Community Effects on Political Participation: The Role of Social Capital, Heterogeneity and Government Competencies

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Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Abstract

This is a study about political participation and the influence that local contexts have on citizens' participatory habits. The question of why some people participate in politics while others do not has spawned a rich body of research. While varied in its scope and focus, the bulk of the empirical studies of political participation, and indeed the major theoretical accounts of participation, center on individual-level characteristics. Previous research has illustrated the importance of factors such as income, education and other sociodemographic and attitudinal variables in explanations of political participation. However, even after controlling for these, there still exists significant variation in participation across communities. That is, beyond the effect that the characteristics of individuals have on participation, different aspects of the social and political environment in which individuals operate, have an effect on their behavior.

In this thesis it is argued that the social and political environment structures incentives for participation in several ways. The institutional and social character of a person's community has a direct effect on their political behavior. Community-level factors also affect political participation indirectly. While there is good evidence that individual-level characteristics in the form of resources, motivation and mobilization drive political participation, this thesis argues that the effects of these are mediated by the institutional and social context within which individuals find themselves. The study also makes a case for treating different forms of political participation separately. It is argued that the contextual factors explored in the thesis have varying effects on individual

types of participation.

In order to test these arguments, the thesis analyzes the effects of community racial diversity, local government institutions and social capital on both electoral and nonelectoral political participation in American cities. The data used for this study come from several sources. Individual-level survey data come from the 2000 Social Capital Community Benchmark survey—a survey of close to 30,000 individuals across the United States. Respondents to this survey are matched with sociodemographic data on their place of residence and information on local government finances from the United States Census and the Census of Governments as well as data from the International City/County Management Association's Municipal Form of Government survey, containing information on the form and size of local government, provisions for direct democracy and local electoral rules among others. Combined, these sources of data provide information on roughly 15,000 individuals nested in over 1000 cities.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This is a study about political participation and the influence that local contexts have on citizens' participatory habits. Political participation, as Verba, Schlozman & Brady put it, is in many ways "at the heart of democracy" (1995, 1). By taking political action, citizens make their political preferences known, determine who holds public office and try to influence the decisions made by politicians. The question of why some people participate in politics while others do not has spawned a rich body of research. While varied in its scope and focus, the bulk of the empirical studies of political participation, and indeed the major theoretical accounts of participation, center on individual-level characteristics (Rosenstone & Hansen 1994, 2–3). While important, focussing solely on characteristics of individuals leaves out many important factors and fails to explain certain patterns of political participation. Among these are changes in participation over time and differences in participation across space.[1] I focus my attention on the latter.

A consistent finding among previous studies of political participation in the United States and elsewhere is that characteristics of people—such as their level of education, income and occupation—have a strong impact on whether they participate in politics or not. It is generally widely accepted that individuals of higher socio-economic status (SES), for instance, participate at higher rates than others. However, participation does not only vary between individuals, there are also differences across locations. That is, beyond the effect that the characteristics of individuals have on participation, different aspects of the social and political environment in which individuals operate, have an effect on their behavior. So it is not the case that similar individuals—say, white, high SES

[1] Focusing on individuals' socio-economic status as the central explanation for political participation leaves some puzzling questions unanswered. Levels of education, for example, have risen steadily in the post–War United States, yet political participation has been on the decline during the same period.

males—necessarily participate in the same ways or to the same extent regardless of where they live. It is this inter-community variation in political participation that is the focus of this thesis. What community-level factors can help account for the variation in political participation across locations after controlling for individual-level characteristics? And related to this, how does context interact with individual-level factors to influence political behavior?

In order to answer these questions, I examine political participation in American communities. Studying political behavior in the context of urban America is fruitful for a number of reasons. Despite popular conceptions of the United States as a vast wasteland of apathetic and apolitical citizens, the reality is that Americans are participants. As Verba, Schlozman & Brady note, while it is true that voter turnout is lower in the US than in many other democracies, Americans are generally more likely to contact politicians and officials, work on a campaign, belong to and be active in political groups and participate in local politics than citizens in other countries (1995, 91). This civic tradition has a long history; as Alexis de Tocqueville famously noted, Americans of the early nineteenth century stood apart in their willingness to form and participate in all manner of voluntary associations from sports and hobby clubs to cultural and religious groups (Tocqueville 1969 [1832]).

If Americans themselves are good subjects for the study of participation, the communities in which they live provide an excellent arena for analyzing the effects of political and social context on that participation. On the one hand, there exists a great deal of variation when it comes to local political institutions such as electoral and representative systems, the services provided by local government, their size and powers, as well as in the social composition of communities. On the other hand, with seventy-percent of Americans living in urban areas, local governments are of substantive political importance as well (US Department of Commerce (Census Bureau) 2002, 33). Some of the most

contentious issues in contemporary American politics—such as debates over school prayer, regulation of the institution of marriage (Rahn & Rudolph 2001) and conflicts over the teaching of evolution in schools (Bhattacharjee 2005, Holden 2005)—are played out at the local level. Local governments are also of economic importance. Primary and secondary education is the largest category of direct public expenditure, aside from defense, and the budgets for these areas are controlled by local governments (Romer & Rsenthal 1979, US Department of Commerce (Census Bureau) 2000*a*). Moreover, an increasing number of services and programs are being devolved from the federal level to the states and local governments (Cigler 1998, 60–2). Thus elections to city councils and the boards of counties, special districts and school districts matter. When it comes to nonelectoral forms of political participation, the reasons to study the local level are even more apparent. If one considers the ways citizens can participate politically outside elections—by protesting, belonging to and being active in political groups, contacting politicians or officials—they are more often than not local. People get involved because they oppose the building of a local highway, want to influence their children's school or are concerned about crime in their neighborhood. Even when participation is directed at the state or federal level, as when people campaign in elections, the citizen is still a member of a local campaign committee or political group. Increasing our understanding of how differences in local context influence political action is an important element of the larger question of the determinants of political participation in general.

1.2 Defining Political Participation

The ways in which people can get involved in politics—express preferences over political issues or try to influence the direction of policy or the distribution

of public resources—are many and varied. As such, there is no consensus on what constitutes political participation. It is hard to disagree that voting is a political act, it is less clear, however, if participating in the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or being involved with the Salvation Army is. Some studies have confined themselves to defining political participation as voting in elections (Blais & Dobrzynska 1998, Franklin 1996, Franklin 2004, Jackman & Miller 1995, Lijphart 1997); while on the other extreme, certain researchers call for a an almost all-inclusive definition of what constitutes political participation, arguing that virtually all human interaction and action is political by its very nature (Mansbridge 1993, Prokhovnik 1998) . Within this spectrum lies a wide range of what can be considered political participation. Rosenstone & Hansen note that past work in this field has tended to focus on a limited definition of political participation as being concerned with "the selection of government personnel and the actions they take" (1994, 4). This definition is limiting as it does not include actions that, while political in nature, are not necessarily aimed at government personnel or the actions of governments and their bureaucracies—such as actions to change consumer behavior or campaigns to alter the distribution of social goods that do not involve government action, for instance. For this reason Rosenstone & Hansen adopt a definition that is more expansive: "Political participation is action directed explicitly toward influencing the distribution of social goods and social values" (1994, 4).

In this study I am somewhat restricted by the questions included in the survey I use—the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey. At the same time, I also want to make a clear distinction between participation that is *political*, on the one hand, and what could be called civic, or non-political voluntary participation, on the other hand. Nevertheless, I follow Rosenstone and Hansen's lead in that I am concerned with action that is aimed at politicians and policy directly and also that which is political in a wider meaning, in the sense that

it is directed at affecting "the distribution of social goods and social values" (Rosenstone & Hansen 1994, 4). Specifically, the five indicators of political participation analyzed in this thesis are:

- voting in the 1996 presidential election
- signing petitions
- attending political meetings or rallies
- participating in demonstrations or boycotts
- being active in a political group

In choosing these five indicators, an attempt has been made to limit myself to actions that are as explicitly political as possible. This means that other forms of participation that some may argue are political in nature have been excluded—examples of these include such things are being active in the PTA; participating in a veterans' or ethnic group; involvement in a union; writing letters to the editor. The list of actions I have included in the analysis also excludes measures of political knowledge, political interest and regular newspaper readership which are sometimes conceived of as political engagement (Norris 2003, Saguaro Seminar 2001). Here it is not clear, however, if these acts are political participation in and of themselves, or if they are causes of political participation.[2] Moreover, according to the definition I adopt, political participation is seen as an action—being knowledgeable or interested in politics is not by itself active (Parry, Moyser & Day 1992). Many studies of political action also analyze other forms of political participation including various forms of contacting politicians and officials; donating money or time to political campaigns; persuading others to participate in politics. These acts fit what I would

[2]Political knowledge and political interest could be considered consequences of political participation. That is, it is not clear whether people have some knowledge about politics and then decide to get active, or if they make the decision to participate and then decide to gather information in order to make a better political choice.

consider to be political participation, however, they were not included in the Benchmark survey, and therefore cannot be included in the study.

Decisions about how to operationalize political participation carry with them implications for the arguments and conclusions researchers are able to draw about the concept. When studies of political participation look at multiple indicators of participation, they often proceed by creating indexes of participation and then analyzing these scales in one model. Verba, Schlozman & Brady (1995), for example, use an eight point additive scale consisting of various political acts to examine overall participation. By doing so, they are able to answer questions about what factors influence whether individuals participate in many, a few or no political acts. However, such an empirical strategy ignores important differences between modes of participation and makes it impossible to examine if, and in what ways, different factors have variable effects on the probability of engaging in separate forms of participation. Clearly many indicators of political participation are related to each other to some extent. As the correlation matrix in the appendix illustrates, the five forms of political participation analyzed in this thesis are no exception. Nevertheless, there are important particularities that necessitate analyzing individual indicators in separate models.

Some forms of political participation, like voting or contacting a public official, are more individualistic in character, while others, such as being active in a political campaign or participating in a protest, are more social in their nature. Moreover, some political acts are more consensual than others. Put differently, certain forms of political action, such protesting or activity in some political groups, are the result of—or related to—higher levels of social and political conflict. Voting and activity in political parties are also intimately related to the political system; other forms of participation are less so. Related to this is the fact that the act of voting is entirely dependent on the political calendar—one can't vote unless there is an election—and then an individual has

one vote. The volume of activity in other forms of political participation, on the other hand, is not restricted in the same way. Finally, the five indicators of political participation analyzed in this thesis also differ as to their intensity. That is, some are simply less costly to engage in than others. Because of these differences, I expect various explanatory variables to affect the indicators differently and, therefore, analyzing each one individually is preferable to building an index.

1.3 Putting Political Participation in Context

The title of this thesis alludes to "community effects" on political participation. How community is defined will obviously have important consequences for the kinds of effects that are uncovered. At the same time, there are myriad contextual characteristics that can exert influence on how people take part in politics. Therefore, it is necessary to limit the analysis to a few salient factors of the social and political environment. The following sections lay out what I mean by community in this thesis—that is, how context is defined—as well as the specific contextual characteristics I focus on in subsequent chapters.

1.3.1 Defining Community

The existing literature dealing with contextual effects on political behavior employs a variety of contextual units of analysis. Some work looks at very small entities such as neighborhoods (Gimpel, Dyck & Shaw 2004, Johnston, Propper, Sarker, Jones, Bolster & Burgess 2004, Oliver & Mendelberg 2000) or even discussion groups (Mutz 2002), others focus on larger geographic areas such as cities or counties (Branton & Jones 2005, Hajnal & Lewis 2003, Kelleher & Lowery 2004, Oliver 2001). There are also studies using the state or provin-

cial level (Johnston & Soroka 2001). In addition, there is of course a vast literature making cross-national comparisons which, at least implicitly, makes arguments about context, albeit on a very large scale (Franklin 2004, Inglehart 1990, Norris 2004, Powell 1982). Given that I am interested in political participation, it makes sense to settle on a contextual unit that is large enough to be politically relevant and at the same time provides as much variation as possible, in social and political environment—something larger than a neighborhood but clearly smaller than the state level.

Table 1.1: Local Governments in the United States[a]

Type of Government	Number
County	3,043
Municipal	19,431
Township	16,506
Special District	35,356
School District	13,522
Total	87,849

[a] Source: US Bureau of the Census. 2002. *Census of Governments.*

As table 1.1 makes clear, the system of American local government is complex with close to 88,000 local government units, sometimes having overlapping jurisdictions. Local governments are organized by three basic units: town or township, county, and city (referring to all municipalities). However, which of these is strongest varies by region. In the New England states, towns and cities are the most important form of local government while counties in these states have few if any governmental responsibilities. Throughout the rest of the northeastern United States (New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania) and the upper midwest (Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota) towns or townships, cities, boroughs, and counties all provide various governmental functions. In the remainder of the United States, counties and cities provide the basic units

of local government with strength vis-a-vis each other varying depending on state. In other words, in some states cities operate almost independently of the counties in which they are located—Texas, for instance, has weak counties, with few governmental services and powers, and strong cities. In other states, cities are very dependent on the counties in which they are located. In addition, special districts and school districts also provide services and levy taxes (Burns 1994, Ostrom, Bish & Ostrom 1988, 3–9). This complexity in local government organization raises issues about the proper geographical unit of analysis for this study.

One approach, employed in Oliver's (2001) work on civic engagement and suburbanization, is to use metropolitan areas. This presents several difficulties however. Metropolitan areas are defined by the US Census Bureau using counties as the building blocks; large metropolitan areas will contain multiple counties and in some cases will cross state lines (US Department of Commerce (Census Bureau) 2000*b*). As such, some metropolitan areas contain many cities, some contain few—the number depends on size of metropolitan area and region of the United States, municipal incorporation being a function of state law and local preference. Using counties, on the other hand, provides a seamless geography that covers most of the country. The drawback to counties is that they do not provide a very a high degree of variation on many of the independent variables of interest. Therefore, I use the city as my contextual unit of analysis in this thesis. Cities vary to a much greater degree than counties when it comes to form of governance, local government services and taxation and spending. Specifically, I use two Census defined geographic divisions: *place* and *city*. A *place* consists of "an incorporated place with an active government and definite geographic boundaries such as a city, town, or village" (Marketing Systems Group 2004). Up until the 2000 Census, the Census only enumerated areas with populations over 2500 as *place*—beginning with the 2000 Census, this restriction has been

removed (US Department of Commerce (Census Bureau) 2000*b*). A *city* as defined by the US Census, "refers to incorporated places with a 1990 population of 25,000 or more" (US Department of Commerce (Census Bureau) 2000*c*, 2). The reason for using both of these geographies is a practical one. For some of the analyses presented here, I use contextual data only available for the *city* level. This includes data on local government spending, taxation and unemployment. One result of this is that the number of contextual units—the number of cities—is not the same in all analyses. Another reason for different sample sizes at the city level is the existence of missing data on some variables at this level. Instead of using that same restricted dataset for all the models, I have chosen to maximize the number of cases included by using the most inclusive dataset whenever possible. Therefore I use the place level when feasible, yielding larger numbers of both individual and city level samples.

1.3.2 Contextual Characteristics

As Burns (1994, 7–16) and Oliver (1997, 10–11) note, local governments and their boundaries are often the result of local political and economic interests which in turn institutionalize both political and social differences. So, not only is there a large number of local government bodies, they also differ in crucial respects along myriad dimensions. Cities range in size, for example, from the smallest village with only a few hundred inhabitants to New York City which is bursting with a population of over eight million. There are clearly more dimensions differentiating cities from one another than there is space to analyze them in this thesis. Therefore, I narrow my focus to three features:

- community diversity
- government competencies
- social capital.

These three characteristics have been chosen partly because they are particularly salient differentiating features of cities and partly because differences along these dimensions can be hypothesized to be important predictors of political participation.

Cities in the United States differ to a great extent socially—in terms of racial and ethnic diversity and socio-economic status. Among the most striking aspects of contemporary American society is its diversity. As the 2000 census confirms, America is more multicultural than ever. How does this diversity effect political participation? Past research suggests that more homogenous places should have higher levels of participation because people will be more likely to invest in their communities when they share values and preferences with others around them (Alesina & La Ferrera 2000, 850). However, the preference congruence that Alesina & La Ferrera (2000), Costa & Kahn (2003) and others cite as characteristic of homogenous places could be hypothesized to depress levels of participation. In more diverse communities where there is a wider spread of preferences, there will also likely be more conflict over resource allocation and policy in general. This conflict makes it more likely that groups will mobilize which ought to lead to increased participation. In other words, in more diverse places the stakes are higher, creating incentives for participation.

Cities in the United States vary to a startling degree in how their political institutions are organized and in what they do for their citizens. Some cities operate under mayor-council systems, others use a council-manager system and still others have an appointed commission that runs city government. Electoral rules also differ between cities. Most notably, local elections in many cities in the United States are non-partisan. How citizens are represented by local governments differs widely as well with councillors being elected at-large or from single-member districts. In the wake of the reform-era, many state and local governments adopted various provisions for direct democracy result-

ing in citizens of some communities being able to influence local politics through referendums, petitions, initiatives and recalls. All of these institutional differences can be summarized as affecting the openness of the local political system. Openness here is a function of such characteristics as single-member districts, provisions for direct democracy, mayor-council systems and partisan elections. Local governments that are more open create more opportunities for political participation.

Not only do the political institutions of cities differ, but the services local governments provide as well as levels of expenditures and taxation vary as well. Some cities provide an extensive range of services—everything from police protection, mass transit, hospitals and airports to schools and sanitation—while others provide virtually no services. Similarly, cities differ to a great extent in how much, and for what, they tax their residents. A rational choice theory of participation would suggest that individuals living in places where local government matters more will be more likely to go the polls or express their preferences in other ways, than their counterparts living in cities with less active governments.

Finally, the focus of much of the recent research on political and civic engagement in the United States has been on the apparent decline of participation in the post-World War II era. Discussions of low and declining levels of political participation in America are not new. Lately however, the issue has been increasingly coupled with discussions about lower levels of social capital and civic engagement in general, with a steady stream of journal articles, books and media coverage following Putnam (1995*a*, 1995*b*, 2000). When it comes to political participation, the argument from the social capitalists is twofold. One line of argument is that activity in voluntary (non-political) associations infuses members with attitudes and values such as norms of reciprocity and trust (Fuchs, Minnite & Shapiro 2000, Putnam 2000). These, it is said, are precisely the

attitudes necessary for political participation—active people are exposed to and develop participatory norms. Second, the social capital literature contends that non-political networks act as recruitment forces on individuals who, lacking this mobilization, would be less likely to participate in politics. Verba, Schlozman & Brady have further argued that the skills and resources required for political participation are gained through activity in non-political institutions (1995, 267–73). The social capital argument is essentially a contextual argument. The "civic culture" of a place—as determined by the levels of social capital in that place—is argued to have an impact on individual political behavior. In other words, according to this theory, differences in political participation between communities should be accounted for to a great extent by inter-community differences in social capital.

1.4 Data

The convoluted nature of American local government has led to difficulties in studying political participation and these difficulties have been exacerbated by the lack of data on participation in sub-national units. Most of the studies in this field have used data from nationally representative samples. When surveys of this kind are used and they include questions about participation in local politics, it is possible to examine in general why some people take action and others do not. For instance, as Rahn & Rudolph (2001, 5) point out, one could draw some conclusions about why home owners might be more likely to participate or why less educated individuals would be less likely to. However, the problem with most nationally representative samples is that they have been designed to analyze individual-level characteristics and as such, more often than not, contain too few higher-level units—cities, neighborhoods, communities,

Congressional Districts or whatever the unit of interest may be—to allow for meaningful inferences to be drawn about differences across places.

Stoker & Bowers (2002, 244–8) convincingly illustrate how increasing the number of higher-level units has a much more dramatic impact on the power of analyses than increasing the number of individuals sampled does. As Snijders & Bosker (1999, 140) put it:

> A relevant general remark is that the sample size at the highest level is usually the most restrictive element in the design. For example, a two- level design with 10 groups, i.e. a macro-level sample size of 10, is at least as uncomfortable as a single-level design with a sample size of 10. Requirements on the sample size at the highest level, for a hierarchical linear model with q explanatory variables at this level, are at least as stringent as requirements on the sample size in a single level design with q explanatory variables.

Thus, if one wants to analyze both individual and contextual effects on individual behavior, a dataset that combines both micro and macro factors while also containing data from enough higher-level units is required. The recently available Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey allows a more systematic study the effects of contextual variables on behavior. In addition to a nationally representative sample of 3003 respondents, the survey also includes respondents from fortyone different subnational representative samples. These samples had varying geographical boundaries including states and regions within states (some were at the county level, some at the city level and some at other regional levels determined by the local community foundation funding the project in each area). The total sample size for the combined surveys is 29,733. Through an agreement with the Roper Center I was able to obtain detailed geocodes for the data, enabling me to identify respondents' places of residence. Using the Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) codes (the unique identification

code used by the US Census Bureau to identify every place in Untied States) respondents were sorted into their city of residence regardless of what sub-sample they belonged to originally, thereby avoiding the sometimes awkward sampling geographies determined by the sponsors. I have then matched respondents to the survey with data about their place of residence from the US Census and US Census of Governments contained in the County and City Data Book (US Department of Commerce (Census Bureau) 1994) as well as data from the International City/County Management Association's (ICMA) Municipal Form of Government survey, which contains information on the form and size of local government, provisions for direct democracy and local electoral rules among others.

There are several sources of missing data in this study. First, some cases are missing because respondents refused to provide their place of residence. However, very few respondents—380—actually failed to provide enough information to identify where they live, making this form of missingness relatively benign. Second, the number of cases in the study is also reduced due to the fact that not all respondents live in census-defined cities. On the one hand, this is an acceptable loss of cases given that I am predominantly interested in hypotheses that relate to urban rather than rural settings. Furthermore, a great deal of the city-level data that I employ is not readily available (if at all) for smaller geographic areas. However, I do want to be careful not to bias my estimates through truncation.[3]

Third, there are as is often the case with survey data, also a number of cases at the individual level that have missing data on some items due to non-

[3]I conducted a simple test to determine whether, or to what extent, this reduction in sample size biases the results. Using the full sample of 29,733 I created a dummy variable that took the value 1 if the case was excluded and 0 if the case was included in the reduced dataset. I then ran a logit regression on this variable using all the sociodemographic indicators as well as the dependent variables that I use in later analyses. While most of the coefficients were insignificant, it does appear that white respondents and people who are in the top income brackets are slightly more likely to be excluded from the final sample.

response. This form of missing data is less random and needs to be addressed in a way other than the common strategy of deleting cases; a strategy that certainly leads to biased results and a loss of power in the analysis due to less information once cases have been discarded (King, Honacher, Joseph & Scheve 2001, 49). Instead of deleting cases—either listwise or pairwise—one can impute values for the missing data. Using Schafer's (1999) multiple imputation software, *NORM* I imputed values for the missing individual-level data, creating 5 complete data sets on which subsequent analyses were carried out.[4]

[4]Imputation involves "filling in" missing data with plausible values. When imputing we are making a guess as to the values of the missing data, so the standard errors from any analyses which use such imputed data will be too small—since they do not include this "guessing". Therefore, one needs to make several imputations. Multiple imputation provides the extra variation needed to account for the uncertainty about the imputed values. This approach involves imputing m values for each missing value, creating m complete data sets on which the analysis is carried out. Estimates from each dataset are then combined using methods described by (Rubin 1987).

Chapter 2

Individual-Level Determinants of Political Participation

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As outlined in the introduction, this thesis argues that people's propensity for taking political action is influenced in large part by the social and political environment in which they find themselves. Explanations of differences in participation across communities that look only at differences in the composition of the population of those communities will be incomplete. Because, as I show in section 4 of this chapter, political participation varies significantly across cities even after controlling for individual-level variables, any explanation of political participation should also include institutional, city-level factors. Having said that, it would be naïve to think that differences in political participation rates can be chalked up to differences in environment alone. Individual participants differ from non-participants in several important ways. One of the strongest findings in past work on political participation—especially turnout—is that individuals with higher socio-economic status (SES) participate more than those from low SES groups (Verba, Schlozman & Brady 1995, Verba & Nie 1972, Wolfinger & Rosenstone 1980). Recent work has also focused on age as an important factor in determining turnout as well as nonelectoral participation (Blais 2000, 49–52)(Wolfinger & Rosenstone 1980, 37–60) and race and gender are often cited as key variables in explaining differences in political behavior between individuals (Burns, Schlozman & Verba 2001, 25–9). Therefore, it is important to first outline and specify an individual-level model of political participation before differences across locations can be analyzed.

The chapter proceeds by first exploring the extent of activity in the five different acts of political participation discussed in the previous chapter. The extent of participation in the contemporary United States is set in comparative perspective in order to determine the relative level of activity; do the levels of engagement reported by respondents to the Benchmark survey represent a lot or participation or a little? The amount of political participation engaged in by

Americans is compared to the volume of non-political activity, political activity in the past and political activity in other democracies. Section three presents some descriptive statistics and bivariate relationships illustrating differences in activity rates between individuals of different SES, age and racial groups. Finally, I turn to a multi-level model in which I first determine the extent of variation in political participation across American cities and then assess how much of this variation is accounted for by individual-level factors.

2.2 The Extent of Political Participation

Figure 2.1 details the percentage of respondents to the Benchmark survey who reported having taken part in various political acts.[1] Just over three quarters of respondents to the survey reported having taken part in at least one of these forms of political participation. There exits a large degree of variation across the five indicators. Not surprisingly, voting is the most common political act with roughly 73% of respondents reporting that they voted in the 1996 presidential election. The data in Figure 2.1 contain important information about the differences in types of political participation and begin to point to some potential factors that make it possible for individuals to participate; or put differently, some potential barriers that may make it less likely that people take political action.

When looking at the proportion of people engaging in forms of political participation other than voting, it is apparent that the more intense, more costly, ways of participating are less frequently engaged in. Some 37% of respondents reported having signed a petition during the previous year. Putting one's name on a petition requires that one is at least somewhat committed to a cause. It is still, however, a relatively low-cost activity given that usually someone will come

[1] See Appendix A.1 for complete question wordings.

