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# World Opinion in the Gulf Crisis

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The authors investigate the empirical claim that a world opinion existed in the Iraq/Kuwait crisis. They find substantial agreement among citizens of a variety of world cities on the interpretation of events, on affect toward the major actors, and on the goals of the international community, but less agreement on the use of military force. There were significant differences in enthusiasm for that agreement across the various countries, but these mostly reflected differences in affect and in support for various goals. It appears that the attitudes of citizens of various world cities responded to the same factors.

The recent collapse of the Eastern bloc has led to renewed attention to the "end of ideology" (Bell 1960). Policymakers and scholars have suggested that with the apparent demise of communism as a plausible worldview, there exist no important ideological differences between nations of the world, for Western democratic values lack serious competition. Inherent in notions such as the "end of history" or the "New World Order" is the idea that important differences over ideology, and future international conflicts will likely be based on relatively narrow economic interests. Such interests may more easily be compromised and contained than more pervasive value and ideological disputes. This optimistic analysis depends on the assumption that a world consensus on fundamental political principles and values actually exists.

The Persian Gulf War of 1991 seemed to provide an early test of the opinion basis of the New World Order. As the U.N. forces built toward a critical mass in the Persian Gulf, journalists and politicians frequently

asserted that "world opinion" supported military intervention to expel Iraq from Kuwait. Data on public opinion were not cited to support this proposition; instead reference was made to the many U.N. Security Council resolutions. Within a few days of the invasion of Kuwait, the Security Council condemned the action, called for the withdrawal of Iraqi forces in Resolution 660, and imposed diplomatic and economic sanctions in Resolution 661. A series of additional resolutions culminated in Resolution 678, which authorized states to use all necessary means to remove Iraq from Kuwait. This was the first action since the Korean War by the U.N. under Chapter VII of the Charter (Arend forthcoming). Such votes can show a consensus among political elites in the world community, but they say little about a possible consensus in world public opinion.

International relations scholars of the realist school generally dismissed the concept of world opinion. Morgenthau (1978) argues that there can be no world opinion in times of military crisis; at most there can be public opinion in a set of countries. He argues that "whenever one probes beneath the surface of popular phraseology, one finds that a world public opinion restraining the foreign policies of national governments does not exist" (Morgenthau 1978, 273). Mowlana (1986) echoes Morgenthau's skepticism, arguing that the nation-states of the world do not share values and assumptions that are essential for a common community. The limited empirical work on cross-national comparisons of foreign policy attitudes supports this realist perspective. Ziegler (1987) has shown substantial disagreement among citizens of West European nations in their attitudes toward Atlantic cooperation. If the nations of a unifying Europe cannot share a foreign policy consensus, is a world opinion possible?

But others have suggested that the concept of world opinion is a meaningful one. Although Davison (1973) acknowledges skepticism about the utility of the concept, he suggests that the term has some utility. Rusciano and Fiske-Rusciano (1990) argue that the concept is frequently used in international media in a manner that has clear meaning. Their work is based on content analysis of the *International Herald Tribune* and the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* between February and April 1986. They suggest that the core of any notion of world opinion is "the moral judgement of observers which actors must heed in the international arena, or risk isolation as a nation" (p. 306).

Rusciano (1992) later extended this work to include the *New York Times* and the *Times of India*. The two papers used the term "world opinion" more than 60 times during the crisis, in both stories and editorials. The detailed quotations that Rusciano provides from these papers, however, suggest that

the term was used in some (though not all) of these newspapers to imply a common reaction by the nations of the world and not necessarily a consensus among the citizens of those nations. Thus journalistic usage refers to an agreement among world elites and leaders that may or may not imply agreement among the citizenry.

Hinckley (1991) also refers to world opinion, in this case in relation to the Persian Gulf crisis. Hinckley uses the term despite his finding that there were several nations, especially in the Mideast and in Latin America, where support for U.S. action was low. In an impressive analysis of many polls in many countries, Hinckley found that public opinion had a distinctive North-South split; European opinion was strongly supportive of the U.N. actions, Japan gradually moved toward support, and the citizens of many developing nations remained skeptical of U.S. motives.

If a world opinion did exist in the Gulf War, what are its likely sources? In their discussion of American opinion on foreign policy, Page and Shapiro (1991) argue that the public forms rational opinions given the information available. They note that the public responds primarily to elites who frame the debates, and to the mass media that interprets international events. They note that "particular sources of news and commentary speak to the public through the media, providing much of the factual and interpretive material that mediates the effects of objective events on public opinion" (Page and Shapiro 1991, 341). They suggest that experts and other news sources provide the information and analysis on which the public bases its opinions. This analysis suggests that one possible source of a world opinion is a framing of issues by political and media elites.

