



Gendering Social Capital:

Bowling in Women's Leagues?

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Synopsis:

Recent years have seen renewed interest in social capital, and the way in which civic associations and personal trust, by affecting individual life-chances and societal well-being, generate both private and public goods. Yet associational membership can be vertically and horizontally segmented for women and men, and this study examines alternative explanations for these differences. *Structural* accounts stress the way that the social cleavages of gender, age, and class are closely related to the unequal distribution of civic resources including time, money, knowledge, and skills. *Cultural* explanations emphasize the attitudes and values that women and men bring to social engagement, including their prior motivational interests and ideological beliefs. *Agency* accounts focus upon the role of informal mobilizing mechanisms generated by family, friends, and colleagues. In short, these explanations suggest that women participate less in associational life because they can't, because they won't, or because nobody asked them. We examine these propositions and consider their implications for the social networks of women and men, as well as for the well being of our communities.

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Social capital theories have stimulated renewed interest in the world of voluntary associations and community associations. The core claim of Putnam's account is that typical face-to-face deliberative activities and horizontal collaboration within voluntary organizations far removed from the political sphere – exemplified by sports clubs, agricultural cooperatives, and philanthropic groups - promote interpersonal trust. In turn, trust is seen as cementing the bonds of social life, as the foundation for building social communities, civil society, and democratic governance. Participation in associational life is thought to generate individual rewards, such as career opportunities and support networks, as well as community goods, by fostering the capacity of people to work together on local problems.

If associational life carries certain benefits, is membership distributed equally across society, including among women as well as men? We can draw a useful distinction between two main types of inequality at work here: *vertical* segmentation refers to differences in the *density* of associational memberships held by women and men; *horizontal* segmentation means contrasts in the *type* of associations involving women and men. The earliest studies of political behavior in Western Europe and North America established gender as one of the standard variables routinely used to explain the extent of activism within voluntary organizations and community groups, as well as in political participation¹. Horizontal segmentation is also well-established, for example, twenty years ago McPherson and Smith-Lovin demonstrated that American men usually belonged to core economic organizations, providing access to information about possible jobs, business opportunities, and chances for professional advancement, while American women belonged to organizations which focused primarily upon domestic and community affairs, giving them networks in the domestic realm². Moore found that men's personal networks included more co-workers, advisors and friends while women's networks were usually more family-related, even after controlling for work status, family and age³. Given the substantial changes transforming women and men's lives in America, gender differences in associational life might be expected to have diminished in recent decades. Yet in fact, as we shall demonstrate later, organizational membership remains segmented by sex in the United States, as well as in most nations⁴. The greatest contrast is less in the total number of clubs, groups, and organizations that men and women join, but rather in the horizontal divisions within associational life. Today in many countries certain types of organizations remain disproportionately male, including political parties, sports clubs, the peace movement, professional groups, labor unions, and community associations (see Table 1). By contrast women continue to predominate in associations related to traditional female roles, including those concerned with education and the arts, religious and church organizations, and those providing social welfare services for the elderly or handicapped, as well as women's groups. This matters if horizontal segmentation into same sex-related bonding groups has positive functions for members, and yet may generate negative externalities (reinforcing gender divisions) for society as a whole. In a perfectly sex-segmented society, the problem is not that women are not bowling, but rather that they are bowling in women's leagues⁵.

This study examines alternative explanations for these patterns. *Structural* accounts stress the way that the social cleavages of gender, age, and class are closely related to the unequal distribution of civic resources, including time, money, knowledge, and skills, which facilitate participation in voluntary associations. *Cultural* explanations emphasize the attitudes and values that motivate people to join associations, including their interests and ideological beliefs. *Agency* accounts focus upon the role of mobilizing networks and the informal ties generated by family, friends, and colleagues. In short, these explanations suggest that women participate less in associational groups because they can't ("No time!"), because they won't ("Not interested!"), or because nobody asked them ("Come along to a meeting?").

Part I of this paper lays out the analytical framework, drawing upon Putnam's theory. *Part II* outlines the sources of evidence, and the pros and cons of alternative measures of social capital, with data drawn mainly from the World Values Survey 2001. *Part III* compares patterns of social capital in many different societies and then tests the core propositions. The conclusion summarizes the main findings and considers their implications for understanding civic engagement and social capital.

I: Putnam's Theory of Social Capital

A long tradition in sociological theory among writers such as Durkheim, Marx, Weber, Tonnies, and Simmel has been concerned about the loss of community and the weakening of the face-to-face relations of *Gemeinschaft*. Modern theories of social capital originated in the ideas of Pierre Bourdieu and James Coleman, emphasizing the importance of social ties and shared norms for societal well-being and economic efficiency⁶. There are multiple alternative understandings of this intellectually fashionable but elusive concept. Here we shall focus on the way that Robert Putnam expanded this notion in *Making Democracies Work* (1993) and in *Bowling Alone* (2000) by linking ideas of social capital to the importance of civic associations and voluntary organizations for political participation and effective governance⁷.

For Putnam, social capital is defined as “*connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them.*”⁸ Most importantly, this is understood as both a *structural* phenomenon (social networks) and a *cultural* phenomenon (social norms). In this study we focus primarily upon the social networks generated through formal associational participation, acknowledging that this is only one part of social capital.

(i) *Social networks and social trust matter for societal cooperation;*

Four core claims lie at the heart of this theory. First, that *horizontal networks embodied in civic society, and the norms and values related to these ties, have important consequences* for the people in them and for society at large, producing both private goods and public goods. In particular, networks of friends, colleagues and neighbors are commonly associated with the norms of generalized reciprocity in a skein of mutual obligations and responsibilities, so that dense bonds foster the conditions for collaboration, coordination and cooperation to create collective goods. The shared understandings, tacit rules, agreed procedures, and social trust generated by personal contact and the bonds of friendships are believed to make it easier for people to work together in future for mutual benefit: whether fundraising for a local hospital, sharing machinery at a local agricultural cooperative, running a childcare center or battered women's shelter, or discussing plans from a local developer. Roladex networks can therefore be regarded as a form of investment, like financial or human capital, since social connections create further value, for both the individual and the group. Since the value of social capital exists in the relations among people, measurement needs to be at societal level, and it is far more elusive than financial investment in company shares and factory machinery, or even educational investment in cognitive skills. For this reason some economists like Arrow express reservations about using the term⁹. But it seems reasonable to regard social capital as productive, analogous to physical or human capital, if it facilitates the achievement of certain common ends and engenders cooperative behavior that otherwise would not have been possible. Organizations in civic society like unions, churches and community groups, Putnam suggests, play a vital role in the production of social capital where they succeed in bridging divisive social cleavages, integrating people from diverse backgrounds and values, promoting 'habits of the heart' such as tolerance, cooperation and reciprocity, thereby contributing towards a dense, rich and vibrant social infrastructure.

(ii) *Social capital has important consequences for democracy*

Moreover Putnam goes further than other contemporary theorists in arguing that *social capital has significant political consequences*. The theory can be understood as a two-step model of how civic society directly promotes social capital, and how, in turn, social capital (the social networks and cultural norms that arise from civic society) is believed to facilitate civic participation and good governance. In particular, based on his analysis of Italian regional government, he claims that abundant and dense skeins of associational connections and rich civic societies encourage good governance. The reasons underlying this relationship remain underdeveloped theoretically, but it is suggested that this is because associations have internal effects, instilling in their members norms and values such as collaboration and shared responsibilities, while there are also external effects on the wider polity, as pluralists have long argued, in terms of interest articulation and aggregation¹⁰. In democracies rich in social capital, Putnam argues, watchful citizens are more likely to hold elected leaders accountable for their actions, and leaders are

more likely to believe that their acts will be held to account. Civic society and civic norms are believed to strengthen connections between citizens and the state, such as by encouraging political discussion and mobilizing electoral turnout. When the performance of representative government is effective, then Putnam reasons that this should increase public confidence in the working of institutions like legislatures and the executive, and also maximize diffuse support for the political system¹¹. Good governance is believed to foster strong linkages between citizens and the states that promote the underlying conditions generating civic engagement and participatory democracy¹². The central claim is not that the connection between social and political trust operates at the individual-level, so that socially trusting individuals are also exceptionally trusting of government, and indeed little evidence supports this contention¹³. Rather, the associations between social and political trust should be evident at the *societal* level, as social capital is a relational phenomenon that can be the property of groups, local communities, and nations, but not individuals. *We can be rich or poor in social capital, I can't.*

(iii) Social capital has declined in post-war America.

In *Bowling Alone* Putnam presents the most extensive battery of evidence that *civic society in general, and associational life in particular, has suffered a substantial erosion in postwar America*. Putnam considers multiple causes that may have contributed towards this development, such as the pressures of time and money. But it is changes in technology and the media, particularly the rise of television entertainment as America's main source of leisure activity, that Putnam fingers as the major culprit responsible for the erosion of social connectedness and civic disengagement in the United States, with the effects most profound among the younger generation¹⁴. In America during the 1950s, he argues, leisure gradually moved from the collective experience characteristic of the movie theatre, urban street summer stoop, local diner, and town hall meeting to become privatized by the flickering light of the television tube. The privatization of leisure has led, he suggests, to a more deep-seated retreat from public life. Putnam is suitably cautious in extending these claims to suggest that similar trends are evident in other similar post-industrial societies, particularly in his recent comparative study¹⁵. But by implication if these have experienced similar secular changes in technology and the media, there should be some evidence of a parallel fall in social capital. In sum, the heart of Putnam's thesis makes certain strong claims generating certain interesting hypotheses that are open to empirical testing. Most attention in the literature has examined whether social capital has actually eroded over the years, as claimed, in America and elsewhere.

