UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF SOCIAL, HUMAN AND MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES

Department of Social Statistics

Volunteering and political engagement: an empirical investigation

by

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ABSTRACT

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Victoria Helen Bolton

Falling levels of political enagagement have attracted attention from politicians, think tanks and researchers alike, and considerable column inches have been devoted to possible solutions. The purpose of this three paper thesis is to investigate and contribute to the empirical evidence for just one of these possible solutions: volunteering. There is a rich and varied literature on the contribution of volunteering and voluntary associations to civic life and in Chapter One this literature is given a novel classification, by causal mechanism.

Volunteering is often considered to be a formative experience, important in setting up a lifetime civic and political habit. Chapter Two (Paper One) uses longitudinal data from the 1958 British birth cohort study to assess whether volunteering as a young adult can promote political engagement in middle age. Data from the early waves of the study is used to account for potential confounders, particularly social class.

Volunteers are more likely to be engaged with politics than non-volunteers: but volunteers are also more likely to be well-educated people, with professional jobs who come from middle-class homes with parents who socialised them to engage in this way. Chapter Three (Paper Two) addresses the question of whether volunteering can be said to affect political engagement by using fixed effects modelling to account for these and other time-invariant effects. The data are drawn from the British Household Panel Survey, and enable an examination of relatively short term effects.

In Chapter Four (Paper Three), the structural equation modelling framework, and cross-sectional data from the Citizenship Survey, is used to analyse the role of trust as a mediator between volunteering and political engagement. Trust is a key component in the social capital literature. Finally, Chapter Five presents a summary of key findings, important limitations and suggestions for further work in this area.

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DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, Victoria Bolton, declare that this thesis entitled *Volunteering and political engagement: an empirical investigation* and the work presented in it are my own and have been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

I confirm that:

This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;

Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;

Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;

Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;

I have acknowledged all main sources of help;

Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;

None of this work has been published before submission.

Signed:

Date:

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The ideas explored here germinated during my time at Generations United (GU), a charity based in Washington, DC which improves the lives of children and older adults through intergenerational collaboration and promoting intergenerational thinking in public policy. I used to take my copy of Robert Putnam's Bowling Alone (2000) to meetings on Capitol Hill and used the evidence provided in Chapter Seven to try to convince Congressmen and staffers to fund intergenerational volunteering projects. Particular thanks are due to Jaia Lent, whose clear and compassionate thinking continues to drive GU's public policy work.

I don't think I would have finished this dissertation without the support of my PhD colleagues. I'm particularly grateful to Dr. Rich Penny (for services to cynicism), to Dr. Sarah Boak (for making me turn off the WiFi), to Anjelica Finnegan (for modelling resilience) and to Dr. Mike Elliott and Dr. James Robards (for handing me a grip when it was badly needed). An honourable mention also to Dr. Gill Norman (who seems to know just when an XKCD or PhD Comics cartoon is needed).

Thanks to Charlie and Zoe for all the hugs.

Finally, thanks Dave. Only you know the full cost of this project. I love you.

Definitions and Abbreviations

Add Health	National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health
CS	Citizenship Survey
BHPS	British Household Panel Survey
CELS	Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
ECHP	European Community Household Panel
HND	Higher National Diploma
GTQ	Generalised Trust Question
IVR	Institute for Volunteering Research
NCDS	National Child Development Study
NELS	National Educational Longitudinal Study
NHES	National Household Education Survey
OSM	Original Sample Member(s)
SES	Socio-Economic Status

Chapter 1: Introduction to the problem, literature and theoretical approach

1.1 Declining political engagement: a challenge to democracy

Concern has been growing, both in the UK and in other established democracies, about the health and wellbeing of the democratic system of government. Voter turnout in the UK has fallen from highs of 84% in 1950 to 65% at the General Election of 2010 (McGuinness, 2012) and 66% at the General Election of 2015 (Hawkins, Keen, & Nakatudde, 2015). The General Election of 2001 marked the lowest point, with turnout standing at just 59%, down from 71% at the previous General Election in 1997. Before the turn of century, voter-turnout, at least for General Elections, was not a significant item on the political science agenda. Peele (1995, p.274) attributed the UK's relatively high turnout to the system of quasi-automatic voter registration through local authorities, rather than relying on voluntary bodies or individuals. While the system of voter-registration remained largely unchanged, certainly until 2015, turnout has fallen.

Other indicators of democratic health were showing signs of a malaise before the record low turnout General Election of 2001. Turnout in local government elections has consistently been much lower than for General Elections. Respect for and trust in politicians has waned (Stoker 2006, p.34). Public perceptions of the effectiveness of national policy delivery have become less positive (Whiteley, 2012). Other types of formal electoral political engagement, such as party membership (Jochum, Brodie, Bhati, & Wilding, 2011), and support for political parties are also in decline (Whiteley, 2012).

This decline thesis has been challenged, notably by Stoker (2006), who uses a much broader definition of political activity, including protests, such as signing a petition, as well as other traditional political acts like writing to an elected official, and political consumerism, which is boycotting or purchasing particular goods for political, ethical or environmental reasons. Stoker estimates, using this broad definition, that at the beginning of the 21st Century eight out of ten UK citizens were participating in politics at some point during the course of a year. Voluntary work has also been embraced in this wider definition (Dalton, 2006).

While involvement in these wider forms of engagement remains strong, they are not a perfect substitute in a representative democracy for engagement in formal democratic processes. The legitimacy of a representative democracy rests, at least in part, on citizen participation; and not just on numbers participating, but also on the evenness of that participation (Lijphart, 1997). In the UK, not only is turnout falling, but it has long been heavily concentrated among older voters, the

middle class and better educated (Parry, Moyser, & Day, 1992). Political engagement in the broader, non-electoral sense is skewed in a similar way. Trust in politicians is positively related to both social class at birth and destination social class (Schoon, Cheng, Gale, Batty, & Deary, 2010). Consumer boycotts and contacting politicians are both activities which are practiced most frequently by people aged 40-60 (Quintelier, 2007): just like voting, these political activities are more common among mature adults than young ones. However, young people are much more likely to attend a demonstration (Martin, 2012, p.92).

1.2 Volunteering: a stepping stone for formal democratic engagement?

This dissertation addresses the relationship between participation in formal electoral politics and one other kind of civic participation: volunteering. (For a discussion of the theoretical basis for this link, see sections 1.4 and 1.5, below.) Volunteering may be defined as unpaid work for an organisation or association. Some definitions also include a clause about the nature of the work: for example, that the work should help other people or help a cause, such as 'the environment'. This definition is usually applied to what is called *formal* volunteering. In contrast, informal volunteering is unpaid work to help other people or a cause which takes place outside the auspices of a formal group or association.

Although the definition is relatively straightforward, it is a matter of judgement to decide whether a particular act can be called volunteering: the words "unpaid", "work" and "help" are the centres of disagreement. Volunteering should be unpaid but, in the literature, payment for work is contrasted to payment of expenses. However, there is no clear blue water here (Rochester, 2006): one man's reimbursement is another man's payment. A definition of work is somewhat beyond the scope of this dissertation, but it should be noted that the importance of 'work' in volunteering has been challenged, notably by Stebbins (1982), who introduced the concept of "serious leisure". Volunteering is usually seen through the lens of work, but most volunteering takes place in free, or leisure, time. Leisure activities are expected to have a cost, rather than attracting payment, and are chosen for their benefits to the participant, rather than for their benefits to others. Volunteers may shoulder costs in relation to their volunteer activities, for example the costs of travel or appropriate clothing. They also speak of the benefits to themselves of their volunteering, more than the benefits to others (Eliasoph, 1998; Harflett, 2015). Furthermore, people are more likely to be considered volunteers by observers if they incur a net cost by volunteering (Handy et al., 2000).

The third key area of disagreement is around helping. 'Helping others or a cause' is a description of the outputs of volunteering. Some volunteering acts and their outputs are easy to categorise as help for others or a cause: helping homeless people by serving at a soup kitchen, for example, or helping to improve the environment by cleaning litter from a beach. A marginal act in this context might be volunteering as social secretary to a private golf club: the 'cause' is essentially entertainment, the people who receive the help are 'in group', and the group is closed (Rochester,

2006). Nevertheless, the acts performed by the golf club social secretary are work-like, unpaid and benefit people other than the secretary herself: they fit better into volunteering than into work or leisure.

Finally, it is clear that a few acts could fall within the definition of volunteering and simultaneously within the definition of formal electoral politics. A woman who acts as treasurer for her local branch of the Labour Party is a volunteer, performing unpaid work as an activist, in service to a cause, but is also engaging in a political act in the formal electoral sphere. For the purposes of this dissertation, it is my intention to treat acts like these as political, in preference to treating them as volunteering, where it is possible to make such a distinction from the data.

It is worth noting here that, alongside volunteering, voluntary association membership is covered extensively in the social capital literature. Voluntary association membership is often considered a prerequisite for formal volunteering but membership does not lead ineluctably to volunteering. One might say that volunteers are the people who organise the meetings other members only attend (Musick & Wilson, 2008, p.271-275). Voluntary association membership is commonly used as a measure of social capital (Li, 2010; Van Deth, 2003), following Tocqueville (see section 1.3, below), but *volunteering* is of particular interest because it is considered to be an altruistic behaviour (Meijs et al., 2003), and therefore particularly relevant to studies of civil society and civic health (Putnam, 2000).

1.3 Volunteering and political engagement: evidence from the literature

As Hooghe (2003) points out, much of the early literature linking volunteering and political activity relies on macro-level correlations between voluntary associations and well-functioning democratic institutions. Tocqueville, writing in the mid 1800s, explicitly attributed the success of nascent American democracy to the strength of its associational life (Tocqueville, 2003). In American public life, he saw associations coalesce around issues which in England were the preserve of rich and aristocratic individuals or in France of the government (p.596). Where even small problems arose in the communities of the young United States, he observed that groups of concerned citizens would gather together and, rather than call for some other executive group to take action, would take action themselves (p. 220). He saw association-building as a skill which must be developed to protect civilisation (p.600) and made an explicit link between voluntary civil association and political association, expecting civil associations to pave the way for explicitly political ones, as people became used to working together in a common cause (p.604).[1] The macro-level correlations are treated as causal, increased levels of voluntary association activity being predictive of better quality democracy (Fukuyama, 1995; Putnam, 1993).

[1] Tocqueville also recognised the reciprocity in the relationship, although he did not attempt to explain the mechanism by which political association might influence civil association.

The relationship between participation in voluntary associations and political activity is also a positive one at the individual level. Individual-level literature in this area is based predominantly on evidence from the United States. In one of the earliest studies, Olsen (1972) performed regression analyses on data from the Indianapolis Area Project (1968, n=750) and concluded that participation in voluntary associations is positively correlated with voting turnout. The data suggest a cumulative effect: the more organisations of which a respondent was a member, the more likely he or she was to vote. Olsen goes on to make causal inference, based on the year in which respondents joined their voluntary associations: he argues that social participation tends to influence voting turnout. As he observes, however, there are a number of problems with this conclusion. First, the data are censored, in that it does not cover respondents' earliest voluntary or voting experiences. Second, the analysis only includes individuals who were association members: this introduces (more) bias. Although Olsen's causal inference is not secure, his conclusions are echoed elsewhere in the field.

Putnam's chapter on altruism, volunteering and philanthropy is an exemplar (Putnam, 2000). He presents evidence that volunteers are generally well-to-do, well-educated and well-connected, and contends that the skills and connections generated by volunteering lead to further voluntary activity. He shows, using evidence from the DDB Needham Lifestyle Survey Archive and Gallup polling, that volunteering has not undergone the same decline as other social capital generating activities: rather it has increased, especially among those born in the 1940s or earlier. (The literature concerning social capital is covered in more detail in sections 1.4 and 1.5, below.) The DDB evidence, covering the last 25 years of the twentieth century, also shows a positive correlation between volunteering and interest in politics and a negative correlation between volunteering and a belief that "honest men cannot get elected." This leads Putnam to his conclusion that "volunteering is part of the syndrome of good citizenship and political involvement, not an alternative to it."

One of the key dangers in drawing causal conclusions from this type of evidence is the likelihood of selection bias (D. Freedman, 1999). Indeed, the question of whether the apparent links between volunteering and political activity are primarily the result of selection, is raised repeatedly in the literature (Hooghe, 2003; Schmidt, Shumow, & Kackar, 2006; Theiss-Morse & Hibbing, 2005; Thomas & Mcfarland, 2010; van der Meer & van Ingen, 2009). Volunteering and political activity are both more common among those in professional or managerial occupations or with a higher education (Home Office, 2008). Furthermore, there may be said to be a participatory 'type': people with a preference for collective action, say, or with a strong sense of civic duty (Carlo, Okun, Knight, & de Guzman, 2005; Denny & Doyle, 2008; Gerber, Huber, Raso, & Ha, 2009). Individuals with a participatory preference would be more likely to both volunteer and be engaged in politics.

Longitudinal data in particular may be useful in accounting for selection effects (see Chapters 2 and 3). In a small scale study of an American high school which introduced compulsory community service, Metz and Youniss found that children who were enrolled in the program were more likely to respond positively to questions about future voting (Metz & Youniss, 2005). Those children classified as 'unlikely' volunteers were most likely to draw a civic benefit from their newly compulsory service. That is, the children in the study were divided into likely and unlikely volunteers, given their background characteristics. Unlikely volunteers were less likely to say that they would vote than likely volunteers. However, following assignment to a community service program, unlikely volunteers recorded a greater increase in stated intention to vote than likely volunteers. The authors use the finding to support community service programs as a way of reducing inequalities in political activity, and suggest that engaging in acts of service does positively influence individuals' political engagement. Their methods account for selection by comparing likely and unlikely volunteers, and suggest that service acts may have differential effects: effects which are somewhat hidden by selection effects for people who are predisposed to engage in volunteering and politics.

The effect is, it should be noted, purely attitudinal: participants were asked if they were likely to engage with politics, rather than if they had actually engaged. The researchers did not follow the children through to adulthood to discover whether the changes they observed held for adult political acts such as registering to vote and turning out to vote. Similarly, Niemi and Chapman used attitudinal, rather than activity-based, data from the National Household Education Survey (NHES) and found that that political interest was shaped by community service (Niemi & Chapman, 1998). They also used identical techniques to Metz and Younis in their effort to account for selection: that is, they made a distinction between voluntary and required service. Hart, Donnelly, Youniss, and Atkins (2007) used the National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS) data, and attempted to address selection effects in the same fashion: by comparing compulsory and voluntary community service. They found that required service predicts future civic knowledge and voting, while voluntary service predicts not only these acts, but also certain types of adult volunteering. One explanation for this discrepancy is that individuals who select in to volunteering in adolescence are displaying a preference for volunteering which continues into their adult lives. The beneficial effects of service on civic knowledge and voting, however, are available even to those who are coerced into the act rather than opting in to it. This is a useful technique for investigating whether performing service acts can contribute to political engagement. However, it does not speak directly to volunteering, because the voluntary aspect has been 'netted out' to account for selection.

Schmidt, Shumow and Kackar (2006) used the NHES and created an index of "civic efficacy" and one of civic knowledge, and used these as outcomes in regression models designed to test the effectiveness of voluntary and compulsory service of various types. They found that adolescents

who worked directly with individuals who needed their service had better civic outcomes than adolescents engaged in other kinds of service or none. Furthermore, they found no difference between voluntary and compulsory service in this regard. However, they acknowledge the weakness in their outcome variables, which have low internal consistency and may not be very good measures of 'civicness' overall.

Frisco et al. used the National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS) to link membership of voluntary associations in adolescence to voter registration and voting in very early adulthood (Frisco, Muller, & Dodson, 2004). As is common in this segment of the literature, the nature of the examined relationship is relatively short-term. Children were followed from adolescence (the US 8th grade, around age 13 or 14 in 1988) through to their first experience of voting in 1992 at age 18. They found that individuals who were members of some types of voluntary organisation were more likely to go on to vote. They also found that both membership and the civic outcomes of that membership are related to race and to socio-economic status (SES). The authors hypothesise that the cultural context in which the activity takes place has an effect on its outcome: this hypothesis would fit with a socialisation effect. They acknowledge, however, that their methods cannot address selection effects, and this is a crucial difficulty in addressing questions about activities with such a strong link to SES.

Smith (1999) used the earlier NELS data and structural equation modelling to show that adolescents who actively participated in voluntary and community activities were more likely to go on to become young adults who participate in those activities, as well as other explicitly political activities. She controlled for socio-economic status (SES), and for 'continuing to postsecondary education'. She found no effect of SES, but those people who continued in education received a greater civic 'boost' from their adolescent activities than those who left at the end of compulsory school. The author ascribed this difference to "greater cognitive abilities and a greater motivation for self-improvement, both of which may facilitate learning and thus the influence of these agents" (p.574). This ascription risks under-stating selection effects, however.

McFarland and Thomas used NELS and the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health) to investigate which extracurricular activities undertaken in adolescence might affect adult political participation (McFarland & Thomas, 2006). They collapseed the NELS data into two sets: 'during high school' and 'after high school' and used two waves of Add Health to achieve a similar effect. For each dataset, they constructed a political participation index as their outcome variable: it includes measures of voting, political memberships, campaigning and also volunteering. Using multilevel regression models to account for school-level differences, they found that engagement in politically relevant youth organisations of the kinds which might assist in the development of civic skills (that is, service, student council, drama, music and religious groups) had a modest, additive, positive effect on adult political participation. However, the use of volunteering both as part of the outcome and as a predictor assumes one of the relationships that

my study sets out to test: namely that volunteering is part of a syndrome of political involvement. The finding that 'volunteering predicts volunteering' is rather different from 'volunteering predicts wider civic engagement'.

All of this evidence – macro-level and individual-level, cross-section and longitudinal – points to a positive relationship between volunteering and later political involvement in the US. However, there are also dissenting voices. Torney-Purta and Amadeo's cross-national study found that volunteering was predictive of political knowledge *except for* in the United States. They used the IEA Civic Education Study to look at Chile, the Czech Republic, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Sweden and the United States. This longitudinal dataset also allowed them to conclude from regression analyses that volunteering in early adolescence is not associated with later voting in the US data.

It is clear that there are some significant cultural differences between democracies which might produce very different social capital outcomes. One motivator for this study is American exceptionalism. American voluntary and philanthropic activity looks quite different to that in the UK or in the rest of Europe, particularly with regard to activity initiated through churches (Curtis, Grabb, & Baer, 1992). Stolle and Hooghe (2005) answer some of this criticism by referring to a range of social capital measures, including trust, to show that there are clear parallels between the US and Europe when it comes to social capital formation and decline. However, they urge caution in drawing direct lessons from American literature for Europe because on key measures, particularly with regard to voluntary associations, European democracies have not seen the same levels of decline as the US. Indeed, levels of volunteering and voluntary association membership in the UK have remained notably stable (see section 1.6, below). This dissertation is an important addition to the literature because it uses UK datasets to investigate questions which have historically been answered using mainly US data.