There is evidence that media exposure affected American attitudes toward the Gulf War (Wilcox, Gunn, Ferrara, and Allsop 1992), although we have little evidence to date for this interpretation in other countries. But Rusciano's analysis of media use of the term "world opinion" in the Gulf crisis suggests that media elites may have frequently used a common frame in Gulf stories, frequently relying on common television footage.

### THE CONCEPT OF "WORLD PUBLIC OPINION"

If there are important differences in national opinions, can the concept of world opinion be meaningful? We argue that it can. Consider for the purposes of comparison the concept of national opinion. Although the vast majority of the work on foreign policy attitudes has focused on the sources of individual opinion within nations, other studies have focused on aggregate U.S. opinion

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(Shapiro and Page 1988; Stimson 1991; Page and Shapiro 1991). Morgenthau and others refer to separate national opinions. Within these nations there may be sharp divisions by region, race, religion, sex, or generation, but most scholars would agree that we can speak of a national opinion.

Scholars who do aggregate analysis of American opinion are aware that aggregate trends can mask great diversity among subgroups. However, there seems to be consensus that we can refer to "American opinion" or "French opinion" while ignoring for a moment the sources of diversity within these countries. Although there were important racial and gender differences in U.S. opinion in the Gulf, for example (Wilcox, Ferrara, and Allsop 1991), few scholars would take umbrage at a claim that "American opinion" was supportive of the Gulf War after the commencement of hostilities. The concept of national opinion implies a certain minimal level of agreement, while allowing for divisions among the citizens of the nation.

For the concept of world opinion to have meaning, however, there must exist a certain level of agreement. Although we have argued above that the concept of world opinion may be theoretically defensible, it is an empirical question whether the necessary agreement actually exists on any issue. If the nations of the world are deeply divided on all issues, then the concept of world opinion may be empirically meaningless. A world opinion would seem to require the agreement of a majority of citizens in most countries. Although it seems too strict a standard to insist that a majority of citizens in all countries agree to a world opinion, it is important that most countries share in any world opinion. It is also possible that a world consensus might exist. Although there is no established standard for when a public opinion consensus exists, McClosky (1968) suggests that we might claim a public opinion consensus when at least 75% of the general public take a particular position. Graham (1989) provides a more nuanced set of descriptions of public opinion distributions. He defines a virtually unanimous opinion as 80%+ in support of a proposition, a preponderant public opinion as 70%-79%, a consensus as 60%-69%, and a majority opinion as 51%-59%.

What might constitute evidence for the empirical existence of a world public opinion in a foreign policy crisis? First, there needs to be some agreement on the interpretation of the events in question and on the goals of a possible multinational action. Do citizens of different countries define international events in the same way, and do they agree on the possible courses of action? Second, there would need to be some agreement on the best solution to the problem. Third, if there is some agreement as to the relevant issues involved in the dispute, then a world opinion might be said to exist.

Of course, even if a world opinion exists, there will be national differences in support for that opinion. However, it is possible to find evidence of a world opinion even in the face of fairly sizable national differences in attitudes. If national differences are at least partly explainable by differences in the social composition of the population of these nations, then a world opinion may be in operation. For example, if we were to find substantial differences between the attitudes of citizens in Germany and Mexico, but were able to attribute these differences to higher levels of education among German citizens, then we would have some evidence that national differences were due to demographic factors that influence citizens of the world.

The Persian Gulf War provides a good test of the possibility of world opinion. The repeated U.N. votes against the Iraq invasion, the imposition of world-wide sanctions, and the eventual multinational U.N. military action to expel Iraq from Kuwait all suggest a level of elite consensus that was rare in previous foreign policy conflicts. Moreover, the U.S.-USSR agreement on the appropriateness of the use of military force provided an opportunity for a truly united world community. Few nations of the world openly sided with Iraq in the crisis, and most gave at least tacit support for the military action. Thus the Persian Gulf War provides an "easy" test for the possibility of world opinion. If we cannot speak of world opinion in this instance, it is difficult to imagine another in which the concept would be meaningful.

In this article, we examine the evidence for agreement and consensus among the publics of various nations on the Gulf crisis. We begin by examining national differences in perceptions of the nature of the crisis, and in affect toward the main actors. We next explore differences in support for various policy goals, and then for policy options including U.S. and multinational military action. Next, we examine the magnitude of national differences and see how far controls for social and demographic variables go in explaining these differences. Finally, we will determine the extent of national differences in the understanding of the relevant issues in the Gulf crisis. In that analysis, we will determine whether the same sorts of attitudes affect support for military action in each country.

