



The evolution of election campaigns: Eroding political engagement?

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Synopsis:

There is widespread agreement that the process of election campaigning, particularly the roles of parties and the news media, have been transformed during recent decades. Many are concerned that these developments have generated widespread apathy, or even alienation, from the traditional modes of electoral participation in representative democracies. This tendency is thought to be particularly pronounced among the young. To examine these issues, *Part I* sets out a theoretical model for understanding the evolution of modern campaigns. *Part II* considers why these developments may be expected to have produced an erosion of common forms of campaign activism. *Part III* describes the source of evidence used to analyze these issues, drawing upon the 15-nation European Social Survey, 2002 (ESS), and the methods of cohort analysis which are used here to examine campaign activism. *Part IV* compares cohort analysis of campaign activism, including through voting and party work, with cause activism. The conclusion considers the implications of these results, and suggests that experience of changes in election campaigns have not been associated with an erosion of civic engagement.

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Paper for the conference on *Political Communications in the 21st Century*, St Margaret's College, University of Otago, New Zealand, January 2004.

Conventional wisdom suggests that during the late-twentieth century, post-industrial societies experienced a tidal wave of citizen withdrawal from the traditional channels of political participation, as exemplified by widespread reports of sagging electoral turnout, rising anti-party sentiment, and the decay of civic organizations. Multiple developments in modern elections are often thought to have contributed towards this process, including changes in parties, the electorate, and the media. In particular, many observers highlight the professionalization of elections leading parties to rely upon consultants, market research specialists and paid workers rather than involving grassroots volunteers¹. An extensive literature has also documented the erosion of mass party membership and partisan dealignment weakening links between citizens and parties². And many studies have demonstrated the development of more autonomous mass media channels of communication replacing the partisan press³. Although there are different interpretations, the existence of these developments in campaigning is less in dispute than their impact upon citizens. Political disengagement is thought to affect all citizens but young people, in particular, are believed to be particularly disillusioned about modern election campaigns, leaving them either apathetic (at best) or alienated (at worst). Concern about these issues has often been expressed in the United States, especially in powerful accounts of the post-civic generation offered in studies of voter turnout by Warren Miller and J. Merrill Shanks and work on social capital by Robert Putnam, but similar worries resonate in many European democracies⁴.

But are these fears justified? To examine these issues, *Part I* of this study sets out the theoretical framework and identifies the key changes associated with the evolution of election campaigns. *Part II* considers why these developments may have generated important changes in common forms of campaign activism. We theorize that if any erosion in campaign activism has occurred this should be most clearly evident through cohort analysis in contrasts among the younger and older generations. *Part III* describes the source of evidence used to analyze campaign activism, drawing upon the 15-nation European Social Survey, 2002 (ESS), and considers the use and limitations of cohort analysis. *Part IV* employs this approach to examine campaign activism, including voting and party work, compared with cause activism. The conclusion considers the implications of these results.

I: Theories of the evolution of the modern campaign

One of the most common observations heard in popular commentary, and widely echoed in the political communications literature, suggests that in recent decades many established and newer democracies have experienced the ‘Americanization’ of election campaigns⁵. Perhaps the strongest argument along these lines has been presented by Swanson and Mancini who suggest that many practices, which have now become ubiquitous in United States elections, are ‘exported’ to countries as diverse as Israel, Russia and Mexico⁶. The authors stress four major features of these changes: the ‘*personalization*’ of politics as leaders and candidates rise in importance; the ‘*scientificization*’ of campaigning as technical experts like opinion pollsters come to take decisions formerly exercised by party officials; the *detachment of parties from citizens* as politicians come to be increasingly reliant upon opinion polls rather than direct contact with grassroots activists and voters; and the development of more *autonomous structures of communications*, as the modern news media are more determined to pursue their own interests rather than to serve the needs of politicians.

Yet instead of a specifically ‘American’ development, or alternatively the growth of ‘political marketing’, as Scammell and others suggest⁷, the interpretation offered in this paper seeks to understand changes in election campaigning as part of the modernization process rooted in technological and political developments common in many post-industrial societies⁸. In this perspective, three distinct stages can be identified in the evolution of election communications,

namely the shift from pre-modern to modern and then post-modern campaigns, which simultaneously transform campaign organizations, the news media, *and* the electorate, as illustrated in Table 1.

[Table 1 about here]

In this theoretical framework, *pre-modern* campaigns are understood to display three characteristics: the campaign organization is based upon direct forms of interpersonal communications between candidates and citizens at local level, with short-term, ad-hoc planning by the party leadership. In the news media, the partisan press acts as core intermediary between parties and the public. And the electorate is anchored by strong party loyalties. Typically in these campaigns local parties selected the candidates, rang the doorbells, posted the pamphlets, targeted the wards, planned the resources, and generally provided all the machinery linking voters and candidates. For citizens the model is one that is essentially *local-active*, meaning that most campaigning is concentrated within local communities, conducted through more demanding political activities like rallies, doorstep canvassing, and party meetings.

Modern campaigns are defined as those with a party organization coordinated more closely at central level by political leaders, advised by external professional consultants like opinion pollsters. In the news media, national television becomes the principal forum of campaign events, supplementing other media. And the electorate becomes increasingly decoupled from party and group loyalties. Politicians and professional advisors conduct polls, design advertisements, schedule the theme de jour, leadership tours, news conferences and photo opportunities, handle the press, and battle to dominate the nightly television news. For citizens, the typical experience of the election becomes more passive, in the sense that the main focus of the campaign is located within national television studios, so that most voters become more distant and disengaged spectators in the process.

Lastly *post-modern campaigns* are understood as those where the coterie of professional consultants on advertising, public opinion, marketing, and strategic news management become more co-equal actors with politicians, assuming a more influential role within government in a 'permanent' campaign, as well as coordinating local activity more tightly at the grassroots. The news media fragments into a more complex and incoherent environment of multiple channels, outlets, and levels. And the electorate becomes more dealigned in their voting choices. For some citizens, the election may represent a return to some of the forms of engagement found in the pre-modern stage, as the new channels of communication potentially allow greater interactivity between voters and politicians.

The essential features of this model can be expected to vary from one context to another. Rather than claiming that all campaigns are inevitably moving into the post-modern category, this view emphasizes that contests can continue to be arrayed from the pre-modern to the post-modern, due to the influence of a range of intermediary conditions such as the electoral system, campaign regulations, and organizational resources. And instead of a specifically American development, with practices like negative advertising, personalized politics, or high campaign expenditures which are subsequently exported to other countries, it seems more accurate to understand the changes in campaigning as part of the modernization process rooted in technological and political developments common to many post-industrial societies. We can describe the main elements in this theoretical framework and then compare cohort analysis with cross-national survey evidence to see whether any such changes have altered campaign activism.

The Pre-Modern Campaign

Pre-modern campaigning originated in 19th century democracies with the expansion of the franchise, and continued in recognizable form in most post-industrial societies until at least the 1950s, when the advent of televised campaigns and the publication of regular opinion polls started to transform the process. In general elections the pre-modern era was characterized by a campaign organization with the party leader at the apex, surrounded by a few close political advisers, running a relatively short, ad hoc national campaign. The base was a loose organizational network of party

volunteers dispersed in local areas. The party organization was predominately locally-oriented, involving politicians, party workers, and citizens in direct, face-to-face contact through activities like town-hall hustings, canvassing and branch party meetings. In mass-branch party organizations, members provided the unpaid labor, helping the local candidate, advised by the constituency party agent. Pre-modern campaigns relied heavily upon the partisan press as the main source of mediated information, either directly owned and subsidized by party organs, or independently owned and managed but providing sympathetic partisan-spin through editorial columns and political commentary. Newspapers were indirectly supplemented in the 1920s by radio and movies, important sources of news in the interwar period, and these media started to nationalize the campaign even prior to the age of television. The classic theories of voting behavior stressed the stability of the electorate during this era, anchored by social and party loyalties. Lipset and Rokkan emphasized that European parties were based on stable sectoral cleavages in the electorate, with the divisions of class, religion, and region providing the solid bedrocks of electoral support⁹. The earliest studies of campaign communications in America, by Lazarsfeld (1944) and colleagues, emphasized that the primary impact of elections was to reinforce partisan supporters, rather than to produce new converts¹⁰. Classic accounts of American electoral behavior, by V.O.Key (1964), and Campbell et al. (1960), argued that voters were guided by partisan identification, representing an enduring loyalty or 'standing decision' influencing voting decisions over successive contests¹¹. If voters were largely stable, the main function of party organization was to energize and mobilize their traditional base of electoral support.

