).

The findings of Lunch and Sperlich's (1979) study concluded that in the initial years of their study, the opinions and perceptions of participants who were college

educated were much more supportive of the war than their high school educated counterparts. However, in 1967, the gap between the two groups narrowed significantly and the next year, in 1968, was gone completely. In their conclusion, the differences between various levels of education among the participants were less notable as the war progressed over a period of years (Lunch & Schmuck, 1979). This finding is significant in application to the current study since we are currently entering the fifth year of United States military presence in Iraq.

Subsequently, studies on university populations of undergraduate students exist concerning the events, perceptions, and beliefs surrounding the Vietnam War. As the comparisons between the public support and popularity (or lack thereof) of the Vietnam War have been made in literature regarding the current Global War on Terror and the continued military presence in both Iraq and Afghanistan, the inclusions of these studies involving comparative subject populations of university students could be especially helpful in analyzing the results of the current study.

The first study, which is one of two the researcher included, should not be considered exhaustive of all studies involving undergraduate student perceptions of the Vietnam War. In the 1960s, college campuses and populations, including faculty members and students, were among the first places formal organization occurred in protest to the Vietnam War. It is the contention of the researcher in this particular study the media attention these formal protests received was among the most visible dissenters and therefore, gained the belief at least in society that most university students and faculty members were opposed to the war (Schreiber, 1973).

Schreiber's study sought to identify how reflective these publicized protests were to the perceptions and opinions of college students and professors prior to the incursion into Cambodia in 1970. The researcher identified the time period prior to 1970 as a time in which it was not yet the trend for university students and faculty to be in opposition to the war (Schreiber, 1973). His findings revealed that "campus-based anti-war protests in the late 1960s gave a misleading picture of American university students and faculty," (Schreiber, 1973, p. 297).

Restated, there were multiple factors or variables that may have influenced the perception of college students and faculty members including a shift in the public perception concerning open forms of protesting military action from the Korean War. For example, students and faculty members who did oppose the Vietnam War could now do so publicly without being labeled as sharing communist sentiments, as someone who spoke out against the United States military would have been during the Korean War (Schreiber, 1973).

Another important variable in this study was identified to be the mass media coverage of the protests and the portrayal of protests when they did occur. Despite the continued rarity overall of protests taking place on university campuses among students and that no anti-war demonstrations on university campuses were reported for the 1968-69 academic year, many in the public continued to believe this was an accurate depiction of the beliefs of those in both student and faculty roles in academia (Schreiber, 1973).

Another study examining university student populations specifically examined the possibility that the use of force of the United States military in Vietnam would create a generation of future leaders who would be opposed to the use of military action with the exception being cases of self defense. The researcher hypothesized that the “dramatic socializing effect” the Vietnam War would have would impact “an entire generation of future leaders,” (Handberg, 1972-1973, p. 612).

This article explored data taken from a pilot study from two universities in the state of Florida following a study in 1962 conducted by Putney and Middleton to examine the structure of conflict and student attitudes in utilizing war as a political strategy or policy vehicle. This sample was representative of the accessible population at these universities with the only criteria for inclusion in the study being enrollment or attendance in the selected courses and the researcher utilized the scale of pacifism developed by Putney and Middleton in their earlier study (Handberg, 1972-1973).

When subjects were divided by gender, females as a group were identified as exhibiting more pacifist beliefs, especially when presented with questions explicitly about the Vietnam War. The researcher attributed these findings to either a conscious policy preference or prior socialization based on what was perceived to be a female role in modern society (Handberg, 1972-1973). This study also considered correlations with political party affiliation of the subjects and pacifist attitudes.

2.6 The Impact of Classroom Instruction and Implications for Criminology and Criminal Justice

In a research study conducted in the early 1970s at Purdue University, the impact of instruction on student opinions and orientations concerning the war in Vietnam were considered by exploring variables taken from material and instruction in the classroom that influence the individual and group perceptions of students. This study drew from available subjects from two international relations courses during the spring semester of 1968.

One professor was very sympathetic toward efforts and policies surrounding the Vietnam War. The other professor expressed many anti-war sentiments believed to be commonly held among much of the academic community at that time including being very critical of policy and their administration in Vietnam. The results indicated the information students in both classes received had little effect in changing the perceptions of the students (Richman & Targ, 1970).

The greatest change that did take place in this particular study indicated in the findings was not as much in opinion, but instead in the students' logical consistency. The students enrolled in these courses, despite the supportive or anti-war perception communicated to them by their professors, were able to consistently choose their own opinions or perceptions and their responses remained constant when compared to students not enrolled in either course (Richman & Targ, 1970). The impact of information obtained in the academic classroom can correlate with perceptions in a variety of ways, which opens the door for analyses from many variables in the current study.

The final element of literature pertaining to the current study explores the implications the Global War on Terror including the continued United States military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq has for the future in terms of policy creation and implications for the criminal justice system. Many acknowledge September 11, 2001 as a sobering reminder of the importance of staying informed regarding international policy. Further and more specifically is the need to acknowledge the relationship between American politics, society, and culture and how each of these are viewed by others in the world (Schattle, 2003).

It has been argued that United States global policy is at times battling the opinions and perceptions of global society. Schattle's (2003) study required students in an introductory level course to monitor articles in English on the Internet in an attempt to illustrate how the Internet, or "global village," has made world wide opinions and discourse regarding policy and events more widely accessible to any audience (p. 433). Through the use of this assignment, the instructor was able to challenge student perceptions and opinions, while teaching an awareness and understanding of the variables that contribute to the formation of each.

Harwood L. Childs (1937) states, "The preservation of peace depends upon the maintenance of a state of public opinion favorable to peace. Conversely, the successful conduct of a war depends upon the creation of a state of public opinion characterized by hatred and enmity toward other nations," (p. 31). With this statement and hypothesis in mind, one of the most important considerations for educators in a university setting generally and in the Criminology and Criminal Justice discipline specifically are the

implications of perceptions in the formation of future policy and the administration of justice.

The criminal justice system is involved with the Global War on Terror in a multitude of ways from the responsibility of responding to acts of terror, the prevention of terrorist acts through securing borders and airports, and in bringing to justice those who cause harm to the United States. Law enforcement personnel are involved as government contractors in attempts to create a new justice system and train law enforcement currently in Afghanistan free from influences and elements of the informal, retributive justice systems previously in place under Taliban rule (Mohammad & Conway, 2003).

The current perceptions of university undergraduate students, particularly those enrolled in criminology and criminal justice courses, as well as those who are enrolled in other academic majors at the university level during the time period addressed in this writing are of explicit interest to the researcher. The differences in the circumstances surrounding the invasion of, and initial military presence in both Afghanistan and Iraq, have inevitably created conflicting factors contributing to perception of both events.

A likely difference in future historical analysis of both invasions and wars will be present in future academic literature surrounding each country. At the time of this writing, it is simply too early to accurately predict what history will articulate in regards to the continued United States military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Currently, academic literature is lacking in addition to current public opinion surrounding the continued United States military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq. It is

the ultimate goal of the researcher to contribute to the literature in this area as well as present opportunities for future study and research. Limited studies and analyses have been conducted regarding the continued presence of the United States military in both countries and the impact of attempts at forming new governments and bringing change in both nations will likely not be realized fully for many years to come.