(iv) Gender and Bridging or Bonding Social Capital

In *Bowling Alone* Putnam considers how far the impact of gender on the total level of social capital in a society -- in particular how far the movement of women into the paid labor force and the related stresses of two-career families -- contributed towards any decline in civic engagement and social capital in America¹⁶. He acknowledges that the movement of women out of the home is a double-edged sword: it both increases opportunities for them to make new social connections and networks via the workplace, and yet also simultaneously reduces the time available for community involvement. After examining data mainly from the DDB Needham Life Style surveys, and acknowledging gender differences in some common forms of community associations, such as PTAs, churches and professional organizations, he concludes that during the last two decades the movement of women into the paid labor force can account for only a modest amount of the total shrinkage of social capital in America: "With fewer educated, dynamic women with enough free time to organize civic activity, plan dinner parties, and the like, the rest of us, too, have gradually disengaged. At the same time, the evidence also suggests that neither time pressures nor financial distress nor the movement of women into the paid labor force is *the* primary cause of civic disengagement over the last two decades...civic engagement and social connectedness have diminished almost equally for both women and men, working or not, married or single, financially stressed or financially comfortable."¹⁷

Yet after examining these trends, Putnam does not go further to consider the consequences for social inequality if typical patterns of associational life are different for women and men. In more recent work, however, he does draw a useful distinction between 'bridging' and

'bonding' groups that is relevant to these concerns. In Putnam's words: "*Bridging social capital refers to social networks that bring together people of different sorts, and bonding social capital brings together people of a similar sort. This is an important distinction because the externalities of groups that are bridging are likely to be positive, while networks that are bonding (limited within particular social niches) are at greater risk of producing externalities that are negative.*"¹⁸ Heterogeneous bridging local associations (such as the Red Cross) are believed to have beneficial consequences for building social capital and social equality, by generating interpersonal trust and reinforcing community ties. It should be stressed that homogeneous bonding organizations can also serve positive functions, by benefiting members. But the danger is that bonding groups can also have dysfunctional consequences for society as a whole by potentially exacerbating and widening existing social inequalities, especially in pluralist societies splintered by deep-rooted ethnic conflict (see Figure 1). Bonding practices can reinforce the practices of nepotism, ethnic hatred, and sectarianism, as well as sexism. After all, the blood brotherhood of the Mafia, the tight networks of Colombian drug cartels, or the exclusionary and racist views of the Ku Klux Klan, all exemplify close-knit, mutually dependent communities. Tolerance and trust of members within the community does not necessarily mean tolerance of outsiders, sometimes just the opposite¹⁹. As Putnam acknowledges, there can be sharp divergences in the functions of social capital, just as financial capital can be used for guns or butter. Putnam argues that the challenge is to channel the positive forces of social capital towards virtuous purposes, and to foster 'bridging' or cross-cutting inclusive networks, exemplified by youth sports clubs in South Africa or the Civic Forum in Northern Ireland that bring together different parts of the community in a common public space²⁰.

[Figure 1 about here]

When related to issues of gender equality, bridging groups are essentially inclusive across the sexes, reflecting the composition of the general population by bringing together a fairly even distribution of women and men. By contrast, bonding groups reinforce close-knit networks among people sharing similar backgrounds and beliefs, generating an uneven distribution of women or men. This conceptual distinction should be seen as a continuum rather than a dichotomy, since in practice many groups serve both bridging and bonding functions, but networks can be classified as falling closer to one end of this spectrum or the other. At the most extreme, a male-only bonding group would be the Augusta Golf Club, which excludes any women from membership. A female equivalent would be a battered women support group that excluded any male participants, even the victims of domestic violence. This distinction is important if tight-knit, closed, and homogeneous sex-related social networks generate negative externalities for society as a whole, for example if this practice leads to lack of understanding between women and men, or if lack of participation in male networks limit women's opportunities to learn about jobs or business. This observation leads to the issue at the heart of this study: In particular, does associational life serve to widen social equality between women and men, thereby expanding 'bridging' social capital, or does it serve to reinforce bonding same-sex networks which promote either women's or men's interests?

What we still understand little about are the causes of horizontal segmentation in voluntary organizations in general, and in particular why women and men become active in different types of groups. The broader literature on civic engagement and political activism suggests that gender differences in associational life could be generated by the factors of structure, culture and agency.

Structural accounts stress the way that gender difference in levels and types of civic activism and organizational membership, analogous to those associated with social class and ethnicity, are closely related to the unequal distribution of resources, notably of time, money, knowledge, and skills. Belonging to local groups, attending community events and holding more demanding leadership position in voluntary organizations requires sufficient leisure time, and also the flexibility of schedules, that facilitates participation. As married women have increasingly entered the workforce, in dual-career households there has been a modest adjustment in the

division of sex roles within in the home and family, but nonetheless women continue to shoulder most of the family responsibilities and care of dependents²¹. The demands of juggling housework and paid employment, as well as lack of control of the family income, are commonly believed to inhibit civic engagement, although recently Burns, Schlozman and Verba challenged this assumption, based on analysis of an American survey of married couples²². A long series of studies have confirmed the role of formal education, and the cognitive, social and organizational skills associated with this, as critical for political participation²³. Becoming a member, active volunteer, or holding office in welfare, labor or environmental community groups typically makes many demands in terms of the ability to gather and process information, to communicate, to organize events and meetings, and to manage people, all of which are facilitated by the skills and confidence provided by education. If women lag behind men in literacy or education, as well as in the resources of time or income, they can be expected to be less active in civic associations and local voluntary groups. In short, structural explanations emphasize that social and demographic inequalities -- based on educational qualifications, socioeconomic status, gender and age -- lead to inequalities in other civic assets, like skills, knowledge, experience, time, and money. Possession of these assets makes some better placed than others to take advantage of the opportunities for participation. Resources are perhaps most obviously useful in fostering more demanding forms of activism, such as the value of social networks in fund-raising, the need for leisure time to volunteer in a community association, the assets of flexible careers for the pursuit of elected office, the advantages of communication skills to produce the local party newsletter, and the organizational abilities that help mobilize social movements.

Cultural explanations emphasize the attitudes and values that people bring to civic engagement, social networks, and community activism, including prior motivational interests and ideological beliefs. Ever since Almond and Verba's *Civic Culture*, cultural attitudes have generally be found to be closely related to patterns of political activism, especially more demanding types such as lobbying, political party activism, and organizing²⁴. These attitudes have been conceptualized and measured in many ways: Almond and Verba emphasized the role of subjective competence, Kaase and Marsh used political efficacy to explain protest activism, while many others have stressed the role of political interest²⁵. More diffuse support for the political system, including trust and confidence in government has also been regarded as important for political participation²⁶. For voluntary associations, we could expect that prior interest would influence which local groups people joined, and how actively they maintained their membership.

Lastly *agency* accounts focus attention upon the role of mobilizing networks such as informal social ties generated by family, friends, and colleagues. Rosenstone and Hansen emphasize how people are 'pulled' into activism by party organizations, group networks like churches, voluntary associations and trade unions, and by informal social networks²⁷. Verba also found that churches and voluntary organizations provide networks of recruitment, so that those drawn into civic life through these associations develop the organizational and communication skills that facilitate further activity²⁸. Accordingly we can examine how far structural inequalities, motivational attitudes and informal social networks help to explain levels and types of participation in associational life, for women and for men.

II: Concepts and Measures

Before examining any evidence, considerable attention needs to be paid to the many conceptual dangers and methodological traps littering the pathway of any attempt to measure trends in social capital in general, and associational activism in particular. There should be flashing signs posted: 'Beware all who enter here'. Attempts to capture this phenomenon from existing empirical data remain frustratingly elusive. Social capital may prove an example of where a battery of sophisticated techniques are being widely employed, generating more heat than light, before social scientists have honed valid, consistent and reliable measures of the phenomenon under investigation. The three most important problems of measurement involve excluding informal networks, including structural but not cultural dimensions of social capital, and examining individual but not diffuse-level effects.

Formal and Informal Networks

The most common approach following Putnam has measured social networks in structural terms (by formal associational membership) rather than more informal and intangible social bonds. In most countries, surveys monitoring longitudinal trends in associational membership are often limited to one or two sectors like churches and unions, and data is usually unavailable prior to the 1960s or 1970s. As a result historical-institutional studies replicating *Bowling Alone* have focused on the official records of membership in voluntary organizations like social clubs and philanthropic societies. Yet this strategy faces multiple challenges, at progressively greater levels of difficulty²⁹.

One problem is the accuracy and reliability of historical records: perhaps even more than official party records, the membership rolls for decentralized voluntary organizations, community groups and local associations are subject to multiple flaws, many may be incomplete, and figures may be systematically exaggerated out of organizational self-aggrandizement. Changes in the legal or financial environment may cause major shifts in record-keeping, for example following the centralization and computerization of party records, producing more accurate estimates and yet sharp falls in the apparent number of members. Moreover official records fail to distinguish between 'de jure' and 'de facto' membership. There is an important difference between long-standing voluntary activists involved in the day-to-day grind of maintaining the organization, the unpaid shop-stewards, housing cooperative managers, or branch secretaries of the PTA, and the more peripheral hangers-on, irregular participants, and nominal members, attracted by various secondary benefits like receiving medical or insurance discounts, or affiliated automatically by virtue of their jobs or location. The number of core activists and organizers may have remained unchanged, even if the more tangential followers who rarely attended meetings have melted away.