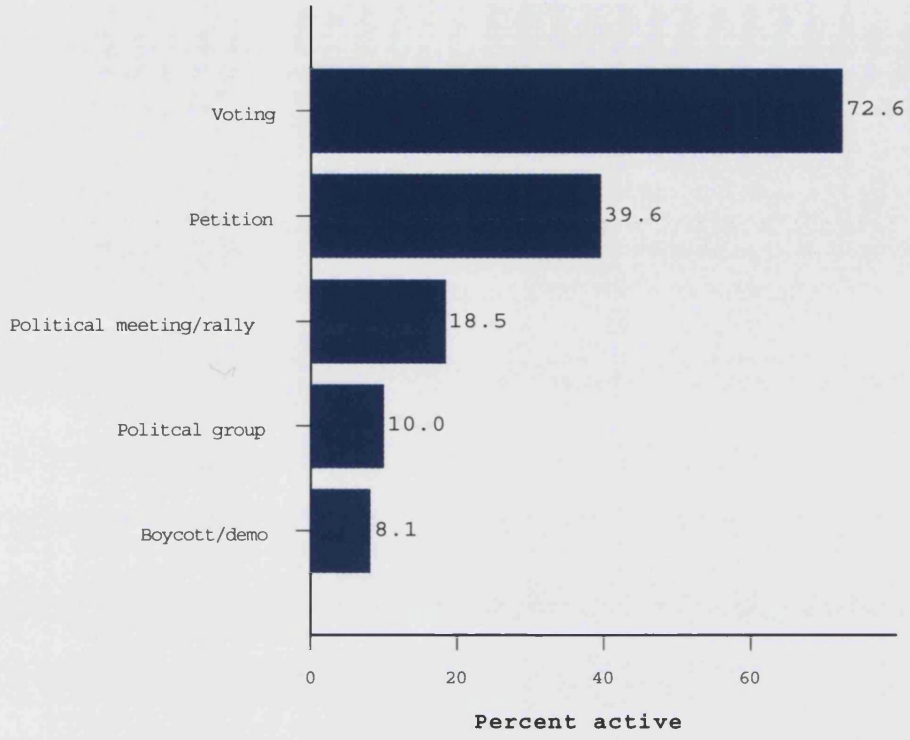


Figure 2.1: Political activities

to the door or one will be stopped on the street; it is rare that a person would seek out a petition to sign. Indeed, signing a petition is the second most common political act and twice as frequent as the next type of activity. The final three forms of participation—attending political rallies; demonstrating; and being active in a political group—are characterized by more commitment and higher costs to the participant. It is fair to say that it takes more commitment to an issue or political cause to compel an individual to find out about and attend a rally than it does to vote. The costs to the participant when it comes to demonstrations or boycotts is perhaps even higher given that demonstrations may be illegal and potentially violent and boycotts entail changing consumption behavior. Being active in a political group takes time and often money. The proportion of respondents engaging in these acts is considerably lower than in less intense forms of participation with 18% reporting they had attended a rally,

10% had participated in a political group and only 8% of respondents reported having been active in a demonstration or boycott.

Voting stands out among these forms of political action in that it is wholly dependent on the political system. That is, a citizen cannot vote unless it is election day and they can only vote once during an election cycle. It is possible for people to "multiply" their activity in the other forms of participation presented here; an individual can sign as many petitions or attend as many rallies as they wish and have time for (Verba, Schlozman & Brady 1995, 46). Unfortunately the Benchmark survey did not ask about the number of times respondents engaged in various acts—how many petitions they signed, rallies they attended and so on—therefore it is not possible to explore the volume of participation; only if an individual participated or not. However, it is possible to examine the number of different political acts individuals engaged in. Figure 2.2—illustrating the number of political acts engaged in by respondents to the Benchmark survey—shows that over three quarters of people took part in only one or two acts—84.1%. The mean number of acts engaged in by the sample is 1.5. The most common political act by far for these people is voting. The dominance of voting as a way to exercise political voice is underscored by the fact that less than 30% of respondents who did not vote, participated in some other political act. Voting clearly makes it more likely that one also takes part in other forms of political activity.

As Verba and his co-authors note, there is no clear-cut way of determining whether numbers such as those reported above represent a lot of participation or a little, (1995, 68). However, following their lead, setting these figures in a comparative perspective can shed some light on whether Americans' engagement in politics is relatively high or low (Verba, Schlozman & Brady 1995, Ch. 3).

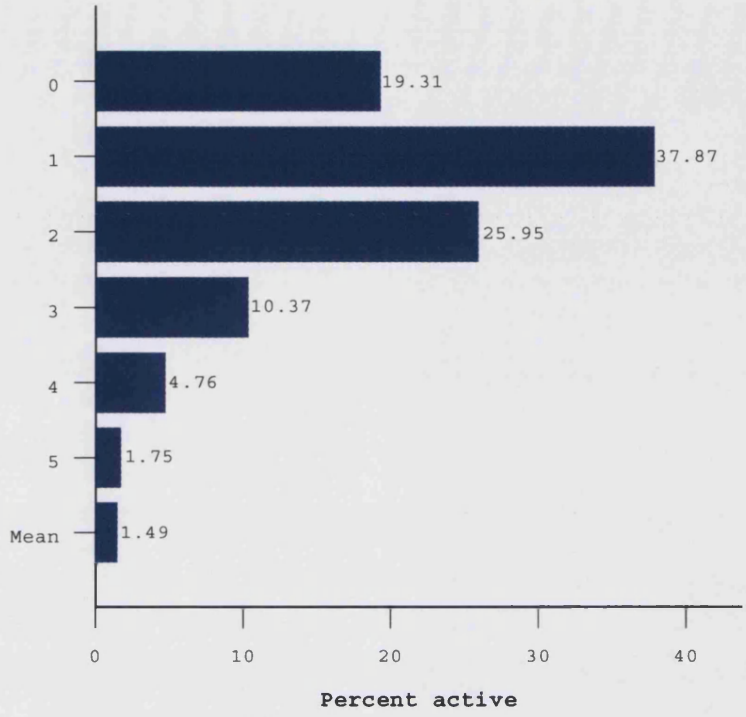
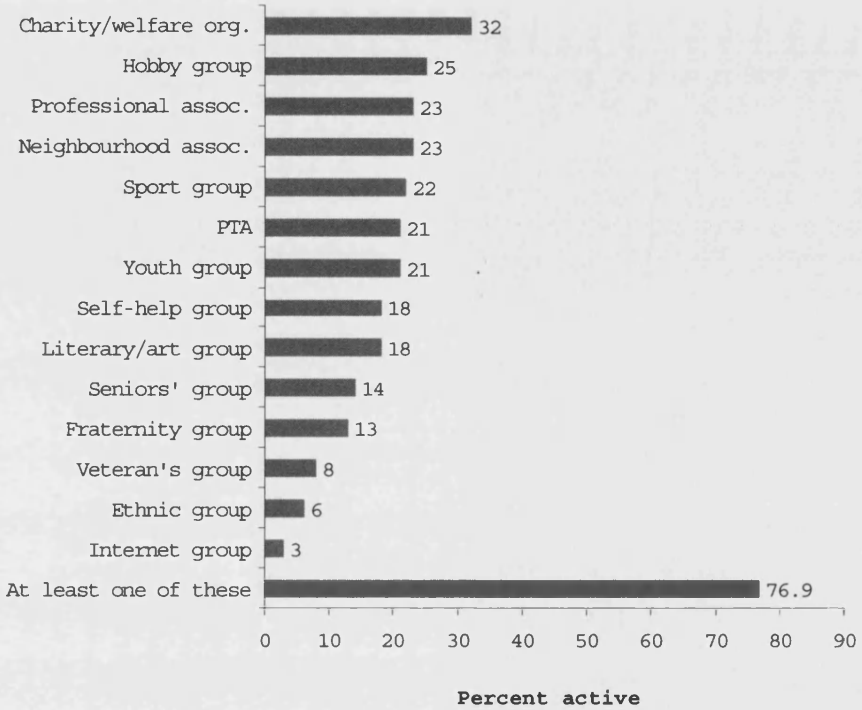


Figure 2.2: Mean number of political acts

2.2.1 Comparing Political and Non-Political Participation

One place to start a comparison of the extent of political participation is to contrast it with the amount of non-political participation. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Americans have a long tradition of joining and being active in myriad associations, clubs and religious congregations. Despite some accounts of a serious decline in non-political participation in the United States (see especially Putnam 2000), Americans are still very active in all manner of voluntary associations and groups. Figure 2.3 presents data on secular non-political engagement and illustrates that Americans are in fact very active in non-political groups and associations. Just over three quarters of respondents to the Benchmark survey—76.9%—had been involved with a non-political group of one kind or another. However, much of this "activity" may be nothing more than paying the membership dues for Amnesty International or contributing a few dollars to



Note: N=29,733; see Appendix for full question wordings.

Figure 2.3: Activity in secular non-political groups

the United Way. Indeed the largest percentage of respondents reported being involved with a charity or welfare organisation. Nevertheless, a considerable number of Americans do invest time in such groups as Parent Teacher Associations, the local Little League or hobby groups. Much of the theory of social capital rests on the importance of these kinds of voluntary, non-political, associations. Putnam and others, argue it is through membership and activity in these so-called secondary associations that the norms of reciprocity, trust and cooperation so important—it is claimed—for well-functioning societies, are fostered (Putnam 1993, Putnam 2000, Stolle 1999). I deal with the question of the nature and outcomes of social capital at length in Chapter 5 but it should be said that the evidence for these connections is less than clear cut.

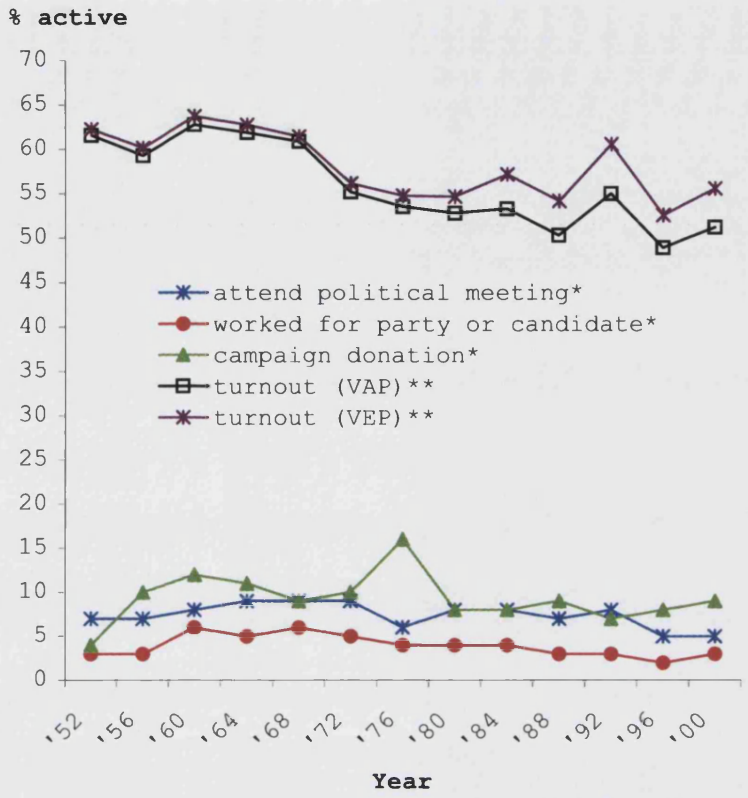
Figure 2.3 is of course not an exhaustive list of the ways in which people can be non-politically active. Volunteering, giving to charity and religious activity

have all historically been important in American society (Putnam 2000, Skocpol 1999, Verba, Schlozman & Brady 1995, Wuthnow 1999).

2.2.2 Participation Past and Present

Much has been made of the perceived decline in political participation—both electoral and nonelectoral—as well as non-political civic engagement in the United States in the period since the 1950s. Putnam (2000) famously charts the downward trend of myriad indicators of engagement—everything from voting to participation in voluntary associations to socializing with friends and bowling in leagues. Rosenstone & Hansen focus specifically on political participation and find that engagement in both electoral and nonelectoral participation has declined across the range of indicators they look at (1994, 56-70). While Putnam (2000) and others have lamented the decline of participation, it is not obvious that there in fact has been such a marked drop. McDonald & Popkin (2001) for instance, make a compelling argument that the way in which turnout is measured in the vast majority of studies on the United States is flawed and significantly underestimates actual turnout. Measuring turnout as the percentage of the voting age population that casts a ballot means that a number of people are included in the denominator of the turnout rate that are not actually eligible to vote. These include prisoners, the mentally incompetent and non-citizens. McDonald & Popkin (2001, 965–8) show that the decline in turnout that began with the 1972 election is largely an artifact created by using the incorrect denominator. They argue that it is the ineligible population that has increased rather than the voting population that has decreased. If one uses the "voting-eligible population" as the denominator of the turnout rate, McDonald & Popkin argue that the only pattern emerging is an *increase* in turnout in southern congressional races (2001, 967).

Figure 2.4 presents data on political participation trends over the past 50



Sources: *American National Election Study;
**McDonald & Popkin (2001).

Figure 2.4: Political participation over time

years.[2] While turnout (measured using the voting age population) has indeed declined steadily—from over 60% in the 1952 Presidential election to less than 50% in 2000—when turnout is measured as the percentage of voting eligible population that votes, the trend is less clear. The drop in the other forms of participation is less marked than that of turnout. Indeed,

been fairly steady since the
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of politics in the United States at that time with t

[2]Because of the need for alternative sources of time-s
2.4 are not all the same as those in the Benchmark surve
trends over time.

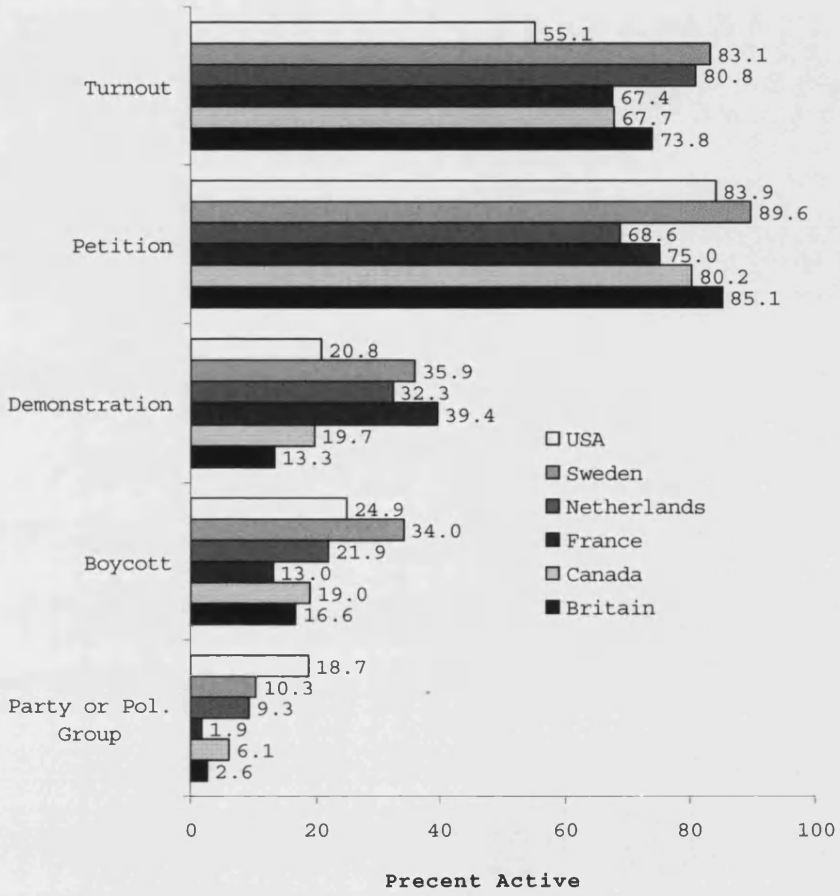
assassinations and the civil rights movement compelling more people to get involved in politics. Again, this is indicative of one of the main arguments of this thesis—namely that individuals are more likely to participate in politics when the stakes are higher.

2.2.3 American Participation in International Comparison

Another way in which to get some of idea of the extent of political participation in the United States is to set it in comparative perspective with participation in other advanced industrial countries. Conventional wisdom holds that Americans are generally apathetic and apolitical and certainly participate in fewer numbers than their fellow citizens in other countries. As Figure 2.5 indicates, this is the case when it comes to voting. Americans' propensity to turnout at elections lags far behind that of citizens in other countries. Average turnout since 1945 is between 12 to 28 percentage points lower in the United States than in France, Canada, Britain, the Netherlands and Sweden. However, when it comes to other forms of political participation, Americans are just as likely, sometimes more likely, to get involved as individuals living in these other countries, dispelling the myth of the disengaged American.

2.3 Individual Characteristics of Participants and Non-Participants

The above discussion has explored the extent of political participation in the contemporary United States, I now turn attention to the question of who these participants are and the ways in which participation is divided along socio-demographic lines—specifically, socio-economics status (SES), race and age. After this exploration of the data, I present a multivariate model better get



Note: Turnout (as % of voting age population) is the average since 1945, except for the Netherlands where it is from after 1969 when compulsory voting was abolished.
Source: World Values Survey, Wave 4, 1999-2001.

Figure 2.5: International comparison of political activity

at the relationships between these individual-level variables and the five measures of political activity.

2.3.1 Socio-economic Status and Political Participation

Education Education has consistently been the most important individual-level variable in explanations of political participation. In Wolfinger & Rosenstone's (1980) seminal analysis of voter turnout in the United States, the impact of increased education on the probability of voting is considerable. They find

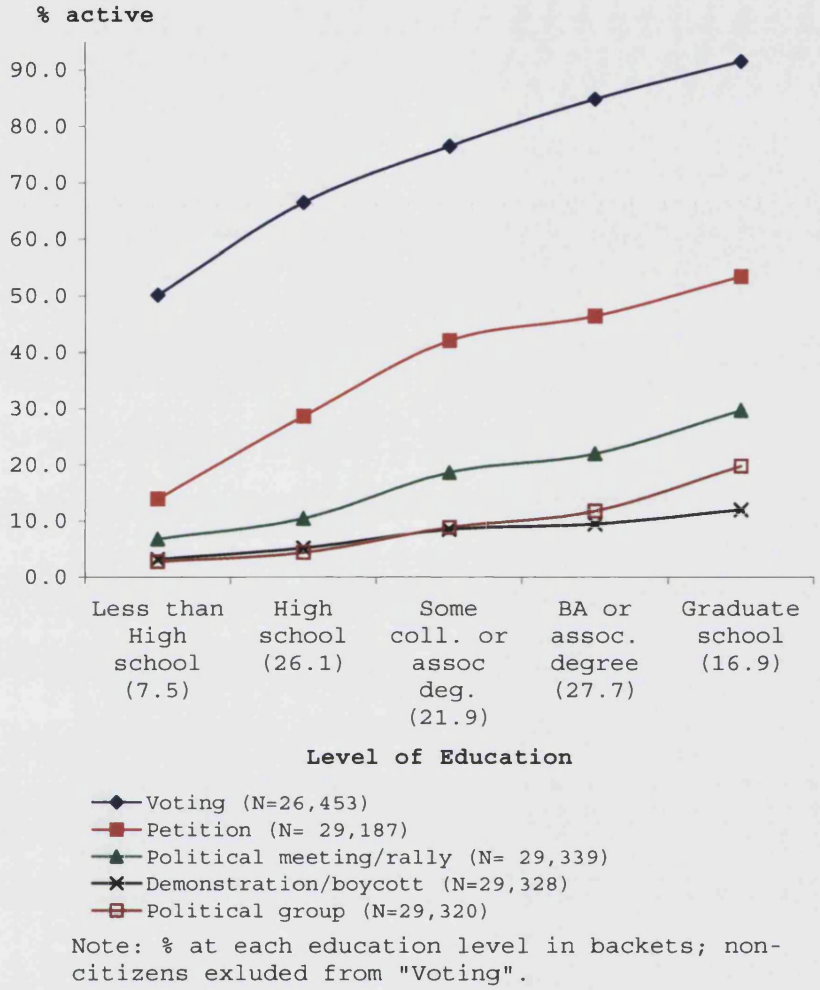


Figure 2.6: Education and political participation

than those with less than 5 years formal education, ceteris paribus (Wolfinger & Rosenstone 1980, 24). Other studies find similarly large education effects. Blais (2000) estimates that moving from the least educated to the most educated represents an increase in the probability of voting of over 20 percentage points. This relationship also holds for forms of political participation other than vot-

[redacted]

. senators or rep- should be percentage points]more likely to have written to U.S

(1994, 74). As Figure 2.6 indicates, the Benchmark survey confirms the positive effects of education on political participation—we see a positive and more or less linear relationship between education and all five indicators of political participation.

Income. While education is the most important component of SES when it comes to political participation, income also plays an important role. The positive relationship between higher levels of income and increased political participation is illustrated in the bivariate relationship displayed in Figure 2.7. Engagement in all forms of political participation is higher among those who earn more. While the relationship appears to be strongest when it comes to the most prevalent forms of political action—voting and signing petitions—when we look at the relative difference between the lowest and highest earners, we see that income in fact has a stronger effect on attending political meetings, participating in demonstrations & boycotts and being involved with a political group. This is consistent with the idea that participation requires resources (Verba, Schlozman & Brady 1995). The three latter forms of participation are more costly in terms of the time and money required to engage in them. This theme of resources is one that I will return to in more depth when I estimate a multivariate model in section 3 of this chapter.

2.3.2 Race

Race is one of the most salient features of contemporary American society. No study of political participation in that country can avoid examining differences in political activity between racial groups. Figure 2.8 presents a breakdown of the percent of respondents to the Benchmark survey that reported activity in the various political acts, by race. While bivariate relationships such as these ought to be taken with caution, it is nevertheless possible to discern some interesting

Figure 2.7: Income and political participation

patterns that set the stage for the more detailed examination of the impact of race and racial diversity on political participation in the following chapter. The largest difference between racial groups is when it comes to voting—over 80% of white citizens reported having voted in the 1996 Presidential election compared to between 52-56% of Asians, Hispanics and Native Americans. A considerably greater number of Non-Hispanic African Americans voted than these other minority groups, although they did not turn out in as great numbers as whites.

Differences in rates of activity between the racial categories decrease for

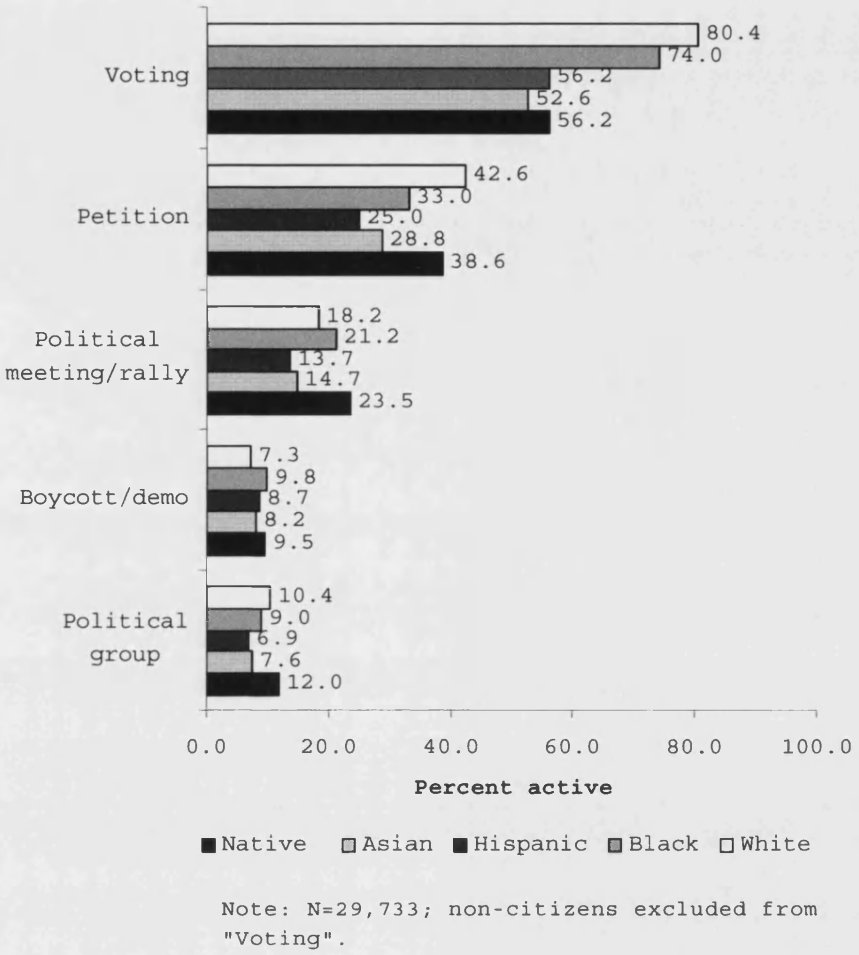


Figure 2.8: Race and political participation

nonelectoral forms of participation and are smallest when it comes to political meetings, demonstrations and being active in a political group. Voting, particularly in a two-party system such as the United States, is to some extent a vote of confidence for the political system. If one feels alienated from that system or feels that one's voice will not be heard, there is less incentive to vote. However, voting is not the only way in which to express political preferences. The political acts where racial differences are smallest are also those that are less related to the traditional political system, perhaps making them more appealing to individuals or groups who perceive themselves to be less powerful within traditional politics. These types of activities also tend to be characterized by more

conflict. In Chapter 3 I deal specifically with the effect of community racial diversity on political participation and argue that diversity will have a larger effect on political participation that is more conflictual in nature and also that individuals of different races react differently to diversity. That is, diversity has varying impacts on different racial groups' political participation.