The question of whether there is a relationship between volunteering and political activity in the UK has been much less frequently addressed. Using a study from three diverse UK secondary schools, Roker *et al* showed that involvement in voluntary activities improved the civic skills of youth aged 14 to 16 and helped them to crystallise their views on traditional party politics, making them more likely to say that they would vote in future (Roker, Player, & Coleman, 1999). Paul Whiteley has done extensive work on social capital in the UK (e.g. Whiteley 2005, 2012). However, his analysis of the effects of volunteering is indirect (Whiteley 2012, p.76). He showed that unpaid voluntary activities make a contribution to social capital by increasing generalised trust, and noted trust's "benign effects on society and politics," but he did not push the analysis to include any concomitant political activity or engagement.

There are fewer longitudinal datasets covering volunteering and political activity available in the UK than in the US. While the National Child Development Study (NCDS) *does* address

volunteering in three of its waves, the other British birth cohort studies do not. The Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study (CELS) includes questions on volunteering and political engagement, but the data are not widely available and attrition rates are high at the adult waves, even for a longitudinal study. Volunteering questions have also been asked in the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England, primarily in the later waves, but this survey collects very limited information on political activity. Similarly, the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing addresses voluntary work, but not political acts. The longitudinal datasets used here – NCDS and the British Household Panel Study (BHPS) – are the only available options. There is no published research on volunteering and political involvement using these datasets: this dissertation fills that gap in the literature.

1.4 Theoretical approaches

Much of the literature described above falls within the broad and contested field of social capital, and attempts to convey the importance of inter-personal and community relationships: an individual with high levels of social capital would meet and interact often with the people around her, building up higher levels of understanding and trust, which in turn would promote yet more participation. Social capital, like other capitals, is a resource which anticipates a market return. Advantaged members of a society accumulate it the way they accumulate other forms of capital: human, cultural and financial.

In some of the sociological literature, social capital is treated as a group asset, an aggregate form of capital which may be used or captured by individuals, but which is not a true property of individuals. Rather it is the production of group membership; a property of a network, more than of the individuals which compose the network (Lin, 2001). It works through information-sharing and influencing, but also through credentialing or signalling. Group members share information about jobs or opportunities; vouch for one-another; exert subtle (or unsubtle) pressure to keep jobs or opportunities in-group; and use group membership as a short-hand for the positive qualities they would like to see in themselves. Social capital has an important reinforcing role to play: membership in a group can reinforce the worth and status of the individual. Lin points out that this reinforcement of the worth of individuals is important to promoting their confidence, mental health and well-being (*ibid*, p.20).

Social capital in this sense is analysed at an aggregate or macro level. This is the theoretical approach taken by Coleman (1988), for example, and the analytic approach Putnam took in his early study of social capital in the Italian regions (1993). Beneath an aggregate level phenomenon, though, lies the behaviour of individuals, and social capital is also treated as a property of individuals. It may be used, as other forms of capital are used, to promote or protect the interests of 'insiders', the family or close confidants. Bourdieu described social capital as exclusionary; a form of capital similar to the others, which can be used to reinforce class boundaries (Bourdieu, 1986).

Dense or closed groups allow social capital to be accumulated and maintained (Li, 2015). Accounts which take this kind of instrumental approach to social capital may focus on its role in job searches, career trajectory or pay. Granovetter's (1973) paper, for example distinguishes between strong and weak ties in social networks, ascribing different outcomes to different to different types of social relationship. Weak ties (perhaps acquaintanceship, more than friendship) are important for information sharing about opportunities outside of one's own immediate circle, while strong ones offer more in terms of credentialing, and therefore better direct access to 'local' opportunities. This corresponds somewhat to 'bonding' and 'bridging' social capital (see below).

This thesis, on the other hand, takes a neo-Tocquevillian or civic approach to social capital (see also section 1.3, above). This is the approach taken by Putnam (2000) who explains the role of social capital in terms of norms and networks (1993, p.167). His conception of social capital relies heavily on trust as a mediator in the relationship between social networks and norms. There are different types of trust. Thick, or in-group, trust relates to the trust between people who know one another. Thin, or generalised social trust refers to the trust between people who do not know each other, the trust that the people we pass on the street mean us no harm. Repeated interaction can build trust and set up a norm of generalised reciprocity. When people trust one another it is easier to work together: participants believe that they will see their efforts reflected in the efforts of others. Trust, built up through repeated social interaction, is part of a virtuous circle: trusting individuals are more likely to volunteer; volunteers have a pattern of repeated social interaction; repeated social interactions build generalised trust in others; trusting individuals are more likely to volunteer.

In the social capital literature, volunteering has often been treated as a special activity, more worthy of interest than other forms of social participation, perhaps because of the (presumed) altruistic element of the act (D. H. Smith, 2013). Although Putnam recommends that "doing with" should be of more interest to a student of social capital theory than "doing for" (2000, p.117) he devotes an entire chapter to volunteering and philanthropy (2000, Ch. 7). The 'social capital' defence for this approach lies, in part, in the possibility that voluntary and philanthropic acts will be reciprocated. This is Putnam's "norm of generalised reciprocity," rather than a direct return of favours *per se.* The role of trust should therefore be particularly relevant in a study of volunteering.

Volunteering might also offer some particular benefits in terms of 'bridging', as opposed to 'bonding' social capital (Stoker 2006, p.194). While bonding social capital brings like-minded people together, bridging social capital builds bridges between heterogeneous individuals and groups. To use an extreme example (Putnam, 2000), membership of the Ku Klux Klan might bring people into more frequent contact with their neighbours but still be a bad thing for democracy. Armony (2004) provides the example of Weimar Germany, which had a rich associational life, but no future as a democracy. Wollebaek and Stromsnes have examined the role played by a single intensive membership, compared to that played by a range of memberships (2007). They found

that intense involvement in one organization has no effect on either trust or civic engagement, unlike membership of a range of associations. Stolle has found that voluntary associations with weak ties and a more diverse membership accommodate more trusting members (1998). These are both evidence for the importance of 'bridging' over 'bonding' in social capital formation.

The theoretical approaches in this area may be described in terms of the mechanism they advance to describe the core relationship between volunteering and political engagement (this approach is expanded upon in section 3.2). In the social capital literature, there is an emphasis on trust as a mediator between volunteering and political engagement, but there are other literatures and approaches available. The political science literature, for example, offers increasing civic skills as an important mediator (Verba, Brady, & Schlozman, 1995). Some associations or groups offer participants the opportunity to learn and practice key civic skills, such as public speaking, chairing, or organising meetings, as well as other relevant personal skills such as assertiveness or negotiation (Maloney, van Deth, & Roßteutscher, 2008). In this regard, not all organisations are created equal: sports clubs are less likely to offer opportunities for public speaking than churches, for example. There is a related link through knowledge (Knoke, 1990). A volunteer might increase her knowledge of a social problem through her unpaid work, and then be moved to act politically to solve that problem. An emphasis on the role of skills and knowledge as mediators has been called the resource model (Brady, Verba, & Schlozman, 1995).

Finally, socialisation can be a mediator between volunteering and political engagement. Socialisation refers to the process by which individuals acquire civic and political norms and values (Marc Hooghe, 2004). Like trust, it is present in the social capital literature (van der Meer & van Ingen, 2009). In general, volunteers are more politically active than others, so a pool of volunteers presents a positive civic example of engagement to new joiners. Individuals who move in circles which encourage (or at least condone) political engagement will receive more positive peer group pressure to engage themselves. Socialisation can take place within the family, school or community, but also through voluntary groups, and these participatory norms can be reinforced through social pressure (Funk, 2010).

This novel approach to the literature, dividing it by mechanism, ensures a focus on causal claims, which is crucial in this dissertation. An increases in any of these mediators – trust, skills and knowledge, or socialisation – would decrease the 'cost' of social, civic or political participation, making it more likely that individuals with high levels of social capital would get involved in, say, a new community project (Denny & Doyle, 2008). This 'cost of engagement' or rational choice approach is particularly useful when considering the role of social class or status in mediating the effects of volunteering on political engagement. Those who have a dominant status in society, through high income or higher education, for example, are more likely to have the economic, social and cultural resources needed to be a volunteer (Hustinx, Cnaan, & Handy, 2010; D. H. Smith, 1994), as well as the resources required for political engagement (see the resource model, above).

As with Bourdieu's approach to social capital (1986) this underscores the tendency of capitals to be accumulated: social capital or social resources are distributed unequally in a pattern that mimics other more traditional forms of capital. As Li, Savage and Pickles show (2003), voluntary associations have become increasingly middle class in membership. Those with dominant status are likely to have their pro-civic norms reinforced through socialisation in their early attempts at civic engagement.

1.5 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework for this dissertation rests on the idea that the relationship between volunteering and political engagement, whilst complex and reciprocal, is essentially a causal one. Causal interpretations are difficult to make from observational evidence, but can be justified where the time-order of events can be securely identified, where there is a clear mechanism at work and where all confounders or alternative explanations have been identified (Ní Bhrolcháin & Dyson, 2007).

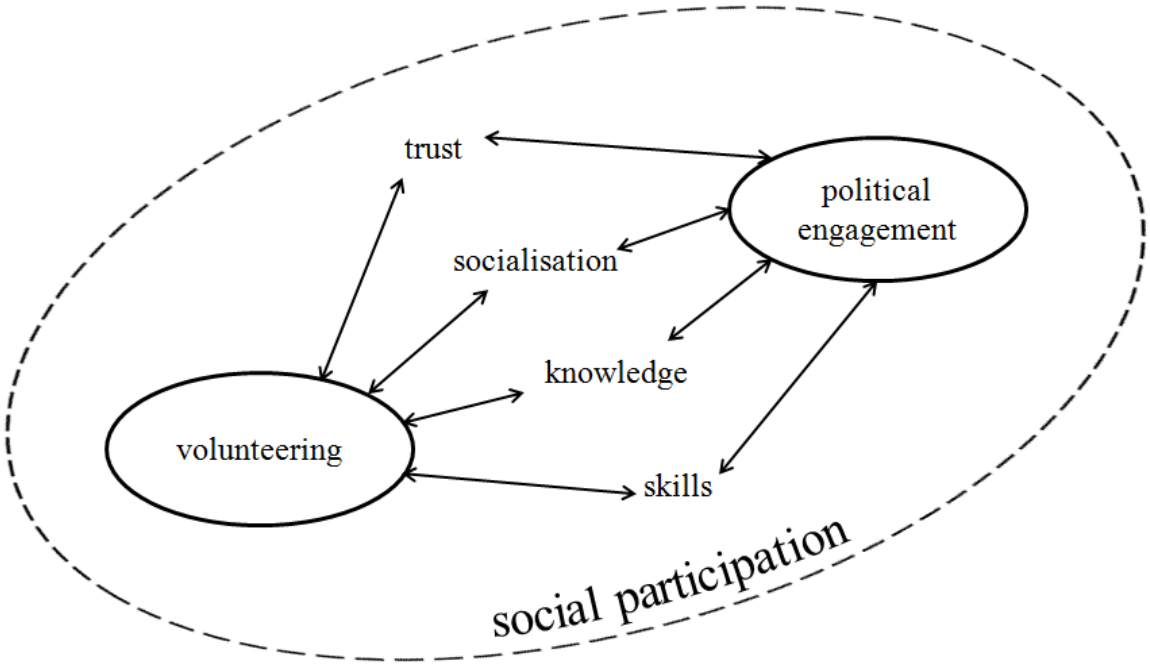
Putnam asserts that "volunteering is part of the syndrome of good citizenship and political involvement" (2000, p.132). The relationship between volunteering and political involvement implied by Putnam's "coherent" (p.137) syndrome is the basis for the conceptual framework of this dissertation. He makes no clear causal claim for his syndrome, but writes in his concluding chapter that restored electoral turnout should be an ultimate goal, and that "organised altruism" would be one of the tools which could be used to reach it (2000, p.404). This strongly hints[2] at a causal belief: that an increase in organised altruism (otherwise known as volunteering and philanthropy) will increase political engagement.

I focus here on volunteering, as opposed to voluntary association membership. Activity-type is important, both theoretically and empirically (see section 1.4, above). Volunteering is a defined activity which may offer better opportunities for face-to-face contact (especially with people different from oneself), skills development and knowledge acquisition than simple membership. Volunteering also exemplifies Putnam's "norm of generalised reciprocity," a key social capital concept.

The conceptual framework on which this dissertation is based is illustrated in Figure 1.1.

[2] Or, in the words of xkcd artist Randall Monroe: "Correlation doesn't imply causation, but it does waggle its eyebrows suggestively and gesture furtively while mouthing 'look over there'" (http://xkcd.com/552/)

Figure 1.1: The syndrome of good citizenship



Within the 'universe' of social participation, represented by the dotted ellipse, volunteering and political engagement are linked through the mediation of trust, skills, socialisation and knowledge. Each of the mediators could equally reinforce a virtuous circle of volunteering. The whole could be described as a plan for the generation of social capital: any social participation, but in this case volunteering, could increase an individual's trust, skills, knowledge, or pro-social socialisation resulting in further positive social engagement. That positive social engagement is predicted to include political engagement. Volunteering is a particularly interesting kind of social participation because of its role in creating and sustaining Putnam's norm of generalised reciprocity.

In this study I take a critical approach to Putnam's social capital model in addressing the question of whether there is a relationship between volunteering and political activity. I use aspects of Verba, Schlozman and Brady's resource model to explain how social and economic resources can reduce the costs of engagement, both in voluntary work and in politics. In using volunteering, rather than voluntary association membership, I place emphasis on the importance of face-to-face contacts in developing these resources, socialising new joiners and growing the generalised trust which is so central in the social capital literature.

My research questions are discussed in detail in section 1.8, below.

1.6 Measurement

Measurement will be addressed separately for the data used in each of the three papers which make up this dissertation. However, there are some over-arching concerns which are discussed here.

In these papers, I concentrate on the act of volunteering, separate from but often linked to voluntary association membership (Musick and Wilson, 2008). Volunteering is usually measured by survey instruments as "unpaid help" to a formal group, club or organisation. The unpaid help formulation was used in the Citizenship Survey (Home Office 2001-2011), the Helping Out survey (DCLG, NatCen, and IVR 2007) and Understanding Society (ISER 2009). Other surveys ask about "voluntary work" and make more or less effort to define it. The National Child Development Study birth cohort were given no definition when answering a question on voluntary work in 1974 while respondents to the Scottish Household Survey Culture and Sport Questionnaire 2007 were given the definition, "Voluntary work is where people help clubs, charities, campaigns or organisations in an unpaid capacity". Sometimes, respondents are given a list of fields of endeavour within which to situate their volunteering; elsewhere, they are given a list of activity types. Surveys also differ in their approach to formal and informal volunteering. Formal volunteering is generally defined as unpaid work to help others (although not family members) which is provided through a group, association or club. Informal volunteering, on the other hand, is generally carried out on an individual basis.

Different question formulations produce quite different answers and different levels of volunteering are reported in general and specialised surveys (Staetsky & Mohan, 2011). Staetsky and Mohan (p.17) found a 'high' rate of nearly 59% of respondents currently volunteering using the National Survey of Volunteering and a 'low' rate of around 23% doing unpaid voluntary work (with an inclusive definition) in the BHPS. The General Household Survey, meanwhile, reports the rate of giving unpaid help to a group or organisation at 36%.

It is important to note the role of early socialisation, class and education in predicting whether or not an individual will become a volunteer. Formal volunteering is more common among the well-educated, well-off and well-placed. According to the Citizenship Survey (Drever, 2010) those in managerial and professional occupations were most likely to volunteer (55%). By way of comparison, only 28% of those in routine occupations were volunteers. Volunteering, like voting, seems to be a civic habit, a behaviour made more likely by practice (McFarland and Thomas 2006; Putnam 2000, p.122).

1.7 Policy context

The concept and theories of social capital, and in particular the work of Robert Putnam, have been extremely influential in policy-making, both in the US and the UK. Putnam has met with US

Presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama, and his language has become part of American political discourse. In the UK, David Halpern, as well as being the academic author of 'Social Capital' (2004), is director of the UK government Behavioural Insights Team, also known as the Nudge Unit. Some of his ideas underlie Prime Minister David Cameron's Big Society messages. This general acceptance of Putnam's language and theories underlines the importance of research in this area.

In a social capital model, volunteers are likely to be more closely engaged with their communities, both civically and politically. They are more likely to know their neighbours and to spend time interacting with other people face-to-face at clubs and meetings. They are more likely to vote and more likely to campaign for a politician. Following from this theoretical approach, and from the political interventions of academics like Robert Putnam and David Halpern, there is a political expectation that volunteering or community action can be used as a policy lever to promote civic or 'pro-social' behaviours, particularly among the young. If politicians accept as axiomatic the theory that volunteering has positive civic and political outcomes, it is important to investigate the empirical evidence for that theory.

The emphasis of the policies differs between competing political ideologies (Mycock & Tonge, 2011) but politicians from across the political spectrum have used Putnam's language to back their positions (Ellaway, 2004). New Labour, for example, was explicitly civic in nature, linking volunteering to electoral involvement. David Blunkett, as Secretary of State for Education and Employment, told the National Council for Voluntary Organisations conference in 2001: "Voluntary activity is the cornerstone of any civilised society. It is the glue that binds people together and fosters a sense of common purpose. It is an essential building block in our work to create a more inclusive society. It contains the principles of commitment and engagement that are the foundations of democracy" (quoted in Nash 2002). This quote could easily have found a place in Putnam's (2000) concluding chapter. In a similar vein, Prime Minister Tony Blair described the Millennium Volunteering youth volunteering project as an element of "civic patriotism" ("Blair volunteers for community work," 2000).

The advent of the Coalition government brought a renewed emphasis on volunteering and social responsibility. The Coalition agreement included the pledge: "We will take action to support and encourage social responsibility, volunteering and philanthropy, and make it easier for people to come together to improve their communities and help one another." The Giving Green Paper published shortly thereafter (HM Government 2010, p.6) conjured up a world where individuals and communities "are empowered to act together". Empowerment and acting together are both Putnam forms of social capital, and volunteering slots neatly into the model. The follow-up Giving White Paper (HM Government, 2011) echoes even more explicitly the vocabulary and approach of social capital theory: "Volunteers work tirelessly to help others and make our communities

stronger; givers know the pleasure of making a difference. Our society is strengthened by the relationships and trust that are built."