Even if there are reliable and consistent historical records, another related difficulty lies in the common systemic bias towards measuring the rolls of older, more bureaucratic organizations like unions and community groups that have card-carrying, dues-paying members. Professional associations, labor unions, and church-related groups often have a bureaucratic form of organization characterized by official membership rules, a hierarchical and bureaucratic structure, legal recognition, written constitutions, independent funds, and fulltime officials³⁰. In contrast, it is far more difficult to pin down evidence for the more informal sense of belonging and identification with social movements like feminists, pacifist groups, and environmentalists, where it is often difficult to know what it means 'to join' even for the most committed (how many feminists who sympathize with the women's movement can be counted as card-carrying members of NOW or equivalent sister-bodies?). The most active and demanding forms of mobilization today, exemplified by the anti-globalization protest movement at Seattle, Gothenberg and Genoa, are characterized by loose-knit and decentralized communications, minimal formal structures of leadership, and ad hoc coalitions of disparate, autonomous and inchoate activists, all committed to achieving political change, and yet none of which can be captured by conventional membership rolls³¹. In poorer developing societies, as well, grassroots networks of community activists coming together with informal ties produced by friends and family, to work on local problems of schools, clean water or food production, are rarely characterized by the Weberian bureaucratic organization and formal membership³². A new survey in the United States, the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey, August 2000, provide a rich source of data which attempts to overcome some of the limitations of older studies.

Measuring Structural but not Cultural Dimensions

If we overcome these initial hurdles, and establish accurate, comprehensive and reliable records for belonging to a wide variety of traditional interest groups and new social movements, the analyst faces an even more serious difficulty. Associational membership represents a proxy indicator both for the structural features of social capital (social networks) and for the cultural norms (of trust and cooperation). Macro-level trends are often examined across a variety of associations like veterans groups, sports clubs, and college fraternities, but it is not clear whether all voluntary organizations are equally effective at generating the cultural norms of reciprocal

cooperation, tolerance and social trust, or even the bonds of friendship and collegiality, that are at the heart of social capital theory. For example, youth organizations like the Scouts or Guides, or school-based sports clubs and arts clubs, may play a particularly important role in the formative process of socialization, stamping norms of collaboration and mutual respect in childhood, whereas professional associations and trade unions may be most effective at maintaining instrumental networks in the work-place. Much of the early work regarded the membership of formal associations as proxy indicators of social networks, yet it is possible that informal linkages like daily meals eaten together, workplace discussions over the water-cooler, or extended family ties may prove richer and denser ways to generate the social norms of mutual trust, reciprocity and tolerance than card-carrying membership. Formal organizational affiliation is therefore only one indicator of community networking, and not necessarily the most important. Indeed there could well be a trade-off involved, if people in certain cultures rely more upon close-knit extended family ties, or bonds of blood and belonging, rather than more bureaucratic interest-based advocacy groups.

Individual or Diffuse-level Effects?

In addition, sociologists like Edwards and Foley, following Coleman's conceptualization, stress that social capital is essentially contextually-specific; it exists in the social relations and social norms that exist within groups that facilitate cooperative action, but it is not necessarily transferable to other contexts³³. For example, Coleman suggests that much of the work of the diamond trade in New York is based on relations of reciprocity and mutual trust among a close-bound community of merchants, but these norms do not persist beyond this context, so that traders are not necessarily more trusting of members of the general public outside the market. People living in high-trust close-knit communities, such as farmers and fishermen in northern Norway, the Amish in Pennsylvania, or monastic communities in Greece, are not necessarily equally trusting of their fellow-man (for good reason) if visiting the Bronx, Bogotá, or Bangkok. If contextual, it makes no sense to measure social capital at the individual-level outside of the specific community. You and I can display high and low trust simultaneously, depending upon our location. Edwards and Foley conclude that research needs to examine diffuse aggregate or societal-level patterns of cooperation, tolerance and civility in divergent contexts, suggesting that careful cross-national research attentive to differences in political and economic contexts is most appropriate to test the claims of the role of social capital and civic society in democracy³⁴. Studies of Western public opinion by Newton and by Kaase strengthen this point³⁵. Newton concluded that weak or non-existent patterns linked social trust and political confidence at individual level, but a positive relationship existed between these factors at national-level, despite certain important outliers to this pattern.

Mixed Trends and Inconclusive Results

Not surprisingly, given all these potential difficulties of conceptualization and measurement, little consensus has developed in the literature. The most detailed studies have examined whether social capital has clearly suffered a long-term terminal decline in America, as suggested. In *Bowling Alone*, drawing upon U.S. data, Putnam demonstrates that membership rolls in many common forms of civic associations that expanded in the early twentieth century subsequently faded in the postwar America, such as church attendance, membership of chapter-based social clubs like the Elks and the Moose, and the PTA. Based on the survey evidence available since the late 1960s and early 1970s Putnam also shows an erosion of traditional forms of conventional political participation, like attending public meetings, working for a political party, and signing petitions³⁶.

Yet Putnam's claims have come under friendly fire from several commentators³⁷. Rotolo reexamined the evidence from the General Social Survey, replicating Putnam's approach, and concluded that trends in American associational membership rarely displayed a consistent linear decline from 1974 to 1994³⁸. Instead he found that some groups did experience falling membership (unions, fraternal organizations, sports-related groups and Greek organizations), but six other groups had stable rates, while membership rose substantially in others (church-related groups, hobby clubs, literary groups, professional associations, school-related organizations and

veterans' groups). My previous work has also questioned whether there has been a steady secular slide in civic engagement in America, even in common indicators like turnout, interest in politics and campaign activism³⁹. Historical-institutional and rational-choice accounts of American associational life have also offered alternative interpretations of the thesis of civic decline⁴⁰.

Attempts to track down parallel developments in similar postindustrial societies elsewhere has proved even more inconclusive⁴¹. Research has generally failed to establish evidence for a consistent secular decline in associational membership in most countries. Instead studies usually point towards two patterns, namely: (i) complex and contradictory membership trends among different types of associational groups, like trade unions, churches, and environmental organizations, and (ii) persistent and stable differences in the strength and vitality of civic society in different cultural regions around the globe, such as long-standing contrasts between the Nordic region and ex-Soviet states. For example Kees Aarts presents one of the most thorough comparative studies of West European trends in membership of traditional organizations and trade unions membership from the 1950s to the 1990s, and support for new social movements during the 1980s⁴². The study found stable differences between countries in the strength of membership, and trendless fluctuations in trends over time, rather than any general erosion of membership across Western Europe. Historical case studies in particular nations have generally confirmed a complicated and nuanced pattern. In one of the most detailed studies, Peter Hall examined trends in a wide array of indicators of social capital in Britain⁴³. Membership in voluntary associations, he concluded, has been roughly stable since the 1950s, rising in the 1960s and subsiding only modestly since then. While some types of British associational membership have faded in popularity in recent decades, including those like churches and parties, others like environmental organizations and charities have expanded, so that overall the voluntary sector in Britain remains rich and vibrant. Similar case studies confirm complex trends in Sweden, Japan and Australia, rather than a steady secular erosion of associational life and civic engagement⁴⁴. Studies of a wide range of post-Communist and developing societies also belie the existence of any simple linkages among social networks, socioeconomic development, and good government⁴⁵.

Elsewhere I have comparing patterns of trade union membership in many countries and church attendance in Western Europe, as well as broader trends in political participation like voting turnout and party membership⁴⁶. Evidence of long-term trends remains limited, for all the reasons already enumerated, but the general pattern that emerges confirms a complex cross-national pattern. Rather than any simple secular fall during the post-war era, by many standard indicators civic engagement appears to have grown significantly in many newer electoral democracies, following socioeconomic development and rising levels of human capital, and to have largely stabilized in postindustrial societies. The results of the comparative research to date means that the case for a widespread erosion of associational life and social trust essentially remains 'unproven', based on the available evidence. If associational membership is flagging in post-war America, as *Bowling Alone* suggests, then particular historical events and specific institutional arrangements in the United States may best explain this pattern, rather than broad secular trends (like changes in the mass media, family or workforce).

Measures of Social Capital

These considerations lay the foundations for the criteria necessary to develop a reliable and valid measure of social capital. The arguments suggest that any measure needs to take account of both structural and cultural dimensions of social capital simultaneously, that is, the strength of social networks (measured in terms of belonging to a wide range of associational groups), and the cultural norms (measured by feelings of social trust). It also needs to gauge activism as well as formal membership. And since social capital is essentially relational-phenomena, any consistent linkage between these dimensions can be expected to operate at societal-level.

Evidence in this study is drawn from the fourth wave of the World Values Study (WVS) conducted in 1999-2001. This wave allows comparison of social capital in 50 societies (listed in Appendix A), including a wide range of agrarian, industrialized and postindustrial societies at

different levels of development, as well as different types of states and cultural regions of the world⁴⁷. The WVS allows us to compare measures of membership and activism in 15 types of voluntary associations and also provides a direct measure of social trust.

Measuring Associational Membership

The 2001 WVS item measured associational membership as follows:

“Please look carefully at the following list of voluntary organizations and activities and say...

a) Which, if any, do you belong to?

b) Which, if any, are you currently doing unpaid voluntary work for?”

