Is Civic Behavior Political?
Exploring the Multidimensional Nature of Political Participation

Despite the impression that civic engagement is largely apolitical, there is growing evidence to suggest that this is not true. We demonstrate that individuals who are "civic specialists" are engaged in a variety of non-electoral – but still political – behavior that challenges the notion of a civic/political disconnect. With a nationally representative telephone survey of adults ages 15 and older, we show that public activism can be categorized through a typology of engagement based on the distinction between civic and electoral behavior. Our data show that individuals differ in how much civic and electoral work they report, with some people focusing their participation in one sphere and not the other. But we also find that civic and electoral activists report similar rates of behavior that give expression to their political voice.

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Opportunities for involvement in American public life are seemingly vast. Individuals can get involved in their communities, participate in traditional election-oriented activities, or simply voice their opinion about issues of the day. Yet an enduring theme in political science has been the relative dearth of citizen involvement in the public sphere and the challenges this condition poses to the maintenance of a healthy democracy. More troubling is the fact that the trends appear to be going in the wrong direction. Voter turnout and other forms of electoral engagement are stagnant or declining (Fiorina 2002; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993). And by a variety of measures, civic engagement is down as well (Putnam 2000).[1]

The picture is not entirely bleak. Volunteer and community-based activity is fairly widespread among young people, even as voter turnout among new cohorts falls below that of earlier generations at the same point in the life cycle (Independent Sector 2001; The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement 2002). Indeed, youth score higher than adults on some measures of this type of activity, suggesting that the future for civic engagement may be brighter than other trends appear to suggest.

But how *political* is *civic* engagement? What other activities are citizens undertaking that conceptually belong in the family of "political behavior"? What are the implications of age cohort differences in each of these for the future of our democracy? We cannot pretend to provide definitive answers to these questions, but will offer what we believe is a new perspective and some new evidence about each of them.

Civic versus Political

Some of the debate is largely semantic. To help reduce confusion, we make a distinction between *electoral* activity and the broader concept of *political* activity. All electoral activity is political, but political activity includes much more than just the selection of leaders. What about civic activity? We start with a broad conception of civic engagement, explicitly recognizing that much of what it includes is devoid of political implications, commonly understood. As Fiorina (2002) says, civic engagement can be "highly political, entirely nonpolitical, and anything in between" (515). We define *civic activity* as organized voluntary activity focused on problem solving and helping others, a definition that obviously encompasses a vast range of settings, goals, and behaviors. But much of what goes on in the civic world bumps up against the political world. Or as Burns, Schlozman, and Verba put it, "Voluntary activity in both the religious and secular domains outside of politics intersects with politics in many ways" (2001:58). This intersection occurs when the goals of civic organizations coincide with political goals, or the objects of the activity include the public sector, or the organizations pursue explicitly political means to attain their goals.

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[1]There are skeptics regarding both trends. McDonald and Popkin (2002) show that voter turnout rates, adjusted for the rising number of adults who are ineligible to vote, have been stable since the 1960s. Similarly, Ladd (1999) argues that a decline among some kinds of civic engagement has been offset by increases among other types.

In addition, civic meets political in another way. Work in the civic world provides training in skills critical for helping an individual navigate the political world. As Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) argue, "managing the firm's move to new quarters, coordinating the volunteers for the Heart Fund drive, or arranging the details for a tour by the church children's choir – all these undertakings represent opportunities in non-political settings to learn, maintain, or refine civic skills. In short, those who develop skills in an environment removed from politics are likely to become politically competent" (310).

A third type of political behavior is intrinsically neither electoral nor civic, but rather expressive. We call it *political voice*: activities that individuals undertake to give expression to their political opinions. While these have been duly noted by political scientists, no consensus exists on how to categorize them. Verba and Nie saw contacting officials as occupying its own dimension (1972), while Barnes, Kaase, et al. (1979) assigned demonstrations, petitions, and boycotts to the category of "unconventional participation" (despite the relatively high incidence of the latter two).

In short, there are compelling reasons to take stock of the landscape of civic and political engagement. We add to this discussion by presenting new quantitative and qualitative data on the distinct types of engagement that characterize activity in the U.S.–and the political character of each.