In Chapter 3, the researcher will discuss the research design and methodology employed in the current study. In the remaining Chapters 4 and 5, the researcher will report the findings in the current study, explore implications and limitations of these findings, and identify areas for future research.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The researcher employed a cross sectional design in the form of a one shot case study in this research. This cross sectional case study consisted of one exposure to stimuli or treatment (in the form of a survey instrument consisting of twenty knowledge and perception based questions for both Afghanistan and Iraq and seven demographical questions) and one observation or measurement. The sample was gathered, or restated, the administration of the survey instrument took place during one point in time.

In the current research study, the X representing exposure was the introduction of the survey instrument to the subjects including questions used to evaluate their perception and knowledge on issues relating to the continued United States military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq. The survey instrument also included statements utilized by the researcher to measure knowledge of the subjects relating to historical information about both countries and United States foreign policy.

The O, representing an observation or measurement, occurred following the administration and collection of the survey instrument. Multiple analyses were completed following the participation of the subjects in the study with data collected from the survey measurement instrument to examine differing perceptions and

responses between undergraduate Criminology and Criminal Justice majors and non-majors. The cross sectional study the researcher employed is represented with the following process:

X-----O

The dependent and independent variables in this study are operationalized through the use of a printed survey instrument administered by the researcher, the professor or the instructor of the course, or in two course sections, both researcher and course instructor. The survey was administered to six undergraduate course sections in order for the researcher to obtain the subject sample described in detail in the following section. The six courses and course sections from which subject perceptions represented by the data were obtained for the current study during the fall semester of 2007 are displayed by the researcher in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 *Course Numbers and Titles of Criminology and Criminal Justice Department Undergraduate Courses Fall Semester 2007 (Subject Population)*

Course Number	Course Title
CRCJ 2334	Introduction to the Criminal Justice System
CRCJ 2334	Introduction to the Criminal Justice System
CRCJ 2334	Introduction to the Criminal Justice System
CRCJ 3300	Theoretical Criminology
CRCJ 3350	Research Methods in Criminology and Criminal Justice
CRCJ 4352	Terrorism and Mass Violence

The research in this study is most appropriately defined as correlational and quasi-experimental including descriptive elements in the research design. The use of a table showing only percentages for demographics is typically found in descriptive research where information is presented in frequencies. A table in Chapter 4 (Table

4.1), in which the researcher displays an example of what would be considered descriptive statistics, is representative of the most basic type of research, but in this particular study, is not the only data that will be presented in the findings. In the remaining tables, the researcher utilizes the statistical software to perform t-tests to compare differences in the means present between the subjects' knowledge and perceptions or opinions on the continued United States military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq, while controlling for academic major.

The quasi-experimental design element of the study is indicated by the use of nonprobability sampling in the inclusion of data regarding the perceptions or opinions of only undergraduate college students who were selected based on their enrollment in a course offered by the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice. The findings are not necessarily transferable or generalizable to other populations of individuals in other segments of society. Another indication of quasi-experimental design is the lack of random assignment to treatments.

In true experimental design, the subjects would be selected through the use of probability sampling in order to ensure equal representation and randomly assigned to treatment. Since the purpose of this study was to examine a particular group, but the Criminology and Criminal Justice majors and non-majors were not divided equally and assigned to random groups for comparison, the need for further research on this topic addressing other populations is acknowledged by the researcher in the findings.

Before beginning the study, approval was sought from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Texas at Arlington. In order to ensure the protection

of human subjects from potential harm, the researcher received training in the protection of human subjects and research methodology prior to gaining IRB approval. The IRB issued approval for the research in this study following application for permission and granted the researcher an amendment to the approval to allow for inclusion of both Criminology and Criminal Justice majors and non-majors as subjects in the study explained in greater detail in the following section.

3.2 Sample Population

The subjects of study in this research were 215 undergraduate college students at the University of Texas at Arlington with academic majors in Criminology and Criminal Justice or non-majors enrolled in Criminology and Criminal Justice courses during the fall 2007 semester. The subjects of this study were selected based on their status as undergraduate college students in an attempt to differentiate between knowledge and perceptions on the continued United States military presence in both Afghanistan and Iraq among students majoring in differing academic disciplines. The variables included were derived from multiple factors including exposure to various forms of academic information obtained from academic instruction in each student's respective field of study.

Students specifically in the department of Criminology and Criminal Justice have potentially formed opinions regarding world events based on the nature of the academic field of study they pursue. The target population for this study was undergraduate university students including individuals seeking Criminology and Criminal Justice or a non-CRCJ major in higher education in the United States. This

group represents policy creators of the future and will oversee or implement policies and legislation regarding aspects of the continued U.S. military presence in Afghanistan or Iraq.

The accessible population consisted of undergraduate students at a research university located geographically in North Texas with a student enrollment of almost 25,000 graduate and undergraduate students. The delivered sample is represented in the 215 voluntary survey participants (n=215) who were selected based on their enrollment among six undergraduate Criminology and Criminal Justice courses upon approval of and/or assistance by the instructors in the months of November and December 2007. This delivered sample should be considered and is included in the analysis and findings for this study.

The sampling plan utilized by the researcher in this study, nonprobability availability or convenience sampling, relies on available subjects during a certain point in time (Bachman & Schutt, 2007). The nonprobability sample population involved pre-determined, specifically selected groups of individuals; however, anonymity in responses of the subjects were of the utmost importance and the survey measurement instrument discussed in full detail by the researcher in the next section was designed with an emphasis on keeping the identity of the participant unknown. Therefore, concern for any type of harm to the participants or subjects from their voluntary participation is minimized. Federal regulations governing the treatment of human subjects were observed throughout the course of the study.

The measurement instrument used in this study included voluntary participants found in academic undergraduate programs. Cohen's Power Sampling emphasizes the focus in research in the social and behavioral sciences should be not on the number of samples, but rather the number of times the sample receives treatment (i.e. the number of times the sample is exposed). The Power Level described by Cohen is the knowledge the researcher possesses that if the same act is repeated, the outcome will likely be the same. The Power Level is important in considering how much information is held about a sample.

According to Cohen, the more times a sample is exposed, the more corrupt it becomes. Participants in the current study were subjected to the measurement instrument one time only and the research was conducted using power sampling to determine the necessary sample size. Restated, the 0.05 confidence level identifying statistical significance allows for a 5% probability of error and the use of power sampling at this level would ensure 95% accuracy between variables in the current research study.

The findings, as discussed by the researcher in greater detail in Chapter 4, are interpreted at a Power Level of at least .80, which requires a minimum of 44 subjects (Keppel, Saufley Jr., & Tonkunaga, 1992, p. 215). In this way, every effort was made by the researcher to determine appropriate sample size, the number of responses needed to the survey measurement instrument, and to guarantee the least amount of exposure to and limit potential corruption of the data.

3.3 Measurement Instrument

The measurement instrument for this study is a carefully constructed, written, and printed survey borrowing themes and content from limited previous surveys of public opinion on the United States military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq from sources such as the Gallup Poll (Gallup, 2006). In constructing the survey instrument, the researcher utilized a five-point Likert Scale for ordinal data subject responses ranging on knowledge and perception based questions from “Agree Strongly” to “Disagree Strongly.” In order to ensure stratified sampling and representation equally among the limited subject population, no subject or student’s survey data was omitted based on any factor including demographical information such as gender, race, academic classification, or political affiliation.