Today direct forms of campaigning have often been supplemented, rather than replaced. The traditional campaign, built on personal networks of volunteers and face-to-face candidate-voter communications, continues to be common when mobilizing voters in no-frills contests for local, municipal, and state-level elected office, for minor parties without generous financial resources, as well as in countries like Britain and Canada where mass-branch party organizations maintain networks of active party members¹². Electoral systems with multimember seats where politicians compete with others within the same party often emphasize the importance of local campaigning to maintain support. This pattern is evident in Ireland under STV, as well as in Japan where politicians traditionally relied upon a local association, or *koenkai*, acting as an election machine to maintain contact with voters, when competing with others from within their party under the multimember Single Non-transferable Vote System that was used until 1994¹³.

Even in the United States, 'retail' politics continues in the snowy Iowa caucuses and in the New Hampshire primaries, in district and state caucuses, and in general elections, with candidates meeting activists in local living rooms and diners, and displays of yard signs and bumper stickers¹⁴. Huckfeldt and Sprague emphasize the political importance in presidential elections of local mobilization efforts, party canvassing and discussion networks within American communities¹⁵. Long-term trends in the proportion of Americans engaged in campaign activism show no consistent and substantial decline across most dimensions (other than the display of buttons and bumper stickers)¹⁶. There has been no fall in the proportion contacted by the major U.S. parties, either face-to-face or, more commonly today, by telephone; if anything recent indicators point towards more contacting activity: Pew post-election surveys suggest that about 38% of Americans were contacted over the phone during the 2000 campaign by candidates, parties or other groups urging them to vote in a particular way, including 53% of all voters in the key battleground states¹⁷. Nevertheless technological changes, notably the rise of television and of opinion polls, means that in post-industrial societies direct forms of campaigning often become ancillary to mediated channels of party-voter communication.

The Modern Campaign

The evolution of the modern campaign from the early 1950s to the mid-1980s was marked by several related developments in established democracies: the move from dispersed state and local party organizations to a nationally coordinated strategic campaign; from party officials and volunteers

contributing time and labor to paid professional consultants specializing in communications, marketing, polling, and campaign management; the shift from more partisan newspapers towards national television news; and the development of a more detached and instrumental electorate, less strongly anchored to party loyalties and social cleavages. The 'long campaign' in the year or so before polling day gradually became as important strategically as the short 'official' campaign.

In most postindustrial democracies, the critical shift towards the modern campaign developed with the rise of television, as well as the publication of regular opinion polling, during the 1950s. This process gradually shifted the primary location of political communications, from the print media towards broadcasting, particularly the mainstream national evening news on the major television channels. The printed press remains politically important, particularly in newspaper-centric systems, since the per capita circulation level of newspapers in OECD countries has remained stable¹⁸. Nevertheless many countries have experienced weakening press-party linkages, as newspapers have become increasingly politically independent, selecting news based on the commercial logic to maximize sales, as discussed earlier, rather than following the political logic of party support¹⁹.

In the Netherlands, for example, at least until the 1960s there were strong sectoral cleavages, producing 'polarization' as people within a community attended the same schools and churches, joined the same social clubs, sports clubs, and community associations, tended to vote for the same party, and therefore bought the party newspaper. The 'zuillen' or pillars were formed around Protestant, Catholic and labor mass movements, which mobilized politically in the early 20th century, at the same time as mass circulation newspapers developed in the Netherlands, creating stable cleavage sub-cultures. A limited number of papers reflected the Protestant, Catholic and Socialist pillars²⁰. The de-pillarization process started in the mid-1960s leading to the decline of the partisan press in the Netherlands. Other countries seem to have often followed a similar process, producing greater internal diversity within newspapers, such as more balanced pro-con op-ed columns, but thereby reducing the degree of external diversity available between different print media.

As with direct forms of personal communications, newspapers did not necessarily decline in importance as sources of political communications, but they became supplemented by television. The main effort of party campaign organizations, from the morning press conferences through the day's events, visits and photo opportunities to the evening rallies and speeches, became increasingly focused on achieving favorable coverage through the main evening news, current affairs programs, and leadership debates on television. The effort was exacerbated by the mainstream audience for these programs, given that until the early 1980s there were only two or three television stations broadcasting in most OECD countries, major news programs occurred at regular prime-time slots in the evening rather than on a 24-hour cyclical basis, and most countries offered no opportunities for paid political advertising on television. To a large extent, therefore, what was reported on the flagship news programs on Britain's BBC and ITN, on Sweden's SVT, or on Japan's NHK, to a largely captive electorate, *was* the heart of the modern election campaign, setting the agenda for the following morning's newspapers. The role of television news heightened the party leadership's control over the campaign, which became increasingly nationalized.

Many writers such as Swanson and Mancini suggest that the focus on television campaign has strengthened the spotlight on the party leadership, moving from cleavage-based and issue-based conflict towards a 'personalization' of politics²¹. Case studies suggest that this trend is particularly marked for presidential elections, such as those in Latin America, but it is also apparent in parliamentary elections as well. The shift in emphasis from newspapers to television has probably heightened the visibility of leaders, especially those like Tony Blair and Bill Clinton who seem most comfortable in this medium, although systematic evidence is unavailable to confirm whether this is a general trend in many democracies. Moreover, it is not clear whether the focus on leaders in campaign coverage has necessarily led to the increasing importance of party leaders in determining votes in parliamentary systems²².

In the modern campaign, following the rise of television, parties increasingly developed a

coordinated national and regional campaign with communications designed by specialists skilled in advertising, marketing, and polling. The adoption of these practices did not occur overnight; rather one study of European political marketing terms this process a 'shopping model', as parties grafted particular practical techniques which seemed useful or successful in other campaigns onto the existing machinery on a more ad hoc basis²³. Party adaptation was particularly evident following extended periods out of power. The move from amateur to professional campaigns was marked by more frequent use of specialist experts, PR consultants, and professional fund-raisers influencing decisions formerly made by candidates or party officials²⁴. Ever since the expansion of the franchise there have always been some 'professional' campaigners, in the form of full-time local agents or party managers, along with permanent staff like press officers at central headquarters. The new professionals, however, were essentially 'hired guns' external to the party organization, often working on campaigns in different countries, like advertising consultants at Saatchi and Saatchi. Increased use of paid consultants, public opinion polls, direct mail, and professional television broadcasts during the long campaign, led to rising costs and the shift from labor-intensive towards more capital-intensive campaigns.

The professionalization of the political consultancy industry has developed furthest in the United States, with demand fuelled largely by the traditional weakness of American party organizations, the rise of the candidate-centered campaign in the 1960s, the capital-intensive nature of advertising-driven campaigns, and the number and frequency of American primary and general elections. Outside of America, the rise of independent political consultants has been slower, mainly because parties have incorporated professionals within their ranks²⁵. Organizations like the International Association of Political Consultants (IAPC) and the World Association of Public Opinion Research, along with regional affiliates, bring together polling experts, advertising specialists, and campaign consultants.

The rise of the modern campaign was also related to major changes in the electorate. Many studies highlighted how dealignment has eroded traditional social cleavages and partisan loyalties, producing a more instrumental electorate supporting parties on a more contingent basis based on their policies and performance. The familiar cleavages of class and religion, which had long anchored the European electorate, proved weaker predictors of voting behavior in many countries as party competition over issues, images and leadership became increasingly important from the 1970s onwards²⁶. Earlier theories suggested that dealignment was largely a product of long-term socioeconomic secular trends gradually transforming the mass public, stressing rising levels of education, class mobility, and crosscutting cleavages like race and gender. In contrast more recent accounts have emphasized that parties have both contributed towards, and sought to benefit from, these changes in the electorate by developing 'bridging' or 'catch all' strategies, designed to attract voters from outside their core constituency²⁷. The modern campaign evolved into a familiar pattern from the early fifties until the mid-eighties, with similar, although not identical, changes becoming evident across many post-industrial societies.

