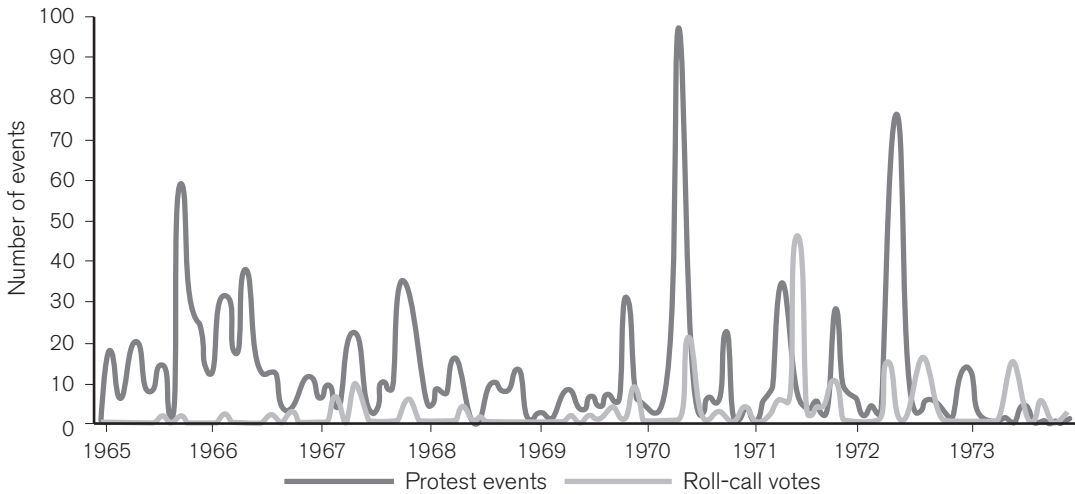


**Figure 9.1 The War at Home: US Anti-War Protests and Congressional Voting, 1965–73**



SOURCE: Doug McAdam and Yang Su, 'The War at Home: Antiwar Protests and Congressional Voting, 1965 to 1973', *American Sociological Review*, (Oct. 2002), 67 (5): 711. Reprinted by permission of the American Sociological Association.

social tensions and reflects weak or inadequate external control.

Because of widespread potentials for racial violence in many countries, the manner in which riots are handled and controlled deeply influences race relations and subsequent patterns of violence. Both local government and the local police are important in determining whether a riot will follow a precipitating incident. Research on American riots in the 1960s found that cities with fewer riots were typically cities with more racially integrated police forces, more representative forms of local government, and a larger percentage of blacks who were self-employed in retail trade, such as store, restaurant, or tavern owners; that is, they were cities with strong, independent black middle-class business groups.

Usually, rioting is set off by an incident involving the police in a minority neighbourhood, where some actual or believed violation of accepted police practice has taken place. Social control starts to break down and people see the opportunity for looting.

If, at this point, order is not restored, the riot moves into a third stage that includes arson, gunfire, and countermeasures by the police and militia. In short, the violence escalates on both sides.

There has been much debate in sociology about the degree of social structuring in riots. Generally, researchers conclude that some kinds of people are more likely than others to participate, and often the participants are linked to one another by social ties as well as shared motives. A large fraction—no fewer than 10 per cent and possibly as many as 20 per cent of the potential population—was involved in the American black urban riots of 1967. Often, people cannot say exactly why they are rioting, or express their motives in overly general terms of dissatisfaction. Often, the mass media play a role in riots, spreading the rationalizations and symbols of identification that rioters come to use. That said, researchers conclude that those who rioted in 1967 were typically less integrated into family life and more subject to informal street life than the average community dweller.