

Source C: Evidence bank: Hardhat rallies

Note: Mentioned in the Overview for Supporting Question #2: The Hard Hat Riot of May 8, 1970 (and the Hard Hat rallies, thereafter) came to symbolize the anger many Americans—particularly the working middle class—had for the anti-war protesters who they perceived as entitled and ungrateful for their desecration of American flags and draft cards.

EVIDENCE 1



Evidence 1: Garry Winogrand, photograph of a Hard Hat rally in San Francisco, 1969.

© The Estate of Garry Winogrand, courtesy Fraenkel Gallery, San Francisco.

EVIDENCE 2



Source 2: Garry Winogrand, photograph of a Hard Hat rally in San Francisco, 1969.

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EVIDENCE 3

For the Flag and for Country, They March

--from the New York Times, May 21, 1970

On May 20, 1970, between 60,000 and 150,000 construction workers and others paraded through downtown New York to show support for President Nixon's Vietnam war policies. The parade was organized by the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York (led by Peter Brennan) in part to counteract the widespread media images of rampaging construction workers from May 8 with images of peaceful political protest. A blizzard of tickertape drifted down on the marchers from the windows of Wall Street offices.

This article is not news coverage of the march but rather "a random sampling of some marchers and their views." This is a valuable historical source for uncovering what the "hardhats" themselves thought and who they were. It is important to keep in mind, though, that the reporter and editors selected the marchers and views they found most newsworthy or representative.

Robert Geary, 50, an office worker for the Colonial Hardware Corporation:

I'm very proud to be an American, and I know my boy that was killed in Vietnam would be here today if he was alive, marching with us....I know he died for the right cause, because in his letters he wrote to me he knew what he was fighting for: to keep America free and to avoid any taking over by Communists--atheistic Communists, by the way.

I think most of them [college dissenters] are influenced by a few vile people...I'll tell you one person who smudged the name of my son and that was Mayor Lindsay. When he stands up and says men who refuse to serve in the armed forces are heroic, then I presume by the same category that my son that was killed in Vietnam is a coward, the way he thinks.

Eighty per cent of the people are behind America and the flag...I believe that what we're fighting for is worth it, yes, but nobody likes war.

Of the flag: It's me. It's part of me. I fought for it myself two or three years in the Second World War...It's the greatest country in the world. All they [dissenters] have to do is move out.

Mrs. Allison Grecker, 411 100th Street, Brooklyn, marching with her children, Richard Nixon Grecker, 1, and Allison, 2:

We're part of the silent majority that's finally speaking--and in answer to the creeps and the bums that have been hollering and marching against the President.

I think he's doing everything he can to bring about an honorable peace. I think my kids are going to live better with Nixon in the White House.

To stop Communist aggression [the war] has been worth it, yes...If they had listened to Gen. Douglas MacArthur from the very beginning and gone into Manchuria, we wouldn't have had the problems we have. We would have put the Communists down back in 1952. I have a lot of faith in the college kids...I think they're being heard enough, and we're answering right now today....They've tried to take over education, the Communists have, and I think this is where [the students are] getting their viewpoints from.

Source 3: Staff, collection of views expressed by construction workers marching in a Hard Hat rally in New York City, "For the Flag and for Country, They March" (excerpts), New York Times, May 21, 1970.

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Source: <http://chnm.gmu.edu/hardhats/forflag.html>.