

Daniel Droba Day (1898-1998):
Attitudes Towards War as a Cause of War

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Militarism and pacificism were the topics of some of the earliest empirical studies of attitudes undertaken by psychologists. This was the research focus of Daniel Droba Day under the tutelage of L. L. Thurstone at the University of Chicago in the 1920s. The motivations for this work must, in part, have arisen from a desire to take actions to prevent war. During the 1930s, when war was on the horizon, Day (1933d; 1934c, p. 516) argued that “*attitudes toward war are the fundamental cause of war.*” The research career of Daniel Day should be of interest to contemporary psychologists, particularly those engaged in research to prevent more war. The biographies of psychologists active in peace research can inspire contemporary psychologists and can lead to meta-historical conceptions of the psychological aspects of peace and war (Rudmin, 1990).

Biography

Daniel Droba Day’s original name was Daniel Drobroslov Droba, which he changed to Danial Droba Day in the late 1930s for reasons thus far unknown. According to his autobiography in the preface to his 1931 doctoral dissertation, Droba (1931f, p. 8) was born in 1898 in Zaskov, Czechoslovakia. He graduated from the Lyceum in Bratislava at age 18 and was drafted into the Austrian Army for two years of military service, including commission as an officer. Perhaps as a result of his war experiences, he began a decade of studies in theology. From 1918 to 1921, he studied at the Lutheran Seminary in Bratislava, and from 1921 to 1922 at the Presbyterian College in Belfast, Ireland. In June, 1922, he emigrated to the USA, studied at the Union Theological Seminary in New York City for one year, and then served as a preacher for one year in Byesville, Ohio. In 1924, he studied at the Chicago Theological College.

In 1925, Droba enrolled in the University of Chicago and completed his

master's degree in 1926 on "*Effect of printed information on memory for pictures,*" research which he published in 1929. During this time, he apparently became a student of L. L. Thurstone who held professorship at the University of Chicago from 1924 to 1952, and who was then developing psychometric methods for measuring attitudes. Thurstone's landmark paper "*Attitudes Can be Measured*" used items on pacificism to illustrate his methods of attitude scale development. A footnote acknowledged Daniel Droba as the author of this scale of pacificism and noted that Droba's work would be published as a doctoral dissertation (Thurstone, 1928, p. 544).

Even though Thurstone had identified Droba's research to be of doctoral quality in 1928, he was not awarded a PhD for that work by the University of Chicago. In fact, US Census data shows that in 1930, Daniel Droba was working as a clerk for a railroad company. In January 1931, he enrolled for doctoral studies in the sociology department of Ohio State University and was awarded a PhD later that same year for his research done earlier at the University of Chicago on attitudes towards war. His scales had been published by the University of Chicago Press in 1930, with two equivalent forms of the scale (Droba, 1930).

During the period 1931 to 1934, Droba was most prolific, publishing at least 16 single-authored articles mostly on attitudes towards war. The most cited of these is "A scale of militarism - pacificism" published in the *Journal of Educational Psychology* (Droba, 1931a). But he published as well in *Psychological Bulletin*, the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, the *Journal of Social Psychology*, the *American Journal of Sociology*, the *Sociology and Social Research*, and *Social Forces*. In 1934, Droba published a book on *Czech and Slovak Leaders in Metropolitan Chicago: A Biographical Study of 300 Prominent Men and Women of*

Czech and Slovak Descent, indicating his pride in his Czech origins.

The date-lines on these publications, written during the Great Depression, show an uneven record of employment. Some are from the Ohio State University in Columbus, some are from the Department of Sociology at the University of North Dakota, and some are simply date-lined "Chicago". Between 1934 and 1940, there is no record of publications by Droba, and then appear two final articles in 1940 and 1942, written from the Bureau of Educational Research at Ohio State University, co-authored with O. F. Quackenbush, based on research done in Mississippi. Daniel Droba had by then changed his name to Daniel Droba Day.