The alternative would have been to rely upon data already collected on the topic. Since very limited peer reviewed journal data is available on public or student opinion surrounding the continued United States military presence in both Afghanistan and Iraq, the use of previously collected data would not prove beneficial in this particular study. Very limited academic research has been conducted on the possibility of information obtained in an educational setting influencing perceptions and opinions concerning United States foreign policy and current events including war.

The use of a survey for this type of research design is a valuable tool because results are quantifiable. In this particular study, the use of other measurement techniques such as interviewing would be far more time consuming for the researcher if

efforts were made to obtain a large sample size in regards to number of variables to be included in the findings. Respondents participating in the survey were asked to select answers affirming or in disagreement with written statements based on the review of literature by the researcher of the historical and current events surrounding the continued United States military presence in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

Demographical information collected as part of the survey data is an important component for later interpretation, as well as student responses to questions relating to the participant's knowledge and perception of historical and current events in both Afghanistan and Iraq. The measurement of knowledge based variables and the effect of knowledge on results and findings from answers on perception based variables is another potential implication to be found as a result of this study.

The methodology behind direct observation allows the research to achieve several significant goals. First, the research and findings will be based on the timeliest information available to date, rather than relying on data that is several years old. The changes in events occurring over a period of two or three years can potentially impact public opinion and perception of the overall conflict or war. In research of this nature, when attempting to differentiate between perception and knowledge on a large scale such as created Global War on Terror, the invasion of both countries, and continued military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq, as events continue to unfold, the public opinion and perception of individuals and groups regarding the events continue to evolve.

Another reason the data collection method of direct observation is vital to this particular research concept is due to the specific focus of the groups to be studied. To directly observe particular groups of undergraduate college students who will be responsible for domestic and foreign affairs including policy creation in the United States in the future, this observation allows the researcher to gather important information concerning the impact of education in a precise location of the country and among certain groups of individuals who will likely pursue careers in key roles of government and other agencies with an interest in topics of a global nature.

Coincidentally, the use of directly observed or gathered data as the method of collection in this study allows the researcher to contribute to the body of knowledge in an area that is incomplete in several ways. The findings as a result of this research have implications in the realm of higher education when considering the potential influence information and knowledge acquisition in the classroom and the impact academic learning potentially has on the development of individual perception and opinion. The findings also could present some relevant application in areas where academic literature is currently limited by introducing information concerning public opinion and the continued United States military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Students were eligible to participate in the survey if they were enrolled as an undergraduate student in a Criminology and Criminal Justice course during the Fall semester of 2007 at the University of Texas at Arlington. The course sections participating in the survey were selected at purposively based upon instructor approval within courses offered at the undergraduate level and professors or instructors willing to

devote a portion of one class period to the administration of the survey instrument. The surveys were distributed during prior approved class meeting times with the permission of the professor for use of approximately 20-40 minutes by the researcher in order to allow volunteers to complete the survey.

Professors for the selected courses who were present for the administration were given a copy of the survey and a statement was read or made by the researcher to the students explaining the purpose of the study. Students were asked to volunteer to complete the survey and were given the option to choose to participate or not to participate without consequence. Students were also instructed they could decide not to answer any one of the questions while completing the survey. There were no identifying characteristics on the survey that would make the student distinguishable and no questions on the survey enabled the researcher to directly identify the participants. The survey instrument administered to subject participants in this study is located in Appendix A.

3.4 Analysis Procedure and Current Research Limitations

The sample population consisted of individuals in many undergraduate level academic disciplines; therefore, the sample remains limited and cannot be considered representative of these respective academic disciplines at other universities, the undergraduate student body, the university, or the entire population or public opinion of mass American society involving the continued United States military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq. The sample is also representative of the time period from which

it is taken and may vary in past or future attitudes and perceptions among the same group of individual variables.

In contemplation of the analysis of data in quantitative research, threats to internal and external validity must be considered. Three potential threats to internal validity that should be considered in this study could be the internal validity threats of selection, additive/interactive effects, and ambiguous temporal presence. Selection threats to internal validity exist in quantitative studies when a bias is present in the sampling plan or subjects. In this study, the entire sample includes individuals from two select groups of the population, which limits the generalizability of the findings and cannot be considered representative of public opinion found in mainstream society.

Another threat to internal validity, additive/interactive effects, can be controlled in research where the selection threat is controlled. This threat exists when an imbalance in groups is present and can often be found when subjects know other groups who are participating in a study. In this study, no evidence of student competition or imbalance in groups is apparent, but this threat should still be noted as it occurs with selection and at times when participation is limited to a specific population. The use of convenience, nonprobability sampling could increase the risk of this type of threat since groups may not be representative of certain populations of undergraduate students who do not choose to take Criminology and Criminal Justice courses, regardless of academic major field of study.

Finally, the internal validity threat of ambiguous temporal presence is found in a study when it is difficult to determine the order of events or the impact of one variable

over another. In this study, it is not obvious whether student opinion and perception regarding the continued United States military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq was formed prior to or following information the subjects obtained in an academic setting. There is also a high probability that other information derived from differing forms of mass media impact student perceptions and opinions in addition to information received from academic instruction.

The threat of interaction effects of selection biases and the experimental variable, dealing with the selection of a random, representative sample, is a threat to external validity that could be present in this type of study. Since this study was begun with a sample taken from a convenient group of participants rather than from a completely random sample of subjects or participants, many important differences among subjects may not be noted due to similarities that exist without the random groups. The researcher acknowledges this weakness in the sampling plan and research design.

The possible effect of the professor or instructor's presence, absence, or administration of the survey instrument could have also impacted this study. Subsequently, the researcher's presence, absence, or administration of the survey instrument could have contributed to the outcome or result of the number of voluntary participants indirectly. This could be considered as an unintentional threat to external validity such as the reactive effects of the experimental arrangement and occurs when something is present in the experimental setting that is not present in a non-experimental setting.

The limitations to this research study should be acknowledged when reviewing and attempting to interpret the implications of the findings of the research in Chapters 4 and 5. The concluding two chapters will contain the findings of the current study and address limitations and the potential for future research including the use of other control variables such as gender, political affiliation, or conducting similar studies on populations from non-academic settings.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

In the current chapter, the researcher will explore the findings of the current study that resulted from data analysis utilizing t-tests to compare the means of responses between Criminology and Criminal Justice majors and non-majors for the purposes of interpretation. The t-test is, “A statistical test of the difference between two means,” (Keppel, Saufley, & Tokunaga, 1992, p. 610). In the current study, the researcher employed a t-test to compare differences between means of Criminology and Criminal Justice majors and non-majors.

4.1 Demographics

A total of 215 surveys were completed by participants in the current study (n=215). The methodological procedures regarding sample selection, available populations, and IRB approval are described by the researcher in Chapter 3. Using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software, the researcher coded undergraduate student responses contributing to the results presented later in this chapter. The descriptive statistics for the sample are illustrated by the researcher in Table 4.1. Survey participants were divided among gender with 122 subjects, or 58.4% of respondents who indicated they are male. Females comprised 41.6% of the total responding participants (n=215) with 87 responses indicating female as gender. There were 6 participants who did not indicate a response.