2.3.3 Age

Figure 2.9 shows that the relationship between age and all the forms of political participation is curvilinear.[3] While participation increases with age up to about fifty years, after this activity in all of the indicators levels off or declines. The leveling off trend is most evident in voting, with the probability of voting rising sharply for people through their twenties to fifties. Once people reach their sixties, the probability of voting remains relatively high and stable. There is some debate in the literature over whether the age-turnout relationship is best characterized as a generational effect or a cohort effect (see for example Blais 2002). Signing petitions is another form of participation that seems to be

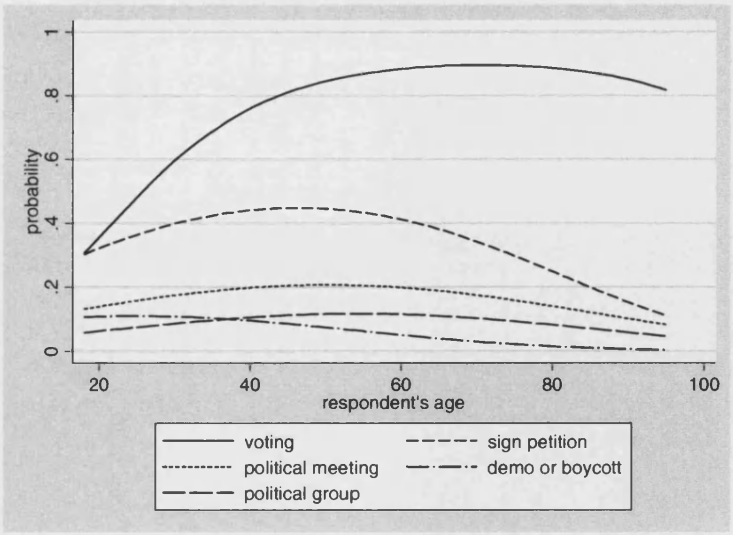


Figure 2.9: Age and political participation

[3]The lines in Figure 2.9 are predicted probabilities plotted against respondents' age. The probabilities were obtained from logistic regressions with age as the only independent variable.

affected by age. In this case, activity increases modestly between ages twenty and midlife, after which it declines quickly. This is likely a function of younger people being exposed to more petitions as well as mobilization efforts for this type of participation being more prevalent among youth. The relationship between age and three of the other forms of political action—signing petitions, attending meetings or rallies and being active in a political group—are similar to that of voting, with engagement increasing with age. However, in the case of these indicators, the curvilinear relationship is more acute. When it comes to demonstrating and participating in boycotts, engagement declines with age perhaps reflecting a disengagement or distrust of traditional politics on the part of youth.

2.4 Across-City Variation in Political Participation

As I discuss in Chapter 1, the data I use here are nested, or clustered, in nature. I have data on individuals from the Benchmark survey and these individuals are clustered in cities, on which I also have data; as such observations have not been sampled independently of each other. As Snijders & Bosker (1999) note, dependence can be seen as both a nuisance and as an interesting phenomenon in itself (1999, 6-9). The nuisance is that dependence of observations needs to be corrected for in some way in order to avoid drawing incorrect inferences; for example, standard errors will tend to appear smaller than they actually are if dependence is ignored. However, I am also interested in analyzing the effects of different city characteristics on individual behavior. That is, I want to draw inferences on cities as well as individuals, making the clustering of observations of interest. In this thesis, the question is whether living in a community with certain social and political characteristics—such as varying degrees of ethnic heterogeneity, local governments that differ in their structure and functions

and different levels of social capital—affects an individual's propensity to take political action.

Past work using data with this kind of multilevel structure have often employed either "dummy variable models" or "interactive models" (Steenbergen & Jones 2002, 220). Dummy variable models, by assigning dummy variables for each higher-level unit (i.e. in this case cities), are able to overcome the statistical problems associated with dependence of observations in clustered data (Rahn & Rudolph 2001). However, one is often interested in how various aspects of different higher-level units impact on lower-level units; say how different city characteristics influence individuals' chances of participating in politics. A dummy variable model is inadequate in this respect. As Steenbergen notes, "Dummy variables are only indicators of subgroup differences; they do not explain why the regression regimes for the subgroups are different" (Steenbergen & Jones 2002, 220). Past contextual analyzes on political behavior (Huckfeldt 1979, Huckfeldt 1984, Abowitz 1990, Oliver 1999, Oliver 2000, Oliver 2001) have tended to use interactive models where contextual-level independent variables are included alone or in interactions with individual-level variables in order to account for contextual heterogeneity (Rahn & Rudolph 2001). These types of models are not ideal either. As Humphries argues, this approach to modeling multilevel data "implicitly assumes a deterministic relationship between the contextual variable and individual-level parameters" (Humphries 2001, 684).

A more appropriate model for clustered data of the kind I have and where one is interested in explaining different sources of contextual heterogeneity is a hierarchical, or multilevel, model. Such a model provides robust standard errors (Raudenbush & Bryk 2002) and, as Rahn and Rudolph note:

> The hierarchical model allows one to model level-1 dependent variable as a function of level-1 explanatory variables, a level-1 disturbance term, level-2 explanatory variables, and, critically, level-2 dis-

turbance terms. Consequently, I are able to model potential sources of contextual heterogeneity without imposing the questionable assumption that we capture all possible sources of such heterogeneity. By actually estimating level-2 variance components, the hierarchical model overcomes the problems of non-constant variance and clustering (2001, 32).

The hierarchical model begins with a level-1 structural model.[4] This model can be expressed as follows:

$$y_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j}x_{1ij} + \epsilon_{ij} \tag{2.1}$$

Where y_{ij} is the individual-level dependent variable for an individual i $(=1,\ldots,N_j)$ nested in level-2 unit (in this case city) j $(=1,\ldots,J)$. The term x_{1ij} is the individual-level variable and ϵ_{ij} is the individual-level disturbance term. The model is in all respects the same as the traditional regression model except for the important difference that the parameters are not fixed. That is, they vary across level-2 units as indicated by the j–subscripts on the β_{0j} and β_{1j} parameters. This addition is crucial and makes possible the testing of certain hypotheses that would be difficult or impossible otherwise. At level-2 (the city-level), I model the individual-level regression parameters as functions of city-level predictors:

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}z_{1j} + \delta_{0j} \tag{2.2}$$

and

$$\beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10} + \gamma_{11}z_j + \delta_{1j}. \tag{2.3}$$

Equations 2.2 and 2.3 together make up the level-2 model where the γ-parameters are the fixed level-2 parameters and the δ-parameters are disturbance terms. Specifying these level-2 disturbances means one is are able to

[4]The development and notation of the multilevel model presented here draws heavily from the excellent discussions in Raudenbush & Bryk (2002, 16–30) and Steenbergen & Jones (2002, 221–3).

avoid the unreasonable assumption one is forced to make with simple regression models, namely that the city-level parameters perfectly account for the variation in individual-level parameters. The full model is achieved by substituting the expressions for β_{0j} and β_{1j} in (2.2) and (2.3) into (2.1):

$$\begin{aligned} y_{ij} &= \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}z_j + \delta_{0j} + (\gamma_{10} + \gamma_{11}z_j + \delta_{1j})x_{ij} + \epsilon_{ij} \\ &= \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}z_j + \gamma_{10}x_{ij} + \gamma_{11}z_jx_{ij} + \delta_{0j} + \delta_{1j}x_{ij} + \epsilon_{ij}, \end{aligned} \tag{2.4}$$

where γ_{00} is the intercept, γ_{01} denotes the effect of the level-2 (city) variable, γ_{10} is the effect of the individual-level predictor and γ_{11} is the effect of the cross-level interaction between the individual-level and city-level predictors with disturbance terms represented by δ_{0j}, δ_{1j} and ϵ_{ij}.

The models presented here were estimated using the multilevel software HLM, version 6.02 developed by Raudenbush, Bryk, Cheong & Congdon which produces "empirical Bayes estimates of the randomly-varying level-1 (individual-level) parameters, generalized least squares estimates of the level-2 (city-level) coefficients; and maximum likelihood estimates of the variance-covariance components" (Raudenbush, Bryk, Cheong & Congdon 2002, 4).[5] Because all of the dependent variables are dichotomous, I estimate what Raudenbush & Bryk call hierarchical generalized linear models (HGLMs) (2002, 292). Specifically, the models presented are HGLMs with a Bernoulli sampling model and a logit link function.

2.4.1 The Empty Model

Before estimating the individual-level model, it is appropriate to begin by asking whether there in fact exists significant variation in the dependent variable across the contextual units—cities—and, if so, what proportion of the total variance is accounted for by the city-level. To gauge the magnitude of variation

[5]See Raudenbush & Bryk (2002) for details on estimating the various coefficients.

between cities in political participation it is useful to begin by estimating an unconditional, or so-called empty model; that is, a model with no predictors at either level. This produces estimates for the grand mean as well as providing information on the variance at the individual and city-levels (Raudenbush & Bryk 2002, 24). The individual-level model is thus simply

$$\textit{political participation}_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \epsilon_{ij} \tag{2.5}$$

and the city-level model is

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \delta_{0j}, \qquad \delta_{0j} \sim N(0, \tau_{00}). \tag{2.6}$$

The full model, by substitution of β_{0j} in (2.5) into (2.6), is

$$\textit{political participation}_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \delta_{0j} + \epsilon_{ij}. \tag{2.7}$$

This model is equivalent to a one-way ANOVA with random effects. Here γ_{00} is the average log-odds of political participation—the population grand mean—while δ_{0j} is the specific effect of city j and ϵ_{ij} is the residual effect for individual i within this city. Snijders & Bosker (1999) explain the variance structure of this model and the idea of the *intraclass correlation coeffiencient* (ICC) as follows:[6]

> [M]acro-unit j has the 'true mean' $\gamma_{00} + \delta_{0j}$, and each measurement of a micro-unit within this macro-unit deviates from this true mean by some value, called ϵ_{ij}. Units differ randomly from one another, which is reflected by the fact that δ_{0j} is a random variable.... Some units have a high true mean, corresponding to a high value of δ_{0j}, others have a close to average, still others a low true mean. It is assumed that all variables are independent, the group effects δ_{0j} having population mean 0 and population variance τ^2 (the *population between-group variance*), and the residuals having mean 0 and variance σ^2 (the *population within-group variance*) (1999, 17).

[6]Some of the notation in the following quotations has been changed to be consistent with the rest of the equations in the text.

In the case of the data analyzed here where the micro-units are individuals and macro-units are cities, σ^2 is the variance within cities about their true means and τ^2 is the variance between cities' true means. Snijders & Bosker go on to illustrate how the empty model is used to partition the variance in data with a multilevel structure:

> Given the model (2.7) [sic], the total variance of Y can be decomposed as the sum of the level-two and level-one variances,
>
> $$\text{var}(Y_{ij}) = \text{var}(\delta_{0j}) + \text{var}(\epsilon_{ij}) = \tau^2 + \sigma^2.$$
>
> The covariance between two individuals (i and i', with $i \neq i'$) in the same group j is equal to the variance of the contribution δ_{0j} that is shared by these individuals,
>
> $$\text{cov}(Y_{ij}, Y_{i'j}) = \text{var}(\delta_{0j}) = \tau_0^2,$$
>
> and their correlation is
>
> $$\rho(Y_{ij}, Y_{i'j}) = \frac{\tau_0^2}{(\tau_0^2 + \sigma^2)} .$$
>
> This parameter is... the *intraclass correlation coefficient*.... It can be interpreted in two ways: it is the correlation between two randomly drawn individuals in one randomly drawn group, and it is also the fraction of the total variability that is due to the group level (1999, 46).

This same parameter can be applied to models with explanatory variables. It is then referred to as the *residual intraclass correlation coefficient* and is interpreted as the fraction of the total variation due to the group level, controlling for X (Snijders & Bosker 1999, 48). In the analyses that follow, I am often interested in changes in the ICC controlling for various explanatory variables. That is, a key aspect of these models is the impact of independent variables—most importantly contextual factors—on the variation in political participation between cities.

Table 2.1: ANOVA[a]

Parameter	Voting	Petition	Pol. meeting	Demo/boycott	Pol. group
Fixed Effects					
Intercept (γ_{00})	1.060*	-0.358*	-1.470*	-2.393*	-2.102*
	(0.035)	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.052)	(0.042)
Random Effects					
City-Level Variance (τ_{00})	0.334*	0.415*	0.327*	0.454*	0.303*
	(0.026)	(0.031)	(0.027)	(0.052)	(0.029)
Intraclass correlation (ρ)	0.092	0.112	0.090	0.121	0.084
-2 × Log Likelihood	38384.286	41152.177	36948.140	32347.636	33108.067

[a] N=12,969; J=656. * significant at .01%. Estimates are from a logistic model estimated using maximum likelihood in HLM; robust standard errors in parentheses.

The estimated results from the empty models for the five indicators of political participation are presented in Table 2.1. Beginning with the empty model for voting, the results are $\hat{\gamma}_{00}$=1.060 (se=0.035), $\hat{\tau}_{00}$=0.112 (se=0.026). Thus, for a city with a typical voting rate, that is, for a city with a random effect δ_{0j}=0, the expected log-odds of voting is 1.060, corresponding to an odds of exp(1.060)=2.886. This corresponds to a probability of $\frac{1}{1+\exp(-1.060)} = 0.743$. The probabilities of engaging in the other forms of participation in cities with typical participation rates are .411 for signing petitions, .190 for attending political meetings, .084 when it comes to demonstrations and boycotts and the probability of being involved with a political group in a city with a typical rate for such participation is .109.

Table 2.1 also shows that there exists statistically significant variation at the city-level for all five types of political participation, making it clear that political participation is more fruitfully modeled as a multilevel phenomena, or at the very least, that the multilevel nature of political participation should not be ignored.[7] In order to get an idea of how much of the overall variance in

[7]To determine whether variance components are statistically significant, I perform a likelihood ratio test by comparing the deviance statistics of two models (Raudenbush & Bryk 2002, Snijders & Bosker 1999, Steenbergen & Jones 2002). The deviance is -2 × the log likelihood (Raudenbush & Bryk 2002, 64). First, I estimate a model with an unrestricted variance component (i.e. a randomly varying intercept), producing a deviance D_1. Next, a model where the variance component is restricted to zero is estimated, giving a deviance D_0.

political participation is attributable to either the individual-level or the city-level, it is useful to calculate the intraclass correlation coefficient.[8] Recall that the error terms in these models capture two levels of unexplained variation in the dependent variable—variation at the individual level and at the city level. The ICC measures the proportion of the variance of the dependent variable that is between cities. As Steenbergen & Jones note in their analysis of support for the European Union, it is unsurprising that the individual-level accounts for a great deal of the variance when data are measured at the individual-level, as they are in my study (2002, 231). Nonetheless, the proportion of the variance in political participation that is between cities is still considerable—for voting it is 9.2% (that is, $100 \times .334/(.334 + 3.29)$), 11.2% of the variance in signing petitions is accounted for at the city-level while the proportion of variance that is between cities for political meetings, demonstrations and boycotts and political group involvement is 9%, 12.1% and 8.4% respectively.

2.4.2 An Individual-level Model of Political Participation

Now I turn to the individual-level model. The model (written as in (2.4)) is as follows:

$$turnout_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \Sigma\gamma_{10} Race_i + \Sigma\gamma_{20} IND_i + \delta_{0j} + \epsilon_{ij} \,. \tag{2.8}$$

Here *Race* is a set of dummy variables for the race of individual respondents and *IND* is a vector of individual-level controls (gender, education, age and

Subtracting D_0 from D_1 generates a statistic with a χ^2 distribution with 1 degree of freedom, allowing me to calculate a p-value for the test.

[8]The intraclass correlation coefficient for linear multilevel models is obtained by the following formula: $\rho = \frac{\tau_{00}}{\tau_{00}+\sigma^2}$ where σ^2 is the individual-level variance. However, in nonlinear models, such as the logit models estimated here, this formula is less useful because the individual-level variance is heteroscedastic (Raudenbush & Bryk 2002, 298). Snijders & Bosker describe an alternative definition of the ICC for nonlinear models as follows: $\rho = \frac{\tau_{00}}{\tau_{00}+\pi^2/3}$. This definition treats the dependent variable as an underlying latent continuous variable following a logistic distribution, the variance (i.e. the individual-level variance in my models) for this distribution is $\pi^2/3$ (Snijders & Bosker 1999, 223–4).

age squared). All of the variables are modeled as fixed effects—that is, I do not allow the effects to vary across cities. I have not included any city-level predictors yet as I want to first estimate an individual-level model, in part to determine the impact of individual-level variables on political participation and in part to estimate how much of the variance in the dependent variables across communities is accounted for by individual factors alone.

The estimates from this model are presented in table 2.2. The results for the individual-level variables are largely consistent with existing research. Individuals with higher socio-economic status (SES) tend to be more likely to participate than others (Verba, Schlozman & Brady 1995, Wolfinger & Rosenstone 1980). Here education has a strong positive effect on all forms of political participation. The estimated effects of income are somewhat less conclusive. While the general trend is for higher earners to be more likely to participate, this is not the case for activity in demonstrations and boycotts. For this indicator, income seems not to have a significant impact. When it comes to voting and signing petitions, the effect of income is between people in the lowest income brackets and the highest earners. Respondents who earn in the middle brackets do not differ significantly from the high-earning reference group. Income has the most consistent positive impact on the likelihood of participating in a political group.

Age has a positive effect on an individual's propensity to participate in all of the activities examined. As people get older, it is more likely that they take political action. The effect is strongest for voting and considerably weaker for nonelectoral forms of participation. The squared term of *Age* is also significant indicating that as people get very old, the positive effect of age on voting tapers off. Again, the result for age is consistent with previous work, most notably on turnout (see for example Blais 2000, Wolfinger & Rosenstone 1980).

The models reported in Table 2.2 point to both race and gender differences across different forms of political participation. Blacks are more likely than

white respondents to report having voted in the 1996 Presidential election. The same holds for attending political meetings or rallies while black respondents are less likely to have signed a petition. The estimates for demonstrations and political group activity fail to meet conventional levels of statistical significance. Asian and Hispanic Americans, on the other hand, have lower probabilities of participating in any of the five acts, compared to white respondents. However, these estimates are significant only for voting and petition signing for Asians and voting, petitions and attending political meetings for Hispanics.

While some researchers do report findings to the effect that women participate to a lesser extent than men, much recent research points to the gender gap closing (Conway 2000, Rosenstone & Hansen 1994). The results in Table 2.2 show that women are more likely than men to vote, controlling for the other variables in the models. They also have a higher probability of participating in politics by signing a petition. Women are, however, significantly less likely to be active in a political group or to attend meetings or rallies. One explanation for these findings is that the latter two forms of participation are considerably more time consuming than either voting or signing petitions. As women are more likely to devote time to both work and childcare, as well as other domestic work, than men, it means that they have less time to spend on costly forms of political participation.[9]

Examining the bottom part of the table, it is evident that the estimates of the variance components of the random portion of the models—the randomly varying individual-level intercept, β_{0j}, are significant in all of the models except voting. That is, after controlling for the individual-level factors, there still remains a significant amount of variation in signing petitions, attending political meetings, participating in demonstrations and boycotts as well as activity in political groups across cities in the United States. Also, as the intraclass correla-

[9]For more detailed discussions of gender differences in political participation see Burns, Schlozman & Verba (2001) and Verba, Schlozman & Brady (1995).

Table 2.2: Individual-level effects on participation[a]

Parameter	Voting	Petition	Pol. meeting	Demo/boycott	Pol. group
Fixed Effects					
Intercept	1.430***	-0.281***	-1.608***	-2.473***	-2.254***
	(0.046)	(0.037)	(0.046)	(0.076)	(0.055)
Black[b]	0.183**	-0.228***	0.392***	-0.111	0.150
	(0.085)	(0.049)	(0.071)	(0.140)	(0.101)
Asian	-1.38***	-0.698***	-0.202	-0.447	-0.321
	(0.114)	(0.115)	(0.147)	(0.243)	(0.197)
Hispanic	-0.526***	-0.333***	-0.221***	-0.113	-0.048
	(0.080)	(0.073)	(0.082)	(0.137)	(0.115)
Age	0.124***	0.048***	0.022***	0.013***	0.019*
	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.008)	(0.015)	(0.009)
Age^2	-0.001***	-0.001***	-0.000**	-0.000**	-0.000
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Under \$20K[c]	-0.647***	-0.385***	-0.400***	-0.055	-0.574***
	(0.073)	(0.081)	(0.079)	(0.117)	(0.118)
\$20-29,000	-0.479***	-0.233***	-0.247***	0.174	-0.449***
	(0.088)	(0.069)	(0.082)	(0.114)	(0.100)
\$30-49,999	-0.181**	-0.098*	-0.281***	0.120	-0.241**
	(0.075)	(0.059)	(0.060)	(0.083)	(0.096)
\$50-74,999	-0.042	-0.036	-0.229***	0.189*	-0.283**
	(0.074)	(0.054)	(0.074)	(0.109)	(0.108)
\$75-99,999	-0.074	-0.104*	-0.132*	0.068	-0.204**
	(0.092)	(0.059)	(0.079)	(0.104)	(0.097)
High school[d]	-2.511***	-1.294***	-1.350***	-1.090***	-1.662***
	(0.116)	(0.099)	(0.135)	(0.271)	(0.259)
Some college	-1.563***	-0.810***	-1.098***	-0.676***	-1.256***
	(0.082)	(0.062)	(0.077)	(0.098)	(0.103)
Bachelors	-0.812***	-0.258***	-0.392***	-0.310***	-0.498***
	(0.068)	(0.046)	(0.067)	(0.079)	(0.071)
Female	0.148***	0.121***	-0.155***	0.026	-0.310***
	(0.052)	(0.033)	(0.047)	(0.070)	(0.053)
Random Effects					
City-level Variance (τ_{00})	0.232	0.387***	0.301***	0.416***	0.259***
Intraclass correlation (ρ)	0.067	0.105	0.084	0.112	0.073
-2 × Log Likelihood	35202.440	40290.022	36454.903	32051.171	32663.059

[a] N=12,696; J=656. See Appendix for exact question wordings and coding; * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%. Estimates are from a logistic model estimated using maximum likelihood in HLM; robust standard errors in parentheses.

[b] Reference group for race is "white".

[c] Reference group for income is "over \$100K".

[d] Reference group for education is "Graduate school".

tion coefficients indicate, of the unexplained variance in the dependent variables remaining after controlling for other factors in the models, a substantive portion is still at the city level. The variance component for the voting model falls just short of conventional levels of statistical significance. One caveat that deserves mention is that the voting variable measures voting in a Presidential election. As such, perhaps one should not expect variation across cities, since cities are not the most politically relevant geography for this type of political participation.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I have sketched a map of the participatory territory, outlining the extent of engagement among the different types of political participation, put participation in the contemporary United States in comparative perspective and explored the socio-demographics of participation. While the individual-level models discussed so far do a fairly good job of explaining political participation, there nevertheless remains a significant amount of variation in the dependent variables across communities even after controlling for individual-level socio-demographics. That is, similar people do not participate to the same extent in different communities. The remaining chapters of the thesis explore explanations for this inter-community variation. In the next chapter the impact of racial diversity on political participation is discussed; Chapter 4 looks at how political participation is influenced by the structure and functions of local government; and Chapter 5 examines the role of social capital in affecting the propensity of individuals to take political action.

Chapter 3

Community Heterogeneity and Political Participation

3.1 The Impact of Diversity on Political Participation

While issues of race and their influence on political behavior and attitudes have long been studied by scholars of American politics, the focus of most of this research has been on how the race of individuals affects various outcomes. Until recently it has been rare that race as a characteristic of community context or environment has been taken into account (Oliver 2001). Perhaps in response to the realization that diversity is increasing and patters of racial integration changing, there have been a number of new studies on the impact of racial heterogeneity (eg. Alesina & La Ferrera 2000, Costa & Kahn 2003, Oliver 2001). The majority of studies examining heterogeneity and participation argue that increased heterogeneity is detrimental to levels of engagement.[1] The social capital literature from Putnam forward argues that diversity may be a hindrance to social capital and more specifically to civic engagement. Ethnically diverse places tend to have lower levels of social trust—that is, trust in people in general, even those one does not know (Saguaro Seminar 2001). But what is the relationship between diversity and civic engagement? A number of authors make the claim that civic engagement is higher (or ought to be higher) in areas characterized by homogeneity (Alesina & La Ferrera 2000, Alesina & La Ferrera 2002, Mutz 2002, Costa & Kahn 2003). The reasoning being that individuals in these areas are a) more able to overcome collective action problems associated with participation and b) more willing to volunteer and engage in a community whose other citizens share their values and beliefs.

This argument has mostly been applied to non-political civic engagement but has even been used by scholars of political participation—which is what is

[1]Notable exceptions are Oliver (2001) who argues that increasing racial segregation between suburbs is related to decreased political and civic engagement and Campbell (2002) who argues that the relationship between diversity and political participation is curvilinear so that political activity is lower at both extremes of diversity and homogeneity.

of central concern here. Diana Mutz, for example argues that people exposed to "cross-pressures" in networks characterized by political disagreement (ideological heterogeneity) are less likely to participate than those who exist in more homogenous surroundings where they agree with those around them. The reasoning is that people in the former will be ambivalent in their political views because of the conflicting pressures put on them by others in their network, thus making it less likely that they will take action (Mutz 2002, 840). Alesina & La Ferrera (2000) also argue that people in areas in which racial heterogeneity and income inequality are high are less likely to participate as a consequence of group formation being more difficult in such areas.

There are however, a number of difficulties with these arguments. Alesina and La Ferrara lump together very disparate forms of participation in their study. A clear distinction needs to be made between political participation and participation in non-political groups. The motivations for engaging in these will be very different. It may be that civic, that is non-political, engagement is higher in more homogenous areas for the reasons Alesina and La Ferrara cite. However, as we see below, these same reasons may well be good arguments as to why we could expect *political* participation to be lower in such areas. While the social capital literature argues that increased diversity leads to decreased generalized trust and, therefore, less political participation, a strong case can be made that the diminished trust in diverse communities should mean more participation. If one is distrustful of others in one's community, it makes sense to ensure that one's own voice is heard through taking part in politics. Another shortcoming of much of the extant literature is that it assumes (or derives) similar effects for different groups in society. That is, the effect of racial environment on political behavior is assumed to be the same for people of different racial or ethnic backgrounds. In this chapter I challenge that assumption. It may well be that race does not have the same effect across all communities and that racial

diversity affects racial groups differently.