Characterizations of Participation in the US

Political science has certainly noted the multi-dimensionality of engagement in the U.S. Perhaps the earliest attempt to classify the different ways individuals participate was Milbrath (1965), who argued that individuals are either "spectators" or "gladiators." Spectators are those who are involved, not very active, instead concentrating their efforts on voting, proselytizing, and wearing buttons in support of candidates. Those whose activism requires more effort – gladiators – give money, attend meetings, join a political club, or work on a campaign.

Recognizing the need to measure behavior that is not centered on elections, Verba and Nie's American study (1972), which led to their pathbreaking work in seven nations, documented behavior that, while political, also included activities that are independent of campaigns and elections. They included, for example, contacting public officials as an important form of political behavior. They also measured work on community problems and membership in political and non-political groups. Their factor analysis of eleven items for measuring political participation yielded four dimensions: voting, campaign activity, contacting public officials, and cooperative activity. Voting, campaign activity, and contacting are the most political of these three dimensions. Efforts in these dimensions center on influencing policymakers. Cooperative activity includes working with others in one's community to solve problems, either informally or through groups. In today's vernacular, cooperative activity is best understood as civic behavior. Thus, for perhaps the first time in political science research, civic behavior was recognized as a domain apart from system-directed activities such as voting and campaign work.

More recent attempts to categorize behavior include the Illinois Civic Engagement Benchmark Survey (The Illinois Civic Engagement Project 2001). In their study of the ways Illinois residents are engaged in public life, researchers at the University of Illinois at Springfield identified seven categories of behavior: community involvement, religious and faith-based activities, contribution activities, political activities (such as voting, working for a candidate or party, running for public office etc.), discussion of politics and current events, news exposure, technology-based activities (such as use of chat rooms to discuss current events, e-mail use exclusive of work, Internet use for current event information, etc.), and informal socializing.

In his comprehensive review of measures of political participation, Brady (1999) distinguishes between electoral (voting and campaign activity) and non-electoral activities, with non-electoral work sorted into categories of "conventional" (informal community, contacting, organizational memberships, attending meetings) and "unconventional" (petitions, demonstrations, boycotts, etc.). And Putnam's review of declining engagement in America (2000: 45) distinguishes between cooperative activity (which includes most of what we call civic engagement) and expressive forms of behavior (such as writing letters).

It is clear from this brief review that although a debate continues regarding the extent to which civic activity is political, political science is increasingly accepting the notion that civic behavior is politically relevant. We turn now to evidence that strongly supports this point of view.

Data and Methodology

Our analyses draw from qualitative and quantitative research conducted while studying civic and political engagement in the U.S. Through a grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts, we have undertaken an extensive examination at the ways in which individuals are involved in public life. While our research confirms that civic and electoral behavior represent a key distinction in the types of engagement, it also adds important evidence in support of the idea that civic activity is often very political. Quantitative data from our survey work shows distinct yet related dimensions of civic, electoral, and expressive activity. Qualitative data from focus groups of people characterized as activists from survey data help to flesh out the idea that civic activity has important political elements.

Data used to show dimensions of engagement are drawn from a nationally representative sample of 3,246 respondents, aged 15 and older, interviewed by telephone in the spring of 2002. This survey was the culmination of a two-year research project intended to develop a reliable but concise set of indicators of civic and political engagement, with a special focus on youth ages 15-25, and to assess the civic and political health of the nation more broadly.

Dimensions of Engagement

Our exploratory work in 2001, and the testing of specific measures in late 2001 and early 2002 that flowed from this inquiry, led to the creation of 19 survey questions about civic and

political engagement.[2] Appendix A provides the wording of the 19 items and the marginal percentages from the spring 2002 survey. Several are drawn from core items in political science that tap behaviors in the electoral arena. Given our desire to create measures that would be valid at different times relative to the electoral cycle, we asked respondents about the regularity of their voting, rather than about having voted in a specific election. We also ask about displaying campaign materials (signs, buttons, stickers), efforts to persuade others how to vote, financial contributions to campaigns, and working for candidates or groups involved in elections. Although there is a good case to be made that voting is *sui generis* (and is treated as such in Verba and Nie's 1972 study), we believe that it is inseparable from other activities in the electoral arena and thus belongs within that dimension.