The Post-Modern Campaign

Accounts commonly identify only two steps in this historical sequence, regarding the age of television as the culmination of the modernization process. But during the last decade there is evidence of the rise of the 'post-modern' campaign marked by several related developments: the fragmentation of television outlets, with the shift from national broadcasting towards more diverse news sources including satellite and cable stations, talk radio and 24-hour rolling news bulletins; the opportunities for newer forms of party-voter interaction facilitated by the rise of the Internet; and the attempt by parties to reassert control in a more complex, fragmented and rapidly changing news environment through strategic communications and media management during the permanent campaign, with the continuous feedback provided by polls, focus groups and electronic town meetings to inform routine decision-making, not just campaigns. This last stage of the modernization process remains under development, and it is more clearly evident in some societies than in others,

but it seems likely to represent the future direction of political campaigning in post-industrial societies. The concept of 'postmodernism' represents a complex phenomenon, open to multiple interpretations, yet it is usually understood to include the characteristics of greater cultural pluralism, social diversity and fragmentation of sources; increased challenges to traditional forms of hierarchical authority and external standards of rational knowledge; and a more inchoate and confused sense of identity. For these reasons, the term does seem to capture many of the developments that are currently transforming the process of campaigning, at least in postindustrial societies.

Two qualifications need to be made. First, the conceptualization refers to campaign not societal modernization. As Swanson and Mancini argue, many other factors may well be transforming society in general, like a greater differentiation of roles, rising educational levels and cognitive skills, and more complex social identities, but these factors remain well outside of the scope of this study²⁸. The focus here is restricted only to the developments within campaign communication. Moreover, many like Scammell have characterized recent changes as the rise of political marketing, placing primary emphasis on the strategic activities of parties, politicians, and campaign advisers in their attempt to maintain or expand their share of the electorate²⁹. The heart of the political marketing concept is a shift from sales of existing products (advertising party policies, leaders, and images) towards a focus that puts the 'customer' first, using research into voter's needs, wants and drives as revealed through polls, focus groups and similar techniques, and subsequently adopts strategies like developing a dependable reputation for reliable service delivery on key policy issues that aim to maximize votes. This approach does provide useful insights but in contrast the conceptualization of the post-modern campaign in this interpretation places greater emphasis on the way that technological and socio-economic developments have altered the context of campaign communications, like the rise of the Internet, to which all actors - parties, campaign professionals and journalists - have been forced to respond. After all polls were available for at least twenty years before they became widely used internally to shape party strategies. Even in recent campaigns, the use of systematic marketing to inform party policies has often proved limited. The post-modern conceptualization sees politicians as essentially lagging behind technological and economic changes, and running hard to stay in place by adopting the techniques of political marketing in the struggle to cope with a more complex communication environment, rather than driving these developments.

Instead of a linear development, the post-modern campaign symbolizes a return to some of the more localized and interactive forms of communication that were present in the pre-modern period. Digital technologies allow forms of political communication that can be located schematically somewhere between the local-activism of the pre-modern campaign and the national-passive forms of communication characteristic of the modern television campaign. The development of political discussion user-groups on the net, party intranets, interactive websites by government agencies, community associations, or transnational policy networks, and the use of email or list-serves to mobilize and organize, as well as the use of the web by 'traditional' news media, represents a mid-way point in the model. These formats continue to evolve, along with the political uses of the web, but parties, governments, and social movements have been rapidly adapting to the digital world.

II: The impact upon campaign activism

The interpretation developed here therefore suggests that the rise of post-modern campaigns has generated important changes in parties and the mass media in recent decades. But what impact has this process had on the electorate, particularly on levels of civic engagement? Many fear that modern and post-modern campaigns turn off citizens, reducing their role as party workers and depressing turnout, yet despite the popularity of this view there is perhaps surprisingly limited systematic comparative evidence confirming these concerns. As shown elsewhere, the aggregate evidence often suggests mixed trends in political activism in different countries and indicators³⁰. It remains difficult to establish systematic time-series evidence examining the effects of long-term changes in campaign activism in many countries; for example, the longest series of surveys is the

American NES which has monitored elections since 1952 and yet, contrary to popular assumptions, this series documents no consistent and steady erosion in most forms of campaign participation³¹. The interpretation offered here emphasizes important long-term developments in the shift from pre-modern to modern campaigns, yet the earliest national election surveys in most other established democracies only started to collect data about campaign participation in the late-1960s and early-1970s, well after the rise of the television campaign. Time-series data, providing systematic content analysis of campaign coverage in the news media gathered consistently over a series of elections, is even scarcer in most countries.

If the account of changes in the structure of election campaigns presented here is essentially accurate, however, the use of cohort analysis with contemporary cross-national surveys should reveal some of the contours of social change. We would expect to find considerable generational differences, in particular if developments in the party and news media campaigns have altered common forms of campaign activism in the public, such as party work and voting turnout³². This study therefore uses cohort analysis to examine the evidence concerning generational differences in campaign activism. For comparison, this type of activity is contrasted with what can be termed ‘cause-oriented forms of participation. Figure 1 presents the theoretical typology of changes in political activism, emphasizing changes in the common ‘*repertoires*’ of political action, meaning the ways that citizens choose to express themselves politically, and the *agencies*, representing the organizational structures through which people commonly mobilize for political expression. If campaign activism has altered in response to the rise of modern and post-modern elections, then we would expect to find distinct generational shifts, with younger people less engaged in campaigns than the older generation.

[Figure 1 about here]

Repertoires of political activism

The first dimension of change concerns the repertoires of activism. Much of the traditional literature on political participation focused upon forms of campaign activism. Verba and his colleagues distinguished among ‘modes’ of participation which differ systematically in their costs and benefits³³. *Voting*, for example, is one of the ubiquitous political activities through regular elections, yet one that exerts diffuse pressure over elected representatives and parties, with a broad outcome affecting all citizens. *Campaign work* for parties or candidates such as leafleting, attending local party meetings, and get-out-the-vote drives, also typically generates collective benefits, but requires greater initiative, time, and effort than casting a ballot. These activities focus upon how citizens can influence representative democracy, either directly (through voting) or indirectly (through parties and elected officials). Verba, Nie and Kim recognized this assumption when they defined political participation as “...those legal activities by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel and/or the actions they take.”³⁴

Campaign activism can be compared with other common types of civic engagement. The seminal literature used to distinguish between ‘conventional’ and ‘protest’ politics. The classic study of political action in the early 1970s by Barnes and Kasse, for example, conceptualized ‘protest’ as the willingness of citizens to engage dissent, including unofficial strikes, boycotts, petitions, the occupation of buildings, mass demonstrations, and even acts of political violence³⁵. Yet this way of thinking about activism seems dated today. Demonstrations, once regarded as radical, have also become mainstream and widespread today; for example, the 1999-2001 World Values Survey indicates that about 40% of the public have demonstrated in Sweden, Belgium, and the Netherlands³⁶.

Instead, today it seems clearer to compare *campaign* with *cause* activism. The latter focuses attention upon specific issues and policy concerns, exemplified by consumer politics (buying or boycotting certain products for political or ethical reasons), petitioning, demonstrations, and protests. The most distinctive aspect of cause activism is that these acts are most commonly used to pursue specific issues and policy concerns among diverse targets, both within and also well beyond the

electoral arena. By the last decade, collective action through demonstrations has become a generally accepted way to express political grievances, voice opposition, and challenge authorities.

An important characteristic of cause-oriented repertoires is that these have broadened towards engaging in 'consumer' and 'life-style' politics, where the precise dividing line between the 'social' and 'political' breaks down even further. Moreover, these acts are directed towards parliament and government, but also towards diverse organizations in the public, non-profit and private sectors³⁷. The targets are often major multinational corporations, as well as protest demonstrations directed against international agencies and intergovernmental organizations³⁸. The process of globalization is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, but one of the clearest political manifestations of this development is the declining autonomy of the nation-state, including the core executive, as power has shifted simultaneously towards intergovernmental organizations like the U.N. and WTO, and down towards regional and local assemblies³⁹. Moreover the 'shrinkage of the state' through initiatives such as privatization, marketization and de-regulation mean that decision-making has flowed away from public bodies and official government agencies that were directly accountable to elected representatives, dispersing to a complex variety of non-profit and private agencies operating at local, national and international levels⁴⁰. Due to these developments, it has become more difficult for citizens to use campaign activism as a way of influencing those in power, reinforcing the need for alternative repertoires for political expression and mobilization.