## THE DATA

The data for this study come from a cross-national survey conducted by the Wirthlin Group for the Citizens for a Free Kuwait. The survey was administered in large cities of 11 countries in October 1990. The cities

included Ankara, Brussels, Frankfurt, Lagos, London, Mexico City, Moscow, Paris, Rome, Tel Aviv, and Tokyo. Approximately 600 interviews were completed in each city. We thus have an interesting mixture of developed and developing countries, of oil exporters and oil-importing nations. The study did not include any South American country (although Mexico is included), nor any predominantly Arab country (although Turkish citizens were surveyed and Nigeria has a large Muslim population). Many of the countries in the study were early supporters of U.N.-sponsored sanctions, although Germany was accused of relatively lax enforcement that allowed trade with Iraq after the sanctions were imposed (Joyner 1991).

Three of the countries in this survey might have a special interest in the Gulf War. Iraq was once a client state of the USSR, which may result in lingering sympathy for Hussein among Moscow residents. Israeli officials perceived that a strong Iraq posed a military threat to their nation, so Tel Aviv citizens may have a special interest in destroying the Iraqi military machine. Finally, Turkey borders Iraq, and Turkish Kurds frequently crossed the border to visit their Iraqi compatriots. Hussein's history of suppression of the Kurds in Iraq may have led to support for a policy that might weaken his regime. Turkey was a military ally of the United States in the Gulf War.

Our data are limited to the residents in one city in each country. Such a sample is quite useful in developing countries, for it is unlikely that residents in smaller villages or rural areas of Nigeria, Mexico, or Turkey were greatly concerned about the Persian Gulf crisis, or had well-developed attitudes on the topic. However, it is important to remember that the sentiments of residents of Lagos may not mirror those in the Nigerian countryside, and that this may be true in Tokyo and London as well. The cities selected were in most cases their nation's capitals, and therefore contained a disproportionate number of citizens interested in world affairs.

The survey instrument contained items about the proper interpretation of Iraqi actions; items that measured affect toward world leaders, various nations, and the United Nations; a series of items that posed various rationales and goals for military action; and items that tapped support for multilateral and U.S. military action to expel Iraq from Kuwait. Details of question wording and scale construction are found in the Appendix.<sup>1</sup>

1. Some of the sets of items in this survey are worded in such a way that response sets are a real possibility. The items on attitudes toward Kuwait, for example, are all worded so that an agreement is favorable to Kuwait. It is impossible to deal fully with this problem, but the main results in the multivariate analysis have been duplicated using LISREL, which partially modeled out measurement error.

## WORLD INTERPRETATIONS AND EMOTIONS ON THE PERSIAN GULF

In Table 1 we show the percentage of respondents in each city who were attending to events in the Gulf. We show national differences in the interpretations of the Persian Gulf situation and affect toward the major actors. In each of the cities of the developed world, a majority of respondents reported having discussed the events in the Gulf with a friend. In each city except Paris, nearly half or more reported that they attended to news about the crisis. In the developing world, interest and attention were somewhat lower, but still remarkably high.

There was strong agreement in the 15 cities in our surveys that Iraq had invaded a sovereign state instead of reclaiming its own land, and agreement as well that the dispute affected the entire world. This opinion fits Graham's definition of a preponderant opinion, and narrowly misses McClosky's definition of consensus (Graham 1989; McCloskey 1968). There was less agreement on whether the military response was multinational in nature or primarily a U.S. action, with opinion in most cities sharply divided on this issue. Clearly there was no world consensus on the interpretation of the U.S. role in the military buildup. Recall that these surveys were conducted in October 1990, before troops from a number of nations were sent to the Gulf. Majorities of citizens in all cities except Tel Aviv believed that the legitimate government of Kuwait was functioning in exile, and large majorities in all cities except Tokyo agreed that Hussein had committed terrorism against his own people.

The affect measures show that in every city Saddam Hussein and Iraq were regarded more coolly than the Emir and Kuwait and than Bush and the United States. Residents in Lagos, Nigeria were markedly warmer toward Iraq and Hussein than other respondents, but this reflected a more general North-South split: residents in Ankara and Mexico City were also somewhat warmer toward Iraq, and somewhat more likely to believe that Iraq had merely recovered its own land. Although we have no data on the religious preference of respondents, it seems likely that Muslims in Lagos were warmer toward Hussein.