Outside of the electoral arena, we asked about community-based activities and ways in which people give voice to their opinions. The former category corresponds to Verba and Nie's (1972) *cooperative* activity dimension. We tap five activities that are clearly *public* but less clearly *political*: informal group activity to solve community problems, regular volunteering, active group membership, and fund raising for charity (two measures).[3]

The third dimension of *political voice* is either largely absent from political science research or treated as "unconventional" participation. Verba and Nie's 1972 study asked about citizen contacts with local and national officials, and the American Citizen Participation Study (Verba, Scholzman, and Brady 1995) also included protest activity. Barnes, Kaase, et al. (1979) asked about petitions and boycotts (and also about rent strikes, occupying buildings, blocking traffic, and other forms of civil disobedience). We tried to expand these avenues of participation based on our review of the focus groups and other research by including the following behaviors

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[2] Settling on the indicators for measuring engagement was a lengthy process. Since one of our goals was to arrive at a reliable set of indicators for measuring engagement in the U.S., we first convened a series of focus groups around the country and listened to people talk about the kinds of things they do that could be construed as political or civic engagement. In so doing, we hoped to gain insight into whether survey research was capturing the breadth of political and civic activity being practiced today. Insights gleaned from the exploratory focus groups informed our experimental telephone surveys. We subjected a variety of behaviors broadly construed to be political to a series of experiments designed to ferret out the possible consequences of social desirability bias, question ambiguity, and memory confusion. For a review of how these problems did not affect, to a significant degree, responses to common measures of political and civic behavior, see Keeter, Zukin, Andolina, and Jenkins (2002).

[3] Questions that simply ask whether a respondent has volunteered in the past year yield unreliable results. But following up such questions with a measure of the frequency or regularity of volunteering produces a much more stable and, we believe, valid indicator.

Similarly, group membership also poses measurement difficulties. Group affiliation can vary from simply being listed on a roster, to paying dues or contributing funds to the group, to regular attendance at meetings, serving as an officer, and the like. To distinguish passive membership (which we believe has little civic consequences) from active membership, we simply asked respondents if they were *active* members of any of the groups to which they belonged.

in addition to contacting public officials and protesting: contacting the media by writing letters or e-mails to editors or calling into talk shows, boycotting *and* buycotting (basing purchasing decisions on the social or political values of the company), sending e-mail petitions, signing conventional paper petitions, and canvassing.

These three conceptual dimensions of participation are empirically distinct in both our spring and fall 2002 national telephone surveys. As with previous examinations of the structure of measures of participation (see Brady's review, 1999, and our Appendix B), we find the correlations among the measures to be low. But exploratory factor analysis is able to extract a meaningful structure. With a few adjustments to the data (dropping one of the two fund raising items and two of the nine voice items because of redundancy with other items),[4] three clean factors corresponding to the hypothesized dimensions were extracted.

Replication in Fall 2002

For purposes of replication, the entire series of items was readministered to a national telephone sample of 1400 adults in November 2002. Two modifications were made in the questionnaire. First, we expanded an item on donating money to campaigns to include working for a campaign: "In the past 12 months, did you work for or contribute money to a candidate, a political party, or any organization that supported candidates?" Second, the item asking about contacts with public officials was modified to ask only about the expression of opinion. In the spring survey, we asked about contacts made "to ask for assistance or to express your opinion."

The November 2002 survey produces the same basic underlying factor structure (not shown). The rotated solution results in three clear

Exploratory Factor Analysis of Civic and Political Engagement Indicators

	Civic	Electoral	Voice
Regular volunteer for non-electoral organization	.75	.12	.02
Community problem solving	.69	.02	.16
Active member of group	.65	.11	.10
Raised money for charity	.48	.10	.19
Displayed campaign button, sign, stick	-.01	.73	.09
Donated money to campaign	.13	.62	.14
Regular voter	.26	.55	-.10
Tried to persuade someone how to vote	-.09	.55	.29
Volunteered for candidate or political group	.33	.47	.18
Protested	-.03	.00	.60
Boycotted	.08	-.03	.56
Signed paper petition	.24	.13	.52
Called a talk show	.03	.18	.50
Contacted public official	.26	.28	.47
Contacted the media	.26	.11	.42
Canvassed	.12	.24	.31

Source: Spring 2002 telephone survey by the authors

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[4]Boycotting and buycotting have a higher correlation with each other than with other items, and so form their own factor or interfere with the determination of other factors; thus only boycotting was included in the final factor analysis. Similarly, measures of signing e-mail petitions and paper petitions were highly correlated, so only the paper petition item was included.

groupings corresponding to our civic, electoral, and voice dimensions, and most of the items have comparable factor loadings on the appropriate factors. Two exceptions are worth noting. First, contacting officials loads about equally on the civic and voice dimensions (.40 and .36, respectively), and somewhat more weakly on the electoral dimension (.29). This reinforces our sense that communication with officials is a behavior the accompanies all types of political activism. In both the spring and fall surveys, it has the strongest loading of all items on the first unrotated factor extracted in the principal components analysis.