Agencies of political activism

The literature also suggests that a related type of change which has occurred concerns the 'agencies' use for political action, meaning the organizational structures through which people commonly mobilize for political expression.

Traditional agencies include 'mass-branch' political parties (which established a large-scale organization base), as well as churches affiliated to Christian Democratic parties, and trade unions and cooperative associations which mobilized the working class on the left, as well as other diverse interest groups and voluntary associations in civic society⁴¹. Characteristically voluntary associations with a large membership usually developed regularized, institutionalized, structured, and measurable activities: people signed up and paid up to become card-carrying members of the Norwegian trade unions, the German Social Democratic party, and the British Women's Institute. Traditional agencies, and mass-branch political parties, were characterized by Weberian bureaucratic organizations, with formal rules and regulations, fulltime paid officials, hierarchical mass-branch structures, and clear boundaries demarcating who did, and did not, belong⁴².

By contrast, modern agencies which evolved since the early-1960s are typified by the women's movement, the anti-globalization movement, anti-war coalitions, and the environmental movement, as well as diverse non-governmental organizations and multinational policy advocacy networks. Movements are usually characterized by more fluid boundaries, looser networked coalitions, and decentralized organizational structures. Their primary goals often focus upon achieving social change through direct action strategies and community-building, as well as by altering lifestyles and social identities, as much as through shaping formal policy-making processes and laws in government⁴³.

III: Evidence and methods for analyzing campaign activism

To examine the evidence, this study draws upon the European Social Survey (the ESS), a new academically-driven study designed to chart and explain the interaction between Europe's changing institutions and the attitudes, beliefs and behavior patterns of its diverse populations⁴⁴. We draw on the initial release of the first round of the European Social Survey, 2002, covering 15 nations in Europe. This includes seven nations in Northern Europe (Norway, Sweden, Finland, Britain, Ireland, the Netherlands, and Switzerland), four from Mediterranean Europe (Greece, Spain, Portugal, and Israel), and four from post-Communist Central Europe (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland,

and Slovenia). All these countries were classified using the Gastil Index by Freedom House in 2001-2 as fully 'free' in their political rights and civil liberties. Most can also be categorized as affluent post-industrial economies (with an average per capita GDP in 2002 ranging from \$16,000 (in Greece) to \$30,000 (in Norway) although all of the post-Communist states except Slovenia fall below this level. All but one (Israel) are member states of the Council of Europe, representing about one third of its total membership.

Cohort analysis:

If we assume that elections have evolved, along the lines we have suggested, generating significant erosion in campaign activism, then we would expect that cohort analysis would let us see whether there is good evidence supporting this proposition. Successive cohorts, growing up to experience either pre-modern, modern, or post-modern election campaigns during their formative political years, should differ in their enduring habits of civic engagement.

Yet before doing so we must recognize that any differences in political behavior associated with cohort of birth can be attributed to three distinct processes: a *generational effect* (due to long-term secular trends, such as long-term shifts in election campaigns, that distinguish successive cohorts, such as those who grew up with and without television coverage of politics during their early years), a *life-cycle effect* (commonly exemplified by the experience of entry into the workforce and settling down to start a family within a local community), and a *period effect* (the product of distinct historical events that leave a lasting impression, such as the radicalizing experience of the 1960s, the end of the Cold War, or the impact of 9/11). Each of these has different implications for understanding processes of social and political change⁴⁵.

Any assumption that any cohort differences can be interpreted as evidence of persistent *generational effects* is based on traditional theories of socialization. These suggest that habitual patterns of political behavior are generally acquired during an individual's formative years -- in the family, school, workplace, and local community -- and these habits gradually rigidify over time, creating persistent differences among successive generations. If election campaigns have evolved over time, and if people acquired patterns of activism in their youth which prove fairly stable during their lifetimes, then, compared with their parents and grandparent's, young people exposed to post-modern elections should display different patterns of activism which persist as they age. Certain broadly linear trends in political activism over successive age cohorts, for example steadily falling levels of party membership and voting, would be generally indicative of the generational interpretation.

Yet although socialization theory is widely accepted, it remains very difficult in practice to distinguish generational patterns from alternative interpretations. In particular, *life-cycle* effects are produced by the experience of changing individual circumstances. Patterns of campaign activism can be expected to alter as people leave home for educational and work-force opportunities, and then start their own family and settle down within a local community, as well as eventually entering retirement. Each successive state of life produces exposure to different networks and contexts, for example at college young people may well become involved in student politics, sports clubs, and university-based societies, before eventually joining trade unions, and professional associations once they enter the paid labor force, becoming engaged in parent-teacher associations or local community groups in early middle-age. In this regard, people's behavior is expected to change as they get older or pass through different stages of life, especially through educational experiences and labor force participation. Rather than displaying linear trends of activism among successive birth cohorts, instead life-cycle effects should be evident in a curvilinear pattern displayed across successive cohorts. For example, first-time voters may be unsure which party to support, but they may gradually acquire the habits of voting and a sense of party loyalties from participating over successive elections.

Lastly *period effects* can be attributed to a particular major historical event which had a decisive impact upon all citizens in a society at one point in time, exemplified by experience of the Great

Depression during the 1920s and 1930s, the end of the World War II, the 1960s student protests, or the dramatic transition to democracy in post-Communist Europe. These events may alter political activism in many different ways; most dramatically, the consolidation of democracy in Central Europe, the experience of free and air competitive elections, and the expansion of civil society, transformed the opportunities for political expression and mobilization in these nations. The end of the Cold War, and the redrawing of European boundaries, altered foreign and defense policy, which had been one of the most important cleavages traditionally dividing European parties of the left and right. Europeans have also experienced major structural changes in the working of their democracies through the impact of EU membership, which has constrained the autonomy of the nation-state and therefore reduced the importance of national parliamentary elections.

For all these reasons, before jumping to any conclusions about an inevitable decline in campaign activism among successive cohorts, any age-related differences need to be carefully interpreted. The implications for understanding cohort analysis of campaign activism depend to a considerable extent on which of these three accounts – generational, lifecycle or period effects - holds. Of course they may each hold but to a different extent with regard to alternative aspects of campaign activism.

The methodological challenge facing this study is to disentangle the separate components of social change⁴⁶. Ideally, we need longitudinal time-series data from panel surveys monitoring patterns of political activism among the same individuals as they gradually age. Unfortunately, as mentioned earlier, these are rare within single nations and simply unavailable cross-nationally. There are serious limits in monitoring change over time even with a succession of cross-sectional surveys. In the absence of such resources, here the 2002 European Social Survey is analyzed using two approaches. (i) First we compare regression models of linear age effects (implying secular trends that progress steadily from young people to the elderly) and also logged age effects (implying a curvilinear life-cycle pattern with activism peaking in middle-age) to explore which provides a better fit to the data. If we establish that linear models are stronger, they suggest (although they do not prove) substantial intergenerational differences in activism, indicating the direction in which prevailing trends are moving⁴⁷. We can assume that any such differences can be related, in large part, to the evolution of campaigns and the changing role of parties and the news media that we have described. In addition, (ii) we can also compare age-related patterns of campaign activism in many different European societies to see whether distinct historical experiences leave a different imprint. Many of the countries under comparison are long-established democracies, although Spain, Greece, and Portugal only became consolidated democracies during the 1970s, while the post-Communist states became consolidated during the 1990s. If the experience of electoral democracy during each cohort's formative years stamps a lasting impression on political attitudes and behavior, then we would expect to observe different patterns of campaign activism by age cohort in established and newer democracies.