Policies have been developed with the aim of increasing volunteering and participation and thereby promoting civic and pro-social values. The National Citizen Service (NCS), a volunteering and community partnership scheme for 16 and 17 year olds, is a case in point. Launching the pilots for the NCS in 2010, Nick Hurd, the Minister for Civil Society said: "...it will foster a culture of volunteerism and social responsibility in our young people. The next generation will be ready to use the massive devolution of power to communities that underpins the Big Society" (Cabinet Office & Maude, 2010). He also describes the NCS as "life-changing" (Hurd, 2013). The programme is intended to have a long-term impact on those taking part. It is aimed, not only at improving their confidence and employability, but also at extending their civic skills. A government press release noted that the NCS: "will also encourage volunteering and will give every 16 year old the chance to develop the skills needed to be active citizens" (Department for Communities and Local Government & Stunell, 2010). Prime Minister David Cameron, quoted in the Daily Telegraph, said: "It's going to teach them what it means to be socially responsible" (Prince, 2010). The NCS is about values as well as skills. It is intended to 'nudge' young people in the direction of future volunteering, community participation, social action and civic engagement.

Given the degree to which the social capital approach and its language have been taken up by politicians and policy-makers, and the role that it has had in the formation of volunteering policy, it is important to examine the assumptions behind those policies, namely, whether volunteering policy can drive further civic engagement, either in volunteering or other civil and political arenas.

1.8 Research questions and structure

This thesis will consist of three papers on the relationship between volunteering and political engagement. Taking the social capital framework and recent UK government policy as the basis for the discussion, these papers address the following research hypotheses:

H1: Volunteering in early adulthood is formative, and shapes levels of civic and political engagement throughout life.

H2: An individual who volunteers is more likely to become politically engaged in the short term, controlling for selection.

H3: The key mechanism linking volunteering and political engagement is generalised social trust.

The three hypotheses are addressed in turn in three papers. Chapter Two is Paper One, Chapter Three is Paper Two and Chapter Four is Paper Three. All three papers rely on data drawn from large representative UK data sets, and the first two are longitudinal. The first paper uses data from the National Child Development Study (NCDS). The second relies on the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS). The third uses data from the Citizenship Survey. Each of these datasets holds information collected by surveying respondents at several time points. The NCDS has followed a cohort of people born in one week in March 1958 from their births to the present day. The BHPS is a nationally representative panel study which began in 1991 with 10,000 individuals in more than 5000 households (and has now been superseded by Understanding Society). The Citizenship Survey is a face-to-face household survey conducted by the Department for Communities and Local Government, based on a nationally representative sample of approximately 10,000 adults in England and Wales at each year in which the survey was conducted. Volunteering and political activity are both strongly linked to social class and education, and are generally treated as civic 'habits': this hints at a joint cause, but does not rule out a separate causal relationship between the two. The vast majority of the existing literature shows evidence of a positive correlation between volunteering and political activity, and that which is based on longitudinal data generally suggests that volunteering precedes political involvement. It would be surprising to find different results from these large UK longitudinal datasets.

The datasets I have chosen offer the best chance of untangling the time-order of individuals' voluntary and wider civic engagement and hence of examining potential causal relationships. Whilst it is impossible to definitively identify a causal relationship from observational data, if there *is* a causal relationship between volunteering and political activity, one would expect to see some evidence for it in the data. The Citizenship Survey includes detailed and wide-ranging questions on associational life, volunteering, and social trust, and therefore offers the opportunity to assess the role of trust as a mechanism. There is very limited literature on volunteering and political activity based on British evidence, and none from the two longitudinal datasets. This dissertation therefore offers a novel contribution to the literature.

1.9 Contribution of this thesis

The research presented in the following three chapters of this three paper thesis addresses important gaps in the literature on volunteering and political engagement. Papers One and Two use longitudinal data to make clearer assessments of the possible causal impact of volunteering on political engagement than are usually possible from observational data. Both papers account for upbringing, family influence and education as confounders in the relationship between volunteering and political engagement; something which is rarely possible because longitudinal data are so difficult and expensive to collect. The literature suggests that early life experiences are key in setting up lifetime civic habits, so accounting for them is extremely important if the causal impact

of volunteering on political engagement is to be studied. Paper One uses cohort data from the NCDS and controls for early-life experiences using data from the earliest waves. Paper Two uses fixed effects modelling to control for all time-invariant effects, which include the early-life experiences already discussed. While there is a great deal of literature available which tests the formative nature of volunteering, there is nothing else which uses British longitudinal data to test the relationship between volunteering and political engagement.

Paper Three uses cross-sectional data and a structural equation modelling framework to look at underlying patterns of mediation. The mediators in this case are social and institutional trust. Social trust in particular is an important mediator in the social capital literature. There has been a great deal of theoretical work on this subject, as well as mixed empirical results suggesting both that volunteering promotes and is promoted by trust; and that trust both encourages and discourages political engagement. There is so far no published paper explicitly testing the mediating role of trust. Paper Three therefore serves an important purpose in investigating the precise nature of the relationship between volunteering, trust and political engagement.

Chapter 2: Volunteering in early adulthood, and political and civic behaviours in middle age: not a virtuous circle, but a privileged one

2.1 Introduction

Governments have promoted volunteering as a mechanism to address falling civic and political participation, particularly among young people, whose rates of participation are far lower than those of other adults (Theiss-Morse & Hibbing, 2005, p.229). The 2010 UK Coalition Government, for example, promoted volunteering through the National Citizen Service (NCS), a volunteering and community partnership scheme for 16 and 17 year olds. Describing the new programme, Prime Minister David Cameron, said: "It's going to teach them what it means to be socially responsible" (Prince, 2010). The NCS was designed to promote civic values as well as civic skills, and to 'nudge' young people in the direction of future volunteering, community participation, and civic engagement (Cabinet Office & Maude, 2010; Department for Communities and Local Government & Stunell, 2010; Hurd, 2013).

In the UK, turnout in General Elections has fallen as low as 59% in 2001 and, in spite of recent increases, the downward trend has raised some concern about falling levels of political engagement and the legitimacy of political institutions. The legitimacy of a representative democracy rests, at least in part, on the participation of its citizens. Uneven participation too, for example by age or social class, affects the responsiveness of the system: uneven participation leads to unequal influence. Political engagement is class-linked: it is more common among the well-educated, the well-remunerated and the well-placed (Lijphart, 1997; Parry et al., 1992). Engagement has also been particularly low among young voters: only four in ten 18-25 year olds turn out to vote at General Elections, and perhaps as few as one in ten at local elections (Stoker, 2006). Young people, and those whose occupations are more routine, are less likely to engage with politics, and therefore exert less influence on democratic institutions (The Electoral Commission, 2005).

Promoting civic engagement in youth is a way of promoting civic engagement over the life course. One of the best predictors of voter turnout is whether the voter turned out at the previous election (Plutzer, 2002). Volunteering, too, is strongly predicted by prior involvement in volunteering (Putnam 2000, p.121). Civic and political acts may be considered to be habits, begun, perhaps, in youth but continued into old age (Gerber, Green, & Shachar, 2003; McFarland & Thomas, 2006). As with class, there is also an element of intergenerational transmission: political engagement may be learned in the family home and then applied in adulthood (Caputo, 2009; Marc Hooghe, 2004). Policy, then, is directed at setting up a virtuous circle of civic engagement (HM Government, 2011).

This paper uses evidence from the UK to test the hypothesis that **volunteering in early adulthood is formative, and shapes levels of civic and political engagement in later life** (see section 1.8). I first define volunteering and political and civic engagement, before setting out the conceptual and theoretical links between them. I then review the empirical literature, concentrating particularly on that which is based, like this study, on longitudinal data. Longitudinal data, that is data which follows the same sample of individuals at different time points, allows researchers to investigate the time-order of events, and may provide an opportunity to account convincingly for selection effects. This is particularly important for a study of this kind, where the relationship of interest, the relationship between volunteering and political engagement, may be confounded by factors which influence both. Social class is one such factor: volunteering and political engagement are both strongly class-linked, with professional and managerial social class predicting both more volunteering and more political engagement than routine or manual social class.

I then present an analysis of volunteering and civic and political engagement, using data from the 1958 British birth cohort study (the NCDS). The analysis shows a strong association between volunteering and engagement, both cross-sectionally and over time. It highlights the role of social class in this effect: individuals from homes supported by a manual worker see no civic 'dividend' from their early volunteering behaviour.

2.2 What links volunteering and political behaviours?

Volunteering may be defined as unpaid work for an organisation or association. Some definitions also include a clause about the nature of the work: for example, that the work should help other people or help a cause, such as 'the environment' (Rochester, 2006). Forced or conscripted service is excluded: volunteering is a choice, time freely given (Paine, Hill, & Rochester, 2010). This definition is usually applied to what is called *formal* volunteering. In contrast, informal volunteering is unpaid work to help other people or a cause which takes place outside the auspices of a formal group or association (Hustinx, Cnaan, & Handy, 2010, p.414). It is clear from this definition that the act of volunteering has a number of attributes: it usually resembles work; the time is given by choice; it may be an act of service to an individual, group or cause; and it is in some way an organised or collective action, involving more than the volunteer in planning or execution. This definition is contested, particularly around the work-leisure axis. Stebbins (1982) introduced the concept of volunteering as "serious leisure", rather than work. Volunteering generally takes place in leisure or free time, so although the act can resemble work, it is usually taking the role or place of a leisure activity. This leisure approach can be used to describe and explain some of the observed class-based differences in volunteering behaviour (Harflett, 2015).

Politics is an activity which allows collective governing decisions to be made through negotiation and compromise, and without resorting to violence (Stoker, 2006, p.7). Political acts are those which influence, or are motivated by a desire to influence, public policy or the people who make it

(Verba et al., 1995). Political engagement is attention to, and expenditure of energy on, the public political sphere (Berger, 2011). Volunteering and political behaviours are both captured by the phrases "civic engagement" or "civic activity", which generally refer to actions taken to address issues of civic, public or community concern (Ehrlich, 2000).

Collective civic acts, like volunteering and active engagement with formal democratic politics, require participants to develop and use particular skills, such as bargaining or leadership. The development of civic skills is a key mechanism by which activity in one civic sphere might influence activity in another (Verba et al., 1995). Some associations or groups offer participants the opportunity to learn and practice key civic skills, such as public speaking, chairing, or organising meetings, as well as other relevant personal skills such as assertiveness or negotiation (Maloney et al., 2008). In this regard, not all organisations are created equal: sports clubs are less likely to offer opportunities for public speaking than churches, for example.

Some political acts are less skills-intensive than others. Voting, for example, requires little skill. Rather, it requires motivation, and identification with a value-set, issue, candidate, or party. It is a social norm for which there are few external rewards because one vote rarely turns an election or changes a policy. Nevertheless, there is a clear cost in going to the polls in terms of time taken to decide how to vote, and to get to the polling (or posting) place. The motivation to go to the polls can be acquired through socialisation within the family, school or community, but also through a voluntary group or association (Quintelier, 2008). Social pressure reinforces the norm and motivates people to go the polls (Funk, 2010). Individuals who move in circles which approve of voting will receive more positive peer group pressure to go to the polls. There is a further potential link between volunteering and political acts through knowledge (Hart et al., 2007; Knoke, 1990). A volunteer might increase her knowledge of a social problem through her unpaid work, and then be moved to act politically to solve that problem. Knowledge can reduce the apparent cost of going to the polls, by providing a basis on which to make a voting decision.

Since social networks can provide both the pressure and the opportunity for civic engagement, it is unsurprising that there are important similarities among the people who engage. This is expressed in the principle of homophily; 'birds of a feather flock together'. People are more likely to choose friends, or join networks which include people who are similar to themselves in religion, education, occupation, social class and even in behaviour and attitudes (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). They are likely to associate with others who share their political beliefs (Knoke, 1990). Voluntary organisations provide a focus around which networks may be built. Networks built around an organisation tend to be twice as homophilous as those which might have been expected given the local population (Feld, 1982). In other words, individuals who are members of a voluntary organisation are more likely to have friends and contacts who are also voluntary association members. People with higher socio-economic status join more voluntary organisations, and leave them less frequently, meaning that they experience more voluntary organisations over

their lives and therefore have more 'co-memberships' (McPherson et al., 2001). There is a powerful selection effect at work: those from the professional and managerial social classes are more likely to select in to voluntary associations (Musick & Wilson, 2008). Since volunteering policy is used to influence political and civic engagement, it is important to assess whether there is an effect of volunteering on wider engagement independent of selection. If an observed relationship between volunteering and political engagement is entirely due to selection effects, changes in rates of volunteering can have no effect on political engagement.

Theiss-Morse and Hibbing (2005) address selection explicitly in their review article, arguing that selection bias makes it difficult to determine the effect of volunteering on political participation. People who are predisposed to join organisations of one type are often also predisposed to join organisations of another: they are 'joiners', first and foremost. They also address the distribution of civic and political acts across the socio-economic spectrum, noting that volunteers tend to be higher-status individuals who are therefore most likely to hold their society's dominant cultural values. If these values are democratic and civil, volunteers will exhibit higher levels of democratic and civil values than non-volunteers, not because of their volunteering experiences, but because they were more likely to hold those dominant values in the first place.

High status and volunteer participation are both linked to feelings of political efficacy (Cigler & Joslyn, 2002; Hayes & Bean, 1993). Efficacy describes the extent to which individuals feel they can influence political actors or outcomes by their own actions (Craig & Maggioto, 1982). Efficacy is a double-edged sword: it can be a commentary on the system, as well as on the attributes of the individual (Verba et al., 1995, p.276). Individuals who are highly skilled are more likely to feel that they can influence decision making, but only in a relatively open system which encourages, or at least accepts, their engagement. Volunteering has been linked to increased political efficacy (Theiss-Morse & Hibbing, 2005) perhaps through skill development. However, it is important to note that political systems may be more or less uniform in their responsiveness, and some social groups may find it easier to influence the system than others. Gilens found that the policy-preferences of the rich were served more often and more completely than those of the poor (2005). Volunteers may therefore experience greater feelings of political efficacy for 'system' reasons, rather than for 'individual attribute' reasons.

The social class distribution of volunteering has been described using dominant status theory (D. H. Smith, 1994). Having a dominant status in society, through a high income or higher education, for example, confers some of the economic, social and cultural resources needed to be a volunteer (Hustinx et al., 2010). Those with dominant status are likely to have their pro-civic norms reinforced in their early attempts at civic engagement. Individuals raised in households supported by a professional or managerial worker are more likely than others to vote and volunteer in early adulthood (Egerton, 2002). This early civic engagement teaches skills, introduces new knowledge and social norms, and opens up opportunity for future engagement. The skills, knowledge, norms

and opportunities produced in the types of associations most commonly joined by middle-class youth are likely to differ from those produced in the types of associations most commonly joined by those from less-skilled backgrounds. The principle of homophily suggests that we are likely to surround ourselves with people who look and think like us: we are therefore likely to find the civic norms of our family background reflected in the voluntary associations we join as young people. Early civic experience is likely to reinforce the civic norms modelled in the home.

The effects of this selection are sometimes described in terms of social capital. The concept of social capital is intended to convey the importance of inter-personal and community relationships. Li et al. note the tension between Bourdieu's (1986) conception of social capital and Putnam's (1995), in terms of the emphasis placed on the individual or societal benefits of social capital production (Li, Pickles, & Savage, 2005). Someone with a high level of social capital has more social contacts and more of those contacts are deeply engaged in the lives of their communities. Participation begets participation: people who are already engaged are more likely to be asked to participate again (Putnam, 2000). The UK Citizenship Survey shows that the majority of people who volunteer were approached to take part, rather than making the approach themselves (Rochester, 2006). The self-selection implicit in this theoretical approach mirrors that described in the principle of homophily.

These approaches – social capital, the principle of homophily and dominant status theory – are linked by the crucial role of social class. Like other forms of capital, social capital accrues most easily in the presence of existing resource, and those from higher social classes are likely to have access to more resources. Birds of a feather flock together, and people of similar social classes move in similar circles. Those who hold a dominant (social class) status are more likely to hold to their society's dominant norms and values (Roßteutscher, 2002; Theiss-Morse & Hibbing, 2005). If these approaches are useful in explaining the empirical link between volunteering and civic participation, social class is likely to be an important link in the chain, and one would expect to see a greater effect of volunteering on political and civic activity levels in the presence of existing resource or high status. That is, volunteers from dominant, high-resource groups should be more likely to also engage in other civic acts than volunteers from less resource-rich backgrounds: any positive civic effect of volunteering should be magnified in high-status groups.

2.3 Civic engagement and social status: a review of the empirical evidence

The distribution of civic activity is heavily weighted towards the middle class, even for the most common activity, voting (Whiteley, 2012). In 2005, voter turnout among the salariat was 80%, compared to 57% among the working class. Correspondingly, turnout was much higher for those who owned their own homes than those who rented: turnout was 80% for those who own their home outright, 71% for those with a mortgage and just 50% for renters. Education was also a predictor, but a slightly weaker one: 67% of those who completed their education between the ages

of 16 and 18 voted in 2005, compared to 76% of those who left at age 19 or older (all data from the 2005 General Election, ibid. p.41).

Other civic and political acts follow a similar distribution. Boycotting consumer goods for political, ethical or environmental reasons, for example, is more common in social group AB (36%) than in social class DE[3] (6%) (Jochum et al., 2011). ABs show greater willingness than other social groups to take part political acts in the future, for example contacting the media, taking part in a campaign or attending political meetings and demonstrations (Hansard Society, 2013). Participation in volunteering and philanthropy is also more prevalent among individuals with more education and from professional and managerial social classes (Jochum et al., 2011). The rate of formal volunteering for those with a degree is nearly twice that for those with no educational qualifications. Nearly 70% of those in managerial or professional occupations give to charity, compared to just under 50% of those with routine or manual jobs. Volunteering is also more common among those in middle age, than youth (Staetsky & Mohan, 2011).

It is unsurprising, given the principle of homophily and the distributional similarities between these various types of civic engagement, that those who participate in one type of civic activity are more likely to also participate in further types. This has been expressed in terms of a "civic core" by Reed and Selbee (2001). The civic core is the small group of individuals who are responsible for the majority of the civic effort of volunteering, donating to charity and participating in voluntary associations. Mohan and Bulloch find that one third of the population provides nearly 90% of the volunteer hours and 77% of participation in civic associations (Mohan & Bulloch, 2012). Compared to others, members of the civic core are more likely to be middle-aged, to have A-levels or a degree, to practice a religion, and to be in managerial or professional occupations.