Second, canvassing loads most clearly on the electoral dimension (at .51) and hardly at all on the other two. Given the very low incidence of canvassing (and thus skewed distribution and resulting low correlations between it and other items), this instability in its dimensional location is not too surprising.

Relationships among the Dimensions

Although the three dimensions are distinct enough to produce interpretable factors, it's clear that the items all share an underlying construct of public rather than purely private behavior. Evidence for this is seen in the fact that the 19 items can be used to form an additive index with reasonable if modest internal consistency (*alpha*=.76). And factor scores created from the items in each of the three dimensions are correlated with one another: civic and electoral activity correlate at .33, while civic and voice activity is correlated at .40 and electoral and voice at .43.[5]

Correlations of Factor Scores		
	Electoral	Voice
Civic	.33	.40
Electoral		.43

Source: Spring 2002 survey by authors

It is noteworthy that the items in the political voice dimension are as strongly correlated with *civic* activity as with purely *electoral* activity. It is strong evidence that civic activity is not *non*political activity, or at least that people who are likely to engage in civic behavior also are likely to make their voices heard through a variety of channels. As noted earlier, the survey item on contacting public officials straddles the dimensions in the factor analysis, indicating its affinity with both types of engagement. More generally (as the correlations among the factor scores would suggest), the individual items within the voice dimension have roughly the same correlations with the factor scores of the other two dimensions.

Relationship of Voice to Civic and Electoral Dimensions		
	Civic Factor	Electoral Factor
Contact officials	.30	.34
Contact media	.27	.27
Talk show	.25	.21
Protest	.18	.15
E-petition	.17	.15
Paper petition	.17	.16
Buycott	.16	.22
Boycott	.12	.15
Canvass	.19	.24

Source: Spring 2002 survey by authors

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[5] Correlations in the fall replication survey are nearly identical.

The extent to which electoral, and in particular civic, behavior share a relationship with political voice activities was further explored through our creation of a typology of engagement. Doing so involves our identification of "specialists" in accordance with the number of activities one is engaged across the civic and electoral dimensions. We consider a respondent a civic specialist if she reports engaging in two or more civic activities but fewer than two electoral activities; an individual qualifies as an electoral specialist if she says "yes" to having done two or more electoral activities but fewer than two civic activities.[6]

Using the two or more standard for identifying civic and electoral specialists, we arrive at a typology of engagement that ranges from civic and electoral specialists, to those who qualify as both, to those who are neither civically nor electorally active.

Our data reveal that around a third of all respondents are "specialists" in the types of activity they appear to favor. Another 16 percent are highly engaged, given their proclivity to engage in both civic and electoral activities. About half are disengaged, although we use this term loosely given the possibility that a respondent could report one activity in each domain and still be classified as such. The fall 2002 survey produced a very similar distribution, indicating that the typology is reliable.[7]

Typology of Engagement	
% of adult	Spring 2002
population who are...	%
Civic specialists	16
(2+ civic activities)	
Electoral specialists	20
(2+ electoral activities)	
Dual activists	16
(meet standards for civic and electoral activists)	
Disengaged	48
(meet neither standard)	

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[6] For purposes of the typology, civic behaviors include: Regular volunteering for a non-electoral group or organization, working informally with others to solve a community problem in the last 12 months, active membership in a group or organization, and efforts to raise money for charities in the past 12 months. Electoral behaviors include: Working for a political organization or candidates running for office in the past 12 months, "always" voting in local and national elections, attempts to persuade others politically when an election is taking place, wearing a button, sticker, or placing a sign in one's yard during an election, and giving money to a candidate, political party, or any organization that supports candidates in the past 12 months.