In Table 2, we show various rationales for military action and various possible outcomes. In each city, substantial majorities that meet Graham's definition of a consensus believed that the world's oil supply must be protected and that Iraq must be made to pay compensation to Kuwait. Large majorities also did not support a call for Kuwait to give up some of the

TABLE 2  
Policy Goals and Rationales (in percentages)

Goals	Brussels	Frankfurt	London	Paris	Rome	Tokyo	Moscow	Tel Aviv	Ankara	Lagos	Mexico City
World's oil supply must be protected	75	68	70	70	75	85	67	70	89	77	88
Iraq must pay compensation and destroy Iraqi chemical and nuclear weapons	91	88	91	92	83	90	93	98	91	55	85
Remove Hussein	76	88	88	69	65	92	53	91	83	39	63
Kuwait must give up some land	34	31	32	38	46	31	26	16	19	32	37
Iraq should be allowed to occupy Kuwait	7	5	7	5	9	10	7	5	11	20	19
Fight because Kuwait keeps oil prices low	80	75	71	68	86	78	83	82	66	69	80
Kuwait civilized	72	83	81	68	85	65	64	62	64	79	76
Kuwait voice reason	68	82	73	59	82	53	81	56	45	68	66
Kuwait "home" to people of world	67	71	70	60	87	58	85	57	44	73	67
Kuwait's foreign aid	64	72	73	62	80	57	85	53	57	83	71

TABLE 1  
Cognitive and Affective Orientations

	Brussels	Frankfurt	London	Paris	Rome	Tokyo	Moscow	Tel Aviv	Ankara	Lagos	Mexico City
Talked about events	72%	71%	68%	66%	74%	54%	39%	80%	75%	41%	66%
Attend to news	47%	63%	61%	37%	57%	71%	61%	53%	40%	31%	32%
Own country is part of U.N.	91%	89%	94%	93%	88%	60%	74%	n.a.	91%	48%	52%
Iraq invaded sovereign state	86%	95%	91%	86%	84%	94%	88%	97%	79%	70%	70%
Response is world, not just U.S.	62%	62%	47%	43%	57%	39%	49%	48%	49%	51%	40%
Dispute affects whole world	74%	82%	82%	76%	85%	88%	74%	92%	77%	77%	63%
Legitimate Kuwaiti government still exists	77%	56%	60%	59%	68%	71%	77%	41%	71%	55%	67%
Hussein committed terrorism	80%	90%	91%	90%	70%	41%	80%	82%	80%	66%	75%
Mean affect	15	6	9	11	10	23	16	6	21	40	27
Hussein	62	62	61	60	60	53	76	77	43	59	55
Bush	49	42	47	44	47	45	45	34	33	44	46
Emir	23	15	18	18	16	32	21	8	22	39	35
Iraq	62	64	63	63	62	60	78	80	42	68	58
United States	52	46	54	54	53	47	54	38	39	48	51
Kuwait											

NOTE: Percentages are of respondents in each city taking each position, and mean feeling thermometer scores are for each referent in each city. n.a. = not ascertained.

disputed territory. There was overwhelming consensus that Iraq must not be allowed to continue to occupy Kuwait.

In every city, a majority believed that the military action should destroy the nuclear and chemical arsenals of Iraq. This position was nearly unanimously held in Tel Aviv, although only a narrow majority in Lagos supported this action. Large majorities in the Western industrialized cities and in Ankara supported a policy that aimed at removing Saddam Hussein from power, although support was lower in Moscow, Mexico City, and especially in Lagos, where only a minority of citizens wanted Hussein removed from power.

The survey included a number of statements about Kuwait that were tested as justifications for military action. Majorities in all cities except Ankara saw these statements as justification for military action. However, it is interesting to note that these statements had less force among those who had the highest levels of education and who attended regularly to TV news and newspapers.

In Table 3, we present national differences in support for various policy options. We have divided these options into those that involve multilateral use of force and action led by the U.S. Predictably, there was less agreement on the proper policy tools than on the goals of that policy. Large majorities in most cities favored continued U.N. pressure on Iraq to withdraw, no matter what the cost in money and lives. Majorities also reported that they would view as acceptable a world military action that would drive Hussein out of Kuwait.

When the items asked about U.N. soldiers initiating combat, however, support dropped in all cities except Tel Aviv. Majorities in Frankfurt, London, and Paris took hawkish views on both questions about U.N. troops starting combat, but support was lower in Rome, Moscow, and in cities of the developing nations. Support for multinational military action was lowest in Japan, where only 11% of respondents favored combat if the embargo failed, and only 20% supported such action if Iraq continued to occupy Kuwait.