In contrast to much of the literature, an argument can be made that community heterogeneity—racial heterogeneity in particular—should lead to a higher likelihood of people participating in politics. One potential reason for this is that cities or communities characterized by heterogeneity will tend to have more conflicts over resources and policies and more mobilized groups leading to more political participation. Recent work in group conflict theory shows that racial attitudes and policy preferences are strongly influenced by group identities and the perception that what other groups gain, the own group loses. As Glaser puts it, "In essence, this theory posits that individuals have a zero-sum view of politics, that they think in group terms, in 'us' and 'them' terms, and that they see the possibility that their own group could lose something valued to a rival group" (Glaser 1994, 23). In other words, individuals view politics, at least in part, as a competitive struggle between groups for scarce resources and are motivated to attempt "to affect the process and pattern of their distribution" (Bobo 1988, 95).

Not only is the individual-level race important for the development of these attitudes and related behaviors, but the racial environment is crucial. People living in more racially diverse areas will be inclined to express these kinds of attitudes more than those in less heterogeneous areas (Glaser 2003). Race and racial identity become more salient in more racially heterogeneous places. In the following sections I test the impact of racial diversity on political participation. I begin with a slightly modified version of the individual-level model presented in Chapter 2. In the individual-level model here, I specify race as a random variable in order to be able to examine whether the effect of race on people's propensity for participation is different in across cities. I then go on to look at the ways in which the effect of individuals' race interacts with the racial environment.

Table 3.1: Individual-level effects on voting[a]

Variable:	Estimate	Odds-ratio
Constant	1.257	3.517
	(0.039)***	
Black	0.099	1.104
	(0.070)	
Asian	-1.766	0.171
	(0.128)***	
Hispanic	-1.055	0.348
	(0.066)***	
Female	0.169	1.182
	(0.051)***	
Education	0.803	2.233
	(0.032)***	
Age	0.122	1.130
	(0.007)***	
Age^2	-0.001	0.999
	(0.000)***	
Random effects:		
Intercept (τ_{00})	0.300***	
Black (τ_{02})	0.353***	
Asian (τ_{03})	0.715***	
Hispanic (τ_{04})	0.246*	

[a] N=14,153; J=690. Dependent variable is "voted in 1996"; * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%. Estimates are from a logistic model estimated using restricted maximum likelihood in HLM; robust standard errors in parentheses. Excluded category for race is "white".

3.1.1 The Varying Effect of Race on Participation

The first model estimated here is similar to the one in the previous chapter; it differs in that *Race* is a random variable here. The model is:

$$turnout_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \Sigma\gamma_{10} Race_{ij} + \Sigma\gamma_{20} IND_i + \delta_{0j} + \Sigma\delta_{1j} Race_{ij} + \epsilon_{ij}\,. \quad (3.1)$$

Here *Race* is again a set of dummy variables for the race of individual respondents and *IND* a vector of individual-level controls. The estimates from this model are presented in table 3.1. Turning to the bottom part of the table, the variance components for the intercept as well as the randomly varying dummy variables for race are significant. That is, the effect of race on political participation is not constant across communities in the United States. The next step is to specify a model that tries to predict those varying slopes.

3.1.2 The Racial Diversity Model

Now I turn to the model testing the effects of racial diversity on political participation. Community heterogeneity is operationalized using a measure of racial fractionalization for each city in the sample. Following Easterly & Levine (1997), Alesina, Baqir & Easterly (1999), Alesina & La Ferrera (2000) and others, racial fictionalization is measured by a Herfindahl-based index constructed from the US Census, defined as follows:

$$racial fractionalization = 1 - \sum_{k} S_{ki}^2$$

where i represents a given city and k the following races: (i) White; (ii) Black; (iii) American Indian, Eskimo, Aleutian; (iv) Asian, Pacific Islander; (v) Hispanic. Each term S_{ki} is the share of race k in the population of city i. The index measures the probability that two randomly drawn individuals in area i belong to different races and takes on values between 0 and 1. Higher values of the index represent more racial heterogeneity.

As I mentioned in the previous section, I am interested in relaxing the assumptions that race has the same affect across all communities and that racial diversity has the same impact on all racial groups. The random race coefficients in (3.1) test the first of these and the crosslevel interaction terms in (3.3) below,

test the second. However, there is a model between these two which specifies a main effect for racial diversity. Before turning to predicting the random slopes in (3.1), I want to investigate the overall effect of racial diversity on political participation. This model is:

$$turnout_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01} RF_j + \Sigma\gamma_{10} Race_{ij} + \Sigma\gamma_{20} IND_i + \delta_{0j} + \Sigma\delta_{1j} Race_{ij} + \epsilon_{ij} \,. \tag{3.2}$$

The results from this model are presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Racial diversity and voting[a]

Variable:	Estimate	Odds-ratio
Constant	1.385	3.996
	(0.039)***	
Black	-0.017	0.983
	(0.079)	
Asian	-1.463	0.232
	(0.113)***	
Hispanic	-1.094	0.335
	(0.065)***	
Female	0.202	1.224
	(0.049)***	
Education	0.399	1.491
	(0.019)***	
Age	0.098	1.103
	(0.007)***	
Age^2	-0.001	0.999
	(0.000)***	
Contextual effects:		
Racial fractionalization	-0.375	0.687
	(0.185)**	
Random effects:		
Intercept (τ_{00})	0.292***	
Black (τ_{02})	0.417***	
Asian (τ_{03})	0.597***	
Hispanic (τ_{04})	0.273*	

[a] N=14,153; J=690. Dependent variable is "voted in 1996"; * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%. Estimates are from a logistic model estimated using restricted maximum likelihood in HLM; robust standard errors in parentheses. Excluded category for race is "white".

The main effect of racial diversity on political participation is negative and

significant. That is, the likelihood of voting is lower in cities that are more diverse. However, as mentioned above, this ignores the possibility that there are different effects of racial environment for different groups. Furthermore, racial diversity, or heterogeneity, also means different things for different racial groups. A feature of American cities is that the size of the white population is negatively related to racial diversity while the size of the black population is positively related to diversity. So, as diversity goes up, the white in-group decreases and minority in-group size tends to increase. This relationship is illustrated in Figure 3.1. The negative main effect of racial diversity may be a

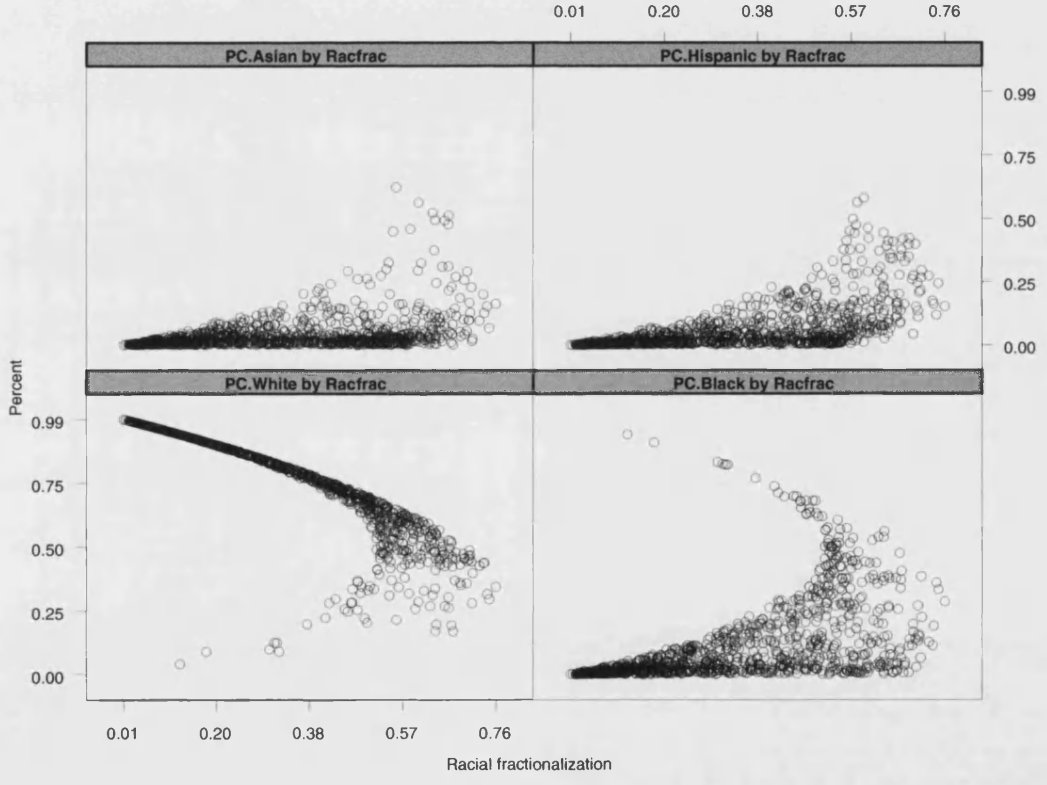


Figure 3.1: Racial fractionalization by size of racial group in American cities

result of the fact that the white population is greater in most cities than that of the black population or other minority populations. Therefore, it is interesting to investigate whether the relationship found in the main effect holds for the

interaction between diversity and race.

While the previous model estimated the slopes for each racial category by specifying these individual-level terms as random, in the full model I attempt to predict those slopes with my measure of racial heterogeneity. That is, I include cross-level interaction terms between the individual-level race dummies and racial fractionalization. In other words, in (3.1) I am testing the hypothesis that differences in voting between groups are not constant across cities; now I want to predict this variation using the level of racial heterogeneity in each city. The full model is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} turnout_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01} RF_j + \Sigma\gamma_{10} IND_i + \Sigma\gamma_{20} Race_{ij} \\ + \Sigma\gamma_{21} RF_j * Race_{ij} + \delta_{0j} + \Sigma\delta_{2j} Race_{ij} + \epsilon_{ij} \,. \end{aligned} \tag{3.3}$$

Of interest here are the estimates for the effects of racial fractionalization on the random slopes of the four race categories included at the individual-level; the cross-level interactions. The other individual-level estimates remain largely unchanged in this model. Turning to the variables of interest, it is instructive to first examine the estimates of the variance components for the random effects. All the variance components have decreased from the previous model with the addition of the city-level factor of racial fractionalization, though only modestly, suggesting that the new variable is doing some work in reducing the unexplained variance across cities. The variance components remain significant, however, indicating that the city-level variables in the model do not explain all the variance across communities.[2]

[2]While the tables contain the variance components, it also instructive to consider their co-variances. In the model presented in Table 3, the intercept is positively correlated with Asian, but negatively with black and Hispanic indicating that if white participation is high, the difference between white and Asian tends to be relatively small, but that between white and black or Hispanic relatively large. Note that in such a case black participation may still be relatively (compared to other cities) high, but the difference between blacks and whites is larger than usual. The correlations between the race effects tell a similar story. They are positive between black and Hispanic but negative between Asian and black or Hispanic. This implies that in a city where the difference between white and black is large, it also tends to be large between white and Hispanic but relatively small between white and Asian.

Table 3.3: The interaction between racial diversity and race on voting[a]

Variable:	Estimate	Odds-ratio
Constant	1.251	3.495
	(0.033)***	
Black	-0.270	0.764
	(0.091)***	
Asian	-2.154	0.116
	(0.158)***	
Hispanic	-1.407	0.245
	(0.090)***	
Female	0.232	1.262
	(0.046)***	
Education	0.672	1.960
	(0.028)***	
Age	0.123	1.130
	(0.007)***	
Age^2	-0.001	0.999
	(0.000)***	
Contextual effects:		
Racial fractionalization×white	-0.289	0.749
	(0.174)*	
Racial fractionalization×black	0.961	2.613
	(0.458)**	
Racial fractionalization×Asian	0.814	2.257
	(0.751)	
Racial fractionalization×Hispanic	-1.407	0.245
	(0.402)	
Random effects:		
Intercept (τ_{00})	0.290***	
Black (τ_{02})	0.348***	
Asian (τ_{03})	0.696***	
Hispanic (τ_{04})	0.244*	

[a] N=14,153; J=690. Dependent variable is "voted in 1996"; * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%. Estimates are from a logistic model estimated using restricted maximum likelihood in HLM; robust standard errors in parentheses. Excluded category for race is "white".

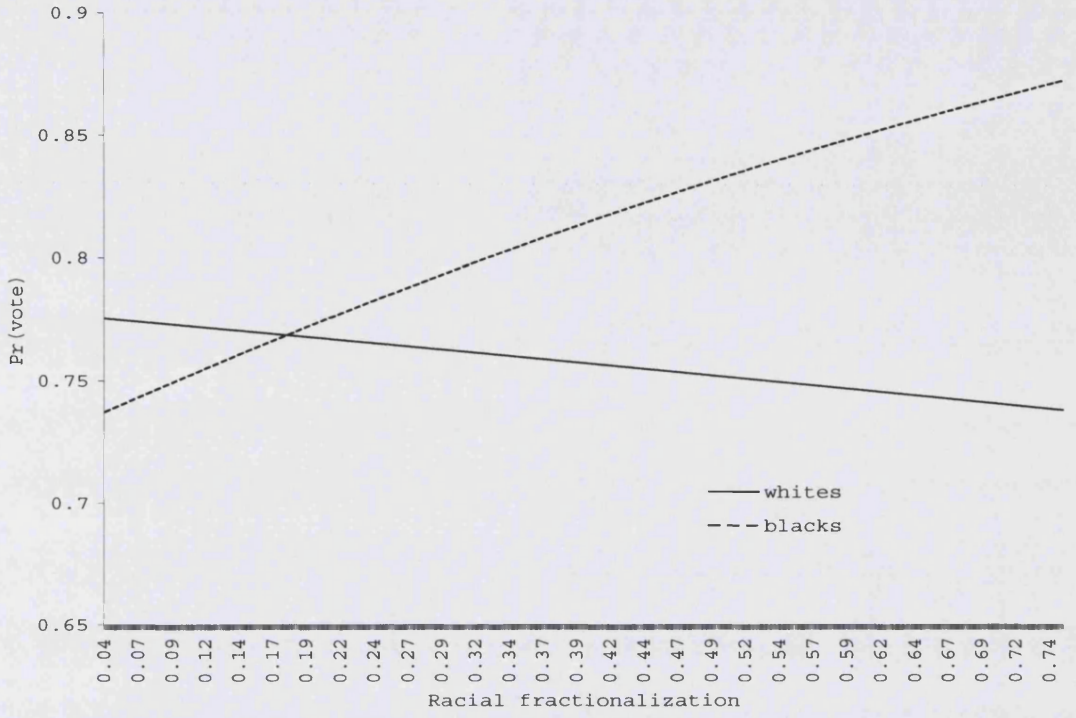


Figure 3.2: The Effect of racial diversity on the probability of voting among racial groups

The cross–level interactions for whites and blacks are both significant and suggest that racial heterogeneity affects these racial groups differently.The effect of racial fractionalization on voting for whites is significant and negative. Increasing racial diversity, according to this model, decreases the likelihood of voting for white people. The *Racial fractionalization*$\times$ *black* interaction, on other hand, has a positive sign and is statistically significant. That is, racial diversity positively predicts voting among blacks—as diversity increases, so do the odds of voting for a black person. While the estimates from the main effects for Asian and Hispanic are significant, the interaction terms for these with racial fractionalization fail to meet conventional levels of statistical significance. Figure 3.2 illustrates graphically the effect of letting racial diversity predict the probability of voting for blacks and whites.[3] If you are black, your odds of voting increase

[3]The predicted effects are obtained by holding all independent variables at their mean and allowing the racial fractionalization index to vary over its full range found in the data.

with increasing levels of racial diversity. The effect on blacks of racial diversity strong enough to make blacks more likely to turn out than whites as one moves up the racial fractionalization scale. A black person moving from a very homogenous community with a score at the bottom of the racial fractionalization index to a city at the high end of the diversity scale would represent a jump in the probability of voting from .737 to .872, holding all other factors constant. For a white person, the same move entails a drop in the probability of voting from .775 to .738. As Figure 3.2 demonstrates, the impact of racial diversity is considerably stronger for blacks than for whites.

3.2 Conclusion

Much previous research on the effects of racial diversity on civic engagement, social capital and political participation maintains that increased levels of diversity will serve to decrease political activity. In this chapter I have argued the opposite; that people living in more diverse communities will be *more* likely to participate in politics. Inter–racial attitudes tend to be more conflictual in more diverse places where race and racial identity are more salient. That is, individuals see race relations in terms of a zero–sum competition over resources and their distribution. More racially diverse places should as a result be characterized by more conflict, more issues and therefore more political participation. I also hypothesized that the differences in voting between racial groups will vary between cities and this variability can, in part, be explained by racial heterogeneity.

The analysis shows that the effect of racial diversity on whites' likelihood of voting is negative. That is, living in a more racially diverse place tends to suppress turnout among whites. However, when racial fractionalization was used to predict the slope of each individual racial group, this relationship reversed

for non-Hispanic blacks. For black people, living in a more diverse community *raises* the probability of voting. The results from this analysis indicate that the relationship between racial diversity and political participation is not straightforward and that it impacts differently on people from distinct racial groups. Specifying a model where the individual effect of race is allowed to vary randomly across cities uncovers different results which remain "hidden" in models where race effects are fixed. In this model, racial heterogeneity becomes a strong predictor of participation for members of minority groups while the participation of whites remains negatively related to diversity. One needs to explicitly model the effect of diversity on separate racial groups in order to get at these associations.

Chapter 4

Local Government Institutions

4.1 Introduction

The organization of local government in the United States is complex with county, city and special purpose governments as well as elected school boards all providing services and levying taxes. Moreover, as Ostrom, Bish & Ostrom note, these governments are essentially organized according to fifty different sets of rules since the laws governing local governments are under the jurisdiction of the states' constitutions and legislatures (1988, 1). Not only is there great variation between these different types of governments, there are also vast differences within the categories, particularly among cities—the focus of this thesis. Some cities, like Chicago, are famously run by mayors with vast powers who control political appointments, budgets, council agendas and city contracts. Others, for example Phoenix, Arizona—a city of over 1.3 million—also have mayors, but in Phoenix the mayor is largely indistinguishable from other council members and lacks the powers of his Chicagoan colleague (see also Oliver 2001, 175). In cities such as Phoenix real power lies with professional city managers (Ostrom, Bish & Ostrom 1988, 44–5). In Seattle, for example, city representatives are elected at-large and ballots are nonpartisan, while in Tucson, a similarly sized city, council members are elected from single-member districts in partisan elections. Cities also differ in the size of their councils, how much and in what areas they tax their residents, the services they provide as well as the extent to which they have mechanisms for direct democracy. In this chapter, I examine the effects of this institutional variation on political participation.

There is a large literature linking political behavior—in particular voter turnout—to institutional structure at the national level. Gosnell (1930), in his early seminal work, illustrated how turnout in European countries varied along with differences in electoral systems. More recently, Jackman (1987) and Powell (1986) and later Jackman & Miller (1995, 2004) and Franklin (2004) have showed how differences in turnout are to a large degree a function of differences in

political institutions. These institutions include the number of political parties, laws making voting compulsory, the level of political competition and electoral disproportionality (Jackman & Miller 2004, 138).

Many of differences in how local governments are run and organized have their roots in the Progressive Era reforms that came into effect in parts of the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These reforms had the goal of stopping corruption in city politics and limiting the power of political machines. While these efforts were clearly meant to strengthen local democracy, they may have had the unintended consequence of lowering rates of political participation. The way in which local governments are organized structures incentives and opportunities for political participation.

4.2 The Organization of American Local Government

The earliest local governments in the United States were organized around principles of individual self-government. These ideas were reflected in Tocqueville's observations on 18th century New England townships (Ostrom, Bish & Ostrom 1988, Tocqueville 1969 [1832]). The main idea was one of decentralization. Townships exercised power over their own concerns and citizens of towns were directly involved in the process of governing their communities. Government was practised by assemblies of all citizens as well as by elected bodies (Ostrom, Bish & Ostrom 1988, 22). This form of township government was effective as long as populations were small. However, as the country changed from a mostly rural society to one of larger urban concentrations, local governments based on citizen assemblies and direct democracy gave way to representative governments (Oliver 2001, 175–6). This shift gave rise to local

political parties and a system machine politics that characterized local government up to the early decades of the 20th century. The massive increase in immigration occurring at the time when representative government structures were emerging, served to strengthen the development of machine politics. As Oliver puts it, immigrants came to be "organized into powerful political constituencies guided by patronage politics" (2001, 176). The ward system of electing city representatives—whereby representatives where selected from single-member districts within the city—meant that local politicians could effectively distribute benefits to groups whose loyalty was needed to ensure political success. The basis of the political machine—which existed to deliver votes "with mechanical regularity"—was not ideology or political issues but rather patronage (Stone 1996, 446). Ostrom, Bish & Ostrom (1988, 28–9) argue that political machines had incentives to:

> ...slate candidates for all the numerous legislative, executive, and judicial offices in its relevant political jurisdictions; to procure positions on public payrolls for those assisting in its organizational efforts to conduct campaigns, canvass votes, and deliver voters to the polls; to control the decisions made by the public officials elected as a part of the organization's slate; and to receive contributions from those who benefit from the decisions taken.

The corruption and rising costs associated with this type of politics led to efforts at reforming the institutions of local government. Several broad categories of reforms took place: the structure of local government executives; electoral reform; as well as reforms to the local civil service (Ostrom, Bish & Ostrom 1988, Ch 3).

4.2.1 Executive Reforms

In order to curb the power of political bosses, some cities adopted reforms to strengthen the powers of the mayor. The so-called Weak-Mayor Plan, in place in many American cities prior to the Progressive Era, was characterized by a plethora of elected officials who were more or less accountable only to their constituents as opposed to a central executive. This setup created opportunities for political bosses to control local politics (Ostrom, Bish & Ostrom 1988, 41). The Strong-Mayor Plan—also called the Mayor-council form—was a response to this shortcoming, the idea being that a strong mayor would have incentives to speak for the entire community and the opportunities for political machines to distribute pork in exchange for votes would be limited. The Commission Plan of local government was another governance structure adopted to make the running of cities more efficient. Under this plan, elected commissioners each have responsibility for administering separate departments. In this way, one body deals with both administrative and legislative tasks. Efficiency was the prime benefit of this form of government, but early proponents also argued that cities run by Commissions were, if not immune, certainly less prone to corruption and machine politics (Ryan 1911, 48–50).

Making mayors stronger was one approach to combating boss rule; eliminating mayors altogether—or eliminating them in all but name—was another strategy. Aside from Mayor-council governments, the Council-manager form of government is most prevalent in the United States. As Ostrom, Bish & Ostrom (1988, 48) put it, the Council-manager form of local government is analogous to a private corporation "in which stockholders elect a board of directors that in turn selects an executive officer to assume responsibility for the management of the firm." This governance structure is such that a small council is elected by citizens and this council in turn appoints a professional city manager who has responsibility for the overall operation of city affairs.

4.2.2 Electoral Reforms

Reforms to the way in which the executives of local governments are structured were also accompanied by several electoral reforms including:

- open primaries replacing party caucuses
- nonpartisan elections
- at large electoral districts instead of wards
- measures for direct democracy such as initiatives and referenda
- recall elections (Hawley 1973, Ostrom, Bish & Ostrom 1988).

The first two of these institutional changes were aimed at reducing the role of parties in elections. When citizens do not have engage in the party caucus in order to run in an election, but instead can simply put their names forward as candidates in a primary, party control of the process is limited. Prohibiting political party labels through nonpartisan elections further diminishes the ability to political machines to mobilize a broad slate of candidates. The argument for local representatives elected at large, in city-wide elections, is that these will be more likely to take account of the concerns of the entire community. Much of the patronage and corruption associated with pre-reform governments stemmed from the fact that local representatives came from single-member wards and where therefore able to funnel appointments, contracts and other benefits to their constituents (Stone 1996). Finally, the reform movement brought with it measures for direct democracy. In many American cities it became possible for citizens to directly propose and vote on ordinances and changes to city charters. Provisions for recall elections were also instituted in a great number of cities. This institution makes it possible for elected officials to be removed from office before their term is up in a special election triggered by a citizen initiated petition (Magleby 1984, Magleby 1988).

Table 4.1: Forms of Government by Population Size[a]

	Population size					
	Under 10,000	10,000–25,000	25,000–<50,000	50,000–<100,000	100,000–250,000	Over 250,000
Form of govt.						
Mayor-council	79%	54%	42%	38%	43%	62%
Council-manager	12%	40%	56%	59%	54%	35%
Commission	2%	4%	2%	2%	3%	3%
Town meeting	3%	1%	—	—	—	—
Other	4%	1%	—	1%	—	—
Electoral districts						
At large	85%	69%	65%	55%	49%	30%
By district	11%	12%	14%	14%	18%	34%
Both	4%	19%	22%	31%	33%	36%

[a] Source: Oliver (2001, 177)

Table 4.1 illustrates the diversity in how American governments are structured. Given the great degree of variation in forms of government, electoral rules and provisions for direct democracy—as well as differences within these categories when it comes to the specific powers of elected officials, the services provided by cities and their spending and taxation—the question is what impact, if any, these institutional differences have on political behavior and specifically participation.

4.3 Incentives and Opportunities for Participation in Reformed and Unreformed Governments

While machine politics and boss rule are widely regarded as corrupt and harmful to local democracy (see Stone 1996), it is nevertheless the case that the institutions associated with this era gave politicians and local officials incentives to act in ways that in fact promote political interest and participation among citizens.

At the same time, several of the reform government institutions that were introduced by the Progressive movement, limit opportunities for citizen political action.