[7] Following our quantitative research, we conducted focus groups to help ascertain the validity of our approach to categorizing citizens. We expected that homogeneous groups of civic specialists and electoral specialists might talk about similar problems facing their communities but would differ in the kinds of approaches that should be used for solving them. Thus, we convened two focus groups in northern New Jersey during the summer of 2002 – one comprised of civic specialists, and the other comprised of electoral specialists and dual activists. Individuals were recruited based on their responses to the items in our civic and electoral indexes. The same threshold was used for inviting respondents to either group (i.e., two or more "yes" responses to civic and/or electoral questions). Although we initially hoped to have a group of electoral specialists, difficulties in recruitment led us to convene a mixed group

We recognize the arbitrariness of imposing a standard of "two or more" activities. Different thresholds are certainly possible, and perhaps one act is arguably indicative of activism. Our criteria reflect a balance between measurement theory and face validity. With the possible exception of voting, none of the items in our index is, of itself, a *necessary* behavior for engaged citizenship. Instead, the behaviors are simply *indicators* of latent constructs of engagement. As with all measurement, more indicators mean better (i.e., more reliable) measurement. The question is how many are needed.

Setting a standard of only one activity would mean that 78% of the population would be gauged to be active in one or both dimensions; this seems too high, given all we know about citizen engagement in public life. Similarly, requiring three activities would mean that only about one-fourth of the public could be considered active in one or both dimensions. This is more plausible than the 78% figure, especially to the pessimists among us, but it also seems too low given that off-year voter turnout – a stringent but single indicator of electoral engagement – exceeds this figure. When considering both the civic and electoral dimensions, surely more than a quarter of the public is engaged in public life. Thus, the standard of two or more activities in each dimension seems defensible.

Characteristics of the Typology Groups

There are a number of interesting, if modest, demographic differences across the groups in the typology. Education and income show the largest differences, with the Disengaged very

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of electoral specialists (3 people) and dual activists (7 people).

Two key expectations for the group were confirmed. The first is that both groups would behave as we would expect activists to behave. Most of the participants would show up, most would take an active part in the discussion, the discussion would be lively and opinionated, the participants would mention community problems and express a concern about them, and the participants would be able to describe their participatory behavior in some detail. We did not expect them to be especially sophisticated, and, given the threshold of two or more activities within a dimension, we did not expect public participation to be the dominant focus of their lives. These expectations were fully satisfied in both groups.

The second expectation is that the groups would be different. Specifically, we expected the civic specialists to reject or at least ignore electoral activity. This, too, was clearly confirmed, as the civic specialists talked at length about their aversion to electoral politics, their feeling that elected leaders were unresponsive or were all corrupt, and the sense that direct action was more effective. They did not reject that the notion that government was important, but felt that elections were not the best method for directing what the government does.

overrepresented among less educated and lower income individuals. Higher income citizens are more likely to fall into to dual activist and civic specialist categories.

Women are slightly less likely to be electoral specialists, but in general gender does not appear to distinguish the engaged from the less engaged. Slight differences are apparent among racial categories. Not surprisingly, whites are the most likely to dual activists; a higher percentage of blacks than whites are electoral specialists.

Demographic Characteristics and the Typology

	Electoral	Civic	Dual	Disengaged	Total N
15-25	15	17	11	57	1001
26-37	13	21	13	53	1000
38-56	19	19	20	42	604
57+	31	9	16	43	602
Female	18	18	16	49	1715
Male	22	16	16	46	1531
White	20	17	17	47	2468
Black	24	13	15	48	321
Latino	22	17	8	53	257
Protestant	23	17	18	43	1375
Catholic	19	18	15	48	829
Less than $30K	22	12	10	56	836
$30-$64,999	20	18	15	47	1083
$65,000+	18	21	26	35	825
High school or	21	13	10	56	1347
Some college	21	17	17	45	908
College	17	24	28	31	975

Focusing in on the age cohorts provides some degree of insight into what differences in engagement portend for the future of democracy in the U.S. Both the youngest cohort and their predecessors (commonly referred to as Generation X) are more likely to appear among the disengaged and less likely to appear among the electoral specialists. This suggests that a downward trend in overall voter turnout is likely as these cohorts age and more active cohorts pass out of the electorate.