In some of the literature, however, this important distributional evidence goes unacknowledged. Duke et al. used data from two waves of the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health) to estimate the effect of adolescent emotional connections to family, school and community on early adult political and civic voice (Duke, Skay, Pettingell, & Borowsky, 2009). They found that levels of civic engagement were higher for youth who had close connections to family and community. Statistical controls were used for sex, ethnicity, immigration status and benefit receipt. However, no other control was attempted for socio-economic status or educational ability, and so the results offer no indication of whether the civic benefits of close connections are spread evenly across the social class distribution.

Using data from the DDB Lifestyles Study, Kwak, Shah, & Holbert (2004) found that social association, either informally, through a religious institution, or at public events, was positively

[3] These social grade groups are commonly used in market research and are based on occupation (Ipsos MediaCT, 2009)

correlated with volunteering in the community. The effect remained significant even controlling for income and education but the change in effect across the different socio-economic groups was not assessed. Furthermore the dataset used for this study presents some particular problems in assessing the effects of socio-economic status on the relationship between volunteering and political activity. It was collected initially only from married couples who opted into a mailing list (Putnam, 2000, p420-421). The authors have gone to some lengths to weight the sample for key demographic characteristics, but it seems unwise, in any case, to use data drawn from a sampling frame of this kind to draw conclusions about the role of social class.

Frisco, Muller and Dodson (2004) used 1988 National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS) to link middle-school voluntary association membership with voting behaviour in early adulthood: they found that membership in some types of voluntary organisations predicts voter registration and voting. They also found that both membership and the civic outcomes of that membership are related to socio-economic status (SES). However, the results show no clear pattern. In both the top and bottom SES quartiles, individuals who participated in voluntary associations were less likely to be registered voters whereas, for those in the second SES quartile, participation was associated with a greater likelihood of voting. The authors hypothesise that the cultural context in which the activity takes place has an effect on its outcome. They also acknowledge that their methods cannot address selection effects.

Where the effects of self-selection are explored, there is evidence for a 'volunteering type': individuals who have a personality or preference set which drives their volunteering behaviour. Personality traits have been found to influence both voter turnout and volunteering. Extraverts are more likely to volunteer (Carlo et al., 2005) while those who are even-tempered, aggressive or hard-working are more likely to vote (Denny & Doyle, 2008). Hart et al. (2007) also used NELS to link volunteering and community service experiences in high school to civic activity in adulthood. Their analysis includes a control for socio-economic status, and also exploits the difference between voluntary and required service. They find that required service predicts future civic knowledge and voting, while voluntary service predicts not only these acts, but also certain types of adult volunteering. One explanation for this discrepancy is that individuals who select in to volunteering in adolescence are displaying a preference for volunteering which continues into their adult lives. The beneficial effects of service on civic knowledge and voting, however, are available even to those who are coerced into the act rather than opting in to it.

Metz and Youniss used a similar technique with data collected from a US high school (2005). They distinguished between 'likely volunteers', who had chosen to volunteer before or who completed a required period of service a full year before the deadline, and 'unlikely volunteers', who had never chosen to serve or left their required service until the last minute. They found that unlikely volunteers were most likely to see a civic gain from compulsory community service, suggesting that there are civic benefits to be had from an activity which looks like volunteering,

even if one does not select in. This is civic gain is purely attitudinal, however: the authors used a measure of whether participants are likely to become civically involved.

Very little of the empirical literature covers evidence from the UK or addresses the effects of volunteering in adulthood. Roker, Player and Coleman used UK data to show that involvement in voluntary activities improved the civic skills of youth aged 14 to 16, making them more likely to say that they would vote in future (1999). Kwak et al. (2004) used data from adulthood, but did not investigate the effects of social class. Paul Whiteley linked adult voluntary activity to support for civil society through interpersonal trust using the data from the World Values Survey (2012, p. 88). Although this data relates both to the UK and to adults, it is analysed only briefly, and no attempt is made to explore distributional effects.

This paper, then, fills a gap in the literature, addressing evidence from UK adults, and exploring the social class-related distributions of volunteering and voting. Using data from the National Child Development Study (NCDS), I investigate whether volunteering at age 23 predicts civic behaviour at age 50, and in what manner, and to what extent, that relationship is affected by social class.

2.4 Data and methods

This analysis uses data from the Perinatal Mortality Survey (PMS) and National Child Development Study (NCDS), the 1958 British birth cohort survey. There have been ten waves of data collection, and nine have been released to researchers. The first study (PMS) was designed to examine social and obstetric factors associated with still birth and infant mortality. This was followed by eight NCDS waves in 1965, 1969, 1974, 1981, 1991, 2000, 2004 and 2008 when the cohort members were aged 7, 11, 16, 23, 33, 42, 46 and 50. The NCDS follows cohort members as they age, building up a picture of their medical and social history through a variety of surveys administered at different time points. The population of inference for NCDS is people born in Great Britain in 1958, or perhaps more generously in the late 1950s in general. Strictly, it is not possible to make inference from the experiences of the cohort at any given age to today's population. This is an issue which arises when studying any longitudinal dataset. The experiences faced by each cohort are unique and a direct read-across from their (collective) actions and reactions to those of some future cohort cannot be assumed. Where parallels exist, however, an analysis of an historic cohort may be able to shed light on events in other times, but this should not be mistaken for statistical inference.

This study uses NCDS data on volunteering and voting collected at ages 23 and 50. The age 50 data are used as outcomes and the age 23 data as key predictors. At age 23, the volunteering question was harmonised to match other surveys and was taken from the General Household Survey (GHS). It was posed (for a 12 month time frame) as: "We are very interested in the voluntary work that people do, that is, work for which they are not paid, which is of service to

others apart from their immediate family. Here [*showcard*] are some examples." Treating all those 23 year olds who claimed to have volunteered once in the last four weeks (or more frequently) as volunteers, 23.8% were volunteers[4].

At age 50 the volunteering question was part of a short battery on leisure activities: "We are interested in the things people do in their leisure time. Please indicate how frequently you do each one... Once a week, once a month, several times a year, once a year or less, never/almost never." The category "Do unpaid voluntary work" was item eleven out of twelve and no definition of voluntary work was offered to respondents. Of the 8668 cohort members who answered the question, 17.2% reported having volunteered several times a year or more. Those who reported volunteering once a year or less were coded as non-volunteers. Whilst very occasional volunteers do share some characteristics with more regular volunteers, they have more in common with non-volunteers in terms of wider civic engagement (Hart et al., 2007; Jochum et al., 2011; Taniguchi, 2012). Coding volunteering in this fashion has the further advantage that it maintains some comparability with the coding at age 23. At age 23, all those coded as volunteers reported volunteering in the last year, whereas the occasional volunteers at age 50 reported volunteering once a year *or less*: the coding used here defines a volunteer as someone who reports doing some voluntary work in the year before the survey.

At ages 23 and 50, cohort members were asked about their turnout at the previous General Election. As the most commonly undertaken political act, voting is a useful, if somewhat blunt, proxy for political activity. It is particularly important as the only form of political participation which involves a majority of British citizens (Whiteley, 2012, p.34). Voting by its nature can only reflect involvement in *electoral* politics. In order to assess non-electoral civic action, the data collected on volunteering (at age 50) was also used as an outcome variable. In choosing civic 'outcomes' voting and volunteering are particularly interesting because one is strictly individual, while the other is collective. It may be particularly useful to consider these types of civic actions separately because there is some limited evidence that participation trends over time have been different for individual and collective actions, with individual actions becoming relatively more popular (Stoker, 2006, p.92).

For this analysis, 'voting' refers to voting in the general elections of 1979 (when the cohort was aged 21) and 2005 (when they were 47). Turnout in these years was 76% and 61.4%, respectively (McGuinness, 2012). Turnout as reported in the NCDS was 66% and 73%. The discrepancy between overall turnout and cohort turnout is probably related to age-effects: older adults are more

[4] This figure was calculated using the responses to questions n5950 and n5952: 12,494 cohort members responded. The questions were about voluntary work in the last year and frequency of volunteer work. There was some inconsistency in the responses: some respondents claimed not to have volunteered in the last year, but nevertheless to have volunteered in the last four weeks. For the purposes of this report, these respondents were treated as volunteers.

likely to turn out to vote than younger ones[5]. Much of the literature on turnout reflects macro-level effects, rather than individual level ones: this study therefore adds to an under-researched area of the literature.

Given the extensive evidence linking social class, volunteering, voting and, social class is a key control variable for this analysis. I have chosen to control for social class at birth (measured by father's social class and, where this is missing, mother's or grandfather's). Social class, measured by occupation-type, is a crucial predictive variable in many political and sociological studies. It carries information about income, social status, educational achievement and family background. The intention in using social class as measured at birth is to account in part for family background and culture. Furthermore, social class at birth is a useful measure in this study for pragmatic reasons, because it minimises the amount of missing data. Social class at birth is here divided into five social classes. Class I covers professional occupations; II is managerial and technical occupations; III is skilled work, either manual or non-manual; IV covers partly skilled occupations, and; Class V is unskilled occupations.[6]

During model testing and construction, controls from different waves of the NCDS were selected and testes, building up the models sweep-by-sweep. From the first sweep (called the PMS), I have taken controls for sex, and whether the mother stayed in school beyond compulsion.[7] From the sweep at age 11, reading and maths scores were used as controls, along with attendance at clubs.[8,9]

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[5] One might expect the answers to overestimate actual voter turnout because respondents consider voting to be socially desirable and therefore claim to have voted when they did not. In fact, the effect is rather small (Pattie, Seyd, & Whiteley, 2004): people over-report their voting but only by about 4% (p.77).

[6] Future work could investigate alternative social class schema, and their effect on the outcomes in these models. The schema used here, the Registrar General's schema, may be weak because it was based on out-dated theories about the 'natural' skill levels of workers in skilled and unskilled occupations in a predominantly industrial society (Rose & Pevalin, 2001).

[7] Maternal education, particularly for those in the lower part of the achievement range, is known to be important for educational and other outcomes in children(Dubow, Boxer, & Huesmann, 2009). Maternal age at birth and smoking status during pregnancy were also investigated as a potential controls from the data at this sweep, but were found not to be significant.

[8] In this case, clubs outside of school.

[9] A number of controls for parental attitude to education were also tested and rejected as non-significant, including whether parents wanted their child to stay in school, the mother's level of interest in the child's education, whether either parent read to the child, and whether parents wanted further education for their child. Variables for social adjustment (from the Bristol Social Adjustment Guide), school attendance, and library-going were also tested and found not to be significant, along with the cohort member's own prediction of their future occupation by age 25.

A second set of social class and education controls were tested as a potential confounders in the relationships between volunteering at age 23 and volunteering at age 50, and volunteering at age 23 and voting at age 50. These were taken from data collected at later sweeps. The age at which the cohort member finished fulltime education was controlled for. This education data was collected at age 42 but refers only to the cohort member's childhood and early 20s. While it may be subject to recall problems, it does avoid conditioning on the future. In addition to this education control, an attempt was made to control for social class by occupation at age 23 but this was found not to be significant in either analysis. Occupational and educational outcomes are closely related: this may explain the lack of statistical significance for social class, which is usually an important predictor of volunteering status.[10]

The data collected from the cohort at age 23 was also used to control for marital and family status, religious practice, voting at the last General Election, and taking part in dancing or sports. The academic test scores are continuous variables from NCDS-administered tests, religious practice divides into four frequency groups, and the remainder are binary variables. The variables for attending clubs, playing sport and going to dances are included in an attempt to control for a propensity to social or associational participation. It is worth noting that all of the control variables are related to social class: more participation and higher test scores are associated with social classes I and II, more marriage and children at age 23 with social classes IV and V.

Logistic regression was used to estimate the effects of early adult volunteering on civic and political activity in later adulthood. A logistic regression model is fitted by a linear equation and is linear with regard to the *logit*, that is the natural log of the odds of 'success' (Agresti, 1996). A success in this context may be read as 'political activity' or 'civic activity' = 1. Models for categorical dependent variables (including binary dependent variables like those used in this study for voting and volunteering) can be fitted by maximum likelihood (Long and Freese, 2006). The software used in this case was Stata v.12. Logistic regression is subject to fewer assumptions than linear regression (for example, logistic regression makes no assumption about the distribution of explanatory variables). The assumptions are: independent and identically distributed errors, no multicollinearity, and linearity of continuous predictors with the logit of the outcome variable (Field, 2009).

The intention of this study is not exhaustively to explain voting and volunteering in middle age, but rather to assess the strength and nature of the relationship between early adult volunteering and these civic outcomes. For this reason, I have used control variables which may be potential confounders in the relationship: that is, I have attempted to control for variables which might cause both volunteering at 23 and the civic outcome variables.

[10] Employment status at age 23 was likewise not statistically significant and is therefore excluded here.

2.5 Results

Presented here are the results of six logistic regression models run for each of the civic outcomes, volunteering at age 50 and voting at age 50, as well as several tables of summary statistics. The intention for each outcome variable is to build up a series of models, culminating in a full model (model six for each outcome) which accounts for potential confounders in the relationship between volunteering at age 23 and the civic outcome at age 50.

There is a strong relationship between volunteering at age 23 and both voting and volunteering at age 50. Of those who reported volunteering at age 23, 27% went on to volunteer at age 50. The figure for non-volunteers was just 13.5%. People who reported volunteering at age 23 were also more likely to go on to vote: 79% of those who volunteered at age 23 voted at age 50, compared to 72% of non-volunteers. This population also shows a strong relationship between volunteering, voting and social class at birth. Individuals born into homes supported by an adult with an occupation of social class I were much more likely than others to engage in either volunteering or voting, while those from social class V were the least likely to be involved in these civic behaviours (see Table 1). This suggests that the relationship between volunteering at age 23 and later political and civic behaviour is likely to be confounded or modified by social class.

Table 2.1: Relationship between volunteering, voting, and social class at birth

social class at birth	volunteer at age 23	total	volunteer at age 50	total	voter at age 50	total
I (professional)	106	284	84	284	251	297
	37.32%		29.58%		84.51%	
II (managerial)	264	895	224	895	786	952
	29.50%		25.03%		82.56%	
III (skilled)	911	3,602	567	3,602	2,932	4,009
	25.29%		15.74%		73.14%	
IV (part skilled)	164	725	98	725	572	815
	22.62%		13.52%		70.18%	
V (unskilled)	71	457	61	457	340	504
	15.54%		13.35%		67.46%	
total	1,516	5,963	1,034	5,963	4,881	6,577
	25.42%		17.34%		74.21%	

Different total sample-sizes in Table 2.1 are due to differences in missing data: there was more questionnaire and item non-response for the volunteering question than for the voting question. The approach taken here, of discarding the units with missing data (listwise deletion) has risks, specifically selection bias. However, a comparison of the samples available for the volunteering

analysis and the voting analysis with shows that they are very similar with regard to social class. That is, the relatively heavy item non-response on the volunteering question has not changed the sample much with regard to the key explanatory variable. Missing elsewhere has also driven the sample size down. There were 9790 respondents to NCDS in 2008 (down from 17,415 respondents to the PMS). Only 8313 of those also responded in 1981 at age 23 and 7817 of those also answered at age 11. Most of the missing data for the analyses presented here comes from missing waves, which is a common problem in the study of longitudinal data. Comparing the analysis samples with a contemporary edition of the Labour Force Survey (April-June 2008, for respondents aged 50-54) shows a lower percentage of respondents in professional occupations and a higher percentage in 'elementary' or manual professions than in the NCDS. This is in-keeping with existing research on respondents to long running longitudinal studies: being an owner-occupier, having higher education and more professional occupation are all associated with greater probability of response (Durrant & Goldstein, 2010; Laurie & Lynn, 2009). However, Hawkes and Plewis showed (2006) that wave non-response is very difficult to model in NCDS, even though there are clearly some systematic differences between respondents and non-respondents. This type of evidence (see also Lillard & Panis, 1998) has been used to show that wave non-response and attrition in longitudinal surveys can be relatively benign, but doubts should remain.

Table 2 shows the coefficients (log odds) for models predicting volunteering at age 50. Model one, a simple bivariate model, shows a strong relationship between volunteering at age 23 and volunteering at age 50. An individual who reports volunteering at age 23 has 2.5 times higher odds of being a volunteer at age 50 than someone who did not volunteer at age 23 (log odds = 0.929, significant at the 1% level). The relationship between volunteering at age 23 and at age 50 continues to be strong in model two, which introduces social class origin controls. However, it is clear from model three, that much of the relationship between volunteering at age 23 and volunteering at age 50 is described by the interaction between social class and volunteering at age 23. The interaction term in model three is the product of the social class variable and volunteering at age 23. The additional coefficients are applied only for individuals who were volunteers at age 23. Social class V (unskilled manual) is the reference category. Individuals from more skilled and professional social classes were more likely to go on to be volunteers at age 50 than those from unskilled and manual social classes.

Of the other controls, cohort member's sex and attendance at religious meetings at age 23 had the greatest effect on their voluntary activity at age 50. The odds of a man being a volunteer at age 50, accounting for all the other model variables, were 0.7 of the odds for a woman (log odds = -0.361, significant at the 1% level). Religious attendance was important only for a relatively small proportion of the sample: three percent attended religious meetings monthly or more, and a further seven percent attended weekly or more. Monthly attendees had 2.4 times the odds of volunteering

at age 50, while those who attended on a weekly basis had 2.7 times the odds of non-attendees (both significant at the 1% level).