Another major difficulty facing attempts to understanding cause activism is that these acts are often situational and episodic rather than generic. Participation is often triggered in reaction to specific events and particular circumstances, depending upon the structure of opportunities generated by specific issues⁴⁸. Reflecting these considerations, studies have often focused on 'protest potential', or the propensity to express dissent. Yet this can be problematic: surveys are usually stronger at tapping attitudes and values rather than actual behavior, and they are generally more reliable at reporting routine and repetitive actions ('how often do you attend church?') rather than occasional acts. Unfortunately, hypothetical questions ('might you ever demonstrate or join in boycotts?') may well prove a poor predictor of actual behavior. These items may prompt answers that are regarded as socially acceptable, or just tap a more general orientation towards the political system (such as approval of freedom of association or tolerance of dissent)⁴⁹. Given these limitations, this study focuses on political acts that people report they actually *have* done during the previous 12 months, taken as the most accurate and reliable indicator of behavior, and excludes acts that people say they *might* do, or protest potential.

IV: A generational erosion of campaign activism?

So are there generational differences in campaign activism evident by birth cohort, as expected due to the evolution of election campaigns? To start to compare the survey evidence, Figure 2 describes the average age of campaign activism, compared with cause activism, without any prior controls for background and attitudes, in the pooled sample across all 15 nations. The pattern confirms, as many observers have found, that all campaign activism attracted a slightly older profile; the average age of all survey respondents was 46, but the average age of those who reported voting was 50, while the average age of party members was 52. The results also show how all forms of cause activism attracted slightly younger citizens; for example, an average age of 40 for those who demonstrated or protested illegally during the previous year. Those engaging in consumer politics and petitioning were also slightly younger than average.

[Figure 2 about here]

Table 2 breaks down these indicators for younger citizens (aged 18-29), the middle-aged (30-59) and older citizens (60+), and also presents the results of the linear and logged age effect regression models. The results confirm that a significant age gap was apparent in all forms of campaign activism, including voting, contacting, donating money, party membership, and party work. The age gap was largest in terms of voting turnout: only half of all the younger people (under 30) reported having voted in an election during the previous 12-months, in sharp contrast to over three-quarters who reported casting a ballot among the middle aged and older groups. The age gap was also clearest in terms of party membership, where only 3% of younger citizens joined parties compared with 8% of the older group, and the gap was modest (although still statistically significant) across the other forms of citizen activity.

Yet the age gap was both substantively larger *and also reversed* for cause activism. Compared with the older group, young people were 8% more likely to have signed a petition, 7% more likely to have bought a product for political reasons, and 6% more likely to have demonstrated.

Regression models can be compared examining both linear age effects (implying secular generational trends) and logged age effects (implying a curvilinear life-cycle pattern) to see which provides a better fit to the data. As shown in the last columns in Table 2, there are often only modest differences, at best, between the linear and logged models. Nevertheless overall, the logged models prove slightly stronger for campaign-oriented activities, suggesting a life-cycle effect, especially in voting and contacting officials. And by contrast, where there are differences, the linear models prove marginally stronger for cause activism, suggesting a generational shift.

[Table 3 about here]

Yet these age-related differences could be due to many factors which distinguish younger and older people, whether in terms of their social backgrounds such as their education and cognitive skills, income and residency within a local community, and their political attitudes such as their political interest, trust, and efficacy. To examine these factors more systematically, Table 3 uses multivariate regression analysis to examine the role of age (in years) in explaining both campaign and cause activism after entering a comprehensive battery of controls. Model 1 first entered age alone. Model 2 added the standard social factors commonly found to influence activism, including gender, education, income, urbanization, and length of residency. Model 3 then entered the cultural variables associated with participation, including interest, discussion, left-right ideology, closeness to a party, satisfaction with the performance of the government and the workings of democracy, political and social trust, internal and external efficacy, and a sense of civic duty.

The results show that most of these indicators performed as expected; for example people who engaged in campaign activism were typically male, well-educated, more affluent, and urban residents, displaying greater than average interest in public affairs, with a partisan attachment, a

strong sense of internal efficacy and civic duty. Even after including all these controls, however, *age (in years) remained not only statistically significant but also one of the strongest predictors of campaign-activism.*

The pattern of cause activism also confirmed some similar patterns: those most likely to engage in this repertoire were also typically well-educated and more affluent than average, with a strong sense of internal efficacy. But there were other important contrasts, for example, women were more engaged than men, and patterns of residency were also reversed; people who had lived in their community for less time were more cause-oriented. Most importantly for the issue under analysis, *the age profile remained significant even after including the full battery of controls and it was consistently reversed, with younger people more likely to engage in cause-activism, not less.*

[Figure 3 about here]

But is this age difference due to a generational (linear) effect or a life-cycle (curvilinear) effect? And how does this vary by the type of society? Figure 3 presents some of the most persuasive evidence that different patterns are evident in both forms of activism, as already observed. *Campaign activism displays a curvilinear pattern in every type of society*, suggesting that the young are indeed least likely to engage through elections, (especially those aged 18-23), with participation rising then peaking in late middle age, with a subsequent decline among the elderly (especially those over 70). This pattern is clearly evident in post-Communist Europe which only experienced the transition and consolidation of democracy during the last decade, as well as in Mediterranean Europe which became democratic during the 1970s, and in Northern Europe and Scandinavia. The consistency of this curvilinear pattern across diverse types of society suggests that we should rule out the impact of a specific period effect from historical events, such as the era of the radical 1960s student protests in Western Europe, or the experience of the end of the Cold War in post-Communist Europe, which could be expected to have generated the strongest impact upon each particular region. Instead, this evidence strongly suggests that *campaign activism is the product of life-cycle effects*, with younger groups gradually becoming more engaged through elections and parties as they enter middle age and settle down within local communities. Figure 4 breaks this down further by each nation and the results confirm the curvilinear pattern in most (although not all) countries. The fact that the models regressing age on voting participation are stronger in the logged than the linear models also suggests that although there is a large age gap in turnout, nevertheless this can be attributed more to life-cycle patterns, so that the younger groups can be expected to gradually vote more often as they enter middle age. This pattern is consistent with the finding that overall aggregate levels of voting turnout have not declined consistently in established democracies during the post-war era; instead, there is a broadly stable pattern of voting during the last fifty years, with only modest erosion during the 1990s⁵⁰.

[Figures 4 and 5 about here]

Yet the profile of cause activism by birth cohort displays strikingly different patterns: while the older cohorts are least engaged through these means, there is a linear rise in cause activism until this peaks among the younger cohorts, and this rise is most marked in Scandinavia and, to a lesser extent, Northern Europe. Other types of society, particularly post-Communist Europe, display a flatter age distribution. What this suggests is that *younger people are more likely than their parents and grandparents to engage in cause activism.* A broadly linear pattern is found among successive cohorts in every type of European society, suggesting a persistent generational shift, with important implications for representative democracy. Figure 5 breaks this pattern down further by each nation and again this confirms the linear trend in many, although again not all, societies. The variations by nation require further scrutiny in future research, to see what contributes towards these patterns.

Lastly, some additional evidence for cultural attitudes towards the political system and civic activism in the pooled sample are examined in more detail in Table 3, including patterns of partisan attachment, interest in politics, satisfaction with democracy, civic duty, political and social trust, and efficacy. The results show that the age gap is particularly clear in party affiliations; only 41% of young

people (under thirty) feel close to any particular party, compared with two-thirds of the elderly. This helps to explain the fact that party membership is also far stronger among the older groups. The patterns also show that young people were less likely to express political interest and satisfaction with government, as many commentators have commonly reported. Yet at the same time, compared with older groups, young people have a stronger sense of efficacy, both external (meaning a feeling that government is responsive to their interests) and internal (meaning a sense that they can affect government and the policy process), as well as greater trust in multinational institutions. While some cultural attitudes therefore suggest that the younger generation is less engaged in politics, others point in the contrary direction.

[Table 3 and 4 about here]

Conclusions

Many observers have documented the evolution of electoral campaigns, including the significant changes in parties, the news media, and the electorate. Alternative interpretations of these developments are offered in the literature although there is considerable consensus about the main characteristics of these changes. There is far less agreement about their impact. Many fear that a result of these developments the public has become disengaged from election campaigns, reflecting, it is feared, a broader disenchantment and disconnect with political parties and the core institutions of representative democracy. Yet despite the popularity of this assumption, the evidence remains controversial. Analysts face many problems in examining the impact of these changes in campaigning upon participation, in the absence of a longitudinal time-series of cross-sectional or multi-wave panel surveys. Here we are limited to cohort analysis of a single cross-sectional survey, which makes it difficult to disentangle life-cycle, generational and period effects. Nevertheless, *although we cannot assert any strong causal relationships*, analysis of patterns of campaign activism broken down by birth cohort provides some indirect insights into this process. Based on the evidence examined in this study, the study arrives at two broad conclusions.