In examination of race/ethnicity, more than half of the participants were Caucasian (51.4% or 107 subjects). Hispanics composed 22.1% of respondents and Black/African American was the response of 14.4%. The remaining race/ethnicity indicators reveal Asian/Pacific Islander as 8.2% and Native American as 0.5%. There were 7 responses indicating “Other,” or anything not necessarily included and represented 3.4% of the respondents. Seven participants did not indicate a response.

Considering student status and classification, 9.5% of respondents were freshmen on the undergraduate university level. Additionally, 17.5% of participants (or 35) were sophomores and 35.0%, or 70 participants, were seniors. Juniors produced the largest representation of classification with 38.0%, or 76 participants indicating this response. Fifteen survey participants did not indicate a response concerning their academic classification.

Subsequently, age of the participants was measured using ranges and 75.9% of the participants indicated they were ages 18-24 years. This finding would not be considered significant since this age range represents the ages of many college students entering the university as an undergraduate directly from high school. The 25-30 age range received 34 participants and represents 16.0% of the total respondents to the survey instrument. The 31-40 age range is representative of 5.7% of participants (or n=12). The remaining two age ranges, 41-50 and 51-55, consisted of 5 participants. Three survey subjects did not respond to the age variable on the survey instrument.

The descriptive “Academic Major,” was an independent variable in the current study. An academic major of “Criminology and Criminal Justice” was classified by 118

participants, or 55.7%. An academic major other than “Criminology and Criminal Justice,” which will be referred to as non-major, included those who indicated “Political Science” or “Other,” was the response selected by 90 respondents, or 42.5%. Another group, “Dual Criminology and Criminal Justice and Political Science,” was measured and 4 participants (1.9%) indicated this response. This variable is the control variable for the current study and is especially important in the interpretation of the findings. Three participants did not respond to this demographic question.

Political viewpoints included “Conservative,” with 93 participants or 56.7% of responding participants indicating their political viewpoints mostly closely resemble that of a conservative. “Liberal” was the next choice with 35.4% or 58 responding participants indicating their political viewpoints are liberal, and “Other” was selected by 13 participants (7.9%). There were 51 subjects who did not indicate a response in reference to their political viewpoints.

The participants were asked to identify their primary sources of mass media by selecting choices among the following responses: “Newspaper,” “Television,” “Internet,” “Academic Courses/Professors,” “Magazines,” “Academic Scholarly Journals,” or “Word of Mouth.” There were 81 responses indicating “Newspaper” as one of the sources of media from which participants acquired information. “Television” was indicated by 146 participants and “Internet” also received 114 subject responses.

The remaining responses to this question presented by the researcher on the survey instrument received fewer responses, with 42 participants selecting “Academic Courses/Professors,” 17 participants selecting “Magazines,” 13 respondents indicating

“Academic/Scholarly Journals,” and 57 selecting “Word of Mouth.” An important finding in relationship to the current study that should be mentioned from the responses to this particular variable is the perception of only a limited number of student participants that information received in a classroom setting or from academic literature is a form of their regular acquisition of information. This finding may support or dispute the rest of the findings considered by the researcher in the remainder of this chapter.

Table 4.1 *Demographics*

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	122	58.4
	Female	87	41.6
Race/Ethnicity	Asian/Pacific Islander	17	8.2
	Black/African American	30	14.4
	Caucasian	107	51.4
	Hispanic	46	22.1
	Native American	1	0.5
	Other	7	3.4
Classification	Freshman	19	9.5
	Sophomore	35	17.5
	Junior	76	38.0
	Senior	70	35.0
Age	18-24	161	75.9
	25-30	34	16.0
	31-40	12	5.7
	41-50	4	1.9
	51-55	1	0.5

Table 4.1 *Continued*

		Frequency	Percent
Academic Major	CRCJ	118	55.7
	Political Science	7	3.3
	Other	83	39.2
	Dual CRCJ/POLS	4	1.9
Political Affiliation	Conservative	93	56.7
	Liberal	58	35.4
	Other	13	7.9
Primary Sources of Mass Media	Newspaper	81	37.7
	Television	146	67.9
	Internet	114	53.0
	Academic Courses/Professors	42	19.5
	Magazines	17	7.9
	Academic/Scholarly Journals	13	6.0
	Word of Mouth	57	26.5

In the following section of Chapter 4, the researcher will discuss the results of t-tests used to compare means between Criminology and Criminal Justice majors and non-majors, which will determine what, if any, differences exist in between the means of CRCJ students and students from other academic disciplines.

4.2 Criminology and Criminal Justice Majors versus Non-CRCJ Majors

Comparisons within this section are included to illustrate differences between Criminology and Criminal Justice majors and non-majors knowledge and perception of the continued United States military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq. There were fourteen knowledge based questions and twenty six perception based questions identified by the researcher on the survey instrument. The result was four knowledge

variables and four perception variables that reached statistical significance, which will be discussed and identified by the researcher later in this chapter.

The first knowledge question on the survey instrument was, “The United States responded to terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 by invading Afghanistan.” The mean for Criminology and Criminal Justice majors was 2.19 and the mean for non-majors was 2.15 with a p-value of .717, which was not statistically significant. Likewise, the next knowledge question did not produce a statistically significant result. “Other countries, including allies of the United States, feel that the United States is justified in maintaining a presence in Afghanistan,” resulted in the mean for CRCJ majors being 3.16 and non-majors were 3.12 with a p-value of .681.

The next knowledge question was, “The majority of citizens in Afghanistan support the United States military presence and assistance.” This question also did not produce a statistically significant result with the mean for CRCJ majors being 3.39 and the mean for non-majors was 3.22 with a p-value of .084. In following knowledge question, “The United States military plans on maintaining a presence in Afghanistan indefinitely,” the mean of Criminology and Criminal Justice majors was 2.91 and the mean of non-majors was 2.89, with a p-value of .872.

Subsequently, the results of t-test to compare means for the following knowledge question, “A political candidate’s position on the continued United States military presence in Afghanistan will be a major factor in future elections,” were also not statistically significant. The results indicated mean for Criminology and Criminal

Justice majors as 1.97 and the mean for the non-majors group was 1.90 with a p-value of .494.

One of the knowledge questions that produced a statistically significant result was, “Since the United States’ invasion of Afghanistan, I have supported United States military troops with a public display (ex. displaying a yellow ribbon, sent care packages, or participated in a demonstration).” The mean for CRCJ majors was 2.82 and the mean for non-majors being 3.15 with a p-value of .034. This result is statistically significant at the .05 confidence level. Criminology and Criminal Justice majors indicated they were more outwardly supportive of the United States military troops than non-majors.

Another knowledge question from the survey instrument in this study that produced a statistically significant result was, “I personally know someone (ex. friends, family members, or coworkers) who has served, were killed, or wounded as a member of the United States military in Afghanistan.” The mean for Criminology and Criminal Justice majors for this question was 2.06 and the mean for non-majors was 2.78. The p value indicates a strong statistically significant difference with a p-value of .000.

Seventy five Criminology and Criminal Justice majors (or 71.6% of CRCJ respondents) indicated they know or knew someone personally involved in the war in Afghanistan as a member of the armed forces. Compared with non-majors, the Criminology and Criminal Justice students in this study have more personal associations with participants in the war in Afghanistan than do non-majors.