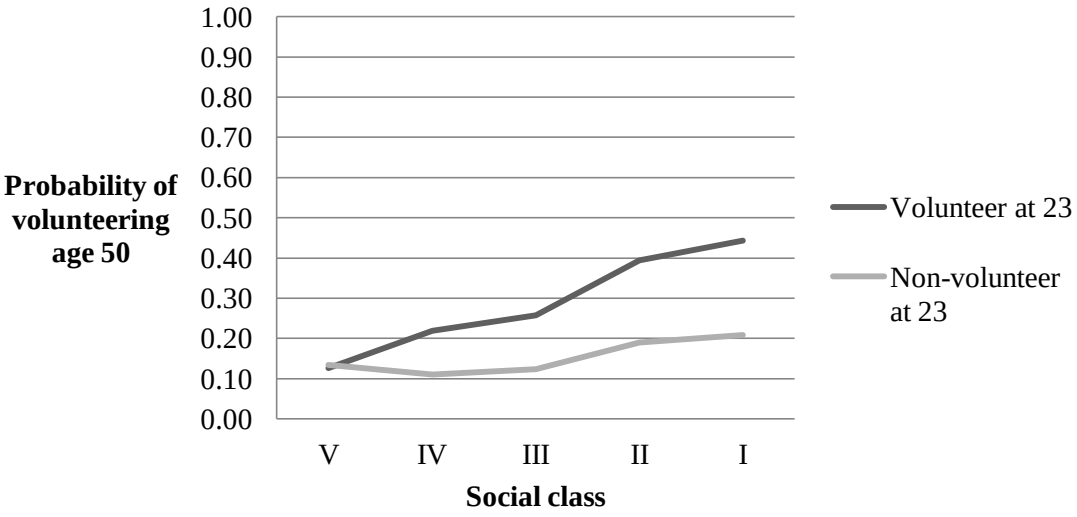
Table 2.2: Volunteering at age 50

	(1) simple	(2) soccla	(3) interaction	(4) add sweep 0	(5) add sweep 2	(6) add sweep 4
volunteer, age 23	0.929***	0.891***	-0.070	-0.027	-0.111	-0.244
	(0.072)	(0.073)	(0.387)	(0.388)	(0.390)	(0.397)
social class at birth V (ref)						
social class at birth IV		-0.061	-0.226	-0.237	-0.280	-0.240
		(0.177)	(0.201)	(0.202)	(0.202)	(0.204)
social class at birth III		0.094	-0.101	-0.142	-0.269*	-0.291*
		(0.147)	(0.160)	(0.161)	(0.163)	(0.165)
social class at birth II		0.650***	0.411**	0.216	-0.039	-0.131
		(0.160)	(0.180)	(0.185)	(0.189)	(0.193)
social class at birth I		0.813***	0.522**	0.248	-0.030	-0.176
		(0.193)	(0.237)	(0.244)	(0.248)	(0.253)
interaction - class V (ref)						
interaction - class IV			0.887**	0.871*	0.861*	0.768*
			(0.451)	(0.452)	(0.454)	(0.463)
interaction - class III			0.974**	0.925**	0.942**	0.898**
			(0.398)	(0.400)	(0.401)	(0.409)
interaction - class II			1.088***	1.052**	1.120***	1.057**
			(0.419)	(0.421)	(0.423)	(0.431)
interaction - class I			1.180**	1.148**	1.200**	1.125**
			(0.471)	(0.473)	(0.475)	(0.484)
male				-0.360***	-0.356***	-0.361***
				(0.071)	(0.072)	(0.077)
mother stayed in school				0.451***	0.323***	0.223***
				(0.080)	(0.082)	(0.085)
reading at 11					0.016*	0.008
					(0.009)	(0.009)

maths at 11					0.021***	0.014***
					(0.005)	(0.005)
clubs at 11					0.170**	0.135*
					(0.072)	(0.073)
left education at age 16 or younger (ref)						
left education age 17-19						0.173*
						(0.096)
left education age 20+						0.325***
						(0.117)
no information						0.556***
						(0.136)
single at 23						0.201**
						(0.086)
kids at 23						-0.037
						(0.109)
religion at 23, rarely (ref)						
religion at 23, monthly -						0.300***
						(0.110)
religion at 23, monthly +						0.865***
						(0.159)
religion at 23, weekly +						0.967***
						(0.111)
voter age 23						-0.001
						(0.082)
goes to dances at 23						-0.014
						(0.078)
plays sport/games at 23						0.163**
						(0.077)
constant	-1.852***	-2.050***	-1.860***	-1.767***	-2.360***	-2.443***
	(0.044)	(0.140)	(0.149)	(0.152)	(0.184)	(0.211)
observations	5,963	5,963	5,963	5,963	5,963	5,963

The graph labelled Figure 2, below, shows predicted probabilities for model three: that is, the model which includes only volunteering at age 23, social class at birth and the interaction of those two variables. The overall pattern demonstrates that the relationship between volunteering at age 23 and at age 50 is moderated by family social class background. Individuals from homes headed by an unskilled manual worker (social class V) do not see a civic dividend from early adult voluntary work. Individuals from social class V who volunteered at age 23 were no more likely to be volunteers at age 50 than those who did not volunteer in early adulthood. By contrast, those in social class I were more than twice as likely to go on to be volunteers at age 50 if they had a experience of volunteering at age 23, compared to non-volunteers at age 23. A similar pattern of predicted probabilities is observed for the full models: the effect is not accounted for by other control variables.

Figure 2.1: Predicted probability of volunteering at age 50, accounting for social class and volunteering at age 23 (from Table 2.2, model 3)



Not only is there a close relationship between volunteering rates and social class, there is also clear social class gradient to the types of volunteering engaged in by the cohort at age 23. Comparing the activities of those who volunteered at age 23, individuals born into social class I (professional) were more than twice as likely as those born into social class IV or V to be on a committee or give advice. Those born into social classes IV and V were nearly three times more likely to volunteer their building or driving skills compared to those born into social classes I and II. It is therefore likely that cohort members' volunteer experiences differed by social class[11].

[11] It should be noted, however, that roughly one third of the volunteer effort in each social class was related to fundraising.

Table 2.3 gives the model coefficients (log odds) for the civic outcome variable 'voting at age 50'. Again, the simple bivariate model shows a strong relationship between volunteering at age 23 and voting at age 50, although with an increased odds of 1.4 times, it is not as strong as the relationship with volunteering at age 50. As with the volunteering outcome, there is a class effect (model 2) and a clear interaction effect (model 3). As with the models for volunteering, above, the volunteering and social class effects are all but subsumed by the interaction of social class with volunteering. Aside from these effects, the single biggest effect on voting at age 50 is from voting at age 23, with the odds of voting at age 50 more than doubling for those who voted at age 23. Religious practice at age 23 is also associated with greater odds of voting, with the odds of voting at age 50 roughly one third higher for those who practiced their religion at age 23.

The interaction effect is illustrated in terms of predicted probability in Figure 2.2 below. The probability of being a voter at age 50 is less for volunteers in social class V than for non-volunteers: volunteers in more skilled or professional social classes, on the other hand, see an effect from volunteering. The model build-up, which adds data from additional sweeps, does not much diminish this effect: accounting for potential confounders, the relationship between volunteering at age 23 and voting at age 50 is heavily mediated by social class. It also provides additional information on the precursors of voting in middle age. In the final model, model six, which includes data from birth, age 11 and age 23, the effect of voting at age 23 on voting at age 50 is nearly as large as the class/volunteering effect. Voters at age 23 have 2.4 times the odds of voting at age 50 compared to non-voters at age 23 (log odds = 0.850, significant at the 1% level).

Figure 2.2: Predicted probability of voting at age 50, accounting for social class and volunteering at age 23 (from Table 2.3, model 3)

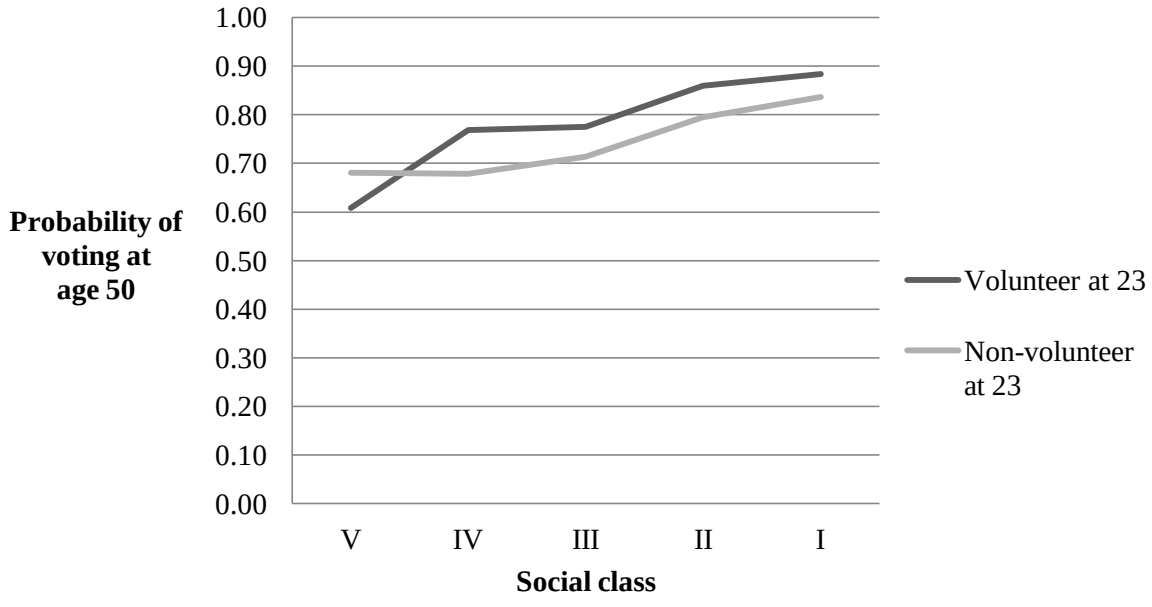


Table 2.3 Voting at age 50

	(1) simple	(2) soccla	(3) interaction	(4) add sweep 0	(5) add sweep 2	(6) add sweep 4
volunteer, age 23	0.364***	0.321***	-0.438*	-0.441*	-0.561**	-0.674**
	(0.0684)	(0.0690)	(0.253)	(0.253)	(0.258)	(0.266)
social class at birth V (ref)						
social class at birth IV		0.105	-0.043	-0.050	-0.083	-0.105
		(0.122)	(0.135)	(0.135)	(0.137)	(0.141)
social class at birth III		0.244**	0.125	0.091	-0.045	-0.168
		(0.102)	(0.112)	(0.113)	(0.114)	(0.118)
social class at birth II		0.784***	0.606***	0.455***	0.168	-0.109
		(0.128)	(0.143)	(0.146)	(0.150)	(0.155)
social class at birth I		0.905***	0.746***	0.517**	0.171	-0.155
		(0.187)	(0.218)	(0.224)	(0.227)	(0.236)
interaction - class V (ref)						
interaction - class IV			0.905***	0.886***	0.876***	0.844**
			(0.319)	(0.320)	(0.325)	(0.335)
interaction - class III			0.759***	0.737***	0.774***	0.740***
			(0.267)	(0.268)	(0.272)	(0.281)
interaction - class II			1.001***	0.973***	1.062***	1.057***
			(0.326)	(0.326)	(0.331)	(0.340)
interaction - class I			0.890**	0.906**	0.993**	1.021**
			(0.434)	(0.434)	(0.439)	(0.449)
male				0.061	0.076	-0.021
				(0.057)	(0.058)	(0.064)
mother stayed in school				0.356***	0.188**	0.081
				(0.073)	(0.075)	(0.077)
reading at 11					0.050***	0.037***
					(0.007)	(0.008)
maths at 11					0.009**	-0.003

					(0.004)	(0.005)
clubs at 11					0.178***	0.156***
					(0.058)	(0.060)
left education age 16 or younger (ref)						
left education 17-19						0.424***
						(0.083)
left education 20+						0.711***
						(0.127)
no information						-0.148
						(0.111)
single at 23						0.161**
						(0.071)
kids at 23						-0.265***
						(0.077)
religion at 23, rarely (ref)						
religion at 23, monthly -						0.279***
						(0.107)
religion at 23, monthly +						0.285
						(0.189)
religion at 23, weekly +						0.207
						(0.129)
voter age 23						0.850***
						(0.062)
goes to dances at 23						0.0505
						(0.063)
plays sport/games at 23						0.180***
						(0.064)
constant	0.971***	0.682***	0.801***	0.740***	-0.144	-0.362**
	(0.032)	(0.096)	(0.105)	(0.108)	(0.133)	(0.156)
observations	6,577	6,577	6,577	6,577	6,577	6,577

2.6 Discussion

Volunteering is one of Tocqueville's "habits of the heart," which shape moral and political customs and behaviours (Tocqueville, 2003, p.336). These habits, when started young, can shape participation for decades. Governments have attempted to kick-start some of these habits by encouraging young people to become volunteers. In this paper, I have used data from the 1958 British birth cohort to examine whether **volunteering in early adulthood is formative, and shapes levels of civic and political engagement in later life** (see section 1.8)**.**

The effect of volunteering in early adulthood on voting and volunteering in middle age is inextricably linked to social class. It is theorised that trust, skills, knowledge and socialisation mediate the relationship and that the effect of social class is reinforced, rather than mitigated by early civic experience. Dominant status theory holds that, in a society with broadly pro-civic norms, individuals from dominant status groups are more likely to volunteer and to hold the dominant pro-civic values. The principle of homophily describes the tendency of individuals to associate with others like themselves. Taken together this implies that individuals from the professional and managerial classes are more likely to volunteer as young adults, more likely to have their early volunteering experiences reflected back to them by their peers, and more likely to receive both social pressure and opportunities for further civic engagement.

The data from the NCDS confirms this. Individuals born into homes supported by a professional or managerial worker (social class I and II) were more likely to volunteer at age 23. The volunteer activities of the cohort members at age 23 differed significantly by social class. Those who volunteered at age 23 were more likely to become politically engaged if they had been born into professional or managerial homes. Volunteers born into social class V (supported by unskilled, manual workers) received no civic dividend at all: in fact, class V volunteers were less likely to become voters at age 50 than non-volunteers. This unequal volunteering effect is just one part of a greater inequality between social classes. In this case, volunteers from social class V were having significantly different volunteering experiences than those from social class I at age 23, and were therefore learning fundamentally different things about their civic roles. Volunteers from 'higher' social classes learned that they could take responsibility for change and make it happen, perhaps by serving on a committee or offering advice; volunteers from 'lower' social classes, who were more likely to drive cars, for example, and therefore to be directed.

Secondly, there is a relationship between volunteering at age 23 and voting and volunteering at age 50, even having accounted for potential confounders. A confounding factor is a variable which is causally linked to both the dependent and key independent variables. In any regression model there remains an element of doubt about the completeness of statistical control which can be achieved.

However, the strength of these models is their use of data from early life to allow within-person effects to be targeted, rather than relying on inference from between-person effects.

In the NCDS cohort, uneven civic participation was reinforced rather than relieved by volunteering in early adulthood. Members of more privileged social classes were able to leverage their early volunteering experiences in way which paid a civic dividend in middle age. Democratic and civic inequity is therefore unlikely to be successfully addressed by policy changes which promote volunteering among marginalised social groups (Li, 2010). Future work in this area should investigate the effects of different types of volunteer experience on participants' future civic lives. It would also be beneficial to conduct a more detailed analysis of social class using alternate social class schema, and to take better account of the effects of social mobility. Mobility could be addressed using a mobility trajectory framework, as described by Li, Savage, and Warde (2008). This framework would separate the upwardly mobile, the downwardly mobile and the stable. This would allow the causes of social privilege to be separated somewhat from the effects.

Chapter 3: Volunteering linked to political interest, but not party support: a study of British panel data

3.1 Introduction

Putnam's work on social capital explicitly linked a decline in volunteering to a wider civic decline (2000, Chapter 7) and thereby underpinned renewed political interest in the role of the voluntary sector in a modern liberal democracy (Fine, 2010, p.198; Kennedy, 2009, p.26). Both in the US and the UK, volunteering has been used as a policy lever to drive civic and political engagement (Mycock & Tonge, 2011). An expansion of volunteering and the voluntary sector is attractive to the political right as an alternative to state intervention and to the left as a means of fostering grassroots engagement and giving voice to 'ordinary people', and governments of all political stripes have therefore pursued policies designed to increase levels of voluntarism (Ellaway, 2004; Theiss-Morse & Hibbing, 2005). Volunteers are more likely than non-volunteers to vote (Putnam, 2000), to be interested in politics (Denny & Doyle, 2008), and to talk about politics informally (Claibourn & Martin, 2007), but the evidence for a clear causal relationship between volunteering and political engagement is mixed.

In this paper, I investigate the hypothesis that **an individual who volunteers is more likely to become politically engaged in the short term, controlling for selection** (see section 1.8). Much of the literature on volunteering and political engagement is concentrated on volunteering as a formative experience for adolescents or young adults (see Chapter 2). It is also clear from that segment of the literature that volunteering and other acts of civic or political engagement are habitual. These habits could simply be a matter of selection: people with the resources to engage in volunteering also have the resources to engage politically. However, much of the literature assumes a causal relationship, and this is tested here. If no link is found between volunteering and political engagement in the short run, with strong controls for selection, it would be hard to justify a causal conclusion.

3.2 Review of the evidence

In this paper, I explore the causal evidence presented in the academic literature, before presenting a new analysis based on data from the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS).

The literature is wide-ranging, and I have categorised it here (and in section 1.4) by the main causal or explanatory mechanism proposed therein. This taxonomy is useful here because it concentrates on causality over correlation. Four broad plausible causal or explanatory mechanisms have been suggested for this relationship. These mechanisms are not mutually exclusive. The following section deals with each mechanism in turn. It concentrates principally on the empirical literature

linking political interest, and party or electoral engagement, to volunteering, as these are the key variables used for this study.

In the literature, the direction of causality is generally taken to run from voluntary association to political engagement, rather than *vice versa*. Some studies infer causation because voluntary association membership precedes political engagement, having controlled for a series of demographic and socio-economic characteristics (Olsen, 1972). This inference rests on the assumption that all the variation between the respondents is observed (D. A. Freedman, 1991). Time order *is* important, but it is also possible that an underlying unobserved condition precedes both volunteering and political engagement. For example, it is possible that some character or personality types are predisposed to both voluntary and political engagement, or that (as shown in Paper One) possessing some resource makes both volunteering and political engagement easier. Political activity usually begins later in life than volunteering because democratic institutions permit only fully-fledged adults to take part. It therefore appears that volunteering causes political activity because it precedes it, when in fact they are jointly caused (Theiss-Morse & Hibbing, 2005).

3.2.1 Skills

Centring on the work of Almond and Verba (1963), and Verba, Brady, & Schlozman (1995), this approach stresses the neo-Tocquevillian understanding of voluntary associations as schools of democracy. Civic skills, such as chairing a meeting, or speaking in public, or organising a schedule of events, can be learned and practiced within a range of institutions, including schools and workplaces, but also, crucially, voluntary organisations. While this idea was developed from American history and data, it has been widely applied (van der Meer & van Ingen, 2009).