However, the table reveals a hopeful sign as well. The two youngest cohorts have the same percentage of civic specialists as do the baby boomers (ages 38-56) and

Expressions of Political Voice in the Previous 12 Months

	All	Dis-engaged	Electoral Specialist	Civic Specialist	Dual Activist
	%	%	%	%	%
Boycotted	38	30	39	42	55
Buycotted	35	27	37	37	52
Written petition	22	12	24	26	48
E-mail petition	12	7	12	17	24
Contacted official	18	9	18	17	45
Talk show	8	3	10	8	21
Contacted media	10	4	9	15	26
Protested	4	3	3	5	10
Canvassed	3	1	2	3	10

Source: Spring 2002 telephone survey by the authors

have more citizens who are civic activists (2 or more civic activities) than do the oldest cohort. Perhaps repeated attempts to address community problems will help youth politicize solutions to many of the problems that encourage civic activism. This may be especially true for the youngest age cohort, who is being increasingly exposed to service learning opportunities in the classroom and compulsory voluntarism.

But the more interesting findings to emerge from our construction of an engagement typology come to light when we account for political voice activities across the typology. Not surprisingly, dual activists report the most political voice behavior, and the disengaged report the least. But civic and electoral specialists demonstrate a remarkable similarity in the extent to which they make their opinions known through expressive activities. Civic specialists are just as likely as electoral specialists to engage in all of the nine activities we tracked.

Political Voice Across Engagement Typology

	Political Voice Activities		
	1 or more	2 or more	3 or more
	%	%	%
All	64	42	24
The disengaged	52	27	11
Civic specialists	73	47	28
Electoral specialists	67	46	26
Dual activists	88	74	58

Source: Spring 2002 telephone survey by the authors

In addition to a comparison of the individual activities, the pattern is clear when using a summary measure (one expression of voice, two, three, and so forth). Here, we see that the dual activists become more distinguishable as political voice increases, but the civic and electoral specialists mirror each other in the extent to which they partake in political voice activities. This suggests that the means of political expression outside of the electoral channel are as equally compelling to civic specialists as they are to electoral specialists.

Finally, our data confirm the political nature of civic activists through measures of cognitive engagement. While electoral specialists are more likely than civic specialists to follow government and public affairs, talk about politics with family and friends, and report reading newspapers regularly, they are less likely to get news on the Internet or to know a key fact about

Cognitive Engagement and the Typology

	All %	Dual %	Electoral %	Civic %	Disengaged %
Follow government and public affairs "most of the time"	45	73	58	43	30
Talk "very often" about politics with family and friends	32	59	42	30	19
Read news on the Internet at least a few times a week	24	40	18	29	20
Read a newspaper regularly (i.e., 4 or more times per week)	50	67	58	49	40
Knows GOP is more conservative	49	71	55	55	38

Source: Spring 2002 telephone survey by authors

partisan politics in the U.S. Taken as whole these five key measures of cognitive engagement point to similarities between civic and electoral specialists. If it were true that civic specialists turn away from the political world, we would expect their rates of attentiveness to resemble more closely the disengaged. However, this is not what we observed. In short, levels of cognitive engagement in the political world belie the notion that people who focus their participation in the civic sphere are apolitical.

Conclusion

We have offered a scheme for categorizing a range of activities that fall under the general rubric of political participation. Activities related to civic participation, electoral participation, and the expression of political voice cluster into separate dimensions in an exploratory factor analysis. While separate, these factors are correlated with one another, and the 19 component behaviors form a weak but acceptable scale of participation. Notably, despite the seemingly apolitical or nonpolitical nature of the civic behaviors – volunteering, group membership, community problem solving, and fund raising – people who engage in these activities are just as likely as electoral activists to express their opinions through channels such as petitions, boycotts, letters to the editor, and direct contacts with public officials.

Yet demonstrating that *civic* engagement is a form of political engagement in no way suggests that participation in the electoral process is irrelevant. Regardless of how politically expressive civic specialists are, their absence from electoral politics means that they will exert less influence over the making of public policy. In particular, the fact that today's two youngest cohorts are turning away from electoral politics is indeed a troubling sign. Given the historic high numbers of youth seeking formal education, the downward trend in electoral engagement is even more cause for concern. The high rate of civic engagement among today's youth is, by itself, insufficient to address the likely disconnect between policymakers and today's youth as they grow into tomorrow's adults.

Appendix A: Questions for measuring 19 core indicators of engagement

CIVIC BEHAVIORS:

Have you ever worked together informally with someone or some group to solve a problems in the community where you live? IF YES, Was this in the last 12 months or not?