The following knowledge variable did not produce a statistically significant result: “It is my understanding that the United States has a clear plan for handling the situation in Afghanistan.” The mean for Criminology and Criminal Justice majors for this question was 3.65 and compared with non-majors, for which the mean was 3.46, produced a p-value of .117. Table 4.2 displays the results of t-tests performed on knowledge based variables for Afghanistan.

Table 4.2 Means and P-Values regarding differences between Criminology and Criminal Justice Majors and Non-Majors toward knowledge concerning Afghanistan

Variable	CRCJ Major (Mean)	Non-major (Mean)	P-Value (2 tailed)
The United States responded to terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 by invading Afghanistan.	2.19	2.15	.717
Other countries, including allies of the United States, feel that the United States is justified in maintaining a presence in Afghanistan.	3.16	3.12	.681
The majority of citizens in Afghanistan support the United States' military presence and assistance.	3.39	3.22	.084
The United States military plans on maintaining a presence in Afghanistan indefinitely.	2.91	2.89	.872
A political candidate's position on the continued United States military presence in Afghanistan will be a major factor in future elections.	1.97	1.90	.494
Since the United States' invasion of Afghanistan, I have supported United States military troops with a public display (ex. displaying a yellow ribbon, sent care packages, or participated in a demonstration)	2.82	3.15	.034*
I personally know someone (ex. friends, family members, or coworkers) who has served, were killed, or wounded as a member of the United States military in Afghanistan.	2.06	2.78	.000**

Table 4.2 Continued

It is my understanding that the United States has a clear plan for handling the situation in Afghanistan.	3.65	3.46	.117
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* Statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level

** Statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level

Similarly, the next knowledge question did not produce a statistically significant result. The mean for Criminology and Criminal Justice majors was 2.65 and the mean for non-majors was 2.73 with a p-value of .483. The question was, “The United States intends on maintaining a presence in Iraq indefinitely.”

The next knowledge question, “I have heard about the possibility of permanent United States military installations in Iraq through various forms of mass media (i.e. newspapers, television, Internet, etc.),” resulted in a p-value of .075, which indicates close to a statistically significant result. The mean for Criminology and Criminal Justice majors for this question was 2.89 and the mean for non-majors was 3.09.

The question, “I personally know someone (ex. friends, family members, or coworkers) who have served, were killed, or wounded while serving the United States military in Iraq since the war began in March 2003,” resulted in the mean of Criminology and Criminal Justice majors being 1.94 and the mean of non-majors was 2.39 with a p-value of .012. This result was statistically significant on the 0.05 confidence level. The majority, or 75.3% of Criminology and Criminal Justice majors indicated they know someone personally who has served in the United States military in Iraq.

Among the remaining knowledge questions, only one produced statistically significant results. The first, “I am aware of Iraq Study Report recommendations made by the commission chaired by James Baker and Lee Hamilton and followed news about the findings,” resulted in a mean for CRCJ majors of 3.63 and the mean for non-majors was 3.72 with a p-value of .490. The knowledge question, “It is my understanding that the United States has a clear plan for handling the situation in Iraq,” resulted with a mean for Criminology and Criminal Justice majors of 3.67 and the mean for non-majors was 3.48. The p-value for this question was .122, which was not statistically significant.

The final knowledge variable in the current study in consideration of Iraq, “Since the United States led invasion of Iraq in March 2003, I have supported United States military troops with a public display (ex. displaying a yellow ribbon, sent care packages to troops, or participated in a demonstration),” did produce a statistically significant result at the 0.05 confidence level. The mean for Criminology and Criminal Justice majors was 2.71 and the mean for non-CRCJ majors was 3.09 with a p-value of .018. Criminology and Criminal Justice majors were slightly in agreement with this statement, while non-majors were more neutral in their outward support of troops in Iraq. Table 4.3 displays the results of t-tests performed on knowledge based variables in consideration of Iraq.

Table 4.3 Means and P-Values regarding differences between Criminology and Criminal Justice Majors and Non-Majors toward knowledge concerning Iraq

Variable	CRCJ Major (Mean)	Non-major (Mean)	P-Value (2 tailed)
The United States intends on maintaining a presence in Iraq indefinitely.	2.65	2.73	.483
I have heard about the possibility of permanent United States military installations in Iraq through various forms of mass media (i.e. newspapers, television, Internet, etc.)	2.89	3.09	.075
I personally know someone (ex. friends, family members, or coworkers) who have served, were killed, or wounded while serving the United States military in Iraq since the war began in March 2003.	1.94	2.39	.012*
I am aware of Iraq Study Report recommendations made by the commission chaired by James Baker and Lee Hamilton and followed news about the findings.	3.63	3.72	.490
It is my understanding that the United States has a clear plan for handling the situation in Iraq.	3.67	3.48	.122
Since the United States led invasion of Iraq in March 2003, I have supported United States military troops with a public display (ex. displaying a yellow ribbon, sent care packages to troops, or participated in a demonstration)	2.71	3.09	.018*

* Statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level

** Statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level

Additionally, the perception based variables in consideration of Afghanistan began with, “I believe the invasion of Afghanistan was a necessary component in the War on Terror.” The result was statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level with the mean for Criminology and Criminal Justice majors of 2.35 and the mean for non-majors was 2.00. The p-value for this question was .001, which indicates a strong

difference in responses between CRCJ majors and non-majors. Criminology and Criminal Justice majors indicated they were more strongly in agreement with this statement with 58.5% of CRCJ majors selecting “Agree Strongly” or “Agree” as their response, while non-majors were more divided between agreement and disagreement, but still generally agree.

The following perception based question was, “I believe that the United States assistance in removing the Taliban was a critical step in the struggle to establish stability in Afghanistan.” The t-test did not produce a statistically significant result on this question. The mean for Criminology and Criminal Justice majors was 2.14 and those of non-majors was 2.18 with a p-value of .694.

The next perception question that produced a statistically significant result was, “I believe that Osama bin Laden is still leading al Qaeda.” The mean for CRCJ majors was 1.94 and the mean for non-Majors was 2.18 with a p-value of .040. This result is statistically significant at the .05 confidence level. Most Criminology and Criminal Justice majors indicated their agreement to this statement, with only 13 of the total CRCJ participants (n=118) indicating they disagree.

Further, the following perception based question, “Most Americans believe continued military presence in Afghanistan is necessary,” did not produce a statistically significant finding. The mean for Criminology and Criminal Justice majors was 3.29 and the mean for the non-major group was 3.10 with a p-value of .090. The next perception question, “I believe the United States is successful thus far in their efforts to bring stability and order to Afghanistan,” also did not produce a statistically significant

result. The mean of Criminology and Criminal Justice majors was 3.38 and the mean for non-majors was 3.23 with a p-value of .197.

The next perception question was, "I think the mass media's role and influence in the formation of public opinion about the United States military presence in Afghanistan is significant." The mean for CRCJ majors was 2.26 and for non-majors, the mean was almost the same with 2.25 and a p-value of .915. The result was not statistically significant for this question or the following: "It is my understanding that groups such as the Taliban still have a presence and influence among the people in Afghanistan." For this perception question, the mean for the Criminology and Criminal Justice major group was 1.90 and for non-majors it was 1.91 with a p-value of .881.