Ostrom, Bish & Ostrom's (1988, 28–29) account of how political machines act given the incentives they are faced with, is telling: they mobilize candidates; give constituents jobs and other benefits in exchange for political support and campaign work; bosses became powerful actors and they were often well known figures in their communities. A crucial aspect of an effective political machine, noted by Oliver (2001) and Welch & Bledsoe (1988) and others, is that cities be divided into small, single-member districts. In this way, politicians have a better connection to their constituents, can adapt to their needs and more effectively distribute the goods and benefits underpinning the electoral machine. At large districts removes this connection. Professional city managers also serve to dampen patronage. As Oliver (2001, 179) puts it:

> When mayors appoint the heads of city department or are responsible for the disbursement of most city contracts, the opportunities for rewarding friends and supporters are high. When such decisions are made by a professional city manager ... the ability of elected officials to manipulate public resources in reward of their supports is severely limited. In other words, the ability to manipulate public resources to induce partisan participation, the very definition of machine politics, is greatly restricted when elected officials have only indirect control over such resources.

Previous research has tended to produce findings supporting the theory that institutions associated with reform governments have a negative effect on political participation. The council-manager form of government and non-partisan elections are both cited as discouraging people from taking part in local political affairs (Cassel 1987, Welch & Bledsoe 1986). By limiting the role of parties,

reform institutions suppress important sources of political mobilization, thereby making it less likely that citizens get involved.

Furthermore, there is an argument to be made that in nonreformed cities, politics tends to be more visible. That is, the central role that mayors play means that citizens can easily identify (if not identify with) local political affairs. Famous mayors such those in Chicago, New York, Cincinnati and Kansas City were colorful public figures who put local politics front and center. Another reason why cities with machine politics might induce higher levels of participation is that the benefits of participating—patronage appointments, preferential contracts, getting on the city payroll—are very real and substantial. In this way, machine politics and the patronage that goes with it can be seen as one way to produce a *B-term solution* to the calculus of voting problem (Dowding 2005, 442–3). The general conclusion in the vast majority of existing work is that reform institutions are associated with less participation (Alford & Lee 1968, Hajnal & Lewis 2003, Kelleher & Lowery 2004). However, Oliver (2001, 178), in his study of participation and local government institutions, notes that most of the previous work in this field has examined only voting and has usually employed only aggregate data. Oliver's analysis—which includes nonelectoral forms of political participation—leads him to conclude that local government institutions have no effect on citizens' propensities for taking political action. Only voting in municipal elections varies with changes in political institutions; none of the nonelectoral forms of participation examined by Oliver—contacting officials, attending board meetings, attending organizational meetings and informal activity—are influenced by differences in how city governments are organized (Oliver 2001, 183–4).

Oliver (2001) is right to expand the number of indicators of political participation beyond voting. The present analysis also looks at both electoral and nonelectoral political participation. I take a somewhat different approach to

Oliver when it comes to operationalizing the institutional independent variables. When considering reformed versus nonreformed institutions, I argue that the expectations about the role of these in political behavior outcomes ought not to be as clearcut as some of the literature maintains.

For instance, the impact of provisions for direct democracy on political participation should be seen as positive. On the one hand, initiatives and referenda have the potential to directly involve citizens. There is empirical work indicating that the use of ballot initiatives makes citizens more aware of politics, increases interest in politics and has a positive effect on other forms of political participation (Bowler & Donovan 2002, Smith 2001, Smith 2002, Tolbert, Grummel & Smith 2001). On the other hand, such institutions also have the potential to involve citizens indirectly through mobilization efforts of interest groups who have a stake in the outcome of such races. Indeed, there is a growing body of research that maintains that, despite their Progressive Era roots, direct democracy institutions such as the initiative, referendum and recall are fertile ground for special interests and machine-like politics (Gerber 1996, Gerber 1999, Gerber, Lupia, McCubbins & Kiewiet 2001). Thus the benefits and drawbacks of reformed and unreformed local governments are not unambiguous. Whether one sees advantages or weaknesses depends on if one is concerned with issues of corruption and patronage or citizen apathy.

Thus, there is a need to avoid the tendency to view the impact of local government institutions in terms of reformed versus nonreformed governments, and instead to simply regard institutions as creating incentives and opportunities that are either positive for participation or negative. To that end, I analyze how the level of political "openness" of cities affects citizens' propensity for political participation. This approach bears some resemblance to the work on social movements that employs the concept of political opportunity structures (Kriesi 1995, McAdam, McCarthy & Zald 1996, Tarrow 1994). Eisinger (1973,

11–12), in his study of protest politics in American cities, described the ways in which the institutional context frames incentives for collective action:

> Elements in the environment can impose certain constraints on political activity or open up avenues for it. The manner in which individuals and groups in the political system behave, then, is not simply a function of the resources they command but of the openings, weak spots, barriers, and resources of the political system itself. There is, in this sense, interaction or linkage between the environment, understood in terms of the notion of structure of political opportunities, and political behavior (cited in Ulbig 1999, 4).

As Tarrow (1994, 85) puts is, political opportunity structures of are "dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for people to undertake collective action by affecting their expectations of success or failure." In other words, the way in which institutions are organized has implications for how citizens view the costs and benefits in the calculus of whether to take political action or not.

Following Ulbig (1999), the openness of a city's political system is measured using four aspects of local government institutions: the form of government; the electoral system; ballot structure; and provisions for direct democracy. Governance structures where executive power rests with managers instead of elected mayors, and at large districts are considered to contribute to a closed political system. Having appointed, professional managers who run city affairs means that citizens are one step removed from the process, as opposed to the situation in cities where citizens directly elect mayors who have real power. Similarly, nonpartisan ballots are also seen as limiting the openness of a city's political system in that they reduce the amount of information available to voters. Nonpartisan elections also eliminate another avenue for citizen involvement in that they curtail party activity and organization. On the other hand, provisions for citizens

to directly change and introduce legislation and recall elected officials contribute to higher levels of openness. These four dimensions are considered together in an additive index constructed from data from the International City/County Management Association's *Municipal Form of Government Survey.*[1] The index is a 25 point scale and ranges from 0 (most closed) to 1 (most open). The expectation is that citizens residing in more open cities will be more likely to participate in politics. Ulbig (1999, 7–8) observes that there could be differences in the effect of openness on different forms of participation. Ulbig makes the case that more open systems, while encouraging all types of participation, should have a greater effect on so-called "conventional" forms of participation. The logic here is that in cities where the political system is more closed, individuals and groups may have incentives to engage in "nonconventional" political activity as the system is less responsive to acts such as voting and contacting politicians and officials.

4.4 Results and Discussion

Analyses testing the impact of different institutional variables on the five indicators of political participation (not reported here) produced mostly nil findings. None of the dependent variables were affected by differences in governance form, electoral rules or direct democracy. However, taking these together, as a measure of the openness, or responsiveness, of the political system does reveal some ways in which local political institutions impact on political participation.

The results from the models including the city openness measure are reported in Table 4.2. The individual-level effects are largely unaffected by the inclusion of city openness. Black Americans are slightly more likely than whites to attend

[1] For more information on the index and the ICMA survey question wordings, see Appendix B.

political meetings and be involved in boycotts or demonstrations; but their odds of engaging the other forms of participation are not significantly different from whites'. The participation of Asians is lower in all forms of activity, compared to whites. Hispanics are also less likely than white Americans to vote or sign petitions. However, the probability of being involved in the more unconventional form of political activity of demonstrations, is higher for Hispanics than it is for whites.

Again, the gender differences that emerge—women being more likely to vote and sign petitions; less likely to engage in the other forms of political participation—point to differences in resources (most notably time) between men and women. The effect for age is consistent across the five dependent variables: older people are mote likely to take political action than younger people. Married people are more likely to vote than their unmarried counterparts. Perhaps one reason for this is social pressure to vote, it being more difficult to hide not nonvoting from a spouse. Married people are, however, significantly less active in forms of political participation that require more time and that are less conventional. This might signal a kind of lifecycle effect where people are more inclined to take part in things like demonstrations before they are married and "settle down". Education, as expected, has a large positive effect on political participation. For example, the odds of voting for someone with a bachelors degree are more than twice as high as the odds for a person with only a highschool diploma. While somewhat smaller, the effects of education on the odds of engaging in the other forms of participation are still large. The longer an individual has lived their community, the higher the chances are that they participate in politics. The same relationship is present for home ownership—people who own their homes, have higher probabilities of taking political action. In other words, the greater commitment one has to one's community—and the more stake one has in that community—the more likely it is that one invests

Table 4.2: Local government openness and political participation[a]

Parameter	Voting[b]	Petition	Pol. meeting	Demo/b'cott	Pol. group
Fixed Effects					
Ind'l-level					
Constant	3.861	0.553	0.186	0.066	0.084
	(3.526,4.228)	(0.513,0.595)	(0.172,0.202)	(0.057,0.077)	(0.077,0.092)
Black[c]	0.987	0.709	1.378	1.249	0.978
	(0.833,1.168)	(0.644,0.782)	(1.185,1.601)	(1.044,1.494)	(0.805,1.189)
Asian	0.340	0.479	0.774	0.556	0.946
	(0.263,0.440)	(0.374,0.614)	(0.650,0.923)	(0.344,0.897)	(0.717,1.249)
Hispanic	0.589	0.532	1.156	1.351	0.942
	(0.499,0.695)	(0.475,0.596)	(0.964,1.387)	(1.064,1.715)	(0.761,1.167)
Female	1.234	1.080	0.832	0.945	0.708
	(1.110,1.372)	(1.004,1.162)	(0.759,0.911)	(0.824,1.084)	(0.641,0.782)
Age	1.111	1.043	1.015	1.003	1.029
	(1.093,1.130)	(1.027,1.058)	(1.000,1.031)	(0.971,1.036)	(1.002,1.058)
Age^2	0.999	0.999	1.000	1.000	1.000
	(0.999,1.000)	(0.999,1.000)	(1.000,1.000)	(0.999,1.000)	(0.999,1.000)
Married	1.162	1.039	0.894	0.807	0.868
	(1.050,1.287)	(0.950,1.137)	(0.801,0.997)	(0.694,0.939)	(0.764,0.986)
Education	2.153	1.454	1.545	1.343	1.696
	(2.011,2.305)	(1.392,1.520)	(1.486,1.608)	(1.244,1.449)	(1.599,1.799)
Years in com.	1.081	1.093	1.101	1.043	1.132
	(1.043,1.121)	(1.061,1.127)	(1.061,1.143)	(0.988,1.101)	(1.091,1.176)
Home owner	1.662	1.180	1.284	1.107	1.209
	(1.497,1.845)	(1.079,1.290)	(1.151,1.432)	(0.898,1.365)	(1.057,1.382)
City-level					
Openness	0.916	1.351	1.341	1.562	1.029
	(0.661,1.267)	(0.991,1.840)	(0.994,1.810)	(0.937,2.605)	(1.005,1.054)
Pop. (logged)	1.063	1.056	1.020	1.093	1.070
	(1.015,1.112)	(1.011,1.102)	(0.979,1.063)	(1.023,1.167)	(1.024,1.118)
Random Effects[d]					
City-level (τ_{00})	0.449***	0.450***	0.387***	0.527***	0.293***
Asian (τ_{07})	1.046***	0.387***	0.880***		1.026
Hispanic (τ_{08})	0.685**		0.530		
Black (τ_{09})	0.580***		0.432***		0.457
ICC (ρ)	0.120	0.120	0.105	0.138	0.082
Deviance	39920.220	48302.369	43223.445	37916.834	38670.366

[a] N=15,629; J=1139. Estimates are from logistic models estimated using maximum likelihood in HLM; entries are odds ratios with 95% confidence intervals in parentheses; see Appendix A and B for exact question wordings and coding; * significant at 5%; ** significant at 1%; *** significant at .1%.

[b] Non-citizens excluded from voting models; N=14,686; J=1107.

[c] Excluded category for race is "white".

[d] Only those variables that had statistically significant variance components in the level-1 models were kept as random effects in subsequent models.

in the community by participating in politics. Home ownership in particular, raises the stakes of local politics since decisions on where to build hospitals, develop schools, or put highways, to name a few, all have an impact on the value of property.

When it comes to the effect of city political system openness, the results are somewhat ambiguous. Voting has a negative relationship to city openness, but the confidence interval around this estimate is too wide to treat it with any degree of certainty. City openness is related to higher odds of signing petitions, attending political meetings, going to demonstrations or boycotting as well as political group activity. Again, as the confidence intervals indicate, these estimates should be treated with caution; indeed the estimates are statistically significant only at the 10% level. Nevertheless, for these types of nonelectoral participation there does appear to be an effect from political system openness—albeit a weak one.

To get a better indication of these relationships, Figure 4.1 presents predicted probabilities of political participation at different levels of city openness. On the y-axis are predicted probabilities from the models in Table 4.2. Along the x-axis are values of the openness index across the range found in the data. The index has been centered around the grand mean, with a mean of 0. The probabilities are conditional on all other variables in the model being held at their means. Ninetyfive percent confidence intervals are represented by the dotted lines. As the figure makes clear, moving from the most closed city (Anaheim, California for example) to the most open (St. Louis), entails only a very modest drop in the probability of voting and these probabilities are predicted with quite low confidence. In other words, there is virtually no statistical or substantive effect of political system openness on voting. However, again it should be noted that this is voting in a Presidential election and therefore, it is unlikely that the nature of local government institutions will play a large role. The other

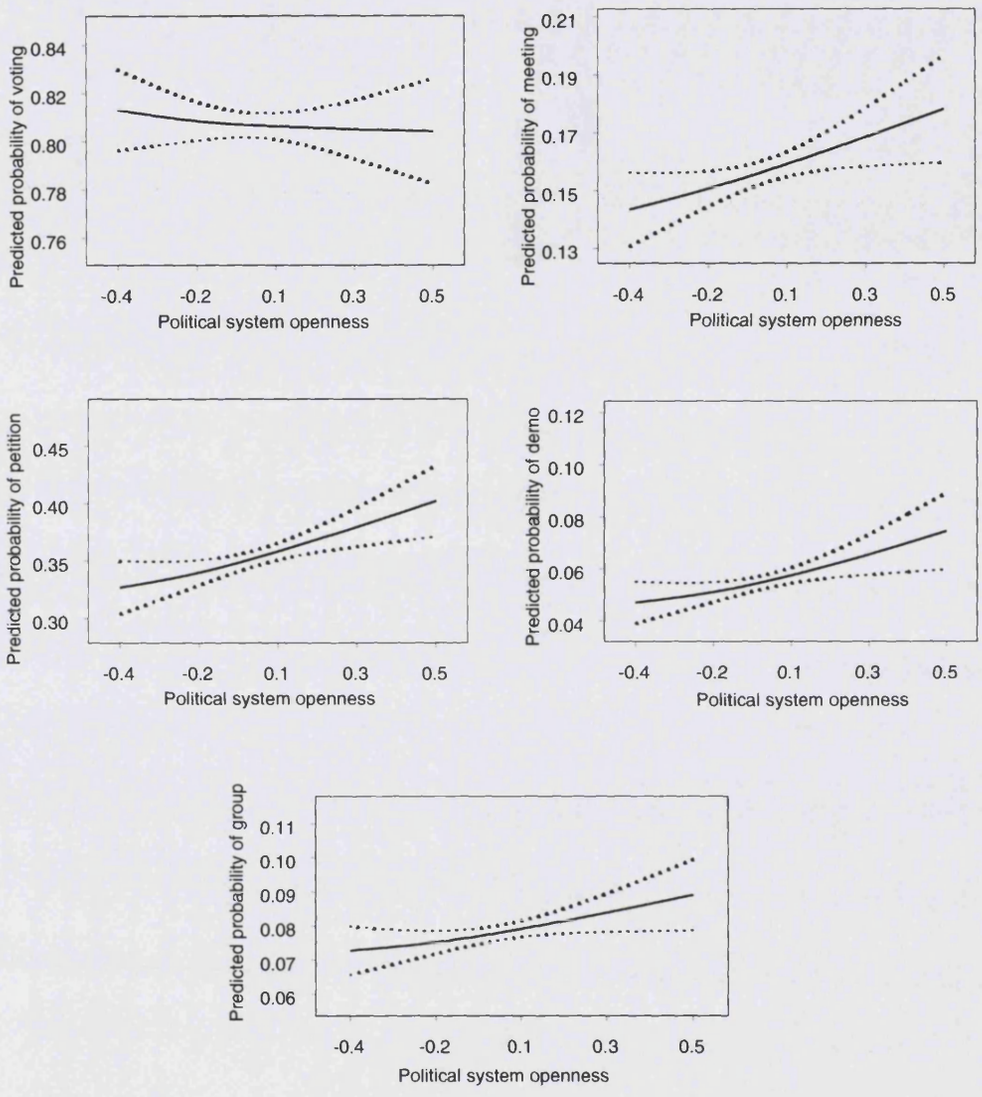


Figure 4.1: The effect of city political system openness on political participation. The solid lines are predicted probabilities of the dependent variable for the valid range of the *Openness* index, holding all other variables at their means. The dotted lines are 95% confidence intervals. The confidence intervals were calculated taking into account the uncertainty of the estimated coefficients in the regressions ($\hat{\beta}$s and estimated standard errors). Values of *Openness* have been centered around the mean ($Openness - \overline{Openness}$).

four indicators of political participation are positively influenced by openness of the local political environment. The slopes of these relationships are all quite shallow, however. Thus the substantive effect of openness is not dramatic.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that institutions structure incentives for collective action and examined how differences in local government institutions affect political participation. The ways in which government executive structures are organized and representatives elected varies greatly among American cities. Some cities also provide for the direct involvement of citizens in enacting legislation through various provisions. The prevailing contention of the literature is that the institutional reforms brought in during the Progressive Era served to dampen participation. However, the findings presented here indicate, on the one hand, that individual effects of institutions are more or less nonexistent across the indicators of political participation studied. On the other hand, when combined into a measure of city political openness in order to tap political opportunity structures, local government institutions do have an effect on participation—though these effects are substantively small.

Chapter 5

The Illusory Effect of Social Capital

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The concept of social capital has recently come to be used to explain myriad ails and wonders in society; among these political participation. The focus of much of the recent research on political and civic engagement in the United States has been on the apparent decline of participation in the post-war era (Paxton 1999, Putnam 2000). Discussions of low and declining levels political participation in America are not new. Lately however, the issue has been increasingly coupled with discussions about lower levels of social capital and civic engagement in general, with a steady stream of journal articles, books and media coverage following Robert Putnam's lead (1995*a*, 1995*b*, 2000). The reported decline of social capital in America has received much attention from a wide spectrum of scholars who argue that it has serious implications for areas as diverse as crime and neighborhood safety (Glaeser, Sacerdote & Scheinkman 1995, Putnam 2000), health (Kawachi, Kennedy & Glass 1999, Veenstra 2001), the economy (Fukuyama 1995, Knack & Keefer 1997), trust in government and other institutions (Keele 2004, Porta, de Silanes, Shleifer & Vishny 2000) and government responsiveness (Knack 2002, Putnam 1993).

When it comes to political participation, there are two streams of argument from the social capitalists. One line of research suggests that the attitudinal aspects of social capital are important factors in explaining why some people take part in politics and others do not. Activity in voluntary (non-political) associations infuses members with attitudes and values such as norms of reciprocity and trust (Putnam 2000, Stolle 1999). These, it is said, are precisely the attitudes necessary for political participation. A second argument concentrates more on the effects of networks on recruiting individuals into political participation. That is, being involved in all manner of non-political groups makes it more likely that a person will be asked to get involved in a political cause. Verba, Schlozman & Brady have further argued that the skills and resources

required for political participation are gained through activity in non-political institutions such as school, the workplace and church (1995, 269–73). According to the social capital theory of political participation, low levels of political participation in areas or among groups is a result of one, or a combination of both, the attitudinal and recruitment mechanisms.

In this Chapter, I test the social capital account of political participation. I question the links between social capital and political engagement, arguing that previous work in the field is characterized by a gap between the theory of social capital and empirical tests of the effects of the concept, leading to potentially erroneous results. What sets social capital apart is its focus on social relations and social structure, yet nearly all empirical work uses individual-level measures of the concept. Thus, with a more lucid account of the theory and more appropriate operationalization of social capital that recognizes the community, or macro-level, nature of the concept, it is possible to more rigourously assess its impact on political participation within and between communities. Before testing whether social capital is a good predictor of political participation, however, it is worthwhile to take a closer look at the empirical evidence underpinning claims made about the roots of social capital. That is, does activity in voluntary associations lead to the norms of reciprocity and trust claimed by Putnam and others (e.g. Putnam 1993, Putnam 2000, Wollebæk & Selle 2003)?

The Chapter is organized as follows. In the next section, I begin by outlining the theory of social capital, how it has been conceptualized and operationalized and the hypotheses about the connection between social capital and political participation that grow out of this conceptualization. Section 5.3 assesses the hypothesized link between civic engagement (activity in voluntary associations and other face-to-face interaction) and generalized trust, which is central to the social capital literature. I offer an alternative explanation of generalized trust that rests on life satisfaction. In section 5.4 I test the claims made about the

relationship between political participation and social capital. I first specify a model that uses the common individual-level measures of social capital. The performance of this model in reducing inter-city variance is compared to ones where social capital is included.

5.2 Social Capital

Social capital is the idea that the relationships between people and the norms and attitudes these relationships foster, can be productive. That is, in the same way that tools or machines (physical capital) or an individual's education and skills (human capital) can be productive, dense networks of association can facilitate production. It has been argued that social capital is important because it enables people to achieve ends that in its absence would not be possible (Coleman 1988).

For Coleman, social capital is a capital resource that comes about in relations between persons. Several different aspects of social relations can constitute social capital. These include trust, obligations, and expectations; information channels; and norms and sanctions (Coleman 1988, S102–5). Coleman defines social capital as follows:

> Social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity, but a variety of entities having two characteristics in common: They all consist of some aspect of social structure, and they facilitate certain actions of individuals within the structure. Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that would not be attainable in its absence. Like physical capital and human capital, social capital is not completely fungible, but may be fungible with respect to specific activities. . . . Unlike other forms of capital, social capital inheres in the structure of relations between persons and among persons. It is lodged neither in individuals nor in physical implements of production (Coleman 1990, 302).

Coleman's definition captures the central elements of social capital—namely the importance of social structure—but suffers from the fact that it defines social capital in terms of its function. That is, according to a strict reading of Coleman's definition, social capital does not exist if it cannot be shown to have a causal effect (Teorell 2000, 2). This is, however, an empirical question and not one of definition. However, Coleman's emphasis on social structure is an important one. Putnam, in his account of institutional performance in Italy's regions, defines social capital as, "features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society facilitating coordinated actions" (Putnam 1993, 167).[1] Putnam's use of the term is problematic in that it also confuses issues of definition with those of empirical investigation. Is social capital to be understood as networks of connections between people, as some outcome of these networks—norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness—or is it both at the same time? It is ambiguous, to say the least, to define a concept both in terms of its cause and effect. The literature following Putnam's early writings has tended to fall into one of two categories:

1. adopting a view of social capital as a resource inhering in *social structure* and focusing on membership in networks;
2. regarding social capital as an *attitudinal property*, consisting of norms of reciprocity and generalized trust, these attitudes being generated through face-to-face interaction.[2]

According to its proponents, generalized trust is important because it lubricates social interaction and the business of everyday life—it reduces transaction costs. As Putnam (2000) puts it, "I'll do this for you now, without expecting anything immediately in return and perhaps down the road you or someone else will return the favour.... A society that relies on generalized reciprocity is more efficient

[1]Putnam uses this definition in his later work on social capital in the USA as well. In his most recent work, *Bowling Alone*, he defines social capital as, "connections among individuals—social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" (Putnam 2000, 19).

[2]See, for example, Foley & Edwards (1999) and Newton (2001).

than a distrustful society, for the same reason that money is more efficient than barter" (2000, 134–5). In the rest of this section, I outline some of the problems with the ways in which social capital has been conceptualized.

5.2.1 Trust and Social Structure

The more active a person is in a wide variety of associations and groups, the more trusting they will be of the generalized other, according to social capital theory. Here however, we run into several problems. First, there is the problem of self-selection. Perhaps people who join groups are simply psychologically predisposed to being more trusting. Without detailed longitudinal data, this claim is difficult to test. Second, trust may be endogenous. That is, it seems reasonable to assume a certain level of trust is needed at the outset to overcome collective action problems when forming the group. Now this obviously does not imply that participants necessarily will not enjoy increased levels of trust once the group is up and running, but it does suggest we need to consider alternative sources of trust. Third, is the problem of mistrust.

There are two, partially related, aspects to the problem of mistrust. The first concerns the role of trust and mistrust in democratic society. The idea of generalized trust rests on the assumption that people transfer the trust they develop over time in particular relations with people to the general population. As Offe points out, individuals in democracies cannot choose who is to belong to "the people", and as such, there is no way to know whether a fellow citizen is trustworthy simply based on their membership of the same democratic society (1999, 56–7). The costs of gathering such information are prohibitive to the point of being insurmountable (Hardin 1992) and therefore one ought to expect democracy to be characterized by distrust. Second, assuming a tight link between trust and participation, as social capitalists do, disregards the potential of mistrust as a catalyst for participation. Consider a parent who has the choice

to participate or not at the meeting of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) in his or her child's school district. If the parent has confidence in the ability of the teachers and other parents to make informed decisions about the curriculum or whatever issue may be on the agenda, there is no reason for them to attend the meeting beyond the purely social function it serves. If I trust that other people are going to make correct decisions, or at least similar decisions to those I would make myself, I am better off letting others decide. If, on the other hand, the parent suspects that his or her fellow PTA members cannot be trusted to make decisions in the best interest of their child, they would do well to attend the meeting in order to ensure that their preferences are taken into account.

There is often a disconnect between the theory of social capital and empirical tests of this theory. In the theory of social capital, much is made of the importance of social structure. The nature of the connections and networks between people is believed to shape the nature, usefulness and existence of the stock of social capital available to members of network. One of the clearest statements of the centrality of social structure to social capital comes from an example provided by James Coleman. In order to illustrate the importance of social structure in creating and maintaining trust, that in turn acts as a resource for groups, Coleman uses the example of wholesale diamond markets:

> Wholesale diamond markets exhibit a property that to an outsider is remarkable. In the process of a sale, a merchant will hand over to another merchant a bag of stones for the latter to examine in private at his leisure, with no formal insurance that the latter will not substitute one or more inferior stones or a paste replica. The merchandize may be worth thousands, or hundreds of thousands, of dollars. Such free exchange of stones for inspection is important to the functioning of this market. In its absence, the market would operate in a much more cumbersome, much less efficient fashion (1988, S98).