According to his Veterans Administration cemetery records, he had entered the US Army for active duty during World War II, attaining the rank of 1st Lieutenant. According to his obituary, after WWII, he worked as a counselling psychologist for the U. S. Veterans Administration (Anon, 1998). He died on March 3, 1998, in Florida and was buried at Bay Pines National Cemetery. His nearest next-of-kin was a niece in Europe. He bequeathed funds to the American Psychological Foundation (Merck, 2005).

Attitudes Towards Pacifism and Militarism

Droba's first scale was based on the conception that pacifism was the contrary of militarism, on a single dimension. He began with 237 statements about war culled from newspapers, books, students' assignments, and his own thinking. Of these, 130 statements were scaled by 300 students for the degree of pacifism expressed (Droba, 1931e). Of these, 44 items were used to make two equivalent scales of 22 items each (Droba, 1930). An example of a low pacifism (high militarism) item is: "*A country cannot amount to much without a national honor, and war is the only means of preserving it,*" rated to be 1.3 on a pacificism range of 1 to

11; an example of a high pacifism (low militarism) items is “*All nations should disarm immediately,*” rated to be 10.6 on pacifism.

Droba’s use of this scale with 1400 University of Chicago students showed that women were more pacifistic than men, a finding that was replicated in subsequent studies. Comparing 10 religions, Catholics, Lutherans, and Episcopalians were most militaristic (Droba, 1931a), leading Droba to conclude that “*the more conservative a church is the more militaristic it will tend to be, and the more liberal a church is the more pacifistic it will profess to be*” (Droba, 1933b, p. 547). Least militaristic were secular Protestants without any avowed religious affiliation (Droba, 1933b). Pacifism was enhanced by education, by age, by mixed-marriage, and by socialist ideology; whereas, militarism was enhanced by study of natural sciences, by military service experience, and by affiliation with Republican or Democratic parties (Droba, 1931d). Unrelated to pacifism-militarism were IQ, neuroticism, employment status, and parents’ SES, (Droba, 1933d).

Attitudes Towards Types of War

_____ The last study by Daniel Droba Day was his 1942 report in *The Journal of Social Psychology*. Here he differentiated defensive war, cooperative war, and aggressive war:

“An aggressive war is one waged by an imperialistic country for the purpose of gaining more territory. A defensive war is for the purpose of defending the United States in case of an attack, while a cooperative war would be illustrated by an active cooperation with the democratic countries of Europe for the defense of a common cause such as democracy” (Day & Quackenbush, 1942, p. 13).

A new scale was devised to measure attitudes towards these three kinds of war, in

the socio-historical context of April, 1941, prior to US entrance into World War II. Defensive war was accepted by 75% of the respondents, cooperative war by 34%, and aggressive war by 11%.

Southern students favored wars more than did northern students. Urban students favored war more than did rural students. Law students favored war more than did other students, and medical students were most opposed to war, which Day attributed to *“their appreciation of the physical consequences of a major war”* as well as to their more mature status as graduate students (Day & Quackenbush, 1942, p. 19).

Conclusion

There are indeed several mysteries in the career of Daniel Droba Day, including the circumstances of his PhD studies, his employment in the 1930s, the reasons for his name change, his role as an ordained minister and anti-war researcher in the US Army during World War II, his long silence after the War even when anti-war activism was salient during the Vietnam War and again during the Reagan administration’s nuclear arms buildup. Nevertheless, Daniel Droba Day should be acknowledged for opening the political psychology of militarism and pacifism to robust psychometric measure.

It is also remarkable that a man well trained in religion should become so critical of religion as a cause of war. Droba (1933, p. 264) concluded from his doctoral studies:

The institutions of education, marriage and the church, which are the great molders of attitudes, are at present producing favorable attitudes toward war. Thus war is today recognized as a lawful institution.

Much of his work seems remarkable contemporary, especially his

differentiation of war into defensive, cooperative and aggressive. The current US administration seems well aware of the fact that the public can accept defensive war to protect the USA, and can accept cooperative war in alliance with other nations to promote democracy. An aggressive war to seize control of other nation's territory and resources would require that it be presented as defensive and cooperative. And so it is.

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