Maloney, Van Deth and Roßteutscher (2008), in a study of two mid-sized European cities, found that affiliation alone predicted political interest: the size or type of voluntary association made no difference. Furthermore, political interest increased in line with the range of activities undertaken. An individual who was involved in more associational tasks (from a choice of participating in decisions, chairing a meeting, preparing a speech, writing a text and performing voluntary work) was more likely to be interested in politics. The authors suggest that the link could plausibly be explained by the development of civic skills (following Verba, Brady, & Schlozman, 1995). However, the conclusion is based on evidence from cross-sectional observational data, which leaves open the possibility that the apparent relationship is confounded. Volunteering and political interest could be subject to a 'joint cause', such as upbringing, education or socialisation, which would predispose individuals to both voluntary association activity and to political engagement. Furthermore, the theoretical link between skills and political action is clearer than the link between skills and political interest: interest is passive, requiring few civic skills, but rather motivation and knowledge.

Wollebaek and Selle used Norwegian survey data and exploited the distinction between active and passive associational membership to investigate whether civic skills might link volunteering to political engagement (Wollebaek & Selle, 2002). They found news readership, political interest and regular voting were predicted by both active and passive associational membership. Linking these outcomes together in a one hundred point civic engagement scale, they found increases of some 10-20% in levels of civic engagement for different levels of voluntary association activity, compared to the average levels for 'outsiders' with no affiliations. Unlike Maloney et al, they also found that political interest (and indeed, voting) were linked to the number of affiliations an individual held. They interpret voluntary associations as an institutionalization of civic engagement, rather than a generator of it, rejecting the skills argument because it seems unlikely that passive memberships could develop civic skills. This interpretation acknowledges the potentially confounded nature of the relationship between volunteering and political engagement.

Similarly, Van der Meer & Van Ingen (2009) used European Social Survey data from seventeen countries to investigate the claims for civic skills, and found a strong correlation between associational involvement and political action, but no support for the theoretical link. They used (self-reported) civic skill as an intermediary variable in an attempt to explain the correlation, but found no statistically significant reduction in effect size. However, their use of 'political understanding' as a complete proxy for civic skill could be questioned: understanding may be a better synonym for knowledge held than for skills practiced.

3.2.2 Knowledge

The cost of obtaining political information can be reduced through interaction with others in the community (Claibourn & Martin, 2007). The cost is reduced in terms of the time and energy used. Political information gathering 'free-rides' on non-political social interactions. Individuals do not have to invest in informing themselves: the information flows freely towards them (Jottier & Heyndels, 2010). Such interaction can also produce more sophisticated thinking among interlocutors (Boix & Posner, 1998). Engaging in political discussion allows ideas to be challenged and honed and their presentation to be practiced.

A number of researchers have used evidence from the American Citizens Participation Study to conclude that voluntary organisations are an important source of such information cost-reduction (Claibourn & Martin, 2007; Marc Hooghe, 2011; Jottier & Heyndels, 2011; Sobieraj & White, 2004). The study shows that very high percentages of those involved in voluntary groups reported 'informal chat' about politics or government among people at their voluntary group meetings (see full question in Appendix A). More than 80% of those attending veterans' groups, professional organisations or ethnic organisations reported hearing informal political chat: the figure was much lower in sports clubs at 55%, but it should be noted that this still constitutes a majority (Claibourn & Martin, 2007). Voluntary association members answered more political knowledge questions

correctly than did non-members. Non-members scored 2.9 out of 10, those involved in one or two organisations answered on average 4.1 questions correctly, and those who were involved in three or more organisations scored an average of 5.6 out of 10 (Marc Hooghe, 2011).

Nevertheless, the authors who designed the American Citizens Participation Study find no effect of (non-political) voluntary group affiliation on either political discussion or more active political outcomes such as political volunteering, voting and making political contributions (Verba, Brady, & Schlozman, 1995, pp356-363). Their analysis includes controls for political interest and information, however, which may have suppressed the effect of affiliation in voluntary organisations on political engagement (Denny & Doyle, 2008). Denny and Doyle contend that political interest and other forms of engagement, such as voter turnout, are jointly caused, and that political interest is therefore a confounding factor in Verba *et al*'s analysis. Furthermore, both their coding and method of classifying of organisations as 'non-political' has been questioned, notably by Sobieraj and White (2004).

Sobieraj and White (2004) used the American Citizens Participation Study data to draw attention to the diversity of voluntary associations and individuals' experiences within them, stressing the importance of political discourse within associations as a prompt for political activity. They divided voluntary organisations into four types, depending on whether they took public stands on issues, whether they sometimes had political items on their agenda and whether members sometimes had informal political discussions. The authors found that participation in organisations with no political content (no public stance taken, no political agenda items, no informal political discussions) was not related to political participation. This supports the theory that political discussion plays an important role in mobilising voluntary association members. However, 'chequebook' memberships – identified as those for which members made additional financial contributions over and above their membership dues – were also statistically significantly related to political activity. These memberships clearly gave no access to political discussion because the members did not attend meetings, and yet they were related to higher levels of political activity among members. Unfortunately, Sobieraj and White did not distinguish between chequebook memberships of organisations which took public stands on issues and organisations which took no public stands. If organisations which solicit extra donations in addition to membership dues are more likely to take public stands on an issue, politically motivated individuals would be more likely to join them. It is therefore impossible to say whether the authors' findings about chequebook memberships are in conflict with their findings on political discussion.

Chequebook memberships may be a source of political information in and of themselves (Selle & Stromsnes, 2001). Passive members may receive political information through newsletters, for example, and may have political discussions outside the organisation as a result of their membership (Wollebaek & Selle, 2002). However, theory suggests that the effect of passive membership should be smaller than for an active membership (van der Meer & van Ingen, 2009).

Van der Meer and van Ingen (2009) find strong associations between voluntary organisation membership and political activity, including passive chequebook membership. In fact, they find that in a hierarchy of involvement, starting with passive membership and moving up to active participation including meeting attendance and voluntary work, the most important step in predicting political activity is (passive) membership alone. This is a challenge to the theory that political discussion and information sharing is at the heart of the relationship between volunteering and political activity (as well as to the link via civic skills – see above).

Eliasoph offers further challenge in her two-and-a-half year qualitative study of suburban activists, volunteers and club members (Eliasoph, 1998). She observes that volunteers use a narrative of self-interest to describe their activities and resist an explicitly political framing, preferring instead to concentrate on problems which are "close to home" and small in scale (p.64). Her inference is that the volunteers in her study want to demonstrate that 'ordinary' people can care, show compassion and make a difference in the world: they resist a description of themselves and their work as "political" because that implies something 'other' or different from their norm. Eliasoph suggests an explanation for those quantitative findings which link volunteering to political behaviour via political discussion (citing Verba & Nie, 1972): in a survey, participants are often left to decide for themselves whether to include a particular activity or discussion when they answer a question about "politics". She writes, "the link between membership and political involvement [holds] only for people who *defined* some of their group's conversation as 'political'" (p. 277, *her italics*). In other words, there is a selection effect in operation here: only 'political' people will identify their discussions or actions as political.

The individuals who get involved in voluntary groups may be the same individuals who routinely gather and disseminate political information, and the same individuals who get involved in political activities like voting and joining political parties. I have shown in the previous chapter, for example, that there is a strong social class link between volunteering and civic engagement. Individuals from families supported by a professional or managerial worker are more likely to go on to volunteer and also more likely to go on to vote, other things being equal. The effect of social class on upbringing precedes both volunteering and political activity and may be interpreted as a joint cause, or perhaps more accurately a joint predictor. Before any causal relationship can be inferred, it is necessary to account for selection effects like these (Theiss-Morse & Hibbing, 2005).

3.2.3 Socialisation

Political socialisation refers to the process by which people acquire political norms and values, often during adolescence, but more generally throughout the life course (Marc Hooghe, 2004). Individuals who move in circles which approve of political engagement will receive more positive peer group pressure to engage. The motivation to engage politically can be acquired through socialisation within the family, school or community, but also through a voluntary group or

association, and these participatory norms can be reinforced through social pressure (Funk, 2010). The literature in this area is concentrated mainly on development during adolescence and young adulthood.

Musick and Wilson give an extensive review of this segment of the literature, which includes amongst others Niemi and Chapman (1998), Roker et al. (1999) and Torney-Purta and Amadeo (2003) (Musick and Wilson 2008, Ch.20). Niemi and Chapman used data from the National Household Education Survey and found that that political interest was shaped by community service. Using a study from three diverse UK secondary schools, Roker *et al* showed that involvement in voluntary activities improved the civic skills of youth aged 14 to 16 and helped them to crystallise their views on traditional party politics, making them more likely to say that they would vote in future (Roker et al., 1999). Torney-Purta and Amadeo's cross-national study found that (except for the United States) volunteering was predictive of political knowledge. In all of these studies, the effect of volunteering on respondents' political lives is theorised to depend on political socialisation.

Quintelier (2008) used the Belgian Youth Survey to examine political socialisation. She found that cultural, deliberative and help organisations, and those which teach leadership and organisation, are more effective in encouraging political participation. Other organisations, however, did not promote political engagement. Although the author uses a civic skills argument to explain some of this effect, she relies on socialisation to explain her finding that multiple memberships have a stronger effect that one single high-intensity membership. However, Quintelier warns that the causal nature of this relationship can only be established using panel data (p.361).[12]

Frisco, Muller, and Dodson (2004) used panel data from the 1988 National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS) to link middle-school voluntary association membership with voting behaviour in young adults. They found that individuals who were members of some types of voluntary organisation were more likely to go on to vote. They also found that both membership and the civic outcomes of that membership are related to race and to socio-economic status (SES). The authors hypothesise that the cultural context in which the activity takes place has an effect on its outcome: this hypothesis would fit with a socialisation effect. They acknowledge, however, that their methods cannot address selection effects.

Hart, Donnelly, Youniss, and Atkins (2007) also used the NELS data, and attempted to address selection effects by comparing compulsory and voluntary community service. They found that required service predicts future civic knowledge and voting, while voluntary service predicts not only these acts, but also certain types of adult volunteering. One explanation for this discrepancy is

[12] It is interesting to note that Quintelier observed an effect of voluntary association membership on political engagement even after controlling for political interest, which differs from the results obtained by Verba, Brady and Schlozman (1995), described above.

that individuals who select in to volunteering in adolescence are displaying a preference for volunteering which continues into their adult lives. The beneficial effects of service on civic knowledge and voting, however, are available even to those who are coerced into the act rather than opting in to it.

Smith (1999) used the earlier NELS data and structural equation modelling to show that adolescents who actively participated in voluntary and community activities were more likely to go on to become young adults who participate in those activities, as well as other explicitly political activities. She controlled for socio-economic status (SES), and for 'continuing to postsecondary education'. She found no effect of SES, but those people who continued in education received a greater civic 'boost' from their adolescent activities than those who left at the end of compulsory school. The author ascribed this difference to "greater cognitive abilities and a greater motivation for self-improvement, both of which may facilitate learning and thus the influence of these agents" (p.574). This ascription risks under-stating selection effects, however.

3.2.4 Trust (and reciprocity)

Other authors have used similar data, but have situated their research in a body of work on trust, reciprocity or, more generally, social capital. The principle behind this theoretical link is that people who make contact with others, particularly face-to-face contact of the kind often experienced by volunteers, build up their levels of generalised trust in others. By making these contacts, volunteers come to believe that their efforts are likely to be reciprocated, not in terms of direct benefit to the volunteers themselves, but in terms of general societal or community effort. Communities which are rich in social contacts of this kind are said to have high levels of social capital. Where social capital is high, political engagement may also be expected to be high: people with high levels of generalised trust, who expect others in their communities to make a civic effort, are more likely to turn out to vote, to be interested in politics and to be engaged in civic and community organisations (Putnam, 2000). Volunteers are "more interested in politics and less cynical about political leaders than non-volunteers are," Putnam writes (2000: p.132).

McFarland and Thomas (2006) test the proposition using data from NELS and the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health). They found that involvement in politically salient youth voluntary associations had significant positive effects on adult political participation (voting, voter registration, political party membership and campaigning), even after extensive controls for family factors. These effects are measured over the long-term (7-12 years). The controls attenuated the authors' effect sizes by as much as half, indicating that the controls were accounting for some confounding factors. The reduction of effect sizes after accounting for family effects, such as parental education, family income, and parenting practices, confirms that some of the apparent relationship between volunteering and political engagement is likely to be endogenous.

Atkinson and Fowler (2012) used an instrumental variable: a big community event (a Saint's Day Fiesta) which may fall, at random, either just before or just after an election. They found that when the Fiesta occurred just prior to an election turnout was reduced. This ran counter to their expectations, which were based on the theory that face-to-face social contacts and community cohesion should increase voter turnout. The authors speculate that perhaps the Fiesta was a distraction from the political process: it took time, introduced uncertainty, and fulfilled in advance any social need to be civically dutiful. Their findings suggest that the link may be more complex than anticipated in much of the literature.

3.3 Research overview

This paper examines the relationship between volunteering and political engagement. Whilst recognising that there are limitations to what can be achieved with observational data, it addresses the question: does volunteering promote political engagement, at the level of the individual? It tests the hypothesis set out in section 1.4: **an individual who volunteers is more likely to become politically engaged in the short term, controlling for selection.**

The construct of political engagement is examined through two variables: political interest and political party support. Taking an interest is a crucial facet of political engagement, albeit a somewhat passive one, while political party support implies an engagement with the electoral system in particular. The intention, in using these two variables, is to examine a traditional, electoral form of political engagement. This relatively narrow concept excludes forms of engagement such as joining civic associations, or signing petitions. Acts of protest, like signing petitions or joining marches, have been treated as part of the construct of political engagement for many decades (Brady et al., 1995; Stoker, 2006) but they are associated with rather different political and civic traits and precursors to their more traditional cousins (Stolle & Hooghe, 2005; Torney-Purta et al., 2003). Acik, for example, found that boycott and 'buycott' protests were not strongly related to other political acts, like joining a party, campaign or action group (2013). The social capital literature has also been expansive in its definitions of civic and political engagement. Putnam, for example, includes volunteering and associational membership in his analyses (2000). For this study, it would be problematic to include voluntary and associational involvement as explanatory variables as this involvement is likely to be measuring a construct very similar to volunteering itself. There is a danger of endogeneity in this broad civic engagement approach (Fine, 2010).

The existence of wider political engagement constructs does not detract from the importance of the elements which make up the narrower, more electorally-based definition of political engagement. The legitimacy of a representative democracy rests, at least in part, on the participation of its citizens and such participation can therefore be considered a political 'good', in and of itself

(Lijphart, 1997). Electoral participation is therefore widely studied as a way of assessing the health of a democracy (Denny & Doyle, 2008).

Unlike political engagement, volunteering is a commonly used expression. A definition was not provided to BHPS panel members asked about "unpaid voluntary work" when they were asked to describe the frequency with which they undertook it (for a full discussion of the survey question, see section 2.4, below) and we must therefore rely on commonly held beliefs about voluntary work and volunteering to decide which activities may be included in their answers. Although there is no one common definition of volunteering it is usually understood as a form of work without pay, generally with the intention of helping others, or a cause (Institute for Volunteering Research, 2004). Some people, particularly those who are already volunteers, engage with the idea that volunteering is not entirely altruistic, but that the volunteer gains significant (non-monetary) benefit from it (Paine et al., 2010). However, people are more likely to be (consistently) considered to be volunteers if their work comes at significant personal cost (Meijs et al., 2003). In the field of volunteering research, and when definitions are provided in surveys, volunteering is described as taking place within the auspices of a club, association or organisation (Rochester, 2006).

3.4 Data

The British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) is a nationally representative panel study which began in 1991 with 10,000 individuals in more than 5000 households and ran for 18 waves until 2008. BHPS sample members were then included in the ongoing longitudinal study Understanding Society. The BHPS sample is built around the original sample members (OSMs). These individuals were present in a private household at one of the 8167 originally sampled addresses for wave 1 of the BHPS. The sample was representative of Great Britain (south of the Caledonian Canal) in 1990. Around 14,000 individuals were contacted initially, with a response rate of 65%. The sample for the subsequent waves (2 – 18) includes all adults in households which contain at least one OSM. OSMs can be children: these individuals were interviewed as adults once over age 16 (the 'rising 16s'). Additional extension or booster samples were added later. Cases used for the European Community Household Panel (ECHP) were added from wave 7 onwards, new contacts from Scotland and Wales joined the sample from wave 9 and a sub-sample from Northern Ireland was added from wave 11 (Lambert, 2006).

This study uses data only from the original sample members (OSMs): this amounts to data on 12,755 individuals (although not all of those provided data on the key variables) who were OSMs and answered the BHPS questionnaire in at least one wave. Of these, 10,264 were OSMs who answered in the first wave and 2491 were OSMs who answered only in later waves. These late starters are by and large the 'rising 16s' mentioned above, although a few, particularly in wave two, were wave one non-responders. After taking into account that data on volunteering (and indeed

other key variables) was not collected in every wave (see section 3.4.1 below), 51,214 observations remain, of which just under 5% were missing, leaving 48,708 volunteering responses for modelling purposes.

3.4.1 Key variables

This study's key explanatory variable, volunteering, was addressed in the BHPS by a question on leisure activities. Panel members were asked:

> "We are interested in the things people do in their leisure time, I'm going to read out a list of some leisure activities. Please look at the card and tell me how frequently you do each one."

They were presented with a range of options, including playing and watching sport, going to the cinema, taking meals out with friends and doing DIY. The final option of twelve listed was "unpaid voluntary work". Respondents were given the frequency options: "at least once a week," "at least once a month," "several times a year," "once a year or less," and "never/almost never". This framing of the volunteering question as one of a list of leisure activities is also used in, for example, the 1958 British birth cohort study (at age 16 and age 50). However, it is not completely standard. Another regular formulation, used for example by the Citizenship Survey, is to ask about "unpaid help" to a group, club or organisation. Survey design, and particularly question formulation, can have an impact on volunteering statistics. Staetsky (2009) produced a detailed treatment of the different approaches taken in UK surveys. Her discussion is focused on how inclusive or exclusive a question is of different activities. "Unpaid help" is generally a broader category than "voluntary work". Asking about volunteering as leisure may exclude activities which the respondent feels a duty to perform. Volunteering questions which are predicated on organisational membership may exclude certain types of episodic volunteering (Brookfield, Parry, & Bolton, 2014).

Volunteering in general surveys is often understated compared with specialised volunteering or civic engagement surveys (Staetsky, 2009). Without prompting, respondents are likely to discount or simply forget some of their voluntary work (Ives, 1981). Rates of volunteering as reported in the BHPS are certainly much lower than those from the Citizenship Survey. In 2008-09, 26% of people reported to the Citizenship Survey that they were volunteering at least once a month. In 2008, the proportion of BHPS OSMs reporting volunteering at least once a month was roughly half, at 13%. Staetsky and Mohan report a range of 10-30% involvement in volunteering on a monthly or more frequent basis, depending on the question and survey. While the BHPS question is not as inclusive as some, particularly those in more specialised 'civic' surveys, it certainly produces responses within the normal range.