As Coleman points out, several features of this market highlight the importance of different aspects of social structure. First, this is a closed system in which

merchants interact with each other repeatedly. That is, the same agents are involved in a long-term relationship with one another; in contrast to, for example, strangers dealing with each other in a one-shot interaction like a taxi driver and his or her fare. The point here is that defection on the part of the inspecting merchant (replacing a few paste replicas) carries with it almost certain detection and sanctions since the merchants will deal with each other again and, furthermore, other merchants in the market observe the behavior. But not only is trust maintained through these professional structures; the diamond market is such that its members share religious, family and community ties. This enforces the norm of trust further because, were it to be broken, the consequences are not only professional, but also entail losing a wider network of contacts (Coleman 1988, S99).

Thus, there are certain problems in conceptualizing social capital as trust simpliciter and measuring it using responses to survey questions such as the ubiquitous "Do you think most people can be trusted, or do you think you can't be too careful when dealing with people". This survey item no doubt measures something, but it is highly doubtful that it taps the kind of trust described in the diamond market example.

5.2.2 Unraveling Trust and Social Structure

I contend that it is conceptually dubious to include attitudes of trust and norms of reciprocity in the definition of social capital. Social capital, remember, is a resource that inheres in the relations between people—in the social structure surrounding individuals (Coleman 1990, 302). If social capital is to be useful as a concept it needs to be differentiated from other forms of capital—physical, financial, human. Surely the key feature that demarcates the arena of social capital is that it is a resource available to individuals with access to a network. That is, access to the social structure that surrounds them as opposed to ac-

cess to physical implements of production, money, or education, knowledge and skills. The willingness to abide by norms of reciprocity and the trustworthiness of others are individual attitudes that can be held in isolation from—or even in opposition to—the attitudes of others around us. As Teorell points out, "I can trust everyone I come across, but that does not mean that they trust me nor that they trust each other" (2000, 4).

At the heart of the argument about social capital's wider effects is the notion that civic engagement and the interpersonal trust among associational members leads to generalized trust. However, social capital is to be found in the relations between people and does not dwell as a trait within individuals. Thus, I argue that social capital is specific to just those relations in which it resides and does not transfer outside these. Human capital, simply put, refers to a person's skills, education, knowledge, health etc. and as such is explicitly individual. Human capital differs in important ways from financial or physical capital. As Becker puts it, "...you cannot separate a person from his or her knowledge, skills, health, or values the way it is possible to move financial or physical assets while the owner stays put" (1993 [1964], 16). In the same way that you cannot separate a person from their human capital, you cannot take social capital out of the specific relations where it resides. That is, there is no reason to believe that the social capital in the form of trust among merchants in the New York wholesale diamond market can be transformed into some form of generalized trust. The trust is not carried from situation to situation by individuals but rather, is unique to the relations among merchants in that setting. Coleman expresses this feature of social structure and trust: "A does something for B and trusts B to reciprocate in the future. This creates an expectation in A and an obligation on the part of B" (1988, S102). A and B act within a closed system and thus A's expectations of future reciprocation cannot reasonably be expected to be fulfilled by some actor C who is not part of the network.

It is not inevitable, or even perhaps likely, that the trust and norms built up among agents in closed systems with unique social structures, such as the diamond market, will be transferrable to dealings with fish mongers or any other strangers with whom interaction is not repeated and, crucially, observed by others with whom a potential defector will have to interact. In other words, social capital should not be seen as an individual property that follows wherever the individual goes. Rather, it is specific to the relations in which it is built up. Individuals who are members of social capital rich relations may well learn skills that are transferable to other social networks and that might indeed foster the creation of social capital in these networks, but that is properly understood as human capital.

5.3 Social Trust and the Impact of Interaction and Participation

Before going on to analyze the effects of social capital on political participation, it is useful to more thoroughly explore the empirical underpinnings of the concept itself. As discussed in the previous section, the idea of social capital—as it is portrayed in the literature—largely rests on the relationship between activity in formal and informal networks, on the one hand, and the creation of generalized trust, on the other hand (see especially Putnam 2000, Stolle 1999). The nature of this relationship tends to be assumed to work such that activity in networks—social relations—leads to generalized trust. In order to assess this claim, I examine the impact of various forms of social interaction on generalized, or social, trust.

Social trust is measured here using questions from the Benchmark Survey on whether respondents trust people in their neighborhood, co-workers, shop clerks,

co-religionists, local police and 'most people'. These kinds of questions are common in the social capital literature and social trust is often operationalized using such items. An index of the scores for these questions was created. The index was calculated as the mean of the standardized responses to the five questions. My measures of social interaction are also quite standard and consist of the following: *Group involvement* measures the number of formal groups a respondent is involved in and is a count of activity in eighteen different groups over the past twelve months. *Volunteering* is a count of the number of times respondents reported having volunteered for various groups and organizations during the past year. While group membership and activity and volunteering tap engagement in formal networks, the social capital literature also stresses the importance of informal social interaction. To that end, an index of informal face-to-face activity was created. The *Schmooz* index was created from responses to questions in the Benchmark Survey asking how often respondents have friends at home; visit with relatives; socialize with co-workers outside of work; hang out with friends in public places; play cards and board games. Again, the index is calculated as the mean of the standardized responses to the five questions (see Appendix A for descriptive statistics, full question wordings and codings).[3] The expectation from social capital theory of the effect of the various measures of formal and informal interaction is that the relationship should be a positive one. That is, the more informal and formal networking an individual does, the more social trust they should have.

Recent work on social capital has suggested that it is not only the volume of interaction that is important in generating social, or generalized, trust, but that we need to take into account the nature of that interaction as well. Specifically, it is argued that social capital will be more productive for society when it is of the "bridging" kind as opposed to "bonding" social capital—bridging social

[3]Credit for the name for the schmooz index goes to Bob Putnam.

capital brings with it greater positive externalities for society at large (Putnam 2000). Bridging social capital refers to the interaction of individuals who are different from one another on some dimension (race, gender, class et cetera) while bonding social capital is that produced by ties between people who are similar (Putnam 2000, 22–24). In order to tap this aspect of social capital, I use a measure of the diversity of respondents' friends. This index is a count of how many different kinds of personal friends the respondent has from eleven possible types (see Appendix A.1 for more details on the index). Thus, according to social capital theory, the more diverse a person's set of friends is, the more social trust they will have.

Table 5.1: The impact of formal and informal interaction on social trust[a]

Variable:	Estimate
Fixed effects	
Group involvement	0.002
	(0.002)
Volunteering	0.001**
	(0.000)
Schmoozing	0.022***
	(0.008)
Diversity of friendships	0.015***
	(0.002)
Constant	0.114***
	(0.007)
Random Effects	
City-level variance (τ_{00})	0.066***
Individual-level variance (σ^2)	0.481

[a] N=14,017; J=634. Dependent variable is the social trust index; * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%. Estimates are OLS coefficients; robust standard errors in parentheses. Controls for race, education, income, gender, age and marital status included.

Table 5.1 presents results from a model testing the impact of the formal and informal social interaction variables as well as the diversity of friendships index on social trust. The model also controls for respondents' sociodemographic characteristics and length of residence at their current address.[4] An effect of

[4]Table 5.1 and the subsequent tables in this chapter only present the coefficients from the main social capital variables; see Appendix D for the complete tables.

volunteering and informal socializing on social trust does indeed exist. Both variables have positive and significant effects on social trust. The more a person volunteers and spends time schmoozing with friends and colleagues, the higher the level of social trust they report having. However, the substantive effect of these variables, in particular volunteering, on social trust is quite small. Controlling for other factors, volunteering one more time per year, increases a respondent's score on the social trust index by a mere 0.001. In other words a person who increases their voluntary activity by volunteering even as much as once a month more (carrying with it an increase of .012 on the social trust index), is not appreciably more trusting than a person who does no volunteering at all. Informal socializing appears to exert a stronger effect on social trust. It is the case that people who report spending more time interacting with friends, neighbors and colleagues also have higher scores on social trust.

Having a more diverse set of friends also means one will have more social trust. This result is not surprising and is in line with the expectations from social capital theory. If one is exposed to a wide variety of positive signals from diverse others—in this case, friends who are different from oneself—one learns to regard strangers who are different with less apprehension. If, however, the only people one consistently socializes with are just like oneself, one will probably develop a certain level of suspicion toward those that are not. This goes to the heart of the distinction between so-called bonding and bridging social capital. Both forms can be beneficial to individuals or groups. However, the latter, it is argued, is more productive of ends that benefit society at large for the very reason that it is more likely to foster generalized trust (Putnam 2000, Marschall & Stolle 2004)—and as Putnam puts it, trustworthiness of this kind, "lubricates social life" (2000, 21).

Formal social interaction, as measured by membership and activity in various groups and associations, has no statistically significant effect on social trust.

One of the most common measures of social capital in the political science literature is membership in civic associations such as the ones used here (see for example Hall 1999, Hooghe 2003, Maloney, Smith & Stoker 2000, Wollebæk & Selle 2003). The problem with many of these studies is that associational membership is considered important simply because a statistically significant effect is found between memberships and some desirable outcome—be it democratic accountability, absence of corruption, political participation or indeed social, or generalized, trust. On the one hand, to the extent that associations are used to explain social trust, this approach disregards the importance of differentiating between kinds of associations. Furthermore, numerous studies rely on voluntary association activity as the sole measure of interaction—as the current analysis and others show, informal socializing may well be the more salient measure. On the other hand, when a direct link is posited between associational activity and desirable social outcomes, the social interaction–to–generalized trust mechanism is ignored.

It would seem that not all social interaction is equally valuable when it comes to predicting social trust. Informal networks have a stronger effect on generalized trust than formal ones. Among formal interaction, it is volunteering that has an effect while group membership and activity has no effect. Finally, individuals who interact with a more diverse set of people are also more socially trusting. The evidence for the link between social interaction and social trust is mixed. However, perhaps it is not social interaction which is driving social trust, but something else entirely. Being more trusting signals a certain optimism and positive outlook. Being more secure may make it easier to place trust in people—in a sense, being more secure makes it less of a risk to bet on someone else's trustworthiness. In order to test this argument, I add a measure of how happy respondents report being and one of their personal economic satisfaction. Respondents to the Benchmark Survey were asked, "All things considered,

would you say you are very happy, happy, not very happy or not happy at all?" Economic satisfaction was measured by the question: "We are interested in how people are getting along financially these days. So far as you and your family are concerned, would you say that you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, or not at all satisfied with your present financial situation?"Results from this model are presented in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Life satisfaction and social trust[a]

Variable:	Estimate
Fixed effects	
Social interaction	
Group involvement	0.001
	(0.002)
Volunteering	0.000
	(0.000)
Schmoozing	0.017***
	(0.007)
Diversity of friendships	0.013***
	(0.002)
Life satisfaction	
Happiness	0.146***
	(0.008)
Economic satisfaction	0.057***
	(0.007)
Constant	0.111***
	(0.007)
Random effects	
City-level variance (τ_{00})	0.060***
Individual-level variance (σ^2)	0.471

[a] N=14,153; J=690. Dependent variable is the social trust index; * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%. Estimates are OLS coefficients; robust standard errors in parentheses. Controls for race, education, income, gender, age and marital status included.

Both happiness and economic satisfaction are highly significant positive predictors of social trust. The happier one is and the more financially secure one is, the higher the score on the social trust index. Including these measures also has an impact on the effect of social interaction on social trust. The size of the effect for both schmoozing and diversity of friendships, although still significant, decreases slightly upon the inclusion of happiness and economic satisfaction. When it comes to the variables measuring formal social interaction—

group involvement and volunteering—the addition of life satisfaction causes the previously significant coefficient for volunteering to become insignificant. Two tentative conclusions can be drawn from this. First, life satisfaction seems to be an important predictor of generalized trust. Second, the fact that the effect of informal social interaction is robust to the inclusion of life satisfaction, is further evidence that this, and not formal interaction, is the more important measure of social interaction when it comes to generalized trust.

An important criticism of studies positing a relationship going from social interaction to generalized trust is that this work does not deal with the potential endogeneity in this relationship. These models simply cannot answer the question of whether it is interaction that causes trust or if people who are more trusting interact more. The same criticism can of course also be leveled at the analysis including life satisfaction. Perhaps people who are more trusting develop a sunnier outlook on life. However, the purpose of the analysis above is to illustrate the problems inherent in extant empirical work on social capital. On the one hand, social interaction of the kind usually focused on by the social capital literature appears to be a poor predictor of generalized trust; on the other hand, even those measures that do predict social trust may be endogenous. In either case serious doubt is cast on the usefulness of these models. By extension, one can conclude that the attitudinal social capital argument for political participation rests on shaky foundations at best. Recall that this argument holds that participation in non-political activity leads to norms such as trust, which in turn have a positive effect on individuals' propensity to participate in politics.

5.4 Does Social Capital Work in the City?

I now turn to the analysis of the impact of social capital on political participation. There are two strands of argument when it comes to this relationship. One says that it is the attitudes created in non-political, face-to-face interaction that are important. These attitudes include trust–specifically generalized trust—and norms of reciprocity and cooperation. Attitudes such as these, it is said, make it more likely that people will participate in politics. The other theory of social capital's impact on political participation argues that activity in all kinds of non-political interaction makes it more likely that individuals will be recruited into political activity. As Verba, Schlozman & Brady illustrate, one reason why people do not participate is because no one asked them to. In other words, the chances of being asked to take part in politics increase if one goes from watching TV to the bowling alley.

The results from the analysis in section 5.3, where generalized trust was modeled as a function of formal and informal social interaction, raises serious doubts about the existence of a positive causal relationship between social interaction and trust. The absence of such a strong link suggests that, insofar as social capital has en effect on political participation, it is through mobilization. This, however, begs the question: if social capital is telling us that people get mobilized into political participation through involvement with different kinds of civic groups, what is this theory adding that we do not already know from the vast literature dealing explicitly with mobilization (e.g. Gerber & Green 2000, Leighley 1996, Rosenstone & Hansen 1994)?

5.4.1 The Impact of Social Interaction and Generalized Trust on Political Participation

I am arguing that if social capital is to be a useful concept in the social sciences, and not simply another term for human capital or mobilization, it needs to be

conceived of as a community-level phenomenon. As such, it is at the community level that it should have an impact on political participation. In other words, the magnitude of the city-level variance component, τ_{00}, ought to decrease once we control for social capital. Given this argument, my empirical strategy in this chapter involves fitting a number of nested models and examining the inter-city variation in the dependent variables. For clarity, I present the table with results from the empty model in Chapter 2 again.

Table 5.3: ANOVA[a]

Parameter	Voting	Petition	Political meeting	Demo/boycott	Political group
Fixed Effects					
Constant (γ_{00})	1.060*	-0.358*	-1.470*	-2.393*	-2.102*
	(0.035)	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.052)	(0.042)
Random Effects					
City-Level Variance (τ_{00})	0.334*	0.415*	0.327*	0.454*	0.303*
	(0.026)	(0.031)	(0.027)	(0.052)	(0.029)
Intraclass correlation (ρ)	0.092	0.112	0.090	0.121	0.084
Deviance	38384.286	41152.177	36948.140	32347.636	33108.067

[a] N=14,017 (12,969 for voting); J=656 (619 for voting). * significant at .01%. Estimates are from a logistic model estimated using maximum likelihood in HLM; robust standard errors in parentheses.

As I showed in Chapter 2, the between-city variance of each indicator of political participation is considerable. The intraclass correlation coefficients for the dependent variables are 9.2% for voting, 11.2% for signing petitions and 9% for political meetings. Demonstrations/boycotts and political group activity have ICCs of 12.1% and 8.4% respectively. The question now is, how is this between-city variation affected by the various measures of social capital?

I begin the examination of social capital's effects on political participation by limiting the analysis to the social interaction variables described above—formal group involvement, schmoozing and diversity of friendships. The results from this model, which includes the same controls for socio-demographics as earlier models, are presented in Table 5.4. Leaving aside the issue of the impact of these measures on the city-level variance components, it is evident that indi-

viduals' propensity to take political action is influenced by the extent to which they interact socially. Formal group involvement has a positive and statistically significant effect on all five indicators of political participation. The more active a person is in different groups, the more likely it is that they participate in both electoral and nonelectoral politics. The diversity of respondents' friendships displays a similar effect. People who have more diverse friends are more likely to vote, sign petitions, attend political meetings, take part in demonstrations or boycotts and to be active in a political group. The results for informal socializing, on the other hand, are more mixed. The more a person socializes informally with friends and colleagues, the more likely he or she is to have signed a petition and attended a political meeting. However, there is no statistically significant effect of schmoozing on the other three forms of political participation. Given that schmoozing was the strongest predictor of generalized trust among the social interaction variables, this might be suggestive of the lack of a relationship between generalized trust and political participation. Of course, a better test of this is to include a direct measure of generalized trust in the model; which I do below.

Turning now to the effect of these social interaction measures on the between-community variance in political participation, it is clear that social capital, at least when conceived of in this way, does not contribute much to our understanding of differences in political participation across communities. The magnitude of the variance component τ_{00} for voting does drop by a little less than a third, indicating that for this type of political participation, the variables in the model do explain some of the differences across communities. The other variance components for the other four indicators also decrease in size, but in substantive terms, this reduction is slight.

Table 5.5 shows the results from the model when generalized trust is included. Generalized trust has a significant effect on four out of the five indi-

Table 5.4: Face-to-face interaction, group membership and political participation[a]

Parameter	Voting	Petition	Pol. meeting	Demo/boycott	Pol. group
Fixed Effects					
Face-to-face interaction					
Group involvement	0.137***	0.197***	0.279***	0.249***	0.448***
	(0.012)	(0.010)	(0.013)	(0.014)	(0.090)
Schmoozing	-0.062	0.125***	0.126**	0.048	-0.067
	(0.050)	(0.031)	(0.048)	(0.071)	(0.062)
Diversity of friendships	0.061***	0.117***	0.115***	0.131***	0.051***
	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.013)	(0.016)	(0.015)
Constant	1.486***	-0.539***	-1.817***	-2.856***	-2.911***
	(0.038)	(0.045)	(0.046)	(0.076)	(0.068)
Random Effects					
City-level Variance (τ_{00})	0.232	0.412***	0.299***	0.427***	0.268***
Intraclass correlation (ρ)	0.066	0.111	0.083	0.115	0.075
-2 × Log Likelihood	34962.167	41923.137	37396.546	33568.032	33003.514

[a] N=13,998; J=633. See Appendix for exact question wordings and coding; * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%. Estimates are from a logistic model estimated using maximum likelihood in HLM; robust standard errors in parentheses.

cators of political participation. However, this effect is positive only when it comes to voting. People who are more trusting also vote more. But individuals who score higher on the social trust index report attending fewer political meetings, being involved in fewer demonstrations and boycotts and are less active in political groups. Generalized trust has no effect on individuals' propensity to sign petitions. Differences in the direction of the effect for voting and the other types of political participation underscore the broader differences between these indicators. The nonelectoral forms of participation on which generalized trust has a negative effect are more conflictual (or at least potentially more conflictual) and group oriented than voting. By that I mean attending a meeting or demonstration, or being active in a political group, is a signal that the individual is identifying with a certain group or cause. If one attends a demonstration or participates in a boycott, one is essentially saying that some aspect of society needs to be changed; one is expressing a preference for social change. As such, it is not surprising that generalized trust has a negative impact on these measures of political participation. On the other hand, distrust as a catalyst for political

participation can also be a result of a rational decision to get involved when one feels one's views would otherwise be misrepresented or when one makes a calculation that getting involved will not make a difference.

Table 5.5: Face-to-face interaction, group membership, generalized trust and political participation[a]

Parameter	Voting	Petition	Pol. meeting	Demo/boycott	Pol. group
Fixed Effects					
Group involvement	0.136***	0.197***	0.280***	0.249***	0.448***
	(0.012)	(0.010)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.017)
Schmoozing	-0.066	0.124***	0.129***	0.051	-0.063
	(0.049)	(0.031)	(0.049)	(0.071)	(0.063)
Diversity of friendships	0.057***	0.116***	0.117***	0.135***	0.054***
	(0.012)	(0.010)	(0.013)	(0.016)	(0.016)
Generalized trust	0.243***	0.054	-0.170***	-0.287***	-0.271***
	(0.056)	(0.047)	(0.060)	(0.083)	(0.089)
Constant	1.483***	-0.541***	-1.814***	-2.852***	-2.909***
	(0.038)	(0.045)	(0.046)	(0.077)	(0.068)
Random Effects					
City-level Variance (τ_{00})	0.232	0.412***	0.296***	0.418***	0.262***
Intraclass correlation (ρ)	0.066	0.111	0.083	0.113	0.074
-2 × Log Likelihood	34935.418	41921.401	37385.236	33546.859	32987.497

[a] N=13,998; J=633. See Appendix for exact question wordings and coding; * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%. Estimates are from a logistic model estimated using maximum likelihood in HLM; robust standard errors in parentheses.

The effects of formal and informal face-to-face interaction remain largely unchanged with the addition of generalized trust. Crucially, so do the variance components for between-city differences in political participation. Indeed, there is essentially no change in the magnitude of these variances. That is, social capital as neither social interaction nor generalized trust, does particularly well in explaining the differences in political participation in American communities that persists after controlling for individual-level socio-demographic variables.

Finally, I estimate a model in which I include a number of city-level variables. There are two reasons for this. First, I want to test the effect of the social capital measures once institutional factors are controlled for. Second, I want to examine the combined effect of all the variables on the city-level variance in the dependent variables. I report the results from these models in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6: The effect of social capital controlling for political institutions[a]

Parameter	Voting	Petition	Pol. meeting	Demo/boycott	Pol. group
Fixed Effects					
Group involvement	0.135***	0.197***	0.275***	0.250***	0.448***
	(0.012)	(0.010)	(0.014)	(0.016)	(0.017)
Schmoozing	-0.069**	0.125***	0.144**	0.056	-0.066
	(0.034)	(0.032)	(0.056)	(0.073)	(0.063)
Diversity of friendships	0.058***	0.116***	0.111***	0.134***	0.055***
	(0.012)	(0.011)	(0.014)	(0.019)	(0.016)
Generalized trust	0.248***	0.056	-0.147**	-0.275***	-0.266***
	(0.050)	(0.053)	(0.064)	(0.091)	(0.089)
Constant	1.466***	-0.539***	-1.826***	2.947***	-2.932***
	(0.044)	(0.045)	(0.052)	(0.085)	(0.068)
Random Effects					
City-level Variance (τ_{00})	0.126	0.350***	0.225***	0.245***	0.132**
Intraclass correlation (ρ)	0.037	0.096	0.064	0.069	0.039
-2 × Log Likelihood	34908.387	41887.759	37357.931	33494.946	32956.079

[a] N=13,998; J=633. See Appendix for exact question wordings and coding; * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%. Estimates are from a logistic model estimated using maximum likelihood in HLM; robust standard errors in parentheses.

Controlling for political institutions—such as the city's form of governance (mayor or council-manager), provisions for direct democracy and the level of municipal taxation—and various indicators of social context—population density, racial diversity, median age, unemployment and the rate of home-ownership in the city—does not alter the effect of the traditional measures of social capital. Individuals who are involved in more groups, are also more likely to participate in all the forms of political action analyzed, even after controlling for city-level factors. The same effect persists for the diversity of respondents' friendships. Generalized trust remains a positive predictor for voting and is negatively related to attending political meetings, demonstrations and boycotts as well as political group activity. The one coefficient that does change once I control for institutions and social context is that of informal social interaction's effect on voting. In this model, the coefficient for schmoozing is negative and statistically significant. The more people interact casually with friends, neighbors and colleagues, the lower the probability is that they voted.

Figure 5.1 shows graphically the impact—or nonimpact—of social capital

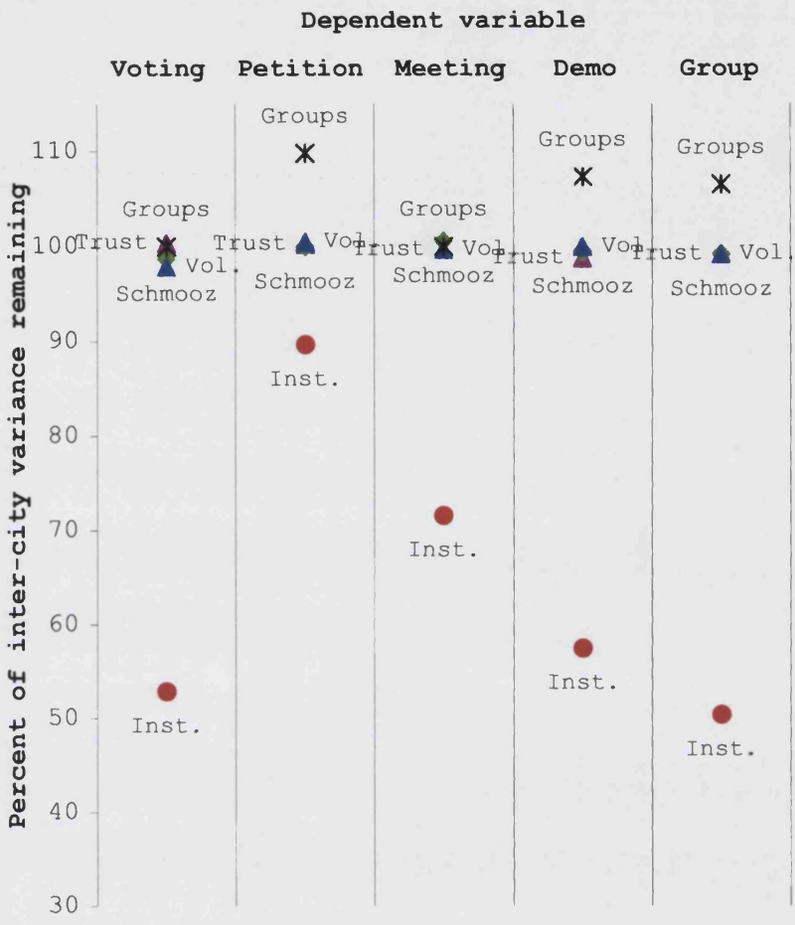


Figure 5.1: The impact of social capital and institutions on inter-city variance in political participation

on the variation in political participation across cities. Each "column" of the figure represents the set of models estimated for each dependent variable. The plots represent the percent of between-city variation in the dependent variable that remains in each model. While the social capital measures in the models presented in the table in this chapter were entered as blocks (social interaction variables were entered together and then attitudinal measures were entered), the variance components reported in Figure 5.1 are from models where each indicator of social capital was entered separately. However modeled, it seems that social capital does little, if any, work in accounting for the variation in

political participation at the level its proponents claim it is operating on—the community level.