Support was even more mixed on the role of the United States in the coming military action. Majorities in Brussels, Frankfurt, London, Paris, Moscow, and Tel Aviv felt that it was appropriate for the U.S. to lead the action. Support was surprisingly strongest in Moscow, where more than 9 in 10 respondents believed that their former adversary should lead a military action against their former client state. Less than a third of citizens in Mexico City supported a U.S.-led action, possibly because of the history of U.S. unilateral action in deposing governments in Latin America. A majority of citizens in all cities except Tel Aviv opposed a unilateral action by the U.S. to drive Iraq from Kuwait, and only in Brussels, London, Paris, and Tel Aviv

TABLE 3  
Policy Options (in percentages)

	Brussels	Frankfurt	London	Paris	Rome	Tokyo	Moscow	Tel Aviv	Ankara	Lagos	Mexico City
Multilateral action	76	60	79	66	86	81	87	83	55	79	44
U.N. must pressure Iraq to withdraw no matter what the cost	72	61	78	77	77	64	74	86	52	60	59
Acceptable in world military troops drive out Hussein	44	56	59	51	37	11	43	88	46	42	46
Soldiers from U.N. start combat if embargo fails	52	58	66	55	47	20	49	86	47	49	53
U.S. action appropriate for U.S. to lead military	54	62	52	53	46	47	91	84	39	48	32
Support U.S.-led attack if talks break down	58	40	52	57	43	22	43	82	32	45	38
Acceptable if the U.S. alone should drive Iraq out of Kuwait	27	23	20	26	33	12	35	67	17	30	22
U.S. has used Iraq as an excuse to establish Mideast presence	44	29	33	47	38	31	57	30	75	63	66

power of Iraq than those of Brussels and less supportive of a possible compromise, but cooler toward the Kuwaitis and less supportive of military action. Residents of Tel Aviv were quite supportive of military action and opposed to compromise, but also less supportive of Kuwait. Citizens of Lagos were less supportive of goals of reducing Iraqi power, more supportive of compromise, and less willing to support force, but they were also significantly more supportive of Kuwait (which had been a major benefactor of Nigeria).

Controls for demographic variables did little to reduce the magnitude or statistical significance of the dummy variables for various cities. In part, this may be a function of the limited number of demographic variables in the survey. Clearly controls for religious preference would have been useful, as would a measure of general ideology. However, such controls would have done little to affect the magnitude of the coefficients for Tel Aviv, Mexico City, or Tokyo. Clearly there were important national cleavages in the enthusiasm for the world agreement on the Kuwait crisis, and national differences appear more important than those demographic variables for which we have data in explaining world opinion.

### THE SOURCES OF SUPPORT FOR MILITARY ACTION

We have established that there existed sufficient agreement on many issues to validate empirically a notion of world opinion, but that there were deep divisions in the world community in the degree of enthusiasm in support of that agreement. Moreover, demographic variables do not help us to understand the differences between the countries in the degree of support for military action. The concept of world opinion would gain further plausibility if the sources of support for military action were similar across the various cities in this study. If residents of Tokyo were less supportive of military action because they are less hostile to Saddam Hussein or less concerned with containing Iraq, for example, then their hesitation to endorse military action becomes understandable. Moreover, such a finding would suggest that the citizenry of various world cities considered the same factors in forming their opinions about military action.

We have separately estimated ordinary least squares (OLS) regression equations for each city, using as dependent variables support for multilateral military action and for U.S.-led military action. As independent variables we include three measures of affect—toward the United States, Iraq, and Kuwait. In each case, this measure is constructed as the mean adjusted feeling

NOTE: This table displays unstandardized regression coefficients and *t* values. Brussels is excluded. Controls include sex, age, income, education, whether the respondent is an Arab, television news exposure, and newspaper readership. \**p* ≤ .05; \*\**p* ≤ .01.