The list included fifteen types of groups, including church or religious organizations, sports or recreational organizations, political parties, art, music or educational organizations, labor unions, professional associations, charitable organizations, environmental organizations, and any other voluntary organization. The range covers traditional interest groups and mainstream civic associations, as well as including some new social movements.

Yet this measure remains limited in an important regard, since it only asks respondents to indicate whether they belong to at least one group within each category. It therefore cannot gauge if someone belongs to several related organizations with each category, such as several different environmental associations. Another restriction is that the question wording has varied slightly in successive waves of the WVS, so this study only analyzes data from the most recent wave, rather than providing comparisons over time⁴⁸. Despite these limitations, reported membership and activism is arguably a better indicator of the psychological strength of belonging than payment of official dues, as documented in membership records. The measure allows us to analyze patterns of membership and activism in the most common types of associations. Since there is considerable uncertainty regarding the most appropriate empirical operationalization, several summary variables were constructed from these items for comparison.

The first (***VOL-ANY***) summarizes belonging to *any* of the categories of voluntary organizations (measured as a 0/1 dummy variable). This measure assumes that what matters is belonging to at least one associational category, such as a church-based, sports or union group, and that it does not much matter which one or how actively people are involved.

It can be argued, however, that civic society is denser and stronger if people belong to multiple overlapping categories, such as churches *and* philanthropic groups, or unions *and* environmental organizations. Accordingly to test this proposition (***VOL-ORG***) summed all the categories to estimate the mean number of associational categories that people joined (using a 15-point scale). This indicator estimated the range of multiple memberships. Overall half (50%) were unconnected with any voluntary association. In contrast one quarter (24%) belonged to just one organization, while the remaining quarter belonged to two or more groups⁴⁹.

Associational Activism

Yet what might matter is not passive belonging but more active engagement in the inner life of associations. Civic engagement may be boosted by face-to-face collaboration and deliberation typified by regular local meetings, yet not by check-paying membership among more peripheral supporters. This approach follows the arguments of Schuller, Baron and Field that mere aggregation is insufficient: *“Grossing up the numbers of organizations to which people belong tells us very little about the strength of social capital if it is not accompanied by information on two scores: what people actually do as members of an association, and how far this relates to public as well as private goods.”*⁵⁰ To examine this proposition a third measure (***VOL-ACT***) was created, a scale summarizing active membership.

Social Trust

Social trust was gauged in the 2001 WVS by the standard question:

“Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people?”

This measure remains limited for many reasons. It gives respondents the option of a simple dichotomy, whereas most modern survey items today present more subtle continuous scales. The double negative in the latter half of the question may be confusing to respondents. No social context is presented to respondents, nor can they distinguish between different categories, such as relative levels of trust in friends, colleagues, family, strangers, or compatriots. Nevertheless this item has become accepted as the standard indicator of social or interpersonal trust, following its use in the American GSS since the early 1970s, so it will be adopted here to facilitate replication across different studies.

The Index of Social Capital

The Putnam conception of social capital was operationalized and measured by combining membership of voluntary organizations with the cultural norms of social trust, based on the above measures⁵¹. The VOL_ORG measure (membership of multiple groups) was eventually selected for inclusion in the final Index as this gauged the breadth of engagement in associational life, and the other alternative measures were dropped to simplify the analysis. The subsequent results were double-checked using the alternative measures and this procedure did not substantially affect the main findings.

III: Comparing Social Capital

The distribution of the societies in terms of associational membership and social trust in the 2001 wave of the WVS is illustrated in Figure 2. The graph shows some striking clusters of societies that strongly relate to cultural regions around the world. Societies richest in social capital, located in the top right-hand corner, include the Nordic nations (Sweden, Finland, and Denmark), as well as the Netherlands. All are affluent smaller European welfare states and parliamentary democracies with relatively homogeneous populations. The United States proves to be moderately strong on social trust and exceptionally high on associational activism, as others from deTocqueville to Curtis et al. have long emphasized⁵². If there has been a systematic erosion of American organizational involvement, as Putnam claims, then this has been from a relatively high base. The other Anglo-American democracies -- Canada, Australia and Ireland (although not Britain) -- fall into the same quadrant.

[Figure 2 about here]

In contrast, many post-Communist states are impoverished in both dimensions of social capital, including the ex-Soviet republics in Central and Eastern Europe, such as Romania, Latvia, and Russia, which clustered together with low trust and activism⁵³. The Latin American nations like Mexico, Venezuela and Argentina have slightly stronger associations but low social trust. And in the opposite quadrant the China, and to a lesser extent Japan, display moderate social trust, yet relatively low organizational membership⁵⁴. Japan may have what Fukuyama terms ‘spontaneous sociability’⁵⁵, with a strong sense of shared norms and a culture of personal trust, but weak associations outside of the workplace. The societies falling into the ‘mixed’ quadrants are important theoretically, and we need to consider further the cultural and institutional reasons leading to the trusting non-joiners, and the joining mis-trusters. This pattern in this figure confirms similar findings in previous waves of the survey⁵⁶. Long-standing historical traditions function to imprint distinctive cultural patterns on clusters of nations, despite some outliers. We can dispute the nature, origins and meaning of social capital, but it appears that whatever the Nordic ‘X’ factor is, the ex-Soviet societies lack.

Gender and Social Capital

In examining the impact of gender on associational life we are concerned to establish whether there are any significant differences in *vertical* segregation (the total number of associations that women and men join) and in *horizontal* segregation (the type of associations that women and men join). The comparison in Table 1 shows how far membership of a wide range of different types of organizations is commonly segmented by sex. In the societies under comparison, membership of some groups is disproportionately male, including political parties, sports clubs, the peace movement, professional associations, unions, and community associations. By contrast in other voluntary associations women predominate, especially those concerned with education and the arts, religious and church organizations, providing social welfare services for the elderly or handicapped, as well as women's groups. The comparison provides little support for the popular assumption that more women than men are engaged in peace groups or community action; instead the gender ratio within each type of group varies according to the type of issue concern. The extent of horizontal sex-segregation in associations means that it is particularly important to include a wide range of groups in any reliable comparison in levels of involvement in associational life.

For comparison we used similar measures to compare the gender ratio in civic associations using the U.S. Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey, conducted among a representative sample of the American population in August 2000. The US results in Table 2 confirm the pattern already established, although the horizontal segmentation was less marked than in the cross-national comparison. The results confirmed that American groups concerned with religion, charity, and school support were disproportionately female, while by contrast the membership of groups concerned with sports and hobbies, veterans, and the professions, business and labor unions were all predominately male. At the same time there are some areas of common ground where gender appears less important, exemplified by youth organizations (although, of course, even here, in practice children are commonly segregated into sex-specific groups such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides). The cross-national and the US results confirm that horizontal segregation in associations remains marked, indicating that women and men are, indeed, usually bowling in different leagues.

[Table 2 about here]

To compare vertical segregation, the alternative scales of Vol_Org and Vol_Any were used to compare the total level of membership of women and men within all types of civic associations as well as levels of social trust. Table 3 presents the scores on each of these scales among women and men, broken down by each type of society, based on the 2001 wave of the survey⁵⁷. The results demonstrate two main findings: (i) Sex-related vertical segregation exists in levels of associational membership and social trust. The differences are usually modest in size although still statistically significant. (ii) The extent of sex segregation in how many associations is greatest in agrarian societies and it diminishes in postindustrial societies. Men usually belonged to more civic associations (Vol-Org), with a modest but consistent gender gap, but the size of this gap was associated with development. The comparison of Vol-Any showed that men were more likely to join organizations across all types of societies. The comparison of social trust showed that women were slightly less trusting than men, a gender gap that was small but also statistically significant and consistent.

[Table 3 about here]

The contrasts in levels of civic activism can be broken down further to examine how far they remain significant within different social sectors in post-industrial societies. Table 4 shows the simple distribution in levels of belonging to at least one civic organization (VOL_ANY), without any prior controls. The results reveal that the gender gap persists across most social sectors, although it is slightly stronger by age group among the over-sixties and for those in unskilled manual occupations. Moreover the gap is stronger for women confined at home, namely those who are not in the paid labor force, those married or cohabiting, and those with children. Putnam speculates that as women entered paid employment this could act as a double-edged sword, reducing the time available for community involvement while simultaneously widening work place

networks, and yet the evidence presented here suggests that the latter seems slightly more important. Without multivariate controls for age, overall 51% of women in paid work also belonged to at least one civic organization, compared with 42% of women not in paid workforce. Women who were regular churchgoers were also more likely to be engaged in civic associations than women who were not. Lastly there was a larger gender gap among those with a 'traditionalist' value orientation towards sex equality than among those who were more egalitarian in orientation.

[Table 4 about here]

To examine the pattern further controlling for other factors we used multivariate OLS regression models. These first entered gender (male=1), along with standard controls for levels of socio-economic development (the United National Development Program measure of Human Development Index, 1998, combining literacy, education, longevity and per capita income), and for levels of democratization (the reversed 7-point scale from the Freedom House Gastil Index of political rights and civil liberties, 1999-2000). Both socioeconomic and political development were expected to influence associational membership, by increasing the number of organizations in civic society through the expansion of the professional middle classes and through expanding legal freedoms and civil liberties for associations.