First, engagement in *campaign activism*, especially voting turnout and party membership, peaks among the middle-aged generation, as many others have reported. But rather than a decline among successive cohorts, the pattern is essentially curvilinear by cohort, *suggesting a life-cycle effect*. This pattern is replicated in each major type of society (including post-communist nations). According to this interpretation, both the oldest and the youngest cohorts are less likely to engage in campaigning than the middle-aged. This suggests, although it cannot prove, that the change from pre-modern to modern and then post-modern forms of election campaigns has not led towards a steady erosion of campaign participation among the electorate.

For comparison, at the same time younger cohorts are *more* likely than their parents and grandparents to engage in *cause activism*, contrary to the thesis of generic youth apathy. A broadly linear pattern is found among successive cohorts in every type of European society, suggesting a persistent generational shift, with important implications for future patterns of political participation.

Therefore, the analysis suggests that although the role of parties and the news media in election campaigns have been dramatically transformed during the last fifty years, patterns of campaign activism are curvilinear by birth cohort rather than demonstrating clear-cut secular linear erosion. The political energies among the younger generation in postindustrial societies have expanded through cause activism, rather than simply ebbed away. How far these patterns will persist in future decades is an issue raising important challenges for the future of representative democracies.

Table 1: Typology of the Evolution of Campaign Communications

	<i>Premodern</i>	<i>Modern</i>	<i>Post-Modern</i>
Predominant era	<i>Mid-19thC to 1950s</i>	<i>Early 1960s-late 1980s</i>	<i>1990s+</i>
<i>Campaign Organization</i>	Local and decentralized party volunteers	Nationally coordinated with greater professionalization	Nationally coordinated but decentralized operations
<i>Preparations</i>	Short-term, ad hoc	Long campaign	Permanent campaign
<i>Central coordination</i>	Party leaders	Central party headquarters, more specialist advisors	Special party campaign units and more professional consultants
<i>Feedback</i>	Local canvassing and party meetings	Occasional opinion polls	Regular opinion polls plus focus groups and interactive web sites
<i>Media</i>	Partisan press, local posters and pamphlets, radio broadcasts	Television broadcasts through main evening news, targeted direct mail	TV narrowcasting, direct and mediated websites, email, online discussion groups, Intranets
<i>Campaign events</i>	Local public meetings, whistle-stop leadership tours	News management, daily press conferences, controlled photo-ops	Extension of news management to routine politics and government
<i>Costs</i>	Low budget	Moderate	Higher costs for professional consultants
<i>Electorate</i>	Stable social and partisan alignments	Social and partisan dealignment	Social and partisan dealignment

Table 2: Campaign and cause activism by age group

	All	Younger (i) 18-29	Middle- Aged (ii) 30-59	Older (iii) 60+	Age Gap (i-iii)	Linear age effects		Logged age effects	
						R ²	Sig.	R ²	Sig.
Campaign activism						.048	***	.066	***
Voted	72	50	79	84	-34	.118	***	.162	***
Contacted a politician or official	16	12	19	14	-2	.001	***	.004	***
Donated money to political organization	8	7	9	8	-1	.001	***	.001	***
Party member	6	3	6	8	-4	.009	***	.009	***
Worked for a political party	5	4	5	5	-1	.001	***	.001	***
Cause activism						.004	***	.001	***
Bought products for political reasons	24	24	28	17	7	.002	***	.000	***
Signed a petition	22	23	24	15	8	.003	***	.001	***
Boycotted certain products	15	14	17	11	3	.000	***	.000	n/s
Lawfully demonstrated	6	9	6	3	6	.004	***	.004	***
Took part in illegal protest	0.9	1.4	0.8	0.6	0.8	.001	***	.001	***

Note: Q: "There are different ways of trying to improve things in [country] or help prevent things from going wrong. During the last 12 months, have you done any of the following?" % who have done these acts. Pooled sample (weighted by dweight). 15 nations N. 29,515. The strength and significance of the relationships between age (in years) and the indicators of activism are measured by the correlation coefficient R. N.18844. The use of a measure of logged age slightly strengthened the coefficient for some traditional repertoires where there was a curvilinear relationship. *** p.>.001 n/s Not significant

Source: The European Social Survey, 2002

Table 3: Models explaining activism

	Campaign activism					Cause activism				
	B	Std. Error	Beta	Sig.	Adj.R ²	B	Std. Error	Beta	Sig.	Adj.R ²
MODEL 1: AGE					.036					.006
(Constant)	.706					1.048				
Age (in years)	.011	.000	.189	.000		-.005	.000	-.075	.000	
MODEL 2: AGE+ SOCIAL STRUCTURE					.087					.124
(Constant)	-.104					.062				
Age (in years)	.011	.000	.203	.000		-.002	.001	-.026	.002	
Gender (Male)	.107	.014	.057	.000		-.145	.016	-.067	.000	
Highest level of education	.123	.005	.194	.000		.126	.006	.173	.000	
Income (12-cat)	.024	.003	.066	.000		.086	.003	.202	.000	
Urbanization	.049	.006	.062	.000		-.011	.007	-.012	n/s	
How long lived in this area	.002	.000	.036	.000		-.006	.001	-.098	.000	
MODEL 3: AGE+ SOCIAL STRUCTURE + CULTURE					.235					.218
(Constant)	.011					.829				
Age (in years)	.008	.000	.145	.000		-.001	.001	-.017	.042	
Structure										
Gender (Male)	-.005	.013	-.003	n/s		-.235	.015	-.108	.000	
Highest level of education	.059	.005	.092	.000		.056	.006	.077	.000	
Income (12-cat)	.007	.003	.019	.015		.060	.003	.143	.000	
Urbanization	.063	.006	.080	.000		-.009	.006	-.010	n/s	
How long lived in this area	.003	.000	.050	.000		-.004	.001	-.073	.000	
Cultural attitudes										
Interest in politics	.104	.010	.093	.000		.103	.012	.080	.000	
Discuss politics/current affairs	.029	.004	.059	.000		.062	.005	.111	.000	
Placement on left-right scale	-.001	.003	-.003	n/s		-.051	.003	-.103	.000	
Important in life: politics	.016	.003	.041	.000		-.013	.004	-.029	.001	
Feel closer to a particular party than all other parties	.244	.014	.128	.000		.145	.016	.066	.000	
How satisfied with the national government	.013	.004	.032	.000		.020	.004	.041	.000	
How satisfied with how democracy works in country	.001	.004	.003	n/s		.000	.004	.000	n/s	
Trust in the national government and politicians	.001	.002	.005	n/s		-.001	.002	-.004	n/s	
Trust in the EU and UN	-.007	.002	-.033	.000		-.016	.002	-.063	.000	
Social trust	.002	.001	.012	n/s		.021	.001	.116	.000	
Internal efficacy	.097	.004	.199	.000		.073	.005	.131	.000	
External efficacy	.022	.004	.044	.000		.036	.005	.062	.000	
Sense of civic duty	.010	.001	.091	.000		.002	.001	.014	.067	

Note: The models present the results of OLS regression models where the dependent variable is the campaign activism scale (5-items including voted, party member, party work, donated, contact) or the cause activism scale (summarizing 5 items including signed petition, bought, boycott, demonstrated, protested). The coefficients represent the unstandardized regression coefficients (B), the standard Error, the standardized regression coefficient (Beta) and the significance. n/s=Not significant. Pooled sample weighted by dweight. 15 nations. Models were tested with tolerance statistics for multi-collinearity. The positive age coefficient represents the greater propensity to engage in campaign activity by older groups. **Source:** The European Social Survey, 2002