BHPS panel members were asked how often they did voluntary work at waves 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16 and 18 (that is, in 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006 and 2008, or seven waves in total). In this paper, a volunteer is defined as someone who volunteered 'several times a year' or more. This approach has the important advantage of mitigating the effects of a known anomaly in the BHPS volunteering data from 2002: the rate of volunteering apparently increases from 20% in 2000 to 28%, before dropping back down again. It was found that the effect was due to a change in the showcard given to respondents (Staetsky & Mohan, 2011). In 2002, the option 'never/almost never' was dropped from the card, leaving a choice of 'at least once a week', at least once a month', 'several times a year' or 'once a year or less'. This resulted in the increase in volunteering rates at the lower end of the spectrum. In some of the analysis, this paper also makes use of the additional information about frequency of volunteering.

A preliminary examination of volunteering in the BHPS shows that rates were fairly stable over the seven waves in which panel members were asked about it, and there was little movement in and out of volunteering. Three-quarters of respondents were non-volunteers at every wave, and a further 11% were volunteers at just one wave. Very small percentages were active as volunteers at the majority of waves: 140 panel members were active at every wave (1.1%), and 499 (5.2%) were active at all the waves to which they responded. Volunteering is clearly a minority pursuit. Table 3.1, below, shows that between 15% and 19% of individuals volunteered at a given wave, and that between 11% and 16% of people changed their volunteering response between waves. The "change in response" data refers to a change in response between waves at which the volunteering question was asked; that is, over two years. Given the relatively stable nature of volunteering, changes in behaviour may be expected to have measurable effects.

Table 3.1: Descriptive statistics for volunteering 1996-2008

	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008
non-volunteer	6,640	6,550	6,215	5,832	5,592	5,402	4,724
%	83.81	85.06	84.77	84.14	84.59	84.94	80.74
volunteer	1,283	1,150	1,117	1,099	1,019	958	1,127
%	16.91	14.94	15.23	15.86	15.41	15.06	19.26
total	7,923	7,700	7,332	6,931	6,611	6,360	5,851
change in response		938	812	808	711	683	923
%		12.95	11.74	12.39	11.54	11.46	16.41
Total		7,245	6,917	5,496	6,519	6,160	5,626

This paper examines the relationship between volunteering and political engagement. The construct of political engagement is examined through two variables: political interest and political

party support. The political interest variable was measured at waves 1-6 and 11-18 (that is, in 1991-1996 and 2001-2008). Panel members were asked whether they were very interested, fairly interested, not very interested or not at all interested in politics. This variable was re-coded into a binary variable: those who were not very or not at all interested were coded as 'not interested' while those who were very or fairly interested were coded as 'interested'. The table below shows descriptive statistics for the re-coded political interest variable for 2001-2008.

Table 3.2: Descriptive statistics for political interest 2001-2008

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
not interested	4,063	4,104	3,981	3,875	3,844	3,846	3,778	3,530
%	56.72	59.13	58.55	58.61	56.60	57.53	57.91	56.76
interested	3,100	2,837	2,818	2,736	2,947	2,839	2,746	2,689
%	43.28	40.87	41.45	41.39	43.40	42.47	42.09	43.24
total	7,163	6,941	6,799	6,611	6,791	6,685	6,524	6,219
change in interest t-1		1,278	1,154	1,020	1,047	1,043	942	1,006
%		19.14	17.79	16.11	16.68	16.19	14.97	16.45
total		6,678	6,488	6,333	6,276	6,442	6,291	6,114

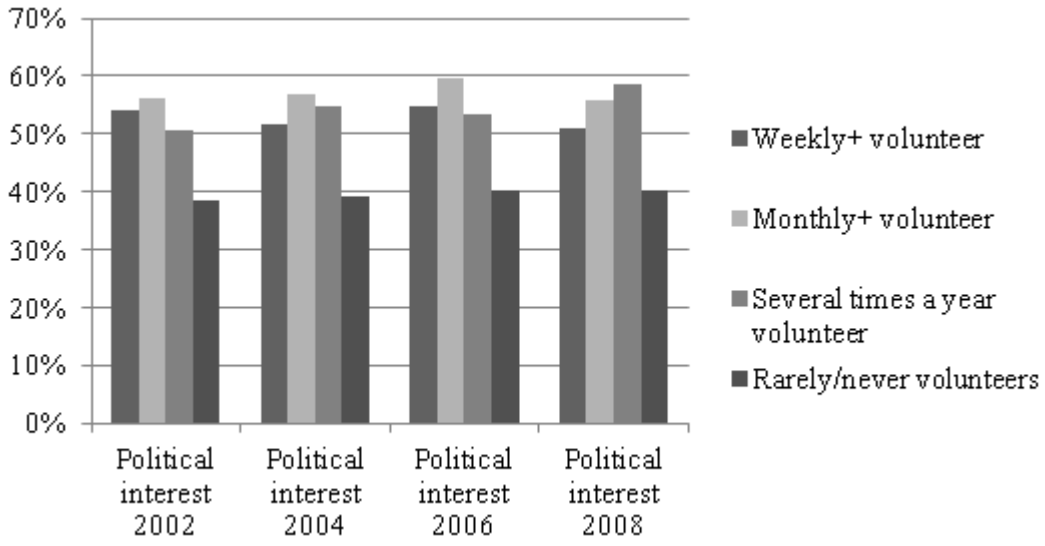
As with volunteering, the proportion of those interested in politics is relatively stable, but the proportion changing their opinion between waves is slightly higher: 15-19%, as opposed to 11-15% changing their volunteering behaviour.

A party support variable was also used as a political outcome variable. This variable is based on a question about the strength of support for a political party. It was coded '1' for those who could not say that they were closer to one political party than another, '2' for 'not very strong' support for a political party, '3' for 'fairly strong' support and '4' for 'very strong' support. This information was collected at every wave. Party support is relatively uncommon: 32% of respondents never express any interest in a party at all, however weak. Table 3.3 shows descriptive statistics for party support.

Volunteering data was collected in 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006 and 2008, so the party support data are displayed for those, and for the subsequent years (i.e. 1997, 1999 etc.). The change data refers to a change in opinion from the previous wave. The table shows that between 31% and 39% of respondents change their party support level from the previous wave. All of this change is occurring within the 68% of respondents who ever express any party support. BHPS volunteers, at any frequency of volunteering, are more likely to be interested in politics than non-

volunteers. The relationship between frequency of volunteering and political interest is illustrated in Figure 3.1, below, which shows the percentage of respondents who were interested in politics by frequency of volunteering for three separate waves: 2002, 2004, 2006 and 2008 (waves numbered 12, 14, 16 and 18).

Figure 3.1: Percentage of respondents interested in politics, by frequency of volunteering (cross-sectional)



There is a clear difference between volunteers and non-volunteers in their political interest, although the relationship is not a simple linear one: monthly volunteering seems to be more strongly linked to political interest than weekly or more frequent volunteering. Similar results were found for the party support variable. Although there is no obvious pattern of party support among the volunteers (that is, those who volunteer at any frequency) it is clear that non-volunteers are less likely to exhibit party support.

Table 3.3: Descriptive statistics for party support

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
no party	2,672	2,297	2,669	2,670	2,928	2,540	2,674	2,886	2,755	2,634	3,021	2,859	2,812
	34.49	30.09	35.67	35.79	40.20	35.79	38.80	42.86	42.13	39.23	45.62	44.17	45.60
not very strong	2,950	2,812	2,950	2,808	2,610	2,779	2,626	2,523	2,401	2,465	2,298	2,232	1,935
	38.01	36.84	39.43	37.64	35.84	39.16	38.11	37.47	36.72	36.71	34.70	34.48	31.38
fairly strong	1,750	2,064	1,570	1,617	1,426	1,509	1,316	1,122	1,167	1,368	1,113	1,196	1,176
	22.58	27.04	20.98	21.67	19.58	21.27	19.10	16.66	17.85	20.37	16.81	18.48	19.07
very strong	376	461	293	366	319	268	275	202	216	248	190	186	244
	4.85	6.04	3.92	4.91	4.38	3.78	3.99	3.00	3.30	3.69	2.87	2.87	3.96
total	7,748	7,634	7,482	7,461	7,283	7,096	6,891	6,733	6,539	6,715	6,622	6,473	6,167
change in response		2,823	2,668	2,459	2,471	2,450	2,174	2,142	1,950	2,063	2,089	1,973	1,933
%		39.37	37.9	35.07	35.52	36.19	33.04	33.46	31.35	33.49	33.05	31.84	32.09
total		7,170	7,040	7,011	6,957	6,770	6,579	6,401	6,221	6,160	6,321	6,197	6,024

Some of the analyses in this paper control for sex, age, academic qualifications, social class, income quintile, financial situation, self-described health status and marital status. These controls were selected because they are linked to volunteering and, in most cases, political engagement in the literature. These controls are available at every BHPS wave, allowing for statistical control for changes the value of these variables. The variable for sex is a binary variable, measured when the OSM joins the sample. The variable for age is a continuous. Academic qualifications are divided into five categories: no qualifications, O-level/CSE level qualifications, A-levels and equivalent, HND/Teaching qualifications and equivalent, and undergraduate degree or higher. Social class is divided into six occupational groups: unskilled, partly skilled, skilled manual, skilled non-manual, managerial/technical and professional. Levels of missing data for this variable were relatively high, so an additional category was coded for 'missing/other': 40% of the data was in this category. Income quintiles are from low to high. The median individual income for this data is around £9500[13]. Financial situation is self-defined in five categories: finding it very difficult, finding it quite difficult, just about getting by, doing alright, and living comfortably. Self-described health status and marital status are constructed as a binary variables (1 is coded as 'healthy' in the first instance, and 'married' in the second).

3.5 Methods

Panel data provides repeated measures of the same characteristics over time: similar questionnaires are administered to respondents at several time points. This dataset is structured hierarchically: there are repeated measures or observations within individuals. In this respect, panel data is similar in structure to data on children within schools, or cities within countries. For data like these, standard regression assumptions do not hold: the observations in the data on the same individual over time are unlikely to be independent of one another. Children within schools are more similar than children in different schools; cities in one country are more similar to one another than to cities in another country; and measurements taken 'within' individuals are more similar than those taken across a set of individuals. This paper compares two possible approaches to this violation of standard independence assumptions: random effects modelling and fixed effects modelling.

Theses analyses of panel data have a binary outcome (politically engaged/not engaged) and are conducted as logistic regressions, estimating the log-odds of engagement. The models have the general form:

[13] For comparison, the median *household* income in the UK in 1999/2000, was around £20,000 (ONS).

Equation 1:

$$\log\left[\frac{P_{it}}{1-P_{it}}\right] = \mu_t + \alpha_i + \beta x_{it} + \gamma z_i + \varepsilon_{it}$$

Equation 1 is a logistic regression equation for panel data where P_{it} is the probability of political engagement for individual *i* at time *t*, μ_t is the time-specific intercept, α_i is the person-specific intercept, and β and γ are regression coefficients, with x_{it} as a vector of time-varying independent variable and z_i as a vector of time-invariant covariables, and ε_{it} is a random error term.

One, parsimonious, method for dealing with this type of nested data to treat α_i as a normally distributed random variable: this may be called a random effects model. A random effects model assumes that there is zero correlation between the observed independent variables and α_i. Here, α_i may be interpreted as a 'unit' or individual effect: it represents the time-invariant characteristics of individual *i* which may be considered permanent properties of that individual (Halaby, 2004). That is to say, having accounted for the effects of z_i, α_i represents the *unobserved* time-invariant characteristics of individual i. In real terms, this would imply no correlation between, for example, volunteering and an unmeasured independent variable such as parental civic norms: this is often considered implausible. If there is a non-zero correlation between such unobserved causes and the covariates in the model, the random effects estimator is biased and inconsistent (Rabe-Hesketh & Skrondal, 2008).

An alternative is to treat α_i as a fixed constant for each individual (a fixed effects model). Whilst being relatively inefficient compared to a random effects model, a fixed effects model gives a consistent estimate of β even when α_i is correlated with the explanatory variables. This approach requires no assumptions about the correlation between observed and unobserved covariates, so it answers the concerns raised above about the effects of correlation between omitted variables and those included in the model (Halaby, 2004). A fixed effects model also has the fundamental advantage that it 'partials out' all the observed and unobserved time-invariant characteristics of individuals in the sample. This feature is particularly useful for a study of volunteering, which is strongly linked to early formative cultural experience and may be transmitted intergenerationally (Caputo, 2009).

It should be noted, however, that time-invariant predictors drop out of a fixed model, making it unsuitable for studying, for example, gender differentials.[14] Additionally, fixed effects techniques cannot control for changes which take place during the period of analysis: unobserved 'shocks' could still account for some or all of the effects observed. A plausible example for this study would be a well-publicised change in government charity or volunteering policy, which might

[14] It should also be noted that using a fixed effects estimator technique is likely to exacerbate bias due to measurement error.

increase the political engagement of volunteers. That would produce an apparent effect of volunteering on political engagement, but the effect could not be considered causal: in fact, an observed change in political engagement would then have been precipitated by government policy changes and not by volunteering *per se*. Alternatively, the effect could confounded by changes in within-person time-varying covariates: perhaps volunteering experience drives people towards additional education, which in turn increases political engagement.

A Hausman test is sometimes used to decide whether fixed or random effects modelling should be preferred. If the value given by the Hausman test is significant ($p<0.05$) the unit heterogeneity in the random effects model (α_i) is correlated with the observed covariates (x_{it} and z_i) and fixed effects should be preferred (Halaby, 2004). However, rather than relying on the Hausman test, some put more emphasis on empirical concerns and the nature of study's research questions in deciding between random and fixed effects (Bell & Jones, 2014).

3.6 Results

The models produced here were estimated in Stata 12. Table 3.4 below shows the regression coefficients (logits) for a contemporaneous calculation predicting political interest. The observations used for the model were collected in 1996, 2002, 2004, 2006 and 2008: these were the years in which data on both volunteering and political interest were available. In the models with controls, those controls are: gender, age, financial situation, health status, academic qualifications, social class and marital status. Fuller Stata 12 results tables are available in Appendix B.

Table 3.4: Naive, random (re) and fixed effect (fe) regression coefficients – political interest

	(1) naive	(2) re	(3) fe	(4) naive - ctrls	(5) re - ctrls	(6) fe - ctrls
volunteer	0.577*	0.540*	0.191*	0.366*	0.418*	0.189*
	(0.030)	(0.064)	(0.072)	(0.032)	(0.064)	(0.073)
odds ratio	1.78	1.72	1.21	1.44	1.52	1.21
constant	-0.403*	-0.902*		-2.778*	-4.538*	
	(0.012)	(0.045)		(0.136)	(0.278)	
intra-class correlation		0.781			0.733	
		(0.006)			(0.007)	
observations	33,653	33,653	12,207	33,168	33,168	12,021
individuals	9,446	9,446	2,750	9,325	9,325	2,715

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p<0.05$

Table 3.4 reports regression coefficients, with standard errors in parentheses below. For ease of interpretation, the odds ratios are shown in the line below that. The intra-class or intra-cluster correlation is the percentage of the variance attributed to the random effect or clustering. In other words, the data within individuals is much more similar than the data between individuals. This may also be described as the residual correlation of political interest measurements within individuals after accounting for volunteering.

The results show a positive effect of volunteering on political interest in each model. The naïve models (with and without controls) are shown mainly for comparison with the random and fixed effects models and should not be interpreted on their own because they do not meet the logistic regression assumption that the observations on which the regression is performed are independent of one another (Field, 2008). It can be seen, however, that the naïve and random effects models are quite similar to one another in the effects they predict for volunteering. Both appear to support the hypothesis that volunteering promotes political interest. Theoretically, the random effects model should be preferred because it is efficient compared to fixed effects modelling. The random effects model, however, is subject to the assumption that volunteering (and, indeed, the other observed predictors) is uncorrelated with unmeasured time-invariant causes of political interest, such as those which might be associated with upbringing, for example (see Chapter 2, and also Rabe-Hesketh & Skrondal, 2008; Sturgis, Patulny, Allum, & Buscha, 2012). A Hausman test was used to differentiate between the random and fixed effects models: in the case of the models described above, the value of the test was significant at the 99.9% confidence level, and the random effect assumption was therefore rejected.

The fixed effects estimators (with, and without, controls) are very similar. The effect of volunteering on political interest is much smaller than for the naïve and random effects models: the odds of being politically interested are 1.2 times greater for volunteers than for non-volunteers. The effect is significant at the 95% level (and, indeed, at the 99% level). The fixed effects models have removed the effects of all unobserved time-invariant confounders. The effect therefore persists once all between-person variance has been partialled out: there is a *within* person effect of volunteering on political interest, albeit a small one.

These analyses were then repeated with a one year lag for the independent variables. Volunteering, and the other independent variables, were measured one wave prior to the outcome variable, political interest. The intention with this approach was to offer some defence against suggestions that the effect may be due to reciprocal or circular causality. The effect of volunteering was a similar size to that observed using contemporaneous measurements, but the effect was only significant at the 10% level.

Models were also fitted for the second outcome variable, political party support. Table 3.6, below, shows the results for naïve logistic, random effects logistic and fixed effects logistic regressions,

with volunteering as a key (binary) explanatory variable, and political party support as a dependent variable. Once again, the naïve and random effects regressions show a positive and significant effect of volunteering on the political outcome, in this case political party support. However, in the fixed effects model which, as we have noted above, might give a better approximation of within-individual causality, there is no effect. The effect sizes are generally smaller for party support than for political interest, and it is possible that there is a positive effect (as evidenced by the direction of the odds ratios) but that it is too small to be detected using this method.

Table 3.5: Naive, random (re) and fixed effect (fe) regression coefficients – political party support

	(1) naive	(2) re	(3) fe	(4) naive - ctrls	(5) re - ctrls	(6) fe - ctrls
volunteer	0.358*	0.228*	0.027	0.144*	0.152*	0.035
	(0.026)	(0.049)	(0.054)	(0.028)	(0.049)	(0.054)
odds ratio	1.430	1.256	1.027	1.155	1.164	-1.036
constant	0.356*	0.649*		-1.650*	-1.698*	
	-0.010	(0.034)		(0.105)	(0.193)	
intra-class correlation		0.693			0.621	
		(0.007)			(0.007)	
observations	47,931	47,931	24,164	47,314	47,314	23,871
individuals	9,566	9,566	4,134	9,444	9,444	4,086

Standard errors in parentheses
* p<0.05

The fixed effects models were re-run with volunteering broken down into four frequencies, and no effect of volunteering on political party support was observed. Finally, the models were run again using 'xtreg' treating the four category party support variable as a continuous variable: no effect of volunteering was observed.