Structural accounts stress the way that gender difference in levels and types of civic activism and organizational membership, analogous to those associated with social class and ethnicity, are closely related to the unequal distribution of resources, notably of time, money, knowledge, and skills. Therefore the models then entered the standard individual-level structural controls, namely age (in years), educational qualifications, income, status in the paid workforce, strength of religiosity, marital status (married=1, else=0), and children. As discussed earlier, ever since Almond and Verba many studies have commonly found these factors help predict activism in civic organizations, particularly the role of education which provides cognitive and organizational skills as well as feelings of efficacy and confidence.

Cultural explanations emphasize the attitudes and values that motivate people to join associations, including their interests and ideological beliefs. Cultural factors were assessed by the position of respondents towards sexual equality, using a 5-item 100-point scale employed in other work, monitored by support for gender equality in politics, education, the workforce and family. It was expected that women who held more egalitarian beliefs were more likely to believe that they should join a wide range of associations, including those that were outside of the traditional roles for women as caregivers in the family and community. The position of respondents upon a 10-point left-right ideological scale was also included, on the grounds that left-wing respondents would be more likely to belong to trade unions, working class cooperative, and collective associations concerned with matters such as welfare, employment, development and the environment.

Lastly *agency* accounts focus attention upon the role of mobilizing networks such as informal social ties generated by family, friends, and colleagues. As discussed earlier, although there could be some trade-offs involved, these factors are generally thought to expand networks and associational engagement, by 'pulling' people into associational life. In contrast those who are more isolated and cut off from these informal social networks of friends and family are less likely to develop formal links with community groups. The role of agency factors was measured by how far people reported spending time with their parents or other relatives, with friends, or with colleagues from work or the professions. It was expected that those with richer informal ties would also have stronger formal memberships.

[Table 5 about here]

The results of the first model including the structural variables in Table 5 show that gender remained significant even after introducing a wide range of structural controls. As expected associational membership was stronger in developed societies and in more democratic states. It was also stronger along older groups, the well educated, as expected, although being married seemed to dampen associational membership. Model 2 added the cultural variables to

the analysis, all of which proved significant positive predictors of associational membership. After controlling for both structural and cultural factors, gender differences in associations remained significant however this factor dropped out of the equation once the role of informal social networks was included, in particular the amount of time spent with friends and work-place colleagues.

Conclusions

The burgeoning study of social capital is throwing new light on civic activism and voluntary organizations, and exploring the consequences of these phenomena for cooperation within communities and for opportunities for individuals. Yet beyond looking at how some of the changes transforming women's lives have contributed towards trends in social capital in America, we still understand remarkably little about how gender interacts with social capital, and what implications this has for social inequality.

In this study we have examined some of the ways in which associational membership can be vertically and horizontally segmented for women and men, and considered three alternative explanations for these gender differences. As discussed earlier, there are many problems in conceptualizing social capital, as well as in operationalizing summary indicators of this phenomenon. The indicators developed in this study go some way towards measuring this elusive concept although further study is required to establish the reliability and robustness of these indices. Bearing in mind these limitations, the results of the analysis suggest three main findings.

First, the analysis confirms the well-known tendency for participation in different types of civic associations to be strongly sex-segregated horizontally, so that some clubs, groups and organizations are disproportionately male while others are located more within the female sphere. None of the groups under comparison were 100% segregated, but still the gender gaps were fairly strong, and only a few groups proved gender-neutral. This finding is not particularly surprising, it confirms popular assumptions, but still it does suggest the need for considerable caution in estimating overall patterns of social capital, since the type of group studied may either exacerbate or under-estimate the extent of any gender differences.

Second, the gender gaps in levels of associational membership and social trust were small but significant, and found in societies at all different levels of development, although the gap in belonging to many associations did diminish in postindustrial societies. Again this largely confirms the conventional wisdom, and it also suggests that studies of social capital need to take explicit account of gender, rather than assuming that this is a gender-neutral phenomenon.

Lastly, in seeking to explain gender gaps in formal associational membership the multivariate analysis suggests that this largely reflects the way in which women and men differ in their informal social networks. Time spent with family members and immediate relatives, more common among women, does not necessarily lead people to join formal organizations and community groups. Indeed the simple correlation between the amount of time spent with family and the indicators of associational membership and activism, without any prior controls, was significant and negative. By contrast, time spent informally with workmates and friends was positively correlated with participation in formal associations. Agency explanations suggest the main reason is that extensive networks of friends and workplace colleagues draw people into belonging to social organizations, attending meetings, or even becoming active in running groups. The gender gap in associational life appears to be more strongly related to the agency-role of informal social networks than to the many well-established structural and cultural differences in women and men's lives.

Does this matter? If an individual's stock of social capital does indeed affect their life chances, as many claim, for example opportunities in professional careers, in public life, and in business, then the gender gap in social capital could well be important as another barrier to women's equality. And if there are broader consequences for community life that flow from the stock of social capital, then again if women are less effectively networked *and* less socially trusting then this may have an important negative impact upon society as a whole. On the one

hand gender-related bonding groups, where women talk to women and men talk to men, can have positive spin-offs for individual, for groups, and for society. But at the same time gender-based bonding can also have negative externalities, for example by isolating women from opportunities in the public sphere and reinforcing their role in the private sphere. If this pattern holds for differences in associational activism between the sexes, it seems likely that there will probably be analogous mechanisms at work relating to the other major social cleavages of class, ethnicity, and race. We need to understand far more about the mechanisms at work here and their implications for social equality and for community life.

Table 1: Gender ratio in civic associations, 50 societies worldwide 2001

| | % Women | % Men | | Gap | Sig. |
|---|----------------|--------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| Political parties or groups | 38 | 62 | 100% | -24 | *** |
| Sports or recreation | 38 | 62 | 100% | -24 | *** |
| Peace movement | 42 | 58 | 100% | -16 | *** |
| Professional associations | 43 | 57 | 100% | -14 | *** |
| Labor unions | 47 | 53 | 100% | -6 | *** |
| Local community action groups | 48 | 52 | 100% | -4 | *** |
| Youth work (e.g. scouts, guides, youth clubs, etc) | 49 | 51 | 100% | -2 | |
| Conservation, environmental or animal rights | 50 | 50 | 100% | 0 | |
| Third world development or human rights | 52 | 48 | 100% | +4 | *** |
| Education, arts, music or cultural activities | 53 | 47 | 100% | +6 | *** |
| Religious or church organizations | 56 | 44 | 100% | +12 | *** |
| Voluntary organizations concerned with health | 56 | 44 | 100% | +12 | *** |
| Social welfare for the elderly, handicapped or deprived people | 58 | 42 | 100% | +16 | *** |
| Women's groups | 87 | 13 | 100% | +72 | *** |
| ALL | 53 | 47 | 100% | +6 | *** |

Note: Q: "Please look carefully at the following list of voluntary organizations and activities and say which, if any, do you belong to?" The table lists the percentage of women and men in the membership of each type of group, with the gender gap representing the difference between women and men. A negative coefficient denotes that women are less likely to belong than men. A positive coefficient indicates that they are *more* likely to belong than men. The significance of the difference between groups was estimated using ANOVA. *** p.01
Source: Pooled World Values Surveys, 2001

Table 2: Gender ratio in civic associations, US 2000

| | % Women | % Men | | Gap | Sig. |
|---|----------------|--------------|------|--------------|-------------|
| Sports club, league, or outdoor activity club | 16 | 26 | 100% | -10 | *** |
| Hobby, investment, or garden club | 20 | 30 | 100% | -10 | *** |
| Veterans group | 5 | 14 | 100% | -9 | *** |
| Third world development or human rights | 7 | 16 | 100% | -9 | *** |
| Professional, trade, or business organization | 21 | 29 | 100% | -8 | *** |
| Labor union | 16 | 7 | 100% | -7 | *** |
| Neighborhood associations | 19 | 23 | 100% | -4 | *** |
| Political group or party committee | 7 | 11 | 100% | -4 | *** |
| Ethnic, nationality, or civil rights organization | 6 | 7 | 100% | -1 | |
| Youth organization | 22 | 22 | 100% | 0 | |
| Service clubs or fraternity/sorority organization | 14 | 14 | 100% | 0 | |
| Self-help program | 17 | 17 | 100% | 0 | |
| Group that meets over the Internet | 3 | 3 | 100% | 0 | *** |
| Seniors' groups | 15 | 13 | 100% | +2 | *** |
| Organization affiliated with religion | 18 | 15 | 100% | +3 | *** |
| Literary, art or music group | 20 | 15 | 100% | +5 | *** |
| Parent association or other school support group | 25 | 19 | 100% | +6 | *** |
| Charity or social welfare group | 35 | 28 | 100% | +6 | *** |
| Church activities other than services | 44 | 35 | 100% | +10 | *** |
| Mean all | 2.74 | 2.79 | | -0.05 | |

Note: Q: "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." The significance of the difference between groups was estimated using ANOVA. *** p.01

Source: The Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey, August 2000 N.3003

Table 3: Associational membership and social trust by gender and type of society, 50 societies worldwide 2001

| Type of Society | Gender | Belong to how many associations (Mean Vol_Org) | Belong to at least one association (% Vol_Any) | Social trust (% 'Can trust people most of the time') |
|-----------------|--------------|---|---|---|
| Postindustrial | Women | 1.42 | 57.2 | 35.9 |
| | Men | 1.47 | 62.3 | 38.5 |
| | <i>Diff.</i> | <i>-.05</i> | <i>-5.1</i> | <i>-2.6</i> |
| Industrial | Women | .57 | 34.1 | 19.8 |
| | Men | .71 | 40.2 | 21.1 |
| | <i>Diff</i> | <i>-.14</i> | <i>-6.1</i> | <i>-1.3</i> |
| Agrarian | Women | .82 | 33.1 | 27.0 |
| | Men | 1.17 | 37.7 | 27.8 |
| | <i>Diff</i> | <i>-.35</i> | <i>-4.6</i> | <i>-0.8</i> |
| Total | Women | .91 | 41.3 | 26.9 |
| | Men | 1.08 | 46.1 | 28.5 |
| | <i>Diff</i> | <i>-.17</i> | <i>-4.8</i> | <i>-1.6</i> |

Note: Q: Belong "Please look carefully at the following list of voluntary organizations and activities and say which, if any, do you belong to?" This scale includes belonging to the 15 organizations listed in Table 1. A negative coefficient denotes that women are less active than men while a positive coefficient indicates that they are *more* active than men. The classification of societies is based on the UNDP Human Development Index, 2000. See Inglehart and Norris (2003) for more details. A comparison of group means using ANOVA shows that the difference between women and men is significant at the .001 level in all cases.