Table 4: Age and political attitudes

	All	Younger	Middle aged	Older	Age Gap	Corr	Linear age effects		Logged age effects	
		18-29	30-59	60+		R	R ²	Sig	R ²	Sig
Feel closer to a particular party than all other parties	54	41	55	62	-21	-.166	.029	***	.030	***
Interest in politics (% 'very interested')	10	6	10	12	-6	-.083	.016	***	.020	***
Satisfied with the national government (5-10)	51	49	50	55	-6	.042	.002	***	.001	***
Important in life: politics (% 'impt' 5-10)	49	46	50	51	-5	.031	.004	***	.004	***
Satisfied with how democracy works in country(5-10)	69	68	68	70	-2	.000	.000	n/s	.000	n/s
Discuss politics/current affairs (% every day)	13	10	16	11	-1	.032	.000	n/s	.001	***
Trust in the national government/ politicians (mean)	10.2	10.2	10.3	10.2	0	-.009	.000	n/s	.000	n/s
Sense of civic duty (mean 60-pt scale)	41.2	40.1	41.2	42.1	-0.2	.081	.016	***	.014	***
Social trust (mean 30-pt scale)	15.2	15.0	15.3	15.5	-0.5	.026	.003	***	.002	***
Placement on left-right scale (% left 0-4)	31	32	32	29	+3	.032	.002	***	.002	***
External efficacy (mean 10-pt scale)	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.4	+0.3	-.053	.001	***	.000	***
Internal efficacy (mean 10-point scale)	5.3	5.4	5.4	4.8	+0.6	-.095	.003	***	.001	***
Trust in the EU and UN (mean 20-point scale)	10.1	10.6	10.1	9.9	+0.7	-.062	.005	***	.006	***

Note: The age effect estimates represent the results of individual-level regression analysis where age (in years) was regressed as a linear or logged variable on political attitudes, without any prior controls, using curvefit. The regression coefficients represent the amount of variance, and the significance of the relationship, explained by age. A positive correlation (R) represents greater support among older citizens and a negative coefficient represents greater support among younger citizens. The pooled sample in 15 nations was weighted by dweight.

Source: The European Social Survey, 2002

Figure 1: Typology of the evolution of political action

		REPERTOIRES	
		Campaign activism, including voting, party work and contact activity	Cause activism, including consumer politics, demonstrations and petitions
AGENCIES	Traditional voluntary associations, including churches, unions and political parties	Older generation	
	New social movements and advocacy networks, including environmental and humanitarian organizations		Younger generation

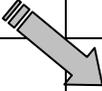
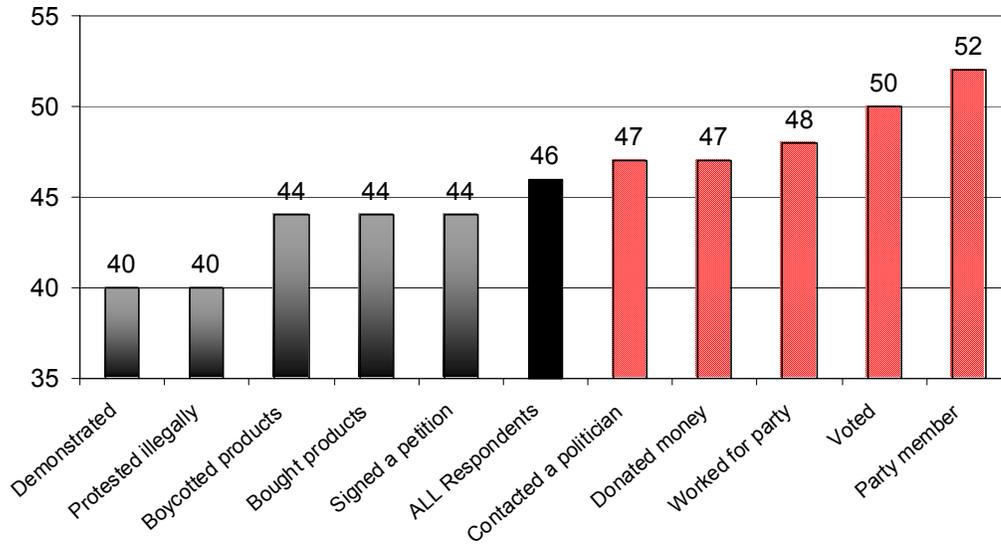


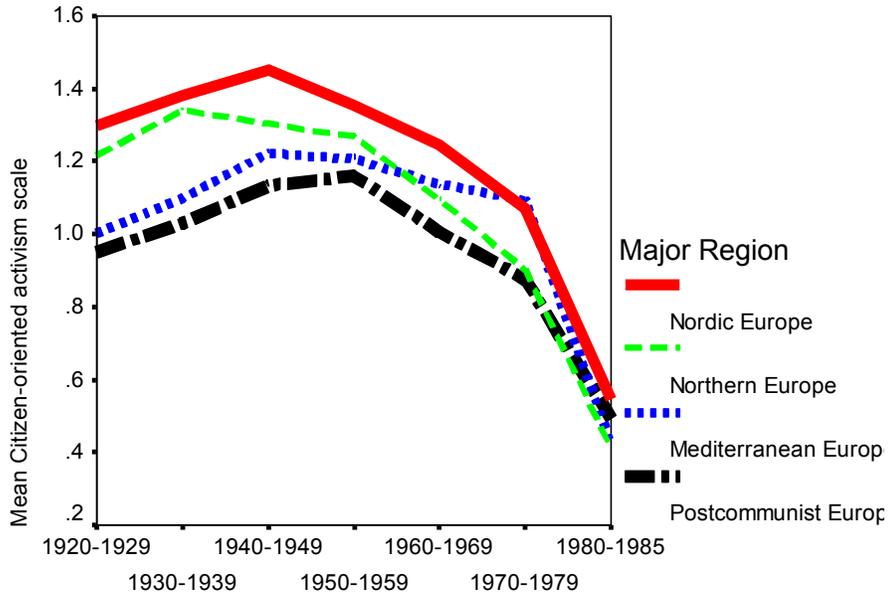
Figure 2: Mean age of activists



Note: Whether the respondent did these acts during the previous 12-months

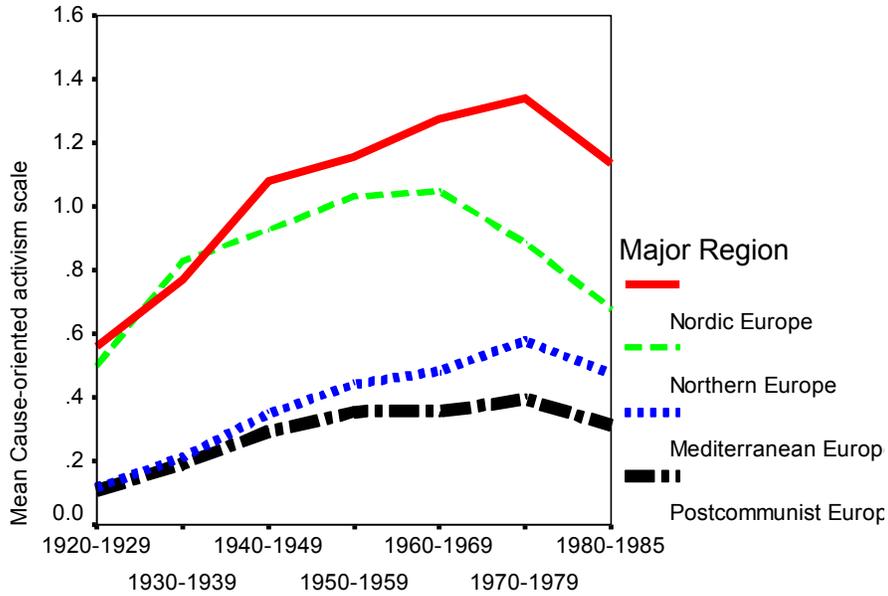
Source: The European Social Survey, 2002