There are two concerns here. First, one might argue that social capital at the community level is being captured by one or more of the city-level variables in the model. In particular, a case could be made that racial diversity is in fact a form of social capital, or at least a proxy for it. However, the racial fractionalization index is negatively correlated with the measures of social capital, while being positively correlated with political participation. Second, there still remains a degree of between-city variance after controlling for all these variables. Insofar as social capital is conceived of as a community-level attribute, it may be that it is operating in this remaining variance. This is entirely possible but unfortunately there do not exist good data to test this possibility. While an unsatisfactory response to the concern, this will remain an important area for future research.

5.5 Conclusion

While social capital theorists maintain that face-to-face interaction such as participation in voluntary associations, volunteering and the like leads to the creation of generalized trust, both empirical and theoretical evidence points to problems with this argument. Variables of group participation, volunteering and informal socializing have relatively little impact on social trust, the latter two having significant negative effects. An alternative argument about the importance of life satisfaction provides more powerful predictors of social trust. However, the problem of endogeneity remains in that model also. I have argued that if social capital is doing any work in explanations of political participation, it is at the aggregate level; social capital, if it has an effect, should act to

decrease the inter-city variance in the different indicators of political participation. However, the analysis of social capital as it is commonly measured and operationalized, provides little or no support for this. While social interaction does have an effect on individuals' propensity to participate, and generalized trust has an effect on voting, none of these measures reduce the variance between cities appreciably. The analysis finds scant evidence for the hypothesis that social capital operates to affect political participation through attitudes. The mobilization hypothesis fares better; but here the concern is that it is not adding anything to the understanding of political participation that is not already known.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

This thesis set out to examine the puzzle of why the political participation of otherwise similar individuals varies across communities. Much of the previous empirical work on political participation—and indeed the major theoretical accounts of participation—centers on individual-level characteristics. Past research on political participation has illustrated the importance of individual characteristics setting participants apart from non-participants. In particular, SES and demographic factors have been shown to be strong predictors of participation. People with higher incomes and more education tend to participate more. However, even after controlling for these individual-level characteristics, there still remains a significant amount of variation in political participation between people residing in different communities. So it is not the case that similar individuals necessarily participate in the same ways or to the same extent regardless of where they live. It is this inter-community variation in political participation that is at the core of the thesis.

6.2 Summary

Chapter 2 outlined the extent of engagement in the different types of political participation. Participation in the contemporary United States was put in comparative perspective—with nonpolitical or civic participation, over time and cross-nationally. The chapter also explored the socio-demographics of participation. An individual-level model of political participation was presented and the findings indicated there remains a significant amount of variation in the dependent variables across communities even after controlling for individual-level factors. That is, similar people do not participate to the same extent in different communities. The thesis examined several aspects of social and political

context in order to explain this.

In Chapter 3, the racial context of American cities and its effect on participation was examined. In contrast to much previous research on the effects of racial diversity on civic engagement, social capital and political participation which maintains that increased levels of diversity will serve to decrease political activity, in thesis I argue the opposite: that people living in more diverse communities will be *more* likely to participate in politics. Inter-racial attitudes tend to be more conflictual in more diverse places where race and racial identity are more salient. That is, individuals see race relations in terms of a zero-sum competition over resources and their distribution. More racially diverse places, I argue, should as a result be characterized by more conflict, more issues and therefore more political participation. In short, the stakes are higher in more diverse cities. I also hypothesized that the effect of individuals' race on political participation varies across cities and this variation can, in part, be explained by racial heterogeneity.

The results of the analysis indicate that the effect of racial diversity on whites is negative. That is, living in a more racially diverse place tends to lower the likelihood that a white individual participates in politics. However, the interaction between racial fractionalization and black was positive. For black people, living in a more diverse community *raises* the probability of voting. The results from this analysis indicate that the relationship between racial diversity and political participation is not straightforward and that it impacts differently on people from distinct racial groups. Specifying a model where the individual effect of race is allowed to vary randomly across cities uncovers different results which remain "hidden" in models where race effects are fixed.

Chapter 4 explored the ways in which the structure and organization of local government institutions affects incentives for political participation. As a consequence of the reforms introduced in the Progressive Era to combat the

corruption of machine politics the ways in which government executive structures are organized and representatives elected varies greatly among American cities. Some cities also provide for the direct involvement of citizens in enacting legislation through various provisions. The prevailing contention of the literature is that the institutional reforms brought in during the Progressive Era served to dampen participation. However, the findings presented here indicate, on the one hand, that individual effects of institutions are more or less nonexistent across the indicators of political participation studied. On the other hand, when combined into a measure of city political openness in order to tap political opportunity structures, local government institutions do have an effect on participation—though these effects are substantively small.

Finally, the thesis tested the social capital theory of political participation. While social capital theorists maintain that face-to-face interaction such as participation in voluntary associations, volunteering and the like leads to the creation of generalized trust, both empirical and theoretical evidence points to problems with this argument. Variables of group participation, volunteering and informal socializing have relatively little impact on social trust, the latter two having significantly negative effects. An alternative argument about the importance of life satisfaction provides more powerful predictors of social trust. I have argued that if social capital is doing any work in explanations of political participation, it is at the aggregate level. Social capital, if it has an effect, should act to decrease the inter-city variance in the different indicators of political participation. However, the analysis of social capital as it is commonly measured and operationalized, provides little or no support for this. While social interaction does have an effect on individuals' propensities to participate, and generalized trust has an effect on voting, none of these measures reduce the variance between cities appreciably. The analysis finds scant evidence for the hypothesis that social capital operates to affect political participation through

attitudes. The mobilization hypothesis fares better; but here the concern is that it is not adding anything to the understanding of political participation that is not already known.

6.3 Future Research

I have argued that in order to gain a better understanding of political participation, it is necessary to look at both individual and contextual data together. Of course there are many aspects of context that have not been addressed in this thesis but that nevertheless are important to consider in future research. Among theses are various forms other forms of community heterogeneity. For instance, the effects of income spread and ideological heterogeneity—or polarization—both deserve more attention. As mentioned in previous chapters, the fact that voting data from local elections in the United States is very hard to come by and often unreliable, presents a problem for this kind of research. Collecting these data would represent a considerable asset to the study of political behavior in the local context. Finally, if one is interested in how local political institutions affect political participation, it would be very useful to study instances where institutions have changed. These kinds of natural experiments could prove a particularly fruitful avenue of future research.

6.4 Implications

This thesis contributes to our understanding of political participation in several ways. First, while comparative work on political participation is not new, the majority of extant studies make comparisons across countries. By comparing

across a large set of communities within one country, I am able to avoid many of the difficulties associated with such cross-national studies—for example, having to account for political culture and other elusive concepts. Participation in local politics is also of substantive importance in that many of the most contentious issues in American politics are fought in the local arena. Second, by using multilevel modeling techniques, the dissertation makes a methodological contribution. Multilevel modeling is well suited to a number of political science problems but it remains an underused technique.

The underlying motivation of this thesis has been the need for attentiveness to the dynamics at work between individual behavior and sources of variation in incentives at higher levels—that is, the interplay between individual characteristics and the social and political environment in which individuals operate. The findings illustrate not only how political context effects individual behavior but also how, and under what circumstances, individual-level attributes interact with environmental factors. In this way, I am able to offer explanations of how political and social context structures incentives in ways leading to different behavior for similar people. Focusing solely on individuals' interest in politics and political resources is insufficient as these are subject to the influence of variation in institutions.

Appendices

Appendix A

The Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey

A.1 Sampling Methods, Selection Issues and Response Rates

The Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey consists of two parts. The first, a national sample of 3003 individuals from across the United States; the second, fortyone socalled "community samples" comprising a further 26,730 individuals. The survey was conducted by telephone using random-digit-dialing (RDD) during July—November, 2000 except for the West Oakland, California survey (which ran from December, 2000—February, 2001). Interviewing in the national survey and in most of the community surveys was concluded in October. Interviews averaged 26 minutes in length.[1]

A.1.1 Local Sample Design

Each sponsoring organization decided what specific area(s) were to be surveyed, how many interviews to conduct, and if specific areas or ethnic groups were to be oversampled. Most of the community surveys used proportionate sampling, that is, no over or undersampling of subareas or population groups. Most of

[1]These descriptions of sampling, selection and interview methods are taken from the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey Technical Documentation, available at http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/misc/usmisc2000-soccap/usmisc2000-soccap.pdf.

the samples range in size from 500—1,500 interviews. (A complete list of communities surveyed along with each surveys sponsor, sample size and geographic definition are shown in Table A.1 below.)

A.1.2 National Survey

The national sample contains an oversampling of black and Hispanic respondents to total at least 500 blacks and 500 Hispanics in all. This required screening to identify households with black or Hispanic residents: Several hundred additional blacks (288) and (294) Hispanics had to be identified and interviewed beyond the interviews with blacks/Hispanics occurring naturally in the national survey. This screening was conducted randomly across the Continental US; areas of higher concentration were *not* targeted in this design.

Table A.1 contains the maximum confidence interval by community for percentage estimates, given the sampling design implemented in each survey:

Table A.1: Effective Sample Sizes and 95% Confidence Intervals for Percentage Estimates[a]

	Final Sample	Statistical Efficiency	Effective Sample Size	95% CI (±)
Atlanta Metro (GA)	510	0.802	409	4.8%
Baton Rouge (LA)	500	0.820	410	4.8%
Birmingham Metro (AL)	500	0.780	390	5.0%
Bismarck (ND)	506	0.835	422	4.8%
Boston (MA) [city]	604	0.473	285	5.8%
Boulder County (CO)	500	0.802	401	4.9%
Central Oregon	500	0.801	400	4.9%
Charlotte (NC) [14-county region]	1500	0.800	1200	2.8%
Chicago Metro (IL)	750	0.766	574	4.1%
Cincinnati Metro (OH)	1001	0.796	796	3.5%
Cleveland/Cuyahoga Co. (OH)	1100	0.687	755	3.6%
Delaware	1383	0.570	788	3.5%
Denver (CO) (city/cty.)	501	0.762	381	5.0%
Detroit (MI) [Metro–7 co. area]	501	0.766	383	5.0%
East Tennessee	500	0.805	402	4.9%
Fremont/Newaygo Co. (MI)	753	0.750	564	4.1%
Grand Rapids (MI) [city]	502	0.737	369	5.1%
Greensboro/Guilford Co. (NC)	752	0.789	593	4.0%
Houston/Harris Co. (TX)	500	0.841	420	4.8%
Indiana	1001	0.673	673	3.8%
Kalamazoo Co. (MI)	500	0.801	400	4.9%
Kanawha Valley (WV)	500	0.731	365	5.1%
Lewiston-Auburn (ME)	523	0.804	420	4.8%
Los Angeles Co. (CA)	515	0.733	377	5.0%
Minneapolis (MN)	501	0.688	344	5.3%
Montana	502	0.795	399	4.9%
New Hampshire	711	0.638	453	4.6%
North Minneapolis (MN)	452	0.732	330	5.4%
Peninsula/Silicon Valley (CA)	1505	0.717	1079	3.0%
Phoenix/Maricopa Cty. (AZ)	501	0.698	349	5.2%
Rochester Metro (NY)	988	0.744	735	3.6%
San Diego Co. (CA)	504	0.578	291	5.7%
San Francisco (CA) [city]	500	0.641	320	5.5%
South Dakota (rural)	368	0.769	282	5.8%
Seattle (WA)	502	0.566	284	5.8%
St. Paul Metro (MN)	503	0.740	372	5.1%
Syracuse/Onondaga Co. (NY)	541	0.797	431	4.7%
Winston-Salem/Forsyth Co. (NC)	750	0.778	583	4.1%
Yakima (WA)	500	0.807	403	4.9%
York (PA)	500	0.808	404	4.9%
National sample	3003	0.687	2063	2.1%

[a] For estimates near 50%; estimates farther from 50% will have narrower confidence ranges

A.1.3 RDD Sample Source and Sampling of Households

The Genesys™ system, a widely-recognized random-digit-dial survey telephone number generator, was used to produce the starting sample telephone numbers. Genesys is a list-assisted sampling procedure which generates numbers from all working residential hundred-banks (area code + exchange + digits 7 and 8; example: 215 654-78XX) of possible telephone numbers corresponding to the targeted geographic area the boundaries of the communitys geography, as specified by the sponsor. A hundred-bank is determined to be "working residential" if it contained at least one two directory-listed residential phone numbers.

As in all RDD telephone surveys, prefixes (area code + exchange combinations, sometimes called 10,000-banks) were selected which correspond to the area being surveyed. The degree of correspondence is not perfect and depends, among other factors, on the size of the geographic unit being surveyed: the larger the area, the more likely that a phone number from a given prefix will fall within the indicated borders. Correspondence is very high with state lines, fairly high with large county boundaries, less so with smaller counties, and so forth. The same sizedegree of fit relationship applies among municipalities. Irregularly shaped borders can also complicate (lessen) the tightness of the correspondence.

Most sponsors were willing to accept some degree of slippage between sample phone exchanges and desired geography—and tolerate an expected small percentage of their final sample falling outside the geographic definition of their community—rather than implement more expensive respondent screening. In a few cases, screening was agreed upon to try to confirm that the respondent resides within the desired area (see Table A.2).[2] These were generally surveys where the correspondence was low.

[2]Although more accurate than merely assuming and not asking, respondents answers are not always correct about location of residence.

A.1.4 Disproportionate Stratification in Some Community Surveys

Except in the few community surveys where there was oversampling, proportionate random sampling was used to select households. Table A.2 lists the samples which involved oversampling and/or screening:

Table A.2: Surveys with Disproportionate Sampling or Screening

Survey	Description
National	Screening to achieve minimum sub-samples of 500 African-Americans and 500 Hispanics.
City of Boston	Screening in 4 targeted zip codes of lower income population to produce 200 additional respondents in those areas.
Delaware	New Castle County under-sampled; Kent and Sussex counties oversampled. Screening in targeted exchanges in New Castle County to achieve a total of 342 interviews with Wilmington residents. (Note: Fewer Wilmington respondents were actually interviewed (146) due to respondents misidentifying city of residence. The rest were re-classified as living in the balance of New Castle County.)
Greater Greensboro NC (Guilford County)	Oversampling in targeted exchanges to produce an additional 250 interviews with residents in exchanges that service, at least in part, the city of Greensboro.
Cuyahoga County OH	Screening in targeted exchanges to produce an additional 100 interviews with Hispanics.
Metropolitan Rochester NY	Screening in targeted exchanges to achieve a minimum total subsample of 100 African-Americans and 100 Hispanics.
Newaygo County MI	Screening used to confirm that respondents reside in Newaygo County.
North Minneapolis MN	Screening used to identify eligible respondents (residing in zip codes 55411 or 55405 and north of I-394).

A.1.5 Selection of Respondents

The "last-birthday" method of respondent selection was used to randomly select one adult in contacted households:

> So that all types of people are represented in our survey, may I please speak to the person 18 years or older living in your household who last had a birthday?

Substitution of alternate respondents was not permitted: If the designated respondent was unwilling or unavailable to be interviewed throughout the full complement of contact attempts, that phone number was assigned the appropriate non-response code.

A.1.6 Contact Regimen

To minimize the number of non-contacts, at least 11 attempts were made (initial dialing plus 10 call-backs) before sampled telephone numbers were replaced. In many cases particularly when re-contact appointments were made and eventual contact seemed likely there were more than 11 dialings to sampled numbers. Successive contact attempts were scheduled at different times of the day and week, and the full complement typically spanned a period of at least one month, often longer, to maximize the chance of eventual contact.

To minimize the number of refusals and increase participation, skilled "refusal conversion" interviewers attempted to re-contact those initially opting out of the survey (or hanging up abruptly) and persuade the designated respondent in the household to agree to be interviewed. Such efforts did not include "hard refusals"–where the person answering was decidedly adamant about not participating, or was angry or abusive to the interviewer. Altogether 3,687 interviews (= 12.6% of 29,238 interviews in all[3]) occurred after a callback where someone

[3]This count does not include interviews in the Hawaii or West Oakland, California surveys.

in the household had explicitly refused once or hung up the phone two or more times on earlier calls.

A.1.7 Response Rates

Survey response rates are shown in Table A.3. The first column (Response Rate) displays the overall response rate, unadjusted for incidence of eligibility:

$$RR = I/((I + R + NC + O + e(UH)),$$

where: I = the number of completed interviews; R = the number of refusals and terminations; NC = the number of households where the designated respondent was not reached (and there was no explicit refusal); O = other (health or language barriers); UH = unknown eligibility / unknown if household–mostly repeated busy signal or Caller ID block.

The proportion of unknowns estimated to be eligible (e) was .25. In most samples, there was no geographic or race/ethnicity screening, so all adults qualified (incidence = 100%). For those samples, the Response Rate and Adjusted Response Rate are the same. In the community surveys where screening occurred (as in the national survey), incidence was less than 100%—requiring an adjustment to make the screened and unscreened sample response rates comparable. The adjustment consisted of multiplying the sum of the non-response categories in the denominator of the formula $[R, NC, O, e(UH)]$ by the estimated incidence[4] and recalculating RR.

The incidence proportion was calculated as the sum of (the completed interviews plus partial interviews[5] plus terminates) divided by the sum of (the

The Hawaii interviews were conducted by another interviewing firm; the West Oakland surveys were completed too late to be included in the technical report.

[4]This adjustment assumes that the likelihood of contact and cooperation following contact was the same among eligible and ineligible respondents. This assumption may be less valid in some samples/locations than in others. To the extent it does not apply, the estimated adjusted rate will be inaccurate.

[5]In this survey, "partial interviews" are those which were begun but not completed and

completed interviews plus partial interviews plus terminates plus the number of households screened and determined to be ineligible).

The Adjusted Cooperation Rate uses the same logic as the Adjusted Response Rate—only it deletes the NC, O, and $e(UH)$ terms from the denominator. Essentially, it the number of eligible respondents reached who chose to participate and completed an interview. The Cooperation Rate (or Adjusted Cooperation Rate) is the inverse of the Refusal Rate: Coop Rate = 1 - Refusal Rate.

there was no explicit refusal to continue. They are not included in the dataset.

Table A.3: Survey Response Rates

	Response Rate (%)	Incidence of Eligibility[a]	Adj Response Rate (%)[b]	Adj Coop Rate (%)[c]
Atlanta Metro (GA)	29.8	1.000	29.8	42.9
Baton Rouge (LA)	25.0	1.000	25.0	36.2
Birmingham Metro (AL)	31.6	1.000	31.6	41.6
Bismarck (ND)	39.7	1.000	39.7	46.0
Boston (MA) [city]	28.5	1.000	28.5	42.3
Boulder County (CO)	22.4	1.000	22.4	35.3
Central Oregon	34.1	1.000	34.1	44.2
Charlotte (NC)	25.0	1.000	25.0	37.1
Chicago Metro (IL)	25.6	1.000	25.6	36.9
Cincinnati Metro (OH)	38.7	1.000	38.7	49.5
Cleveland/Cuyahoga Co (OH)	20.0	0.649	27.9	40.1
Delaware	27.3	0.984	27.6	40.6
Denver (CO) (city/cty)	14.9	1.000	14.9	30.2
Detroit (MI)	30.1	1.000	30.1	40.8
East Tennessee	26.2	1.000	26.2	35.4
Fremont/Newaygo Co (MI)	40.0	1.000	45.1	57.2
Grand Rapids (MI) [city]	36.0	1.000	36.0	50.3
Greensboro/Guilford Co (NC)	32.7	1.000	32.7	43.8
Houston/Harris Co (TX)	28.7	1.000	28.7	41.2
Indiana	26.7	1.000	26.7	37.2
Kalamazoo Co (MI)	27.1	1.000	27.1	40.9
Kanawha Valley (WV)	27.4	1.000	27.4	44.0
Lewiston-Auburn (ME)	26.8	1.000	26.8	38.9
Los Angeles Co (CA)	24.1	1.000	24.1	39.1
Minneapolis (MN)	39.6	1.000	39.6	53.9
Montana	44.1	1.000	44.1	55.4
New Hampshire	32.2	1.000	32.3	41.2
North Minneapolis (MN)	16.3	0.382	33.8	47.5
Peninsula/Silicon Valley (CA)	20.3	1.000	20.3	34.2
Phoenix/Maricopa Co (AZ)	31.7	1.000	31.7	43.3
Rochester Metro (NY)	27.1	0.721	34.0	42.9
San Diego Co (CA)	30.9	1.000	30.9	43.6
San Francisco (CA) [city]	27.1	1.000	27.1	45.8
South Dakota (rural)	35.2	1.000	35.2	42.5
Seattle (WA)	25.1	1.000	25.1	43.9
St Paul Metro (MN)	39.2	1.000	39.2	48.6
Syracuse/Onondaga Co (NY)	24.8	1.000	24.8	35.2
Winston-Salem/Forsyth Co (NC)	34.8	1.000	34.8	47.7
Yakima (WA)	34.6	1.000	34.6	47.9
York (PA)	28.2	1.000	28.2	38.8
TOTAL: COMMUNITIES	27.4	0.929	28.9	41.6
NATIONAL SAMPLE	17.2	0.519	28.7	42.3

[a] Proportion qualifying as eligible for survey

[b] Response rate adjusted for incidence of eligibility

[c] Percent of those estimated as eligible who agreed to participate and complete interview

A.2 Weighting the Individual-level Data

The data weighting involved three steps: (1) calculation of an initial weight, (2) calculation of the balancing weight, and (3) multiplying these two weights to produce the final weight.

A.2.1 Initial Weight

The initial weight takes account of (a) the number of adults in the household and (b) the number of telephone lines in the household through which someone could be contacted. Calculation of the initial weight is straightforward:

Initial weight = number of household adults / number of phone lines.

Example: If there were 3 adults and 2 phone numbers, the initial weight would be 1.5. (The number of adults entered into the formula was capped at 3 to avoid excessive variance. The number of phones was capped at 2.)

For those samples with geographic disproportionality—where specifications called for different proportions of interviews with residents in different parts of the sample area relative to population size—a further adjustment was made to the initial weight. For example, if residents in the center city made up 25% of the population of the county of which it is a part, but had 50% of the interviews, then each center city respondent's initial weight would be halved and each non center city respondent's weight would be increased by 50% (.75/.50 = 1.5).

A.2.2 Balancing Weight

The purpose of the balancing weight is to reproduce the population distributions in the sample on four demographic characteristics: gender, age, education and race/ethnicity. The best available population estimates were used as the target proportions for calculating the balancing weights—either U.S. Census (CPS)

figures (in a minority of samples) or MSG estimates, from Marketing Systems Group, which provided the Genesys™ RDD sample.

Except for one community sample (state of Indiana) and the national sample, weighting calculations are based on the marginal frequency distributions of the four balancing weight variables. For Indiana, reliable cell-based population estimates were available and used as the basis for the balancing weight. In all of the other samples, univariate distributions ("marginals") for each of the four demographics (gender, age, education and race) were used. These were entered into a program which uses an iterative process to estimate cell weights—a procedure known as "marginal weighting" or "raking." The algorithm attempts to reproduce the marginal distributions as closely as possible while minimizing variation across the cell weights.

For the balancing weight variables, the categories used in most of the samples were: gender: male, female; age: 18-34, 35-44, 45-64, 65+; education: college graduate, not college graduate; and race/ethnicity: Hispanic, non-Hispanic black, all others. When available, additional categories were sometimes used for education and race/ethnicity to afford greater precision. Additional categories were employed in the weighting only when they constituted at least 5% of the respective survey's estimated population and the sample cell was nonempty.

A.3 The Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey Compared

In order to check on issues of selection bias, I have compared the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey (SCCBS) to two other national samples from the United States; the 2000 American National Election Study (ANES) and the 1990 Citizen Participation Study (CPS). Frequencies for key variables are presented in Table A.4. It should be noted that the ANES was specifically de-

signed to capture opinion and behavior around the 2000 Presidential election and therefore questions about nonelectoral behavior are focused on that particular campaign rather than politics in general. Similarly, the the fact that the CPS was conducted ten years prior to the SCCBS might result in some differences. While there are differences in sampling and, to some extent, the purpose of these surveys, there nevertheless exists a relatively strong overlap in respondents' answers to questions in the three studies giving me a good level of confidence that responses to the SCCBS are not affected by any marked selection bias.

Table A.4: A comparison of national surveys[a]

Variable	SCCBS (2000)	ANES (2000)	CPS (1990)
Turnout	76	73	63
Political meeting	18	5[b]	18
Political group	10	n/a	7
Demonstration	8	n/a	11
Trust national government[c]	30	44	n/a
Income <$30K	28	26[d]	26
Income >$100K	11	11[e]	9
High school	26	27	40
University degree/postgrad	27	24	14
Female	59	56	53
White	72	74	64
Black	13	13	19
Asian	3	3	1
Hispanic	12	7	14
Mean age (years)	43	47	57
N	29,732	1544	2,517

[a] Cell entries are percentages unless otherwise stated.

[b] The ANES item asks specifically about meetings in support of election candidates.

[c] Percentage of respondents who trust the national government "most of the time" or "just about always".

[d] For the ANES, this category is <$24,999.

[e] For the ANES, this category is >$94,999

A.4 Question Wordings and Codings

(Note: "Refused" or "Don't know" responses were coded as missing for all questions.)

Female: gender of respondent; coded 1 Female, 0 Male.