Source: World Values Surveys, 2001

Table 4: Civic Activism by Gender in 17 Postindustrial Societies, 2001

| | | % Belong to at least one civic organization | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|---|-----|------|
| | | Women | Men | Diff |
| All | | 48 | 52 | -4 |
| Education | High | 50 | 55 | -5 |
| | Moderate | 53 | 55 | -2 |
| | Low | 39 | 43 | -4 |
| Age group | Under 30 | 48 | 52 | -4 |
| | 30-59 years old | 50 | 54 | -4 |
| | 60+ | 41 | 49 | -8 |
| R's Occupational Class | Manager/professional | 61 | 63 | -2 |
| | Lower middle | 54 | 56 | -2 |
| | Skilled working | 44 | 49 | -5 |
| | Unskilled working | 43 | 50 | -7 |
| Work Status | In paid work | 51 | 54 | -3 |
| | Not in paid work | 42 | 48 | -6 |
| Marital Status | Married or cohabiting | 47 | 54 | -7 |
| | Not | 48 | 52 | -4 |
| Children | No children | 51 | 54 | -3 |
| | Has a least one child | 47 | 52 | -5 |
| Religiosity | Attend service every wk | 59 | 54 | -5 |
| | Never attend | 38 | 47 | -9 |
| Gender Equality | Traditionalist | 40 | 47 | -7 |
| | Egalitarian | 55 | 57 | -2 |
| Religion | Catholic | 48 | 55 | -7 |
| | Protestant | 49 | 53 | -4 |

Note: The proportion of women and men who belong to at least one of the 14 types of civic organizations (VOL_ANY). In the 'difference' column, a negative figure represents women less active than men. A positive figure represents women more active than men.

Source: World Values Survey 2001

Table 4: The impact of gender on civic activism, 50 societies, 2001

| | Model 1 Gender + structure | | | | Model 2 Gender + structure + culture | | | | Model 3 Gender + structure+culture+agency | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|------|-------|-----|---|------|-------|-----|---|------|-------|-----|
| | B | SE | Beta | Sig | B | SE | Beta | Sig | B | SE | Beta | Sig |
| Gender (Male=1, Female=0) | .025 | .006 | .042 | *** | .020 | .006 | .032 | *** | .010 | .006 | .016 | N/s |
| SOCIAL STRUCTURE | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Level of development (HDI 1998) | -.264 | .025 | -.146 | *** | -.350 | .028 | -.194 | *** | -.334 | .028 | -.185 | *** |
| Level of democratization (FH 2000) | .008 | .002 | .045 | *** | .031 | .003 | .183 | *** | .031 | .003 | .184 | *** |
| Age (years) | .001 | .000 | .072 | *** | .001 | .000 | .049 | *** | .001 | .000 | .069 | *** |
| Education (3 categories) | .099 | .004 | .227 | *** | .081 | .004 | .186 | *** | .075 | .004 | .172 | *** |
| Income | .000 | .001 | .001 | N/s | .004 | .001 | .036 | *** | .004 | .001 | .038 | *** |
| In paid employment (1 Yes/0) | -.006 | .007 | -.009 | N/s | .044 | .007 | .068 | *** | .027 | .007 | .041 | *** |
| Married-cohabiting (1 Yes/0) | -.062 | .007 | -.101 | *** | -.036 | .007 | -.058 | *** | -.032 | .007 | -.051 | *** |
| With children (1/0) | .039 | .008 | .057 | *** | .013 | .008 | .018 | N/s | .014 | .008 | .020 | N/s |
| CULTURAL VALUES | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sex Equality (100-point scale) | | | | | .001 | .000 | .040 | *** | .001 | .000 | .042 | *** |
| Religiosity (100-point scale) | | | | | .001 | .000 | .103 | *** | .001 | .000 | .104 | *** |
| Left-Right Ideology Scale (10-pt scale) | | | | | .080 | .003 | .304 | *** | .077 | .003 | .290 | *** |
| AGENCY | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Time with family (4-pt scale) | | | | | | | | | .077 | .003 | .006 | N/s |
| Time with friends (4-pt scale) | | | | | | | | | .002 | .003 | .058 | *** |
| Time with colleagues (4-pt scale) | | | | | | | | | .021 | .003 | .117 | *** |
| Constant | .197 | | | | -.477 | | | | -.616 | | | |
| R | .268 | | | | .362 | | | | .385 | | | |
| Adjusted R ² . | .071 | | | | .130 | | | | .147 | | | |

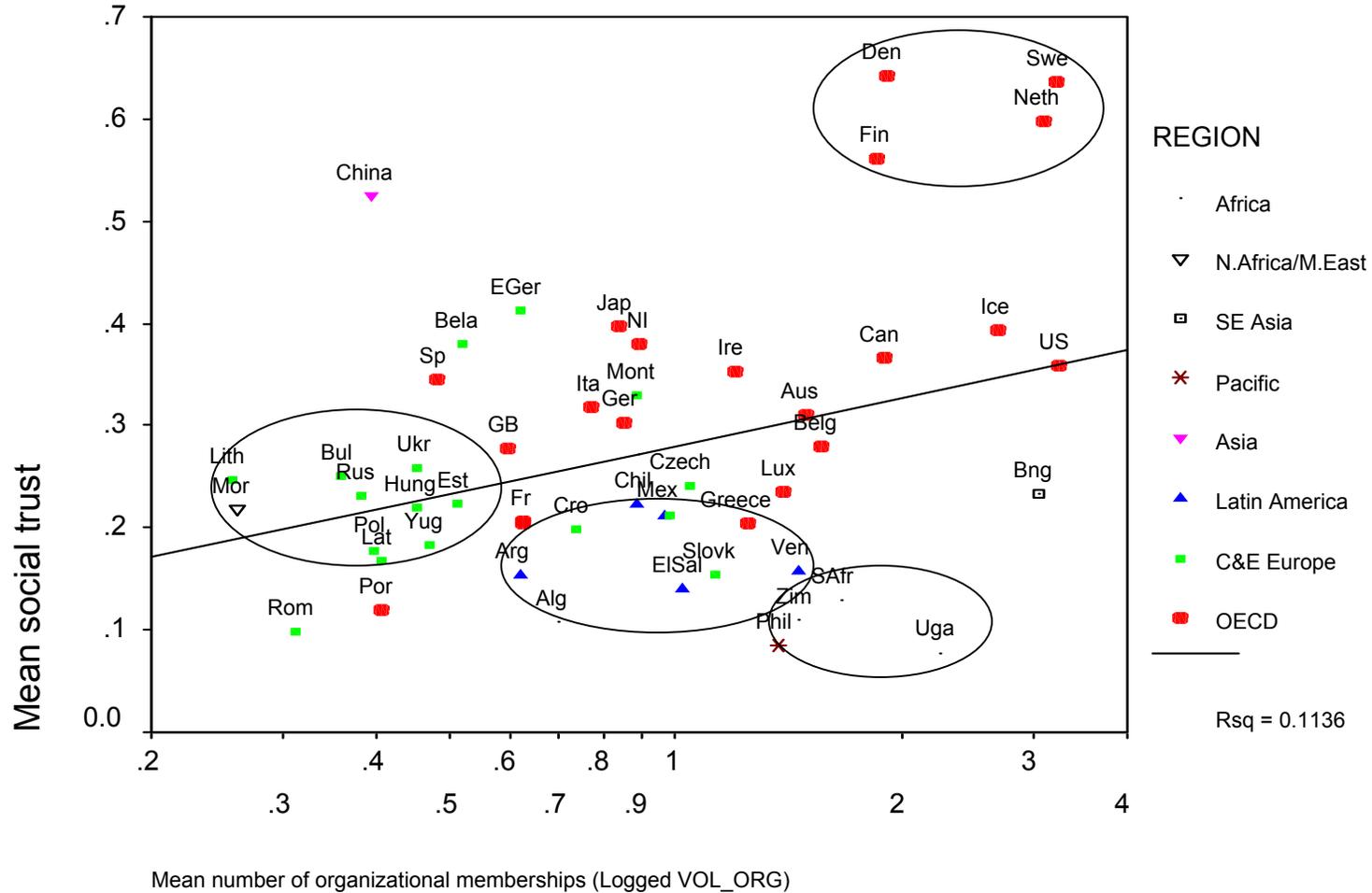
Note: The models are based on OLS regression analysis where logged VOL_ORG is the dependent variable. The figures are unstandardized (B) and standardized (Beta) coefficients and the standard error. *Model 1* includes gender without any controls, where a positive coefficient denotes men active than women. *Model 2* includes gender effects with social controls for level of human development (HDI 1998), level of democratization (FH 2000), age, education, religiosity, and dummy variables for respondent's occupational class (middle=high), work status (fulltime, part-time or self-employment =1), marital status (married or cohabiting=1), and the presence of children in the household. *Model 3* includes social and attitudinal controls, the latter including the 100-point gender equality scale, the 100-point religiosity scale, and a left-right ideology 10-point scale. Sig. *.05 **.01. ***.001. N/s Not significant. All models were checked by tolerance and VIF statistics to be free of multicollinearity problems.