Yes, within last 12 months	21.4
Yes, but not within last 12 months	20.6
No, haven't done it	57.7
(VOL) Don't know	.3
Total	3246

Computed summary variable for regular voluntary activity for at least one of six types of groups. Questions used are:

Have you ever spent time participating in any community service or volunteer activity, or haven't you had time to do this? By volunteer activity, I mean actually working in some way to help others for no pay. IF YES, Have you done this in the last 12 months?
As I read each one, can you tell me if you have volunteered for this type of group or organization within the last 12 months? An environmental organization; A civic or community organization involved in health or social services. This could be an organization to help the poor, elderly, homeless, or a hospital; An organization involved with youth, children, or education; Any other type of group.
Thinking about the work for (type of group) over the last 12 months, is this something you do on a regular basis, or just once in a while?

Yes	23.4
No	76.6
Total	3246

Computed summary variable of those who report active group membership. Questions used are:

Do you belong to or donate money to any groups or associations, either locally or nationally? Are you an active member of this group/any of these groups, a member but not active, or have you given money only?

Yes	31.0
No	69.0
Total	3246

Now I'm going to read you a quick list of things that some people have done to express their views. For each one I read, please just tell me whether you have ever done it or not. (FOR EACH YES, PROBE: And have you done this is the last 12 months, or not?)

Personally walked, ran, or bicycled for a charitable cause -this is separate from sponsoring or giving money to this type of event?

No, have not done it	62.2
Yes, Have done it, but not in last 12 months	24.0
Yes, Have done it, and within last 12 months	13.5
Have done it, Don't know whether in last 12 months or not	.1
Don't know if have done it/Refused	.2
Total	3246

And have you ever done anything else to help raise money for a charitable cause?

No, have not done it	44.9
Yes, Have done it, but not in last 12 months	23.1
Yes, Have done it, and within last 12 months	30.8
Have done it, Don't know whether in last 12 months or not	.5
Don't know if have done it/Refused	.7
Total	3246

ELECTORAL BEHAVIORS:

We know that most people don't vote in all elections. Usually between one-quarter to one-half of those eligible actually come out to vote. Can you tell me how often you vote in local and national elections? Always, sometimes, rarely, or never?

Always	50.6
Sometimes	26.0
Rarely	7.7
Never	13.0
Other (eligibility problems)	2.1
(VOL) Don't know	.5
(VOL) Refused	.1
Total	2858

When there is an election taking place do you generally talk to any people and try to show them why they should vote for or against one of the parties or candidates, or not?

Yes	33.0
No	66.0
(VOL) Don't know	.9
(VOL) Refused	.1
Total	3246

Do you wear a campaign button, put a sticker on your car, or place a sign in front of your house, or aren't these things you do?

Yes	25.9
No	73.9
(VOL) Don't know	.2
(VOL) Refused	.0
Total	3246

In the past 12 months, did you contribute money to a candidate, a political party, or any organization that supported candidates?

Yes	13.1
No	86.4
(VOL) Don't know	.4
(VOL) Refused	.1
Total	3246

Have you ever spent time participating in any community service or volunteer activity, or haven't you had time to do this? By volunteer activity, I mean actually working in some way to help others for no pay. IF YES, Have you done this in the last 12 months?
As I read each one, can you tell me if you have volunteered for this type of group or organization within the last 12 months? ...A political organization or candidates running for office

Yes, has volunteered within the last 12 months	16.3
No, has not volunteered within the last 12 months	82.7
Don't know if volunteered within the last 12 months	1.1
Total	1001

POLITICAL VOICE BEHAVIORS:

Now I'm going to read you a quick list of things that some people have done to express their views. For each one I read, please just tell me whether you have ever done it or not. (FOR EACH YES, PROBE: And have you done this is the last 12 months, or not?)

Contacted or visited a public official - at any level of government - to ask for assistance or to express your opinion?

No, have not done it	65.3
Yes, Have done it, but not in last 12 months	16.8
Yes, Have done it, and within last 12 months	17.5
Have done it, Don't know whether in last 12 months or not	.2
Don't know if have done it/Refused	.2
Total	3246

Contacted a newspaper or magazine to express your opinion on an issue?

No, have not done it	74.9
Yes, Have done it, but not in last 12 months	14.4
Yes, Have done it, and within last 12 months	10.4
Have done it, Don't know whether in last 12 months or not	.1
Don't know if have done it/Refused	.1
Total	3246

Called in to a radio or television talk show to express your opinion on a political issue, even if you did not get on the air?