	Contain Iraq		Compromise		Help Kuwait		Multilateral Action		U.S.-Led Action	
	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>
Ankara controls	.03	0.71	-.08	-1.87	-.29	-6.39**	-.25	-6.57**	-.39	-10.47**
Frankfurt controls	.11	2.64**	-.10	-2.21*	-.29	-5.55**	-.23	-6.07**	-.38	-9.81**
Lagos controls	.09	2.13*	-.07	-1.48	.29	6.21**	-.09	-2.17*	.06	1.47
Lagos controls	-.75	-17.88**	.22	4.31**	.29	5.90**	-.06	-1.53	-.13	-3.38**
Lagos controls	-.70	-15.92**	.19	3.60**	.33	6.79**	-.04	-0.89	-.11	-2.59**
London controls	.16	3.90**	.01	0.30	.02	0.42	.15	4.05**	.04	1.11
London controls	.15	3.62	.00	0.00	-.00	-.06	.13	3.39**	.06	1.64
Mexico City controls	-.15	-3.81**	.26	5.62**	.08	1.69	-.31	-8.20**	-.42	-11.21**
Mexico City controls	-.08	-1.98*	.26	5.34**	.14	3.20**	-.26	-6.71**	-.37	-9.66**
Moscow controls	.03	0.78	-.15	-3.16**	.49	10.72**	.08	2.04*	.18	4.68**
Moscow controls	.07	1.63	-.09	-1.89	.58	12.12**	.09	2.26*	.21	5.40**
Paris controls	-.13	-3.17**	.13	2.69**	-.18	-3.96**	-.00	-0.17	-.02	-0.41
Paris controls	-.11	-2.79**	.11	2.41*	-.17	-3.82**	-.01	-0.20	-.00	-0.12
Paris controls	-.16	-4.02**	.22	4.77**	.44	9.99**	-.07	-1.78	-.13	-3.59**
Rome controls	-.16	-3.97**	.21	4.51**	.44	9.99**	-.08	-2.03*	-.14	-3.69**
Rome controls	.34	8.56**	-.21	-4.52**	-.20	-4.47**	.43	11.67**	.68	18.30**
Tel Aviv controls	.35	8.73**	-.23	-4.87**	-.20	-4.33**	.43	11.31**	.68	17.90**
Tel Aviv controls	.06	1.47	.11	2.35*	-.18	-3.83**	-.43	-11.25**	-.37	-9.78**
Tel Aviv controls	.08	1.84	.13	2.69**	-.14	-2.90**	-.45	-11.72**	-.37	-9.70**

TABLE 4

Multivariate Analysis

thermometer toward the country and its leader.<sup>3</sup> In addition, we have constructed three scales to measure foreign policy goals—to contain Iraq, to protect Kuwait, and to protect the world's oil supply.<sup>4</sup>

In Table 5, we show the results for support for multilateral military action. The variables do a fairly good job in accounting for the variation in each city, but the goodness of fit is lower in Moscow and Tel Aviv. In the latter case, there was such widespread agreement on the need for military action that there was little systematic variation to explain.<sup>5</sup> The data suggest that in European cities, in Ankara, and in Japan, support for multilateral action was partly a function of affect toward the United States. In all cities, negative affect toward Iraq predicted support for military action. Affect toward Kuwait did not play a major role in any city, although it was positively associated with support for action in Brussels and negatively associated with support in Tel Aviv.

In all cities, a desire to protect the world's oil supply was a significant source of support for multilateral action. In nearly all cities, a desire to contain Iraq and destroy its war capacity was a strong predictor, and this relationship was predictably strongest in Tel Aviv. A desire to help Kuwait was significant only in Moscow and Tel Aviv.

In Table 6, we show similar coefficients for support for U.S.-led military action. Once again the variables do a relatively good job in explaining variation in most cities, although once again the consensus in Tel Aviv limits the explanatory value of the independent variables. Affect toward the United States is the strongest predictor in most cities. Because this scale measures support for a U.S. leadership role, affect toward Iraq is relatively less important, and affect toward Kuwait is again relatively unimportant in explaining variation in attitudes. A desire to protect oil is a significant predictor in most cities, as is a desire to contain Iraq. Once again, a goal to help Kuwait is relatively unimportant in explaining attitudes, except in Lagos.

Taken together, the data in these tables suggest that support for military action in various world cities is explainable in terms of a common set of attitudinal variables. Although citizens in the cities of the world may differ

3. In other words, for the United States we have taken the feeling thermometers toward the United States and toward Bush. We have adjusted these feeling thermometers to reflect individual differences in the use of these items. See Wilcox, Sigelman, and Cook (1989) for more details.

4. It might appear that the policy goals might be collinear with the affect measures. In particular, we might expect that the goal of containing Iraq would be highly correlated with affect toward Iraq and Hussein. In no city was the correlation greater than .3, however.

5. With little systematic variation, the random measurement error is a larger proportion of the overall variance.

TABLES  
National Differences in the Sources of Support for Multinational Military Action