Source: Pooled World Values Surveys 2001.

Figure 1: Model of bridging and bonding functions of social networks for social equality

| | Bridging Networks Socially and ideologically inclusive | Bonding Networks Socially and ideologically exclusive |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Individual member | Positive | Positive or negative |
| Groups | Positive | Positive or negative |
| Society | Positive | Negative |

Figure 2: The distribution of social capital, 50 societies 2001



Note: Vol_Org “Please look carefully at the following list of voluntary organizations and activities and say which, if any, do you belong to?” (Logged mean number of voluntary organizations people joined (VOL_ORG)). Source: World Values Survey 2001.

Appendix A: Societies included in the 1999-2001 wave of the World Values Survey

| Society | VOL_ANY % Who belong to at least one association | | SOCIAL TRUST (% Trusting) | | SOCIAL CAPITAL INDEX | |
|-----------------------------|---|------------|------------------------------|------------|----------------------|-------------|
| | Women | Men | Women | Men | Women | Men |
| POST INDUSTRIAL (17) | | | | | | |
| Austria | 62% | 73% | 29% | 34% | 0.21 | 0.26 |
| Belgium | 60% | 71% | 25% | 31% | 0.19 | 0.25 |
| Canada | 72% | 76% | 35% | 39% | 0.27 | 0.34 |
| Denmark | 82% | 87% | 64% | 65% | 0.57 | 0.57 |
| Finland | 82% | 78% | 58% | 54% | 0.50 | 0.44 |
| France | 36% | 43% | 21% | 20% | 0.10 | 0.10 |
| Germany | 48% | 54% | 29% | 32% | 0.16 | 0.18 |
| Iceland | 93% | 94% | 40% | 39% | 0.36 | 0.37 |
| Ireland | 53% | 62% | 30% | 42% | 0.19 | 0.28 |
| Italy | 38% | 46% | 30% | 33% | 0.15 | 0.20 |
| Japan | 41% | 45% | 40% | 40% | 0.19 | 0.20 |
| Luxembourg | 55% | 62% | 23% | 24% | 0.13 | 0.18 |
| Netherlands | 91% | 95% | 58% | 61% | 0.55 | 0.59 |
| Spain | 26% | 32% | 35% | 35% | 0.10 | 0.13 |
| Sweden | 96% | 95% | 64% | 64% | 0.62 | 0.61 |
| United Kingdom | 34% | 32% | 26% | 30% | 0.12 | 0.12 |
| United States | 88% | 92% | 37% | 34% | 0.33 | 0.32 |
| INDUSTRIAL (24) | | | | | | |
| Argentina | 44% | 41% | 15% | 16% | 0.08 | 0.08 |
| Belarus | 43% | 49% | 39% | 36% | 0.18 | 0.18 |
| Bulgaria | 21% | 26% | 22% | 29% | 0.06 | 0.09 |
| Chile | 49% | 51% | 24% | 21% | 0.13 | 0.12 |
| Croatia | 35% | 54% | 18% | 22% | 0.08 | 0.14 |
| Czech Republic | 54% | 67% | 24% | 24% | 0.14 | 0.17 |
| Estonia | 33% | 34% | 22% | 23% | 0.10 | 0.08 |
| Greece | 54% | 60% | 20% | 22% | 0.13 | 0.15 |
| Hungary | 30% | 31% | 21% | 23% | 0.09 | 0.08 |
| Latvia | 31% | 32% | 16% | 17% | 0.06 | 0.06 |
| Lithuania | 18% | 19% | 22% | 27% | 0.05 | 0.07 |
| Malta | 33% | 52% | 20% | 21% | 0.09 | 0.13 |
| Mexico | 46% | 47% | 20% | 23% | 0.11 | 0.11 |
| Philippines | 58% | 63% | 9% | 9% | 0.05 | 0.06 |
| Poland | 22% | 28% | 19% | 17% | 0.05 | 0.06 |
| Portugal | 24% | 34% | 11% | 13% | 0.05 | 0.07 |
| Romania | 18% | 24% | 9% | 10% | 0.02 | 0.03 |
| Russian Federation | 31% | 32% | 23% | 23% | 0.09 | 0.09 |
| Slovakia | 62% | 68% | 15% | 16% | 0.11 | 0.13 |
| Slovenia | 46% | 58% | 20% | 22% | 0.13 | 0.14 |
| Turkey | | | 17% | 21% | | |
| Ukraine | 34% | 36% | 25% | 27% | 0.09 | 0.10 |
| Venezuela | 52% | 62% | 14% | 18% | 0.08 | 0.11 |
| Yugoslavia | 23% | 41% | 19% | 18% | 0.05 | 0.09 |
| AGRARIAN (15) | | | | | | |
| Algeria | 28% | 45% | 11% | 11% | 0.04 | 0.05 |
| Bangladesh | 46% | 80% | 23% | 24% | 0.07 | 0.16 |
| China | 22% | 29% | 54% | 51% | 0.13 | 0.16 |
| Egypt | | | 38% | 37% | | |
| El Salvador | 66% | 69% | 13% | 15% | 0.09 | 0.11 |
| Indonesia | | | 44% | 48% | | |
| Iran | | | 49% | 50% | | |
| Jordan | | | 25% | 30% | | |
| Morocco | 14% | 22% | 25% | 18% | 0.04 | 0.05 |
| Nigeria | | | 25% | 26% | | |
| South Africa | 76% | 73% | 12% | 14% | 0.09 | 0.10 |
| Tanzania | 84% | 91% | 19% | 20% | 0.18 | 0.19 |
| Uganda | 71% | 90% | 7% | 8% | 0.06 | 0.07 |
| Viet Nam | 79% | 74% | 37% | 41% | 0.30 | 0.31 |
| Zimbabwe | 91% | 83% | 11% | 11% | 0.10 | 0.09 |
| Total (56) | 41% | 46% | 27% | 28% | 0.13 | 0.14 |

Note: The six countries where the battery of questions on voluntary associations was not included in the survey were excluded from the analysis presented in this study.

¹ Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

² J. McPherson and Lynn Smith-Lovin. 1982. 'Women and weak ties: Differences by sex in the size of voluntary organizations.' *American Journal of Sociology*. 87: 883-904.

³ Gwen Moore. 1990. 'Structural determinants of men's and women's personal networks.' *American Sociological Review* 55: 726-35.

⁴ See Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris. 2003. *Rising Tide: Gender Equality and Cultural Change Worldwide*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁵ Look, for a moment, at the illustration chosen to illustrate the back jacket-cover of *Bowling Alone*.

⁶ Pierre Bourdieu. 1970. *Reproduction in Education, Culture and Society*. London: Sage; James S. Coleman. 1988. 'Social capital in the creation of human capital.' *American Journal of Sociology* 94: 95-120; James S. Coleman. 1990. *Foundations of Social Theory*. Cambridge: Belknap. For a discussion of the history of the concept, see also the introduction in Stephen Baron, John Field, and Tom Schuller. (Eds). 2000. *Social Capital: Critical Perspectives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁷ The seminal works are Robert D. Putnam. 1993. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press; Robert D. Putnam. 1996. 'The Strange Disappearance of Civic America.' *The American Prospect*, 24; Robert D. Putnam. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. NY: Simon and Schuster. More recent comparative research is presented in Susan Pharr and Robert Putnam. Eds. 2000. *Disaffected Democracies: What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries?* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press; Robert D. Putnam. Ed. 2002 *Democracies in Flux*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁸ Robert D. Putnam. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. NY: Simon and Schuster. P.19. Putnam also offers a related definition: "By 'social capital' I mean features of social life - networks, norms and trust - that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives." Robert D. Putnam. 1996. 'Who Killed Civic Life.' *The American Prospect*. P.56.

⁹ See Kenneth J. Arrow. 2000. 'Observations on social capital.' In *Social Capital: A Multifaceted Perspective*. Eds. Partha Dasgupta and Ismail Serageldin. The World Bank: Washington DC.

¹⁰ Robert Putnam. 1993. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. P.89-90.

¹¹ Susan Pharr and Robert Putnam. Eds. 2000. *Disaffected Democracies: What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries?* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

¹² Robert D. Putnam. 1993. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

¹³ For a discussion see Kenneth Newton and Pippa Norris. 2000. 'Confidence in Public Institutions: Faith, Culture or Performance?' In *Disaffected Democracies: What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries?* Eds. Susan Pharr and Robert Putnam. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press; Kenneth Newton. 2001. 'Trust, Social Capital, Civic Society, and Democracy.' *International Political Science Review* 22(2): 201-214.

¹⁴ Robert D. Putnam. 2000. Op Cit. p.246. Also Robert Putnam. 1995. 'Tuning In, Tuning Out: The Strange Disappearance of Social Capital in America.' *P.S: Political Science and Politics* XXVIII (4): 664-83; Pippa Norris. 1996 'Did Television Erode Social Capital? A Reply to Putnam' *PS: Political Science and Politics*. XXIX (3) September: 474-480.