No, have not done it	86.6
Yes, Have done it, but not in last 12 months	5.0
Yes, Have done it, and within last 12 months	8.2
Have done it, Don't know whether in last 12 months or not	.2
Don't know if have done it/Refused	.0
Total	3246

Taken part in a protest, march, or demonstration?

No, have not done it	82.2
Yes, Have done it, but not in last 12 months	13.3
Yes, Have done it, and within last 12 months	4.3
Have done it, Don't know whether in last 12 months or not	.1
Don't know if have done it/Refused	.1
Total	3246

Signed an e-mail petition?

No, have not done it	82.1
Yes, Have done it, but not in last 12 months	5.5
Yes, Have done it, and within last 12 months	12.0
Have done it, Don't know whether in last 12 months or not	.2
Don't know if have done it/Refused	.2
Total	3246

And have you ever signed a written petition about a political or social issue?

No, have not done it	51.5
Yes, Have done it, but not in last 12 months	24.0
Yes, Have done it, and within last 12 months	22.5
Have done it, Don't know whether in last 12 months or not	1.4
Don't know if have done it/Refused	.6
Total	3246

NOT bought something because of conditions under which the product is made, or because you dislike the conduct of the company that produces it?

Taken part in a protest, march, or demonstration?	
No, have not done it	82.2
Yes, Have done it, but not in last 12 months	13.3
Yes, Have done it, and within last 12 months	4.3
Have done it, Don't know whether in last 12 months or not	.1
Don't know if have done it/Refused	.1
Total	3246

No, have not done it	40.5
Yes, Have done it, but not in last 12 months	17.7
Yes, Have done it, and within last 12 months	37.7
Have done it, Don't know whether in last 12 months or not	2.3
Don't know if have done it/Refused	1.8
Total	3246

Bought a certain product or service because you like the social or political values of the company that produces or provides it?

No, have not done it	52.5
Yes, Have done it, but not in last 12 months	9.7
Yes, Have done it, and within last 12 months	34.5
Have done it, Don't know whether in last 12 months or not	1.4
Don't know if have done it/Refused	1.9
Total	3246

Have you worked as a canvasser - having gone door to door for a political or social group or candidate?

No, have not done it	85.9
Yes, Have done it, but not in last 12 months	11.3
Yes, Have done it, and within last 12 months	2.7
Have done it, Don't know whether in last 12 months or not	.1
Don't know if have done it/Refused	.0
	3246

Appendix B: Correlations among 19 core indicators of engagement

	Comm prob solving	Group member	Run/walk	Charity	Reg voting	Persuade	Button	Give money	Pol work	Cont. official	Contact media	Talk show	Protest	E-petition	Petition	Buycott	Boycott	Canvass
Volunteering	.40	.35	.19	.24	.18	.08	.11	.16	.30	.17	.17	.10	.08	.13	.17	.11	.11	.09
Comm prob solving		.28	.14	.20	.13	.08	.07	.11	.24	.24	.18	.11	.08	.13	.22	.11	.12	.15
Group member			.17	.26	.17	.10	.10	.17	.19	.21	.18	.11	.10	.12	.18	.11	.10	.15
Run/walk		*Civic activity*		.25	.06	.06	.06	.11	.07	.11	.12	.11	.12	.11	.12	.10	.11	.11
Charity					.16	.10	.12	.13	.12	.19	.16	.13	.06	.11	.18	.13	.15	.12
Reg voting						.15	.27	.20	.15	.18	.13	.09	.02	.08	.15	.07	.06	.08
Persuade							.28	.24	.18	.19	.12	.19	.10	.07	.16	.14	.15	.11
Button								.27	.25	.19	.13	.16	.09	.09	.15	.11	.07	.15
Give money					*Electoral activity*				.31	.24	.15	.10	.11	.14	.20	.08	.09	.16
Pol work										.26	.14	.15	.14	.09	.17	.09	.11	.24
Contact official											.27	.20	.16	.18	.25	.15	.18	.16
Contact media												.22	.11	.13	.22	.08	.10	.09
Talk show													.10	.10	.18	.08	.12	.12
Protest														.14	.18	.13	.14	.19
E-petition															.23	.16	.16	.06
Petition																.19	.20	.10
Buycott																	.43	.05
Boycott											*Expression of political voice*								.08

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