City	Affect, United States				Affect, Kuwait				Affect, Iraq				Contain Iraq				Help Kuwait				Constant	N	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	
	b	beta	b	beta	b	beta	b	beta	b	beta	b	beta	b	beta	b	beta	b	beta						
Brussels	.07	.19**	.07	.17**	.04	.00	-.09	-.20**	.19	.22**	.20	.19**	.03	.03	.10	.17	.17	.19	.03	.10	.10	.44*	561	.27
Frankfurt	.07	.17**	.04	.00	-.06	-.20**	.09	-.14**	.12	.13**	.08	.07	.07	.07	.05	.05	.05	.08	.05	.05	.02	.44*	549	.29
London	.06	.26**	.03	.00	-.05	-.20**	.15	-.14**	.14	.16**	.03	.03	.03	.03	.03	.03	.04	.08	.03	.03	.02	.38*	552	.31
Paris	.04	.20**	.08	.16**	-.06	-.16**	.12	-.19**	.16	.16**	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.42*	514	.24
Rome	.05	.13**	.07	.13**	-.07	-.26**	.09	-.15**	.16	.19**	.06	.06	.06	.06	.06	.06	.06	.06	.06	.06	.06	.42*	574	.24
Tokyo	.11*	.05	.02	.02	-.07	-.19**	.09	-.11*	.11*	.26**	.09	.09	.09	.09	.09	.09	.09	.09	.09	.09	.09	.53**	439	.21
Moscow	.03	.08*	.03	.08*	-.04	-.09*	.19	.22**	.19	.19**	.03	.03	.03	.03	.03	.03	.03	.03	.03	.03	.03	.44*	549	.29
Tel Aviv	.01	-.09*	-.02	-.09*	.11	.16**	.11	.16**	.11	.16**	.06	.06	.06	.06	.06	.06	.06	.06	.06	.06	.06	.47**	484	.14
Ankara	.10	.30**	-.02	-.02	-.07	-.21**	.21	.24**	.03	.03	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.20	574	.34
Lagos	.02	.06	.01	.01	-.04	-.11**	.23	.27**	.29	.39**	.01	.01	.01	.01	.01	.01	.01	.01	.01	.01	.01	.60*	387	.41
Mexico City	.02	.02	.00	.00	-.08	-.28**	.18	.20**	.14	.15**	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.04	.96**	517	.19



TABLE 7  
Full Regression Model

	Multilateral Action		U.S.-Led Military Action	
	b	beta	b	beta
Education	.01	.01	-.01	-.01
Income	.01	.02	-.00	-.01
Sex	-.13	-.09**	-.10	-.07**
Age	.00	.01	.00	.02
Reads paper	.06	.04**	-.03	-.02
TV news	.02	.02	.02	.02*
Affect, United States	.05	.15**	.11	.33**
Affect, Kuwait	.01	.03*	.02	.06**
Affect, Iraq	-.06	-.19**	-.03	-.10**
Protect oil	.17	.20**	.11	.12**
Contain Iraq	.16	.18**	.11	.11**
Help Kuwait	.03	.03	.05	.06**
Ankara	-.13	-.06**	-.25	-.11**
Frankfurt	-.14	-.06**	-.13	-.06**
Lagos	.16	.06**	-.02	-.01
London	.11	.05**	.09	.04**
Mexico City	-.21	-.09**	-.31	-.13**
Moscow	-.05	-.02	-.00	-.00
Paris	.01	.00	-.05	-.02
Rome	-.13	-.06**	-.20	-.09**
Tel Aviv	.18	.08**	.41	.16**
Tokyo	-.34	-.13**	-.30	-.11**
N	5,564		5,559	
R <sup>2</sup>	.34		.40	

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

## CONCLUSIONS

These data suggest that the concept of a world opinion in the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait has some empirical meaning. Residents of cities in a variety of countries shared a consensus on the interpretation of events, on policy goals, and in their affective response to the main actors. There was less consensus on the need for military force, but this was true in the United States at the time of this survey, and in the United States support increased as the U.N. deadline approached.

Despite this consensus, there was considerable national variation in the intensity of these attitudes. Our dummy variable regressions showed strong differences in residents of these various cities, and these differences were not reduced by controls for demographic variables. Of course, American opinion differed across generational, gender, racial, and regional lines before the initiation of hostilities (Wilcox, Ferrara, and Allsop 1991). These differences in attitudes do not mean that the concept of world (or national) opinion is meaningless, but they do point to the limits to the meaning of the concept.

We also find that the attitudinal sources of support for military action are relatively similar across countries, and that these attitudes are far more important than the city of residence in predicting support for military action. This suggests that citizens in these cities framed the issue of military action in similar ways, and were influenced by the same affective and cognitive components to their attitudes. Support for military action was a function of affect toward the United States and Iraq, and of support for goals of maintaining the world's oil supply and of containing Iraq.