The following perception question, "In regards to United States foreign policy in Afghanistan, the goal of the United States should be to aid in the establishment of a stable government," resulted in a mean for Criminology and Criminal Justice majors of 2.17 and for non-majors the mean was 2.12 with a p-value of .621. The result was not statistically significant.

Similarly, the next perception question on the survey instrument, "I think the mass media depicts the war in Afghanistan and the continuing occupation by United States military troops more favorably than the presence and war in Iraq," did not produce a statistically significant result. The mean for Criminology and Criminal Justice majors was 2.52 and for non-majors, the mean was 2.49. The p-value was .763.

The next perception based variable, "Afghanistan will eventually have a democratic government that will not likely be overthrown by terrorists or other

insurgents,” did not produce a statistically significant result. In regards to this question, the mean for Criminology and Criminal Justice majors was 3.46 and the mean for non-majors was 3.32 with a p-value of .221. Similarly, the question, “The withdrawal of United States forces from Afghanistan would encourage anti-government insurgents,” did not produce a statistically significant result. The mean of CRCJ majors for this question was 2.27 and the mean for non-majors was 2.25 with a p-value of .828.

The following perception question did not produce a statistically significant result. The question, “There have been an acceptable number of United States military casualties in Afghanistan,” presented a mean for CRCJ majors of 3.09 and the mean for non-majors was 3.00 with a p-value of .552. Table 4.4 displays the results of t-tests performed on perception based variables in consideration of Afghanistan.

Table 4.4 Means and P-Values regarding differences between Criminology and Criminal Justice Majors and Non-Majors toward perception concerning Afghanistan

Variable	CRCJ Major (Mean)	Non-major (Mean)	P-Value (2 tailed)
I believe the invasion of Afghanistan was a necessary component in the War on Terror.	2.35	2.00	.001**
I believe that the United States assistance in removing the Taliban was a critical step in the struggle to establish stability in Afghanistan.	2.14	2.18	.694
I believe that Osama bin Laden is still leading al Qaeda.	1.94	2.18	.040*
Most Americans believe continued military presence in Afghanistan is necessary.	3.29	3.10	.090
I believe the United States is successful thus far in their efforts to bring stability and order to Afghanistan.	3.38	3.23	.197

Table 4.4 Continued

I think the mass media's role and influence in the formation of public opinion about the United States military presence in Afghanistan is significant.	2.26	2.25	.915
It is my understanding that groups such as the Taliban still have a presence and influence among the people in Afghanistan.	1.9	1.91	.881
In regards to United States foreign policy in Afghanistan, the goal of the United States should be to aid in the establishment of a stable government.	2.17	2.12	.621
I think the mass media depicts the war in Afghanistan and the continuing occupation by United States military troops more favorably than the presence and war in Iraq.	2.52	2.49	.763
Afghanistan will eventually have a democratic government that will not likely be overthrown by terrorists or other insurgents.	3.46	3.32	.221
The withdrawal of United States forces from Afghanistan would encourage anti-government insurgents.	2.27	2.25	.828
There have been an acceptable number of United States military casualties in Afghanistan.	3.09	3.00	.552

* Statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level

** Statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level

Subsequently, the next perception question, “I believe the United States had to invade Iraq in March 2003 as part of the War on Terror and this invasion was not a separate military action,” resulted in similar findings that were not statistically significant. The mean for Criminology and Criminal Justice majors was 2.92 and the mean for non-majors was 2.82 with a p-value of .474.

The next four perception questions presented on the survey instrument did not result in demonstration of statistical significance. The first, “I believe that Saddam Hussein was involved with terrorist networks such as al Qaeda and potentially harboring known terrorists,” resulted in a mean of 2.09 for CRCJ majors and 2.05 for non-majors with a p-value of .755. Next, the following two perception questions, “The United States made a mistake in sending troops to Iraq because no weapons of mass destruction were recovered,” and “I believe Iraq has weapons of mass destruction or had programs in place to produce or develop them,” also did not have statistically significant results. The mean for Criminology and Criminal Justice majors on the first was 3.17. The mean for non-majors on the first question discussed here was 3.18. The result was a p-value of .932. The mean for CRCJ majors on the second question was 2.39 and the mean for non-majors was 2.38. This produced a p-value.938.

The next perception question, “I believe the United States should withdraw military troops, but only enough to turn control over to the Iraqis while still maintaining a presence in the country,” did not reveal statistically significant results. The mean for Criminology and Criminal Justice majors was 2.51 and the mean for non-CRCJ majors was 2.61 with $p=.427$.

However, the following perception question, “Iraq will eventually have a democratic government that will not likely be overthrown by terrorists or insurgents,” produced a statistically significant result at the .001 confidence level. The mean for CRCJ majors on this question was 3.56 and the mean for non-Majors was 3.17 with a p-value of .001. This result indicates a strong difference between the responses for CRCJ

majors and non-Majors for this question. Criminology and Criminal Justice majors responded with 64 participants (or 54.7%) in disagreement with this statement and 29.4% (or 34 subjects) selecting “Neutral.”

The following perception question, “The United States government has reason to believe al Qaeda planned or plans to operate a terrorist cell or even a terrorist network headquarters located in Iraq,” produced no statistically significant result. The mean of Criminology and Criminal Justice majors was 2.47 and non-majors was also 2.47 with a p-value of .997.

Two of the questions that did not produce statistically significant results were, “I would favor actions taken by Congress to restrict funding in order to keep President Bush from sending more troops to Iraq,” and “I think the mass media’s role and influence in the formation of public opinion about the United States military presence in Iraq is significant.” The mean of CRCJ majors on the first question was 2.75 and on the second question, the mean was 1.97. The mean for non-majors on the first question discussed here was 2.95 and for the second, the mean was 2.04. The p-values were .212 and .507, respectively.

Additionally, the perception question, “The United States should set a deadline for withdrawing United States military forces from Iraq,” did not produce a statistically significant finding. When examining the mean for CRCJ majors of 2.60 and the mean for non-majors was 2.71, the p-value result was .423. Subsequently, the perception question, “The withdrawal of United States forces from Iraq would encourage anti-government insurgents,” did not produce statistically significant results. The mean for

CRCJ majors was 2.28 and non-majors was 2.10 with a p-value of .072. This result was also closer to statistically significant.

The next perception question was, “There have been an acceptable number of United States military casualties in Iraq.” The mean for Criminology and Criminal Justice majors was 3.20 and the mean for the non-majors was 3.17 with $p=.072$. This result was closer to statistical significance than some of the previously discussed questions, however, did not produce a statistically significant result.

The next perception variable was, “It is my opinion that the United States government and law enforcement can do little to prevent acts of terror.” The mean for CRCJ majors was 3.15 and the mean for non-majors was 3.46. This question produced a statistically significant result at the .01 confidence level with a p-value of .026. Since the researcher attempted to consider the role of law enforcement in addressing terrorism by including this variable, the results are important in interpretation of the findings and possible implications for criminal justice policy.

Criminology and Criminal Justice students were almost equally balanced in their responses to this variable with 56.4% (or 66 subjects) indicating they are in agreement that the ability of the government or of law enforcement is limited in prevention of acts of terrorism. Likewise, more than half (56.5%) of non-majors indicated they were in disagreement with the statement that law enforcement could do little to prevent acts of terror. Therefore, the CRCJ majors who were participants in the current study have differing perceptions concerning the limited abilities of law enforcement in the

prevention of terrorism, which may be attributed to differing information presented in their academic discipline.