Q6 Trust Now, I want to ask you some questions about how you view other people. Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?

1 People can be trusted	recoded as 2
2 You can't be too careful	recoded as 0
3 (VOLUNTEERED) Depends	recoded as 1
8 Don't Know	
9 Refused	

Q7 Social trust groups Next, we'd like to know how much you trust different groups of people. First, think about (GROUP). Generally speaking, would you say that you can trust them a lot, some, only a little, or not at all?

Q7A TRNEI People in your neighborhood (CLARIFY IF NECESSARY: How about in general?)

Q7B TRWRK People you work with

Q7C TRREL People at your church or place of worship

Q7D TRSHP People who work in the stores where you shop

Q7E TRMEDIA The local news media

Q7F TRCOP The police in your local community

Q7G TRWHT White people

Q7H TRBLK African Americans or Blacks?

Q7I TRASN Asian people?

Q7J TRHISP Hispanics or Latinos?

All items coded:

1 Trust them a lot	recoded as 3
2 Trust them some	recoded as 2
3 Trust them only a little	recoded as 1
4 Trust them not at all	recoded as 0
5 (VOLUNTEERED) Does not apply	recoded as missing
8 Don't Know	
9 Refused	

Q9 HAPPY All things considered, would you say you are very happy, happy, not very happy, or not happy at all?

1 Very happy	recoded as 3
2 Happy	recoded as 2
3 Not very Happy	recoded as 1
4 Not happy at all	recoded as 0
8 Don't Know	
9 Refused	

Q12 LIVCOM Number of years lived in your local community

1 Less than one year

2 One to five years

3 Six to ten years

4 Eleven to twenty years

5 More than twenty years

6 All my life

Q15 OWN Do you or your family own the place where you are living now, or do you rent?

0 Rent

1 Own

Q23 VOTEUS As you may know, around half the public does not vote in presidential elections. How about you–did you vote in the presidential election in 1996 when Bill Clinton ran against Bob Dole and Ross Perot, or did you skip that one? (DO NOT PROBE DK RESPONSE)

1 Yes, Voted

2 No, Skipped that one — recoded as 0

3 (VOLUNTEERED) Was not eligible — recoded as missing

8 Don't know

9 Refused

Q24 TGNAT How much of the time do you think you can trust the NATIONAL government to do what is right—just about always, most of the time, only some of the time, or hardly ever?

1 Just about always — recoded as 3

2 Most of the time — recoded as 2

3 Some of the time — recoded as 1

4 Hardly ever — recoded as 0

8 Don't know

9 Refused

Q25 TGLOC How about your LOCAL government? How much of the time do you think you can trust the LOCAL government to do what is right? (Would you say just about always, most of the time, only some of the time, or hardly ever?)

1 Just about always — recoded as 3

2 Most of the time — recoded as 2

3 Some of the time — recoded as 1

4 Hardly ever — recoded as 0

8 Don't know

9 Refused

Q26 Which of the following things have you done in the past twelve months:

Q26A PETITION Have you signed a petition?

Q26B RALLY Attended a political meeting or rally?

Q26C PROJECT Worked on a community project?

Q26D MARCH Participated in any demonstrations, protests, boycotts, or marches?

All items coded:

1 Yes

2 No recoded as 0

8 Don't know

9 Refused

Q30 RELMEM Are you a MEMBER of a local church, synagogue, or other religious or spiritual community?

1 Yes

2 No recoded as 0

8 Don't know

9 Refused

Q31 RELATEND Not including weddings and funerals, how often do you attend religious services? (IF NECESSARY PROBE WITH CATEGORIES)

1 Every week (or more often)

2 Almost every week

3 Once or twice a month

4 A few times per year

5 Less often than that

8 Don't know

9 Refused

Q32 RELPART1 In the past 12 months, have you taken part in any sort of activity with people at your church or place of worship other than attending services? This might include teaching Sunday school, serving on a committee, attending choir rehearsal, retreat, or other things.

1 Yes

2 No recoded as 0

8 Don't know

9 Refused

Q33 Group involvements Now I'd like to ask about other kinds of groups and organizations. I'm going to read a list; just answer YES if you have been involved in the past 12 months with this kind of group.

Q33A GRPERL Besides your local place of worship,) Any organization affiliated with religion, such as the Knights of Columbus or B'nai B'rith (BA-NAY BRITH), or a bible study group?

Q33B GRPSPORT (How about) An adult sports club or league, or an outdoor activity club.

Q33C GRPYOUTH (How about) A youth organization like youth sports leagues, the scouts, 4-H clubs, and Boys & Girls Clubs.

Q33D GRPPTA A parents' association, like the PTA or PTO, or other school support or service groups.

Q33E GRPVET A veteran's group.

Q33F GRPNEI A neighborhood association, like a block association, a homeowner or tenant association, or a crime watch group.

Q33G GRPELD Clubs or organizations for senior citizens or older people.

Q33H GRPSOC A charity or social welfare organization that provides services in such fields as health or service to the needy.

Q33I GRPLAB A labor union.

Q33J GRPPROF A professional, trade, farm, or business association.

Q33K GRPFRAT Service clubs or fraternal organizations such as the Lions or Kiwanis or a local women's club or a college fraternity or sorority. (NOTE: Includes Alumni Organizations)

Q33L GRPETH Ethnic, nationality, or civil rights organizations, such as the National Organization for Women, the Mexican American Legal Defense or the NAACP?

Q33M GRPPOL Other public interest groups, political action groups, political clubs, or party committees.

Q33N GRPART A literary, art, discussion or study group or a musical, dancing, or singing group.

Q33O GRPHOB Any other hobby, investment, or garden clubs or societies.

Q33P GRPSELF A support group or self-help program for people with specific illnesses, disabilities, problems, or addictions, or for their families.

Q33Q GRPWWW Are you involved in any group that meets only over the Internet.

Q33R GRPOTHER And do you belong to any other kinds of clubs or organizations?

All items coded:

1 Yes

2 No recoded as 0

8 Don't know

9 Refused

The social trust (**SOCTRUST**) index was constructed from responses to questions Q6, 7a, 7b, 7c, 7d, 7f (general interpersonal trust, trust neighbors, trust co-workers, trust fellow congregants, trust store employees where you shop, trust local police). The index is calculated as the mean of the standardized responses to the 5 questions, using national norms to standardize.

Diversity of friendships (**DIVRSITY**)—this index is a count of how many different kinds of personal friends the respondent has from the 11 possible types in the Q55 series.

Number of formal group involvements (**GRPINVLV**)—counts of "yes" answers in the 18-item Q33 series.

Informal social interactions (**SCHMOOZ**)—based in responses to Q56F, 56D, 56D, 56I, and 56C (having friends visit home, visiting with relatives, socializing with co-workers outside of work, hanging out with friends in public places, playing cards and board games). The index is calculated as the mean of the standardized responses to the 5 questions, based on national survey norms.

Appendix B

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) 1991 Municipal Form of Government Survey

B.1 Question Wordings and Codings

(Note: "Refused" or "Don't know" or "Not sure" responses were coded as missing for all questions.)

Q1 Form of Government Indicate your current form of government as defined by your charter, ordinance, or state law. (Check only one.)

1 Mayor–Council	recoded as .5
2 Council–Manager	recoded as 0
3 Commission	recoded as .25
4 Town Meeting	recoded as 1
5 Representative Town Meeting	recoded as .75
6 Not sure	

Q7 Direct Democracy Does your municipality have provision for any of the following? (Check all applicable.)

Q7.1 Initiative

Q7.2 Referendum

Q7.3 Recall

Q7.4 Petition or Protest Referendum

All items coded:

0 No

1 Yes

Q21 NONPART Does the political party affiliation of candidates for board or council appear on the ballot in a local general election?

0 Yes

1 No

Q29 COUNSELEC Indicate the number of council members selected by each of the following methods.

Q29.1 Nominated and elected at large

Q29.2 Nominated by ward or district and elected at large

Q29.3 Nominated by ward or district elected by ward or district

Q29.4 Other (specify)

Q29.a CSIZE Total council members listed in 1–4.

ATLRGE The percentage of the total council members elected at large (Q29.1 and Q29.2).

ELECFORM

0 More than 50% of council elected at large

.5 50% of council elected at large

1 Less than 50% of council elected at large

City political system openness **(OPENNESS)** is an index constructed from the following items: Q1; Q7; Q21; ELECFORM. Scores from each of these items were summed to create the index.

Appendix C

Descriptive Statistics

Table C.1: Level 1 Descriptive Statistics

Variable name	N	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Dependent variables					
Voting	14017	0.70	0.46	0	1
Petition	14017	0.42	0.49	0	1
Political meeting	14017	0.20	0.40	0	1
Demonstration/boycott	14017	0.10	0.30	0	1
Political group	14017	0.11	0.32	0	1
Independent variables					
Happy	14017	2.28	0.60	0	3
Years in community	14017	3.43	1.48	0	6
Home owner	14017	0.58	0.49	0	1
Economic satisfaction	14017	1.07	0.65	0	2
Volunteering	14017	8.43	14.75	0	53
Group involvement	14017	3.20	2.78	0	18
Trust	14017	1.01	0.96	0	2
Social trust	14017	0.09	0.54	-2.32	1.04
Schmoozing	14017	-0.02	0.65	-0.88	4.73
Diversity of friends	14017	6.48	2.71	0	11
Under $20K	14017	0.16	0.36	0	1
$20–29,000	14017	0.14	0.35	0	1
$30–49,999	14017	0.24	0.42	0	1
$50–74,999	14017	0.18	0.38	0	1
$75–99,999	14017	0.10	0.31	0	1
Over $100K	14017	0.12	0.32	0	1
High School	14017	0.29	0.46	0	1
Some College	14017	0.32	0.47	0	1
Bachelors	14017	0.19	0.39	0	1
Graduate School	14017	0.20	0.40	0	1
Married	14017	0.57	0.49	0	1
Gender	14017	0.59	0.49	0	1
Age	14017	43.25	16.69	16	97
White	14017	0.61	0.49	0	1
Black	14017	0.18	0.38	0	1
Asian	14017	0.05	0.22	0	1
Hispanic	14017	0.16	0.37	0	1

Table C.2: Level 2 Descriptive Statistics

Variable name	N	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Form of government	1139	0.22	0.25	0	1
Initiative	1139	0.46	0.50	0	1
Referendum	1139	0.73	0.45	0	1
Recall	1139	0.51	0.50	0	1
Petition referendum	1139	0.29	0.45	0	1
Nonpartisan	1139	0.24	0.43	0	1
Council size	1139	6.85	3.21	3	51
Population	1139	76326	306704	2505	8008278
Percent at-large	1139	0.63	0.44	0	1
Electoral form	1139	0.41	0.49	0	1
Direct democracy	1139	1.99	1.46	0	4
Openness	1139	0.41	0.22	0.00	0.93
Percent White	1139	0.77	0.19	0.04	0.99
Percent Black	1139	0.10	0.16	0.00	0.93
Percent Asian	1139	0.04	0.06	0.00	0.62
Percent Hispanic	1139	0.05	0.09	0.00	0.58
Racial fractionalization	1139	0.31	0.20	0.01	0.76

Appendix D

Supplementary Tables

Supplementary Tables From Chapter 5

Table D.1: The impact of formal and informal interaction on social trust[a]

Variable:	Estimate
Fixed effects	
Constant	0.114***
	(0.007)
Black[b]	-0.308***
	(0.015)
Asian	-0.128***
	(0.022)
Hispanic	-0.267***
	(0.014)
Age	0.007***
	(0.002)
Age^2	-0.000***
	(0.000)
Under \$20K[c]	-0.110***
	(0.016)
\$20-29,000	-0.055***
	(0.016)
\$30-49,999	-0.017
	(0.011)
\$50-74,999	0.006
	(0.011)
\$75-99,999	0.016
	(0.014)
High school[d]	-0.132***
	(0.014)
Some college	-0.062***
	(0.012)
Bachelors	-0.013
	(0.011)
Female	0.053***
	(0.011)
Married	0.026***
	(0.009)
Face-to-face interaction	
Group involvement	0.002
	(0.002)
Volunteering	0.001**
	(0.000)
Schmoozing	0.022***
	(0.008)
Diversity of friendships	0.015***
	(0.002)
Random Effects	
City-level variance (τ_{00})	0.066***
Individual-level variance (σ^2)	0.481

[a] N=14,017; J=634. Dependent variable is the social trust index; * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%. Estimates are OLS coefficients; robust standard errors in parentheses.

[b] Excluded category for race is "white".

[c] Excluded category for income is "Over 100K".

[d] Excluded category for education is "graduate school".

Table D.2: Face-to-face interaction, group membership and political participation[a]

Parameter	Voting	Petition	Pol. meeting	Demo/boycott	Pol. group
Fixed Effects					
Constant	1.486***	-0.539***	-1.817***	-2.856***	-2.911***
	(0.038)	(0.045)	(0.046)	(0.076)	(0.068)
Black[b]	0.025	-0.434***	0.188*	-0.039	-0.467***
	(0.055)	(0.064)	(0.088)	(0.098)	(0.090)
Asian	-1.082***	-0.866***	-0.096	-0.253*	-0.542***
	(0.130)	(0.105)	(0.146)	(0.151)	(0.188)
Hispanic	-0.583***	-0.547***	0.051	0.175	-0.263**
	(0.090)	(0.076)	(0.097)	(0.110)	(0.116)
Age	0.096***	0.049***	-0.001	-0.007	-0.008
	(0.010)	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.013)	(0.015)
Age^2	-0.000***	-0.001***	-0.000	-0.000*	-0.000
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Under \$20K[c]	-0.444***	-0.215***	-0.040	0.396**	-0.098
	(0.125)	(0.072)	(0.118)	(0.170)	(0.153)
\$20-29,000	-0.333***	-0.158*	-0.031	0.412***	-0.078
	(0.113)	(0.083)	(0.114)	(0.134)	(0.168)
\$30-49,999	-0.019	0.007	-0.154	0.280**	-0.099
	(0.091)	(0.073)	(0.094)	(0.128)	(0.102)
\$50-74,999	0.058	0.093	-0.105	0.330**	-0.139
	(0.107)	(0.079)	(0.086)	(0.135)	(0.097)
\$75-99,999	0.142	0.133	0.039	0.239*	-0.012
	(0.111)	(0.082)	(0.089)	(0.130)	(0.126)
High school[d]	-1.540***	-0.608***	-0.638***	-0.308**	-0.983***
	(0.091)	(0.085)	(0.086)	(0.152)	(0.144)
Some college	-0.733***	-0.119*	-0.226***	-0.195*	-0.402***
	(0.095)	(0.065)	(0.072)	(0.118)	(0.102)
Bachelors	-0.055	-0.074	-0.118	-0.137	-0.213**
	(0.115)	(0.075)	(0.078)	(0.139)	(0.097)
Female	0.239***	0.167***	-0.172***	0.040	-0.372***
	(0.054)	(0.047)	(0.055)	(0.074)	(0.077)
Married	0.106*	-0.028	-0.127*	-0.156*	-0.205**
	(0.056)	(0.046)	(0.065)	(0.085)	(0.079)
Face-to-face interaction					
Group involvement	0.137***	0.197***	0.279***	0.249***	0.448***
	(0.012)	(0.010)	(0.013)	(0.014)	(0.090)
Schmoozing	-0.062	0.125***	0.126**	0.048	-0.067
	(0.050)	(0.031)	(0.048)	(0.071)	(0.062)
Diversity of friendships	0.061***	0.117***	0.115***	0.131***	0.051***
	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.013)	(0.016)	(0.015)
Random Effects					
City-level Variance (τ_{00})	0.232	0.412***	0.299***	0.427***	0.268***
Intraclass correlation (ρ)	0.066	0.111	0.083	0.115	0.075
-2 × Log Likelihood	34962.167	41923.137	37396.546	33568.032	33003.514

[a] N=13,998; J=633. See Appendix for exact question wordings and coding; * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%. Estimates are from a logistic model estimated using maximum likelihood in HLM; robust standard errors in parentheses.

[b] Excluded category for race is "white".

[c] Excluded category for income is "over \$100K".

[d] Excluded category for education is "graduate school".

Table D.3: Face-to-face interaction, group membership, generalized trust and political participation[a]

Parameter	Voting	Petition	Pol. meeting	Demo/boycott	Pol. group
Fixed Effects					
Constant	1.483***	-0.541***	-1.814***	-2.852***	-2.909***
	(0.038)	(0.045)	(0.046)	(0.077)	(0.068)
Black[b]	0.108*	-0.384***	0.137	-0.129	-0.551***
	(0.057)	(0.068)	(0.089)	(0.105)	(0.093)
Asian	-1.048***	-0.778***	-0.120	-0.290*	-0.583***
	(0.133)	(0.104)	(0.147)	(0.154)	(0.190)
Hispanic	-0.519***	-0.533***	0.011	0.106	-0.324***
	(0.091)	(0.079)	(0.098)	(0.126)	(0.120)
Age	0.095***	0.037***	-0.000	-0.005	-0.007
	(0.010)	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.013)	(0.015)
Age^2	-0.000***	-0.000***	-0.000	-0.000*	-0.000
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Under \$20K[c]	-0.419***	-0.130	-0.061	0.357**	-0.133
	(0.124)	(0.080)	(0.117)	(0.169)	(0.155)
\$20-29,000	-0.320***	-0.098	-0.043	0.385***	-0.104
	(0.114)	(0.088)	(0.114)	(0.135)	(0.167)
\$30-49,999	-0.015	0.030	-0.159*	0.272**	-0.109
	(0.092)	(0.077)	(0.094)	(0.128)	(0.101)
\$50-74,999	0.059	0.111	-0.104	0.329**	-0.139
	(0.107)	(0.082)	(0.086)	(0.135)	(0.097)
\$75-99,999	0.138	0.138	0.040	0.240*	-0.012
	(0.110)	(0.085)	(0.089)	(0.131)	(0.127)
High school[d]	-1.514***	-0.539***	-0.660***	-0.355**	-1.022***
	(0.094)	(0.088)	(0.088)	(0.150)	(0.144)
Some college	-0.720***	-0.123*	-0.236***	-0.215*	-0.420***
	(0.095)	(0.067)	(0.073)	(0.118)	(0.102)
Bachelors	-0.060	-0.075	-0.117	-0.137	-0.212**
	(0.116)	(0.076)	(0.079)	(0.140)	(0.099)
Female	0.227***	0.164***	-0.163***	0.056	-0.356***
	(0.055)	(0.050)	(0.056)	(0.073)	(0.079)
Married	0.100*	-0.030	-0.122*	-0.152*	-0.196**
	(0.056)	(0.046)	(0.066)	(0.087)	(0.082)
Social capital					
Group involvement	0.136***	0.197***	0.280***	0.249***	0.448***
	(0.012)	(0.010)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.017)
Schmoozing	-0.066	0.124***	0.129***	0.051	-0.063
	(0.049)	(0.031)	(0.049)	(0.071)	(0.063)
Diversity of friendships	0.057***	0.116***	0.117***	0.135***	0.054***
	(0.012)	(0.010)	(0.013)	(0.016)	(0.016)
Generalized trust	0.243***	0.054	-0.170***	-0.287***	-0.271***
	(0.056)	(0.047)	(0.060)	(0.083)	(0.089)
Random Effects					
City-level Variance (τ_{00})	0.232	0.412***	0.296***	0.418***	0.262***
Intraclass correlation (ρ)	0.066	0.111	0.083	0.113	0.074
-2 × Log Likelihood	34935.418	41921.401	37385.236	33546.859	32987.497

[a] N=13,998; J=633. See Appendix for exact question wordings and coding; * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%. Estimates are from a logistic model estimated using maximum likelihood in HLM; robust standard errors in parentheses.

[b] Excluded category for race is "white".

[c] Excluded category for income is "over \$100K".

[d] Excluded category for education is "graduate school".

Table D.4: The effect of social capital controlling for political institutions[a]

Parameter	Voting	Petition	Pol. meeting	Demo/boycott	Pol. group
Fixed effects					
Constant	1.466***	-0.539***	-1.826***	2.947***	-2.932***
	(0.044)	(0.045)	(0.052)	(0.085)	(0.068)
Black[b]	0.108*	-0.384***	0.137	-0.129	-0.551***
	(0.057)	(0.068)	(0.089)	(0.105)	(0.093)
Asian	-1.048***	-0.778***	-0.120	-0.290*	-0.583***
	(0.133)	(0.104)	(0.147)	(0.154)	(0.190)
Hispanic	-0.519***	-0.533***	0.011	0.106	-0.324***
	(0.091)	(0.079)	(0.098)	(0.126)	(0.120)
Age	0.093***	0.037***	-0.000	-0.005	-0.007
	(0.007)	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.013)	(0.015)
Age^2	-0.000***	-0.000***	-0.000	-0.000*	-0.000
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Under \$20K[c]	-0.434***	-0.130	-0.061	0.357**	-0.133
	(0.072)	(0.080)	(0.117)	(0.169)	(0.155)
\$20-29,000	-0.327***	-0.098	-0.043	0.385***	-0.104
	(0.084)	(0.088)	(0.114)	(0.135)	(0.167)
\$30-49,999	-0.021	0.030	-0.159*	0.272**	-0.109
	(0.080)	(0.077)	(0.094)	(0.128)	(0.101)
\$50-74,999	0.062	0.111	-0.104	0.329**	-0.139
	(0.078)	(0.082)	(0.086)	(0.135)	(0.097)
\$75-99,999	0.133	0.138	0.040	0.240*	-0.012
	(0.111)	(0.085)	(0.089)	(0.131)	(0.127)
High school[d]	-1.509***	-0.539***	-0.660***	-0.355**	-1.022***
	(0.108)	(0.088)	(0.088)	(0.150)	(0.144)
Some college	-0.713***	-0.123*	-0.236***	-0.215*	-0.420***
	(0.093)	(0.067)	(0.073)	(0.118)	(0.102)
Bachelors	-0.061	-0.075	-0.117	-0.137	-0.212**
	(0.095)	(0.076)	(0.079)	(0.140)	(0.099)
Female	0.228***	0.164***	-0.163***	0.056	-0.356***
	(0.051)	(0.050)	(0.056)	(0.073)	(0.079)
Married	0.102*	-0.030	-0.122*	-0.152*	-0.196**
	(0.054)	(0.046)	(0.066)	(0.087)	(0.082)
Social capital					
Group involvement	0.135***	0.197***	0.275***	0.250***	0.448***
	(0.012)	(0.010)	(0.014)	(0.016)	(0.017)
Schmoozing	-0.069**	0.125***	0.144**	0.056	-0.066
	(0.034)	(0.032)	(0.056)	(0.073)	(0.063)
Diversity of friendships	0.058***	0.116***	0.111***	0.134***	0.055***
	(0.012)	(0.011)	(0.014)	(0.019)	(0.016)
Generalized trust	0.248***	0.056	-0.147**	-0.275***	-0.266***
	(0.050)	(0.053)	(0.064)	(0.091)	(0.089)

Table continued on next page

[a] N=13,998; J=633. See Appendix for exact question wordings and coding; * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%. Estimates are from a logistic model estimated using maximum likelihood in HLM; robust standard errors in parentheses.

[b] Excluded category for race is "white".

[c] Excluded category for income is "over \$100K".

[d] Excluded category for education is "graduate school".

Table D.4 continued[a]

Parameter	Voting	Petition	Pol. meeting	Demo/boycott	Pol. group
Contextual effects					
Council size	-0.000	-0.020**	0.004	-0.004	-0.000
	(0.004)	(0.009)	(0.005)	(0.007)	(0.005)
Mayor council[b]	0.018	-0.175	0.086	-0.423*	-0.303
	(0.095)	(0.186)	(0.167)	(0.249)	(0.191)
Council manager	0.144	-0.136	0.146	-0.056	-0.101
	(0.136)	(0.152)	(0.140)	(0.185)	(0.139)
Fulltime mayor	0.005	0.105	0.200	0.443**	0.311*
	(0.100)	(0.127)	(0.124)	(0.162)	(0.139)
Nonpartisan elections	-0.102	0.064	0.096	0.016	-0.223**
	(0.074)	(0.104)	(0.092)	(0.117)	(0.087)
Fulltime staff	-0.061	-0.184**	-0.008	-0.220*	0.121
	(0.073)	(0.083)	(0.095)	(0.119)	(0.104)
Direct democracy[c]	-0.016	0.065**	0.014	0.074*	0.006
	(0.025)	(0.027)	(0.030)	(0.039)	(0.031)
Taxes[d]	0.000	0.000**	0.000	0.000	0.000
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Percent owner occupied	-0.009**	-0.000	-0.012***	-0.022***	-0.010**
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.005)
Unemployment rate	0.010	0.002	0.009	-0.061*	0.000
	(0.017)	(0.024)	(0.026)	(0.033)	(0.022)
Median age	0.016*	0.008	0.005	0.030*	0.009
	(0.010)	(0.012)	(0.011)	(0.016)	(0.014)
Racial fractionalization	-0.341	0.565	-1.377	0.080	1.965
	(0.935)	(1.032)	(1.216)	(1.508)	(1.402)
Racial fractionalization^2	-0.565	-0.846	1.193	-0.374	-2.894
	(1.187)	(1.360)	(1.594)	(1.902)	(1.804)
Population density	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000*	0.000***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Population (logged)	0.054	0.060	-0.045	0.069	-0.069
	(0.038)	(0.046)	(0.046)	(0.056)	(0.050)
Random Effects					
City-level Variance (τ_{00})	0.126	0.350***	0.225***	0.245***	0.132**
Intraclass correlation (ρ)	0.037	0.096	0.064	0.069	0.039
-2 × Log Likelihood	34908.387	41887.759	37357.931	33494.946	32956.079

[a] N=13,998; J=633. See Appendix for exact question wordings and coding; * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%. Estimates are from a logistic model estimated using maximum likelihood in HLM; robust standard errors in parentheses.

[b] Excluded category for executive type is "commissioner".

[c] *Direct democracy* is the sum of the following: initiative, referendum, recall and petition or protest referendum.

[c] *Taxes* measures the percentage of city revenue coming from taxation.

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