Figure 3: Campaign and cause activism by cohort and region



Cohort

Cases weighted by DWEIGHT

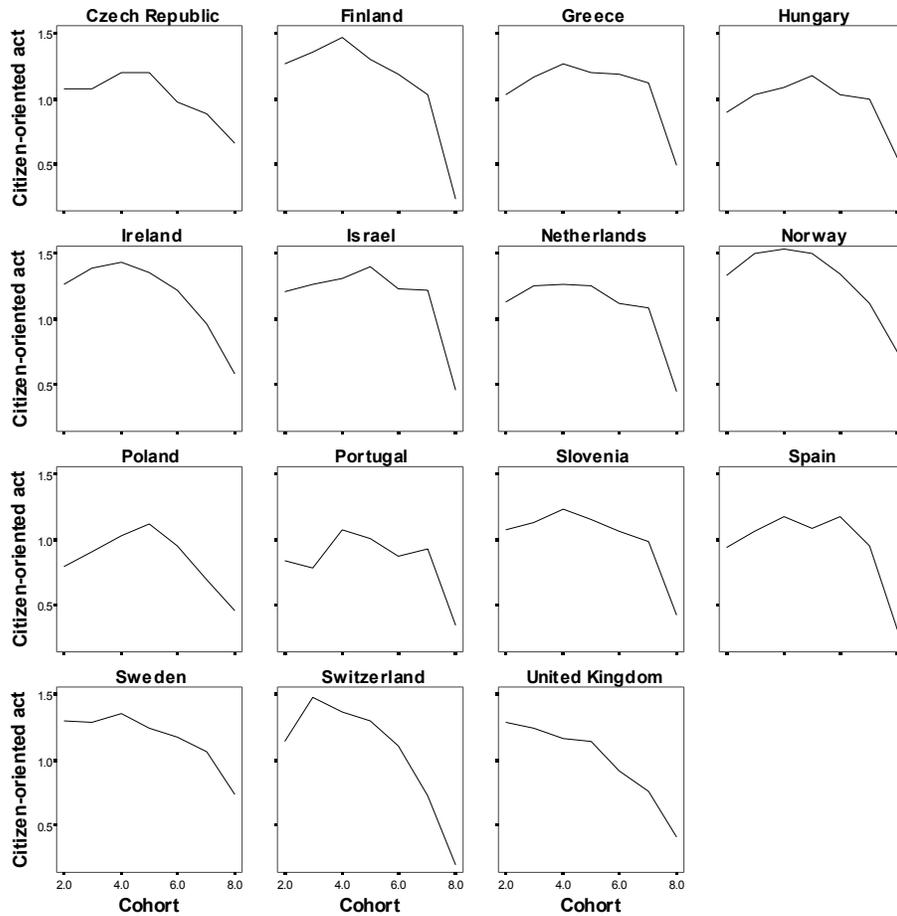


Cohort

Cases weighted by DWEIGHT

Source: The European Social Survey, 2002

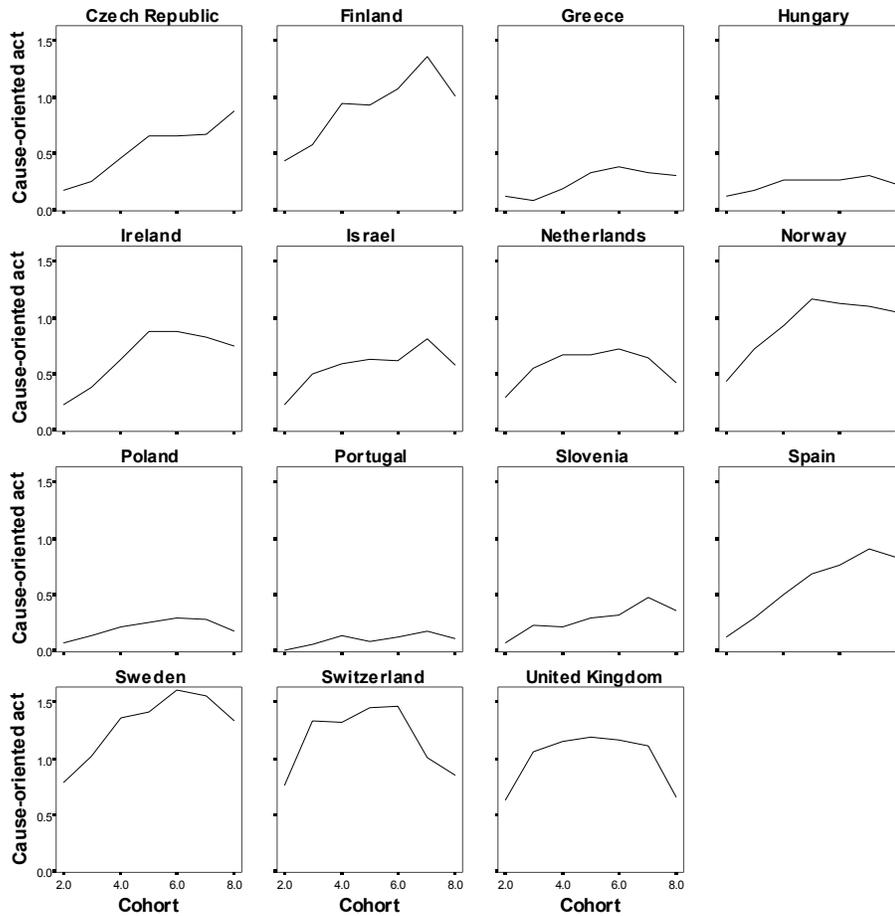
Figure 4: Cohort analysis of campaign activism



Note: The campaign activism scale summarizes whether the respondent did five acts during the previous 12-months: voted, party member, worked for party, donated money, contacted official. The cohorts in the pooled dataset were classified by decade of birth (2=1920-29; 3=1930-39; 4=1940-49; 5=1950-59; 6=1960-69; 7=1970-79; 8=1980-85). Weighted by dweight.

Source: The European Social Survey, 2002

Figure 5: Cohort analysis of cause activism



Note: The cause activism scale summarizes whether the respondent did five acts during the previous 12-months: signed petition, bought goods for political reasons, boycotted goods for political reasons, demonstrated legally, protested illegally. The cohorts in the pooled dataset were classified by decade of birth (2=1920-29; 3=1930-39; 4=1940-49; 5=1950-59; 6=1960-69; 7=1970-79; 8=1980-85). Weighted by dweight.

Source: The European Social Survey, 2002

¹ See, for example, Panebianco, Angelo. 1988. *Political Parties: Organization and Power*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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³ See, for example, Richard Gunther and Anthony Mughan. Eds. 2000. *Democracy and the Media: A Comparative Perspective*. NY: Cambridge University Press; Gianpietro Mazzoleni. 1987. 'Media Logic and Party Logic in Campaign Coverage: The Italian General Election of 1983.' *European Journal of Communication*. 2(1): 81-103.

⁴ The 'civic malaise' literature is too numerous to cite but a summary can be found in Pippa Norris. Ed. 1999. *Critical Citizens*. NY: Oxford University Press and Pippa Norris. 2002. *Democratic Phoenix*. NY: Cambridge University Press. For some of the most thorough examinations of generational patterns in the U.S. see Warren E. Miller and J. Merrill Shanks. 1996. *The New American Voter*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; Robert D. Putnam. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. NY: Simon and Schuster. For studies of generational patterns of turnout in other postindustrial societies, see Mark N. Franklin. 2004. *The Dynamics of Voter Turnout in Established Democracies since 1945*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

⁵ For the debate on 'Americanization' see Dennis Kavanagh. 1995. *Electioneering*. Oxford: Blackwell; Ralph Negrine and Stylianos Papathanassopoulos. 1996. 'The "Americanisation" of Political Communications: A Critique'. *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 1(2): 45-62; David Farrell. 1996. 'Campaign Strategies and Tactics.' In *Comparing Democracies: Elections and Voting in Global Perspective* edited by Lawrence LeDuc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; Margaret Scammell. 1997. 'The Wisdom of the War Room: U.S. Campaigning and Americanization.' *The Joan Shorenstein Center Research Paper R-17*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.

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⁷ Margaret Scammell. 2000. 'Political Marketing: Lessons for Political Science.' *Political Studies*; Bruce Newman. Ed. 1999. *Handbook of Political Marketing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

⁸ For more details, see Pippa Norris. 1999. *A Virtuous Circle*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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¹⁰ Lazarsfeld, Paul F., Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet. 1944. *The People's Choice: How the Voter Makes Up His Mind in a Presidential Campaign*. New York: Columbia University Press.

¹¹ Key, V.O. 1964. *Public Opinion and American Democracy*. NY: Knopf; Campbell, Angus, Philip Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes. 1960. *The American Voter*. New York: Wiley.

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