Although we conclude that we can speak of world opinion in the case of the Kuwait crisis, some caveats are in order. First, it is unlikely that a world opinion with the level of consensus we have stipulated would have existed in earlier conflicts. Moreover, the existence of a world opinion does not imply that this consensus had an impact on the actions of any nation or international body.<sup>8</sup> Clearly Iraq did not withdraw from Kuwait because of international opinion. It is possible that the multinational nature of the U.S.-led coalition was partly a response to world opinion, but additional analysis (not shown) shows that a large majority of Americans also preferred multilateral action to an exclusively American response. The impact of world public opinion on foreign policy in the Kuwait crisis is a different question that would require different methodology. It must be the subject of future research.

8. Knopf (1992) has recently argued that world opinion had an impact on negotiations over a nuclear test ban, suggesting that the realists' dismissal of any impact from world opinion may have been premature.

## APPENDIX

Interview dates and methods	
Ankara	In person 10/13-10/19
Brussels	In person 10/10-10/18
Frankfurt	Telephone 10/8-10/12
Lagos	In person 10/12-10/21
London	Telephone 9/28-10/2
Mexico City	In person 10/5-10/16
Moscow	In person 10/10-10/24
Paris	Telephone 10/4-10/12
Rome	Telephone 10/3-10/10
Tel Aviv	Telephone 10/7-10/9
Tokyo	In person 10/5-10/19

## Scale Construction

*Affect for United States*

Constructed from adjusted feeling thermometers toward the United States and George Bush. Pearson's  $r = .70$

*Affect for Kuwait*

Constructed from adjusted feeling thermometers toward Kuwait and the Emir. Pearson's  $r = .63$

*Affect for Iraq*

Constructed from adjusted feeling thermometers toward Iraq and Hussein. Pearson's  $r = .62$

*Help Kuwait*

Now I'd like to read you a few statements that describe the country of Kuwait. For each one I'd like you to tell me how important you think the statement is as a reason that countries around the world should be willing to help fight for Kuwait:

- (very important, somewhat important, not very important, not important at all)
1. Kuwait is more than just oil. It is a group of people with a civilized way of life and a constitutional government.
  2. Kuwait has always been a voice of reason in the troubled Middle East and has worked to reduce regional conflicts.
  3. Kuwait, until now, has always been a friendly home to people from around the world and has a civilized and sophisticated society.
  4. Kuwait has used its oil wealth wisely by distributing it among its own citizens and helping other countries through foreign aid.

Alpha = .81

*Contain Iraq*

Now I am going to read you a list of possible outcomes of this crisis that some people feel need to happen before this conflict can be resolved completely. Please tell me whether you favor or oppose each outcome:

(strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, strongly oppose)

1. Saddam Hussein must be removed.
2. Iraq must pay compensation to the government and people of Kuwait.
3. The chemical and nuclear war machine of Iraq must be destroyed.

Alpha = .55

*Protect Oil*

(Introduction as in the Help Kuwait Scale)

1. Kuwait has always tried to keep the other oil-producing countries of OPEC in check and the price of oil reasonable.  
(Strongly agree to strongly disagree)
2. The world's oil supply in the Persian Gulf must be protected at all costs.

Gamma = .78

*Multilateral Military Action*

On principle, the United Nations must continue to pressure Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait no matter how long it takes or how much it costs in men and material.

Soldiers from several United Nation's countries should engage in combat if the embargo does not seem to be taking effect.

Soldiers from several United Nation's countries should engage in combat if Iraq refuses to leave Kuwait and restore its legitimate government.

Military forces from all the countries around the world that are now in the Middle East [should] drive Iraqi soldiers out of Kuwait.

Alpha = .78

*U.S.-Led Military Action*

It is perfectly appropriate that the United States takes the leadership in coordinating a military response to Iraq.

The United States, acting on its own, [should] drive Iraqi soldiers out of Kuwait. If the economic embargo becomes bogged down and both sides appear to be stalemated, would you support United States military action to drive Iraq out of Kuwait even if Saddam Hussein did nothing further to provoke an attack?

Alpha = .71

*Other Items:*

How would you describe what Iraq did to Kuwait? Some people say it invaded a sovereign state and other people say it reclaimed its own land. With whom do you agree?

Thinking now a moment about the actions that the United States and other countries have taken in response to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. . . . Some people think that the response has been a global and cooperative one coordinated by the United Nations. Other people think that the response has been mostly a U.S. intervention. What do you think?

Some people say that the dispute involving Iraqi invasion of Kuwait is an Arab matter that should be solved by Arab States, while others say it affects the whole world

and needs to be handled by international leaders and the United Nations. Which view comes closest to your opinion?

Iraq's Saddam Hussein has committed acts of terrorism and atrocities among his own people.

Iraq should be allowed to continue to occupy Kuwait.

Kuwait must give up some of its own land to give Iraq access to and control of a port on the Persian Gulf.

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