The remaining perception variable that did not produce a statistically significant result was, “I believe the United States was justified in invading Iraq, even without the approval of the United Nations.” The p-value for this perception question was .382. The mean for Criminology and Criminal Justice majors was 2.99 and the mean for non-majors was 2.86.

The findings that resulted in statistically significant differences in means between Criminology and Criminal Justice majors and non-majors should be considered in the interpretation of the data. Table 4.5 illustrates the results of t-tests performed by the researcher on the perception based questions concerning Iraq.

Table 4.5 Means and P-Values regarding differences between Criminology and Criminal Justice Majors and Non-Majors toward perception concerning Iraq

Variable	CRCJ Major (Mean)	Non-major (Mean)	P-Value (2 tailed)
I believe the United States had to invade Iraq in March 2003 as part of the War on Terror and this invasion was not a separate military action.	2.92	2.82	.474
I believe that Saddam Hussein was involved with terrorist networks such as al Qaeda and potentially harboring known terrorists.	2.09	2.05	.755
The United States made a mistake in sending troops to Iraq because no weapons of mass destruction were recovered.	3.17	3.18	.932
I believe Iraq has weapons of mass destruction or had programs in place to produce or develop them.	2.39	2.38	.938

Table 4.5 Continued

I believe the United States should withdraw military troops, but only enough to turn control over to the Iraqis while still maintaining a presence in the country.	2.51	2.61	.427
Iraq will eventually have a democratic government that will not likely be overthrown by terrorists or other insurgents.	3.56	3.17	.001**
The United States government has reason to believe al Qaeda planned or plans to operate a terrorist cell or even a terrorist network headquarters located in Iraq.	2.47	2.47	.977
I would favor actions taken by Congress to restrict funding in order to keep President Bush from sending more troops to Iraq.	2.75	2.95	.212
I think the mass media's role and influence in the formation of public opinion about the United States military presence in Iraq is significant.	1.97	2.04	.507
The United States should set a deadline for withdrawing United States military forces from Iraq.	2.6	2.71	.423
The withdrawal of United States forces from Iraq would encourage anti-government insurgents.	2.28	2.10	.072
There have been an acceptable number of United States military casualties in Iraq.	3.2	3.17	.870
It is my opinion that the United States government and law enforcement can to little to prevent acts of terror.	3.15	3.46	.026*
I believe the United States was justified in invading Iraq, even without the approval of the United Nations.	2.99	2.86	.382

* Statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level

** Statistically significant at the 0.01 confidence level

In regards to variables in this study that did not result in statistically significant differences in means, it is important for the researcher to note that the absence of statistically significant differences does not indicate that the responses for all participants for a particular variable were in agreement. For example, the knowledge question, “It is my understanding that the United States has a clear plan for handling the situation in Iraq,” produced a mean for Criminology and Criminal Justice majors of 3.67. The mean for non-majors was 3.48 with a p-value of .122. Most CRCJ majors and non-majors indicated they disagreed with this statement. Therefore, it cannot be interpreted that responses not indicating statistically significant differences in means automatically indicates agreement by both groups.

In conclusion, the researcher notes that statistically significant differences were found when comparing means of Criminology and Criminal Justice majors with non-majors in this study, specifically when exploring knowledge and perception. The findings indicate Criminology and Criminal Justice majors in the current research study presented differing knowledge and perceptions of both the war in Afghanistan and Iraq. Subsequently, Criminology and Criminal Justice majors specifically varied in their opinions concerning the abilities of the government or law enforcement to prevent acts of terror.

These findings are significant in consideration of the impact information in an academic setting has on student knowledge and perception. Interestingly, many of the student participants, regardless of academic major, did not indicate the classroom, their professors, or scholarly literature as their primary sources of media. The findings do

indicate information obtained in the classroom may play a significant role in both knowledge and perception of the individual, which is the ultimate goal of most educators.

In the following chapter, the researcher will readdress these findings. Specifically, the implications for policy creation, implementation, and the limitations of the current study will also be addressed. The researcher will conclude Chapter 5 by including areas of consideration for future research.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The primary purpose of this study was to explore undergraduate student opinion regarding the continued presence of the United States military in Afghanistan and Iraq. In this chapter, the researcher will once again detail the statistically significant differences found through analysis of the survey instrument data while discussing the limitations of this study. The researcher will conclude with implications for policy and areas of consideration for future research.

5.1 Academic Major Related Findings

Criminology and Criminal Justice undergraduate students responded differently than non-CRCJ majors to eight of the variables or statements presented on the survey instrument. Four of these questions were based on the student's knowledge of the invasion of both Afghanistan and Iraq following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The variables that produced statistically significant differing results in means when divided by academic majors were four perception based questions.

Restated, out of the forty knowledge and perception questions included in the survey instrument, eight produced statistically significant results when academic major was used as an independent variable. The researcher concludes based on this information, some differences between the University of Texas at Arlington's Criminology and Criminal Justice majors and non-CRCJ undergraduate majors'

perception and knowledge of the continued United States military presence in both Afghanistan and Iraq exist.

The knowledge and perception differences could be the result of exposure to differing information obtained in the classroom setting due to dissimilarity in academic major. While most of the questions in both knowledge and perception did not produce statistically significant differences when examining groups by academic major, it is important to acknowledge some differences were present in the findings. It is also possible based on the findings, since the bulk of the results did not produce statistically significant differences in means based on academic major, other demographic variables such as race/ethnicity, classification, or gender could also be independent variables that would impact perception and knowledge.

5.2 Policy Implications

Debatably, Criminology and Criminal Justice students at the University of Texas at Arlington differ with non-CRCJ majors in regards to their knowledge and perception of terrorism, the role of law enforcement including federal agencies, and the continued United States military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq. Further, this study's findings present correlations between knowledge and perception of these topics in general, without considering other variables influencing individuals pursuing differing major fields of study.

This study's findings present future implications for the University of Texas at Arlington on many levels. Information and knowledge presented to students concerning the continued United States military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq in Criminology

and Criminal Justice courses can be adjusted based on academic major differences when considering the range of knowledge levels of students enrolled in courses from other academic departments. Specifically, the current study could be important to improve curriculum in order to address these differences.

Subsequently, this information provides a greater understanding of the impact that knowledge potentially has on perception and vice versa. Likewise, instructors with awareness of the importance of knowledge and perception can better address the needs of their students of any academic major. This information could help enable instructors, professors, and staff to take greater interest in the implications the knowledge they present to their students has on impacting student knowledge and perception concerning the world in which they live.

The implications for law enforcement, federal agencies, and the criminal justice system are equally as important to consider. The undergraduate students participating in this study are possibly future law enforcement practitioners, executives, policy creators, and government officials based on their selection of the Criminology and Criminal Justice discipline as an academic major. Non-CRCJ majors are also likely to become key figures in the development of policy by the sheer nature of their attendance and pursuit of a four year college degree. Examining this population, including their perceptions and knowledge, could be indicative of future policy direction, especially in regards to foreign policy, homeland security, and military action.