¹⁵ Robert D. Putnam. Ed. 2002. *Democracies in Flux*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

¹⁶ Robert D. Putnam. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. NY: Simon and Schuster. Pp194-203

¹⁷ Ibid. p203.

¹⁸ Robert D. Putnam. 2002. 'Introduction.' In *The Dynamics of Social Capital*. Ed. Robert D. Putnam. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- ¹⁹ A. Portess and P. Landholt. 1996. 'The downside of social capital.' *The American Prospect* 26:18-21.
- ²⁰ See C. McCall and A. Williamson. 2001. 'Governance and democracy in Northern Ireland: The role of the voluntary and community sector after the agreement.' *Governance*. 14 (3): 363-383.
- ²¹ S.F. Mennino and A. Brayfield. 2002. 'Job-family trade-offs - The multidimensional effects of gender.' *Work and Occupations* 29 (2): 226-256.
- ²² Nancy Burns, Key Schlozman and Sidney Verba. 1997. 'The public consequences of private inequality: Family life and citizen participation.' *American Political Science Review* 91 (2): 373-389.
- ²³ Sidney Verba, Norman Nie and Jae-on Kim. 1978. *Participation and Political Equality: A Seven-Nation Comparison* New York: Cambridge University Press.
- ²⁴ Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- ²⁵ Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press; Samuel Barnes and Max Kaase. 1979. *Political Action: Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- ²⁶ Pippa Norris. Ed. *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Governance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- ²⁷ Steven J. Rosenstone and John Mark Hansen. 1995. *Mobilization, Participation and Democracy in America*. New York: Macmillan. See also C.A. Cassel. 1999. 'Voluntary associations, churches and social participation theories of turnout.' *Social Science Quarterly*. 80(3): 504-517.
- ²⁸ Sidney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry Brady. 1995. *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- ²⁹ See, for example, Frank R. Baumgartner and Jack L. Walker. 1988. 'Survey research and membership in voluntary associations.' *American Journal of Political Science*. 32(4): 908-28; Francis Fukuyama. 1995. *Trust: The Social Virtuous and the Creation of Prosperity*. New York: The Free Press.
- ³⁰ For a discussion of this distinction and a typology of associations see Mark E. Warren. 2001. *Democracy and Association*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- ³¹ Russell J. Dalton and Manfred Kuechler. Eds. 1990. *Challenging the Political Order: New Social and Political Movements in Western Democracies*. New York: Oxford University Press; Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, 1998. *Activists beyond Borders - Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press; J. Smith, C. Chatfield and R. Pagnucco. Eds. 1997. *Transnational social movements and global politics: Solidarity beyond the state*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press; H. Kriesi, D. D. Porta and Dieter Rucht. Eds. 1998. *Social Movements in a Globalizing World*. London: Macmillan.
- ³² Jonathan Baker. 1999. *Street Level Democracy: Political Settings at the Margins of Global Power*. Connecticut: Kumarian Press.
- ³³ Bob Edwards and Michael W. Foley. 1998. 'Civil society and social capital beyond Putnam.' *American Behavioral Scientist*. 42(1): 124-139.
- ³⁴ See also Kenneth Newton and Pippa Norris. 2000. 'Confidence in Public Institutions: Faith, Culture or Performance?' In *Disaffected Democracies: What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries?* Eds. Susan Pharr and Robert Putnam. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press; Kenneth Newton. 2001. 'Trust, Social Capital, Civic Society, and Democracy.' *International Political Science Review* 22(2): 201-214.
- ³⁵ See Kenneth Newton and Pippa Norris. 2000. 'Confidence in Public Institutions: Faith, Culture or Performance?' In *Disaffected Democracies: What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries?* Eds. Susan Pharr and Robert Putnam. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press; Kenneth Newton. 2001. 'Trust, Social Capital, Civic Society, and Democracy.' *International Political Science Review* 22(2): 201-214; Max Kaase. 1999. 'Interpersonal trust, political trust and non-institutionalized political participation in Western Europe.' *West European Politics*. 22(3):1-23. See also Jan van Deth 2000. 'Interesting but irrelevant: Social capital and the saliency of politics in Western Europe.' *European Journal of Political Research*. 37:115-147.
- ³⁶ Robert Putnam. 2000. *Op Cit*. p.27.

³⁷ See Carl Everett Ladd. 1996. 'The Date Just Don't Show Erosion of America's Social Capital.' *The Public Perspective* 7(4); Theda Skopol. 1996. 'Unravelling from Above.' *The American Prospect* 25: 20-25; Michael Schudson. 1996. 'What if civic life didn't die?' *The American Prospect* 25: 17-20.

³⁸ Thomas Rotolo. 1999. 'Trends in voluntary association participation.' *Nonprofit And Voluntary Sector Quarterly*. 28(2): 199-212.

³⁹ Pippa Norris. 2000. *A Virtuous Circle: Political Communications in Postindustrial Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 13; Pippa Norris. 2002. *Democratic Phoenix: Reinventing Political Activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 8.

⁴⁰ Theda Skopol and Morris P. Fiorina. Eds. 1999. *Civic Engagement in American Democracy*. Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press.

⁴¹ For comparative work see Jan Willem Van Deth. Ed. 1997. *Private Groups and Public Life: Social Participation, Voluntary Associations and Political Involvement in Representative Democracies*. London: Routledge; Jan Willem van Deth and F. Kreuter. 1998. 'Membership of Voluntary Associations.' In *Comparative Politics: The Problem of Equivalence*. Ed. Jan.W. van Deth, London: Routledge. Pp. 135-155; Jan van Deth 2000. 'Interesting but irrelevant: Social capital and the saliency of politics in Western Europe.' *European Journal of Political Research*. 37:115-147.

⁴² Kees Aarts. 1995. 'Intermediate organizations and interest representation.' In *Citizens and the State*, Ed. Hans-Dieter Klingemann and Dieter Fuchs. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁴³ Peter Hall. 2000. 'Social Capital in Britain'. In *The Dynamics of Social Capital*. Ed. Robert D. Putnam. Oxford: Oxford University Press; Peter Hall. 1999. 'Social Capital in Britain.' *British Journal of Political Science*. 29(3): 417-61. See also William L. Maloney, Graham Smith, and Gerry Stoker. 2000. 'Social Capital and Associational Life.' In *Social Capital: Critical Perspectives*. Eds. Stephen Baron, John Field, and Tom Schuller. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁴⁴ See Bo Rothstein. 2000. In *The Dynamics of Social Capital*. Ed. Robert D. Putnam. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁴⁵ Partha Dasgupta and Ismail Serageldin. Eds. 2000. *Social Capital: A Multifaceted Perspective*. The World Bank: Washington DC.

⁴⁶ See Pippa Norris. 2002. *Democratic Phoenix: Reinventing Political Activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁴⁷ For details of the classification see Appendix A in Pippa Norris. 2002. *Democratic Phoenix: Reinventing Political Activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁴⁸ Unfortunately the question to monitor belonging to voluntary associations used in different waves of the WVS survey were equivalent but not identical, and the wording varied as follows:

1980 WVS: "Please look carefully at the following list of voluntary organizations and activities and say which, if any, do you belong to?"

Early-1990 and 2001 WVS: "Please look carefully at the following list of voluntary organizations and activities and say... a) which, if any, do you belong to? b) Which, if any, are you currently doing unpaid voluntary work for?"

Mid-1990s WVS "Now I am going to read off a list of voluntary organizations; for each one, could you tell me whether you are an active member, an inactive member or not a member of that type of organization?"

The change in wording makes it difficult to compare *activism* among all waves, and the wording in 1995 may generate different response rates as well. I am grateful to Ron Inglehart for providing these details.

⁴⁹ Variations among different sectors, and the reason why people join, are discussed in detailed elsewhere See Pippa Norris. 2002. *Democratic Phoenix: Reinventing Political Activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁵⁰ Stephen Baron, John Field, and Tom Schuller. (Eds). 2000. *Social Capital: Critical Perspectives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. P.27.

⁵¹ Because this index is a conceptual measure based on theoretical considerations, factor analysis and reliability tests, which are often employed to test the consistency of scaled items, would be inappropriate techniques.

⁵² James E. Curtis, Edwards G. Grabb and Douglas E. Baer. 1992. 'Voluntary association membership in fifteen countries: A comparative analysis.' *American Sociological Review*. 57(2): 139-152.

⁵³ For a detailed study of Russia using alternative measures of social capital see Richard Rose. 2000. 'Uses of social capital in Russia: Modern, pre-modern, and anti-modern.' *Post-Soviet Affairs*. 16 (1): 33-57. See also Richard Rose, William Mishler, Christopher Haerpfer. 1997. 'Social capital in civic and stressful societies.' *Studies in Comparative International Development*. 32 (3): 85-111.

⁵⁴ For a discussion of the cases of China and Taiwan see T.J. Shi. 2001. 'Cultural values and political trust - A comparison of the People's Republic of China and Taiwan.' *Comparative Politics* 3(4): 401-412.

⁵⁵ F. Fukuyama 1992. *The End of History and the Last Man*. NY: Free Press. P.159.

⁵⁶ See Pippa Norris. 2002. *Democratic Phoenix: Reinventing Political Activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. See Chapter 8.

⁵⁷ The analysis is limited to the most recent (2001) wave of the WVS because the wording of the items of 'belonging' and 'activism' within civic associations changed over successive waves.