5.3 Limitations

The research in the current study is limited by several factors. First, the survey instrument was presented to students enrolled in a course in the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice during the fall semester of 2007. The study was limited to students enrolled in courses offered by one academic department at one university, although other students majoring in other academic disciplines were represented.

Consequently, the utilization of a convenience sample of undergraduate university students cannot be considered representative of public opinion or perspective in society. The geographic location of the subject population, time period from which the sample was taken, and the lack of longitudinal data over a period of time could also be considered limitations of the current study. Also, since all student participants in the current study were currently enrolled in a course in the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice, despite differences in academic major, the exposure to CRCJ course instruction could mask possible differences between CRCJ majors and non-majors that have not taken CRCJ courses.

5.4 Future Research

In this study, the researcher's goal was to also promote further academic investigation concerning studies surrounding war or conflict which utilize undergraduate college student populations as subjects. The findings of this research cannot serve as a blanket generalization to all undergraduate students of Criminology and Criminal Justice nor are they representative of any other academic major.

Similarly, the responses received cannot apply universally to all Criminology and Criminal Justice majors or non-majors in their knowledge and perception of the continued United States military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq in general.

Future researchers could consider replication of the same study with a different group of subjects in another academic major, geographical area, or during a different time period to evaluate the evolution of knowledge and perception over a period of time. Another possible area for further research would be to examine other demographical variables such as race/ethnicity, gender, or political affiliation, to determine if different control variables also produce statistically significant differences with regard to knowledge and perception of the continued United States military presence in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Social, cultural, and political factors may also influence undergraduate student perception and knowledge of these events additionally. It is the desire of the researcher to encourage further studies related to knowledge and perception of this phenomenon.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

SURVEY

The purpose of this study is to capture opinions regarding your perception of the continued presence of the United States military in Afghanistan and Iraq. Although your participation is appreciated, please understand that completion of this survey is voluntary. No questions on this survey will enable the researchers to directly identify you, therefore, please do not write your name or any identifying marks on the survey. You may choose not to answer any question or choose not to participate in the survey without consequence. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this survey, please contact Dr. Alex del Carmen, Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice, University of Texas at Arlington at (817)272-3318. Thank you!

Please leave this section blank! Begin survey on Page 2!

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AFGHANISTAN

1. The United States responded to terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 by invading Afghanistan.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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2. I believe the invasion of Afghanistan was a necessary component in the War on Terror.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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3. I believe that the United States assistance in removing the Taliban was a critical step in the struggle to establish stability in Afghanistan.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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4. I believe that Osama bin Laden is still leading al Qaeda.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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5. Most Americans believe continued military presence in Afghanistan is necessary.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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6. Other countries, including allies of the United States, feel that the United States is justified in maintaining a presence in Afghanistan.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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7. The majority of citizens in Afghanistan support the United States' military presence and assistance.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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8. I believe the United States is successful thus far in their efforts to bring stability and order to Afghanistan.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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9. The United States military plans on maintaining a presence in Afghanistan indefinitely.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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10. I think the mass media's role and influence in the formation of public opinion about the United States military presence in Afghanistan is significant.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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11. A political candidate's position on the continued United States military presence in Afghanistan will be a major factor in future elections.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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12. It is my understanding that groups such as the Taliban still have a presence and influence among the people in Afghanistan.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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13. In regards to United States foreign policy in Afghanistan, the goal of the United States should be to aid in the establishment of a stable government.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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14. Since the United States' invasion of Afghanistan, I have supported United States military troops with a public display (ex. displaying a yellow ribbon, sent care packages to troops, or participated in a demonstration)

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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15. I think the mass media depicts the war in Afghanistan and the continuing occupation by United States military troops more favorably than the presence and war in Iraq.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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16. Afghanistan will eventually have a democratic government that will not likely be overthrown by terrorists or other insurgents.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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17. The withdrawal of United States forces from Afghanistan would encourage anti-government insurgents.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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18. There have been an acceptable number of United States military casualties in Afghanistan.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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19. I personally know someone (ex. friends, family members, or co-workers) who has served, were killed, or wounded as a member of the United States military in Afghanistan.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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20. It is my understanding that the United States has a clear plan for handling the situation in Afghanistan.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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IRAQ

1. I believe the United States had to invade Iraq in March 2003 as part of the War on Terror and this invasion was not a separate military action.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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2. I believe that Saddam Hussein was involved with terrorist networks such as al Qaeda and potentially harboring known terrorists.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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3. The United States made a mistake in sending troops to Iraq because no weapons of mass destruction were recovered.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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4. I believe Iraq had weapons of mass destruction or had programs in place to produce or develop them.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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5. I believe the United States should withdraw military troops, but only enough to turn control over to the Iraqis while still maintaining a presence in the country.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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6. The United States intends on maintaining a presence in Iraq indefinitely.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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7. Iraq will eventually have a democratic government that will not likely be overthrown by terrorists or other insurgents.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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8. The United States government has reason to believe al Qaeda planned or plans to operate a terrorist cell or even a terrorist network headquarters located in Iraq.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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9. I have heard about the possibility of permanent United States military installations in Iraq through various forms of mass media (i.e. newspapers, television, Internet, etc.).

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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10. I would favor actions taken by Congress to restrict funding in order to keep President Bush from sending more troops to Iraq.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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11. I think the mass media's role and influence in the formation of public opinion about the United States military presence in Iraq is significant.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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12. The United States should set a deadline for withdrawing United States military forces from Iraq.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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13. The withdrawal of United States forces from Iraq would encourage anti-government insurgents.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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14. There have been an acceptable number of United States military casualties in Iraq.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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15. It is my opinion that the United States government and law enforcement can do little to prevent acts of terror.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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16. I personally know someone (ex. friends, family members, or co-workers) who have served, were killed, or wounded while serving in the United States military in Iraq since the war began in March 2003.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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17. I am aware of Iraq Study Report recommendations made by the commission chaired by James Baker and Lee Hamilton and followed news about the findings.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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18. It is my understanding that the United States has a clear plan for handling the situation in Iraq.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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19. Since the United States led invasion of Iraq in March 2003, I have supported United States military troops with a public display (ex. displaying a yellow ribbon, sent care packages to troops, or participated in a demonstration)

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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20. I believe the United States was justified in invading Iraq, even without the approval of the United Nations.

Agree Strongly

Disagree Strongly

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DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Gender

Male

Female

2. Race/Ethnicity

Asian/Pacific Islander

Black/African American

Caucasian

Hispanic

Native American

Other

3. Classification

Freshman

Sophomore

Junior

Senior

Graduate

4. Age

18-24

25-30

31-40

41-50

51-55

55+

5. Academic Major

CRCJ

POLS

Other

6. I most closely relate to political viewpoints that could be considered primarily:

Conservative

Liberal

Other

7. My primary source(s) of mass media information on current events come from:

Newspapers

Television

Internet

Academic Courses/Professors

Magazines

Academic/Scholarly Journals



Word of Mouth



Other



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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Michele L. Whitehead earned her Bachelors and Master of Arts degrees in Criminology and Criminal Justice from the University of Texas at Arlington. Her research interests include terrorism, juvenile delinquency, public policy, gangs and youth violence, law enforcement issues, crime, perception, and media, and women and crime. She currently lives in Fort Worth, Texas.