3.7 Discussion and conclusion

It is clear from the literature that volunteers are more likely to be engaged with politics than non-volunteers: but volunteers are also more likely to be well-educated people, with professional jobs who come from middle-class homes with parents who socialised them to engage in this way. This paper uses fixed effects modelling to account for these and other time-invariant effects. This approach has not been used before in the context of volunteering and political engagement. Rather than looking at patterns of engagement over the life course, it permits an examination of volunteering as a causal agent in the shorter term: **is an individual who volunteers more likely to become politically engaged in the short term, controlling for selection?** Although the effect of

volunteering on political interest is smaller using fixed effects modelling than for random effects (an odds increase of 21%, as opposed to 52%) it is nonetheless statistically significant. The difference in magnitude between the random and fixed effects coefficients can be interpreted as being a result of omitted confounding variables (Halaby, 2004). That is, early life experiences and socialisation may indeed result in exaggerated effect-sizes unless they can be adequately accounted for.

A fixed effects approach is particularly appropriate for volunteering, which may be considered a habit (Putnam, 2000, p.122), formed early in life and continued into adulthood (Caputo, 2009). (The formative nature of early volunteering in setting up long term civic habits was explored in Chapter Two.) Factors such as parental volunteering rates, family culture during adolescence and school community service are all fixed effects for adult panel members. The four main theoretical approaches linking volunteering to political engagement – skills, knowledge, socialisation and trust – all acknowledge the importance of early experience in driving both volunteering and political engagement (Stolle & Hooghe, 2005). An approach like the one used here which partials out these early influences is therefore particularly useful.

Political interest is only one facet of political engagement, but may be considered a particularly useful one. It provides an important motivation to further engagement, as well as to knowledge-gathering (Marc Hooghe, 2004). My finding here echoes the literature: Maloney et al. (2008), Niemi & Chapman (1998), and Wollebaek & Selle (2002) also find a positive relationship between activity in voluntary associations and political interest. However, it should be noted that interest does not necessarily drive further engagement, even among those with substantial resources: such people have been dubbed "spectators" (van Deth, 2000). Furthermore, Denny and Doyle (2008) have argued that political interest is subject to an endogeneity problem of its own, being driven by personality and intellectual ability, which also drive voter turnout.

Volunteering was not, however, found to be a driver of political party support. The random effects model showed an increase in the odds of being a party supporter of 20% for volunteers over non-volunteers, but this was not replicated in the fixed effects model. There was, in other words, no additional chance that an individual would be a party supporter if they were a volunteer either at time *t* or time *t-1*, controlling for observed and unobserved time-invariant characteristics. This finding is in keeping with the mix of outcomes reported in the literature. The effect of volunteering on political engagement is therefore not consistent over different types of political engagement.

There are some limitations to this approach. Firstly, the generalisability of findings from the BHPS may be rather low, particularly when these findings are related to social participation (such as volunteering, or filling in survey, for example). The relationship which I have demonstrated between volunteering and political interest may apply only that segment of the British population which can be induced to fill in annual surveys over a period of years. Secondly, the fixed effects

approach controls only for time-invariant characteristics: there remains the possibility that the effects observed here are confounded by external shocks, or by factors which change within people over time.

Future work in this area might usefully focus on the effects of volunteering on different varieties of civic and political engagement, using similar techniques to pick apart some of the endogeneity which plagues these subjects. Political interest is a useful way of looking at political engagement, but formal electoral engagement cannot truly be said to be represented by political party support. An analysis using voter turn-out, for example, would be informative.

3.8 Acknowledgement

The methodological inspiration for this paper came from an ISER Working Paper "Social Connectedness and Generalized Trust: A Longitudinal Perspective", written by my supervisor Patrick Sturgis with Roger Patulny, Nick Allum and Franz Buscha (Sturgis et al., 2012)

Chapter 4: The role of trust as a mediator between volunteering and political engagement

As discussed in Chapters One and Two, there is a strong positive relationship between volunteering and political engagement. Volunteers are much more likely than non-volunteers to be interested in politics, to vote, sign petitions, and take part in civic decision-making (Putnam, 2000; Quintelier, 2008). It is theorised that trust is an important mediator in the positive relationship between volunteering and political engagement (see also section 1.4). This paper assesses whether **the key mechanism linking volunteering and political engagement is generalised social trust**.

4.1 The importance of trust

This paper examines the role of trust as a mediator in the relationship between time spent volunteering and two different types of political engagement: face-to-face political or civic meetings, and contacts with politicians or officials. I use the techniques available in the structural equation modelling (SEM) framework to unpick one strand of Putnam's "well-tossed spaghetti" of civic and political engagement (Putnam, 2000, p.137). The relationship between volunteer hours, generalised social trust, institutional trust and two types of political engagement is tested using data from the 2009/10 Citizenship Survey. The relationship between voluntary association membership and social and institutional trust has been well-studied, as has the relationship between trust and political engagement, and a few papers even address both (van der Meer & van Ingen, 2009; Wollebaek & Selle, 2002). This paper, however, is unique in using a continuous measure of volunteer hours to study the effect, rather than relying on membership only. Volunteering is an act of service, one that generally requires face-to-face contact, either with other volunteers or with service-users, and is the type of activity which might be expected to induce higher levels of social trust in participants. Volunteering may also bring participants into contact with the formal institutions of the state, building their trust in governmental institutions, and thus encouraging political engagement. Voluntary association membership, on the other hand, can involve little more than an exchange of paper: while it has been shown to be linked with both social and institutional trust, it is not clear exactly how the mechanism functions.

Trust is particularly important in the in the social capital literature. Trust is a key component of social capital, and therefore a key predictor of positive civic outcomes (Claibourn & Martin, 2000; Kaase, 1999; Putnam, 1993; E. Smith, 1999; Whiteley, 2000; Wollebaek & Stromsnes, 2007). In this body of literature, trust usually refers to generalised social trust. Social trust is the sense we have that the people around us, that is, people we don't know personally but who occupy the same public spaces as us, are generally safe to be around and will not usually act in a way that harms our

interests. It may be contrasted with particularised trust; that is, trust in known others, or 'insiders' (Uslaner, 1999). Social trust has been interpreted as a character trait, somewhat fixed, and linked to an optimistic worldview (Sturgis et al., 2010; Uslaner & Brown, 2005) but has more commonly been described as a social attitude which changes depending on circumstances (Putnam, 2000; Stolle, 1998; Wollebaek & Selle, 2002). To be considered as a potential mediator, trust must be assumed to be a mutable characteristic, capable of being altered by volunteering behaviour, and this is the approach taken here.

The relationships between the social norms of trust and reciprocity, and social networks built through voluntary work, are complex and reciprocal (Sonderskov, 2010). Nonetheless, there is a clear expectation that where people meet face-to-face, and especially where they work together voluntarily, they build up social norms of trust and reciprocity, and engage in social networks which share these norms, both of which make it more likely that they will engage in further social and civic actions (Wollebaek & Selle, 2002). Theoretical accounts of volunteering, trust and political engagement which take a broadly social capital approach predict that volunteering will have a positive effect on political engagement, and that this positive effect will flow through social trust.

Elsewhere in the literature on volunteering and political engagement, a theoretical link is made through institutional, as opposed to social, trust (Wilson, 2000). Trust in political and civic institutions has been shown to be related to higher levels of political engagement (Marc Hooghe, 2011, p.136) but there is considerable disagreement in the literature (Levi & Stoker, 2000; Newton, 1999). Institutional trust is most relevant in stable democracies, where citizens trust at least that their state institutions will persist into the future, and that engagement with them will not be dangerous (Torney-Purta, Klandl, & Barber, 2004). The role of institutional trust may be particularly useful in studies of collective societies, such as Japan, because an endorsement of the partnership between the non-profit and state sectors, can help mobilize citizens for volunteer action (Taniguchi, 2012). While the UK cannot be said to be in the same category as Japan when it comes to collectivity, it may nevertheless be interesting to compare the effects of social and institutional trust: the former suggests that the social role of volunteering is upper-most in determining how it effects political engagement, while the latter highlights its institutional role.

The effect of volunteering on institutional trust is thought to rely on volunteers' increased contact with the formal institutions of the state. Volunteering may bring people into contact with the officialdom and formal institutions of the state, particularly those parts of the civic system or culture which support the voluntary sector, but also the parts with responsibilities which coincide with the interests of the voluntary organisation concerned. These contacts build trust in the government or its institutions, which encourages further political and civic engagement (Sivesind, Pospíšilová, & Frič, 2013).

4.2 Trust as a mediator between volunteering and political engagement

Two papers explicitly address the relationship tested here between volunteering and political engagement, with trust as a mediator. In both, a contrast is made between 'chequebook' members and those who are more actively involved (van der Meer & van Ingen, 2009; Wollebaek & Selle, 2002). Van der Meer and van Ingen's study uses European Social Survey data from 2002 and 2003 to test the 'neo-Tocquevillian' claim that membership in voluntary associations can cause an increase in political activity at the level of the individual through the mechanism of socialisation. They attempt to predict two types of political engagement: conventional and unconventional. Conventional political engagement is a binary variable which is coded 1 if a respondent has contacted a politician, worked for a political party, worn a campaign button or donated money to a politician's campaign. Unconventional political engagement is a binary variable which is coded 1 if a respondent has taken part in a legal or illegal demonstration, taken part in a boycott or 'buycott', or signed a petition. They tested the claim that active members (those who volunteer, for example) should receive a greater political 'dividend' than passive members (those for whom membership is a mostly financial transaction). They found that passive (or 'chequebook') members show much higher levels of political action than the non-involved, whereas the additional effects of active participation are marginal. They conclude that, if social trust or social participation were mediators, active participation should pay a higher political dividend than passive participation, because of the greater opportunities to forge social connections offered by active involvement. They describe voluntary associations as "pools of democracy" (p.281) rather than schools of democracy (following de Tocqueville).

Van der Meer and van Ingen also found that institutional trust was negatively linked to both conventional and unconventional political participation. That is, people who were less trusting of politicians and political institutions were *more* likely to participate politically. They suggest, following Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2002), that such people feel the need to participate precisely because they do not trust: that is, they participate in order to keep a weather eye on politicians and the political process. Increased trust in parliaments has been shown to be correlated with reduced commitment to volunteering (Hackl, Pruckner, & Halla, 2009). Hackl *et al* refer to this as "consensual crowding out," where individuals reduce their volunteering because of a broad consensus between the people and their government over what should be provided by the state. In this case, lack of trust in the state provides an incentive to intervene on a voluntary basis, particularly for interventions which are protest-based (John, Fieldhouse, & Liu, 2011). Wilson has suggested that where volunteer hours are found to be associated with reduced levels of institutional trust (John et al., 2011, for example) volunteering time is being diverted into protest (Wilson, 2000).

Van der Meer and van Ingen did, however, find a positive association between social trust and unconventional political engagement. People who were more trusting of those around them were

more likely to engage. The authors' measure of unconventional political engagement is likely to be dominated by signing petitions: signing a petition could be 25 times more common[15] as a political act than taking part in a demonstration (for example Ipsos MORI, 2010). The link between generalised social trust and this individualistic form of political engagement is slightly surprising: theory suggests that trust should be more closely linked to collaborative forms. It would have been interesting to see a different construction of political engagement measures to allow this thesis to be tested.

Wollebaek and Selle (2002) show similarly that there is no difference between active and passive memberships in terms of civic outcomes, but also that an individual's level of political engagement is positively related to the number of associations she joins. This finding fits well with those of van der Meer and van Ingen and militates against the hypothesis that trust is a strong mediator in this relationship. The authors used data from the Norwegian Survey of Giving and Volunteering. They found that generalised social trust was better predicted by multiple memberships, than by a single active membership, and that the relationship between social trust and active participation broke down completely with the addition of socio-demographic controls. Wollebaek and Selle operationalise active, as opposed to passive, membership as a dichotomous variable which is coded 1 if respondents are active in an association for one hour or more a week. This operationalisation is useful but cannot make any distinctions among the active population: if trust were promoted by face-to-face contacts, one would expect that more activity would be association with more trust. Volunteering would have been a better measure than voluntary associational membership for this test, because volunteering usually involves face-to-face contact, and face-to-face contact is important for trust. Volunteering may also be available as a continuous measure, which is interesting because it allows investigation of the effects of each additional exposure.

4.3 Data and methods

Citizenship Survey 2009-10 data was used for this study. The survey is based on a nationally representative sample of adults in England and Wales. It is a specialist Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) survey investigating community cohesion, civic and political engagement and discrimination. The data were collected over four quarters from April 2009 to March 2010. The core sample of 9335 individuals surveyed in England and Wales was selected for this project. Individuals with missing data on the study variables were dropped from the analysis, resulting in a final study sample of 8959.

Structural equation modelling (SEM) was used to analyse the data. Structural equation models (SEMs) were estimated using MPlus, v.7 and data preparation was carried out in Stata (both v.13

[15] In the data used for this study, the core sample of the Citizenship Survey 2009/10, signing a petition is thirteen times more common than attending a demonstration.

and v.11). SEM was chosen because it allows for the study both of mediation effects and of latent variables. Latent variables are hypotheticals; not directly observable, but theorised. Trust is a good example: we have no way of directly observing whether a person is trusting, or how trusting a person might be. Trust is not an appearance or a single behaviour, but a complex construct of attitudes, beliefs and behaviours.

The trust to which much of the social capital literature refers is generalised social trust of people whom we do not know personally. Generalised social trust rests on a background of shared social norms and networks, and an expectation of reciprocity (Putnam, 2000). Generalised social trust is measured by the Generalised Trust Question (GTQ):

> "Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?
>
> 1 – most people can be trusted
>
> 2 – can't be too careful
>
> 3 – depends."

The Citizenship Survey (CS) 2009-10 used for this paper also includes trust question about people in "your neighbourhood". The question reads:

> "Would you say that ...
>
> (1) **many** of the people in your neighbourhood can be trusted,
>
> (2) **some** can be trusted,
>
> (3) a **few** can be trusted,
>
> (4) or that **none** of the people in your neighbourhood can be trusted?"

A measurement model was constructed using this neighbourhood trust question and dummy variables constructed from the GTQ. ('Can't be too careful' was the omitted category: see Appendix C for measurement model and fit).

Trust in civic and political institutions is also measured in the CS. The questionnaire includes questions about "your local council", "Parliament" and "the police," in the form:

> "Do you trust it/them a lot, a fair amount, not very much, or not at all?
>
> (1) A lot
>
> (2) A fair amount

(3) Not very much

(4) Not at all."

Trust in civic institutions, sometimes called political trust has a weak positive relationship to social trust (Kaase, 1999). The three questions were used to construct a latent variable for institutional trust, encompassing trust in the local council, the Westminster Parliament and the police.

In addition, the Citizenship Survey contains a wealth of political engagement information. Political engagement information is gathered in two separate sections of the questionnaire and encompasses data on contacts, meetings, demonstrations, petitions, consultations and civic decision-making groups. Table 4.1, below, gives detailed information.

Table 4.1: political engagement variables

engagement variable	**questionnaire section**	**description**	**variable type**
contact	4 (PActUK)	contacted (8 types of) politician or local official (not casework), last 12 months	binary – 8 types
demonstration	4 (PRally)	took part in a demonstration or protest, last 12 months	binary
public meeting	4 (PRally)	attended a public meeting or rally, last 12 months	binary
petition	4 (PRally)	signed a petition, last 12 months	binary
frequency of action	4 (POften)	how often have you contacted a politician or official, attended a demo or public meeting, or signed a petition, last 12 months (choose from at least weekly, at least monthly, less than monthly or other)	4 frequency categories
frequency of action	4 (POfOth)	if POften is 'other' or 'less than monthly', number of times taken action in last 12 months	continuous
consultations	4 (PConsul)	taken part in a public consultation (by 3 different methods), last 12 months	binary – 3 types
frequency of consultation response	4 (PConOft)	how often have you taken part in a consultation, last 12 months (choose from at least weekly, at least monthly, less than monthly or other)	4 frequency categories
frequency of consultation response	4 (POfOth1)	if PConOft is 'other' or 'less than monthly', number of times taken part in last 12 months	continuous
decision group	6 (CivAct2)	member of (7 types of) local decision-making group, last 12 months	binary – 7 types

There are several plausible ways of modelling the political engagement information. Firstly, political engagement could be modelled as a single latent variable, comprised of all the available

engagement variables. The Citizenship Survey data from 2009/10 includes information from the following political engagement questions.

A measurement model for 'political engagement' was estimated using all the variables in Table 4.1 as indicators of a latent political engagement factor. It was found to be a poor fit to the 2009/10 Citizenship Survey data (high value Chi square test, RMSEA above 0.5, CFI below 95), so more complex models were considered.

Some analysts have divided political engagement between traditional forms and protest forms, sometimes called conventional and unconventional forms (van der Meer & van Ingen, 2009). Traditional political engagement certainly includes voting, which is not covered by the Citizenship Survey, but also contacting officials or politicians and taking part in consultations. A second measurement model was estimated dividing the variables in Table 4.1 into traditional (contact, consultations, decision group) and protest (demonstration, public meeting, petition). Again, it was found to be a poor fit to the data.

Thirdly, political engagement may be modelled in terms of contact and collaboration (Berger, 2011; John et al., 2011; Whiteley, 2005). Contacting a politician or civic official is generally a solitary activity, carried out by one individual even when it comes as part of a campaign or publicity drive. It requires little in the way of negotiation or collaboration and can be done in the contactor's own time. Collaborative engagement, however, involves group working and usually some time spent face-to-face with others. The political engagement variables from the Citizenship Survey were divided into 'meeting' and 'contacting'. 'Meeting' was measured by responses to questions about attending a public meeting or demonstration, taking part in a consultation group or meeting, and taking part in a civic decision-making group. 'Contacting' was measured by responses to questions about contacting a politician or official, signing a petition and filling in a consultation questionnaire. This model was a good fit for the data: the measurement model, estimates and associated fit statistics are reported in Appendix C. Although these models cannot be formally tested against one another[16], only the contact/collaboration model offered a good fit to the data.

Volunteering hours was used as a key predictor variable. Respondents who had been involved with voluntary organisations in the last year were asked:

> "Now just thinking about the past **4 weeks**. Approximately how many **hours** have you spent helping [an organisation] in the past 4 weeks?"

[16] The models are not nested – and even if they were, the WLSMV estimator was used, and the chi-square value from WLSMV cannot be used for chi-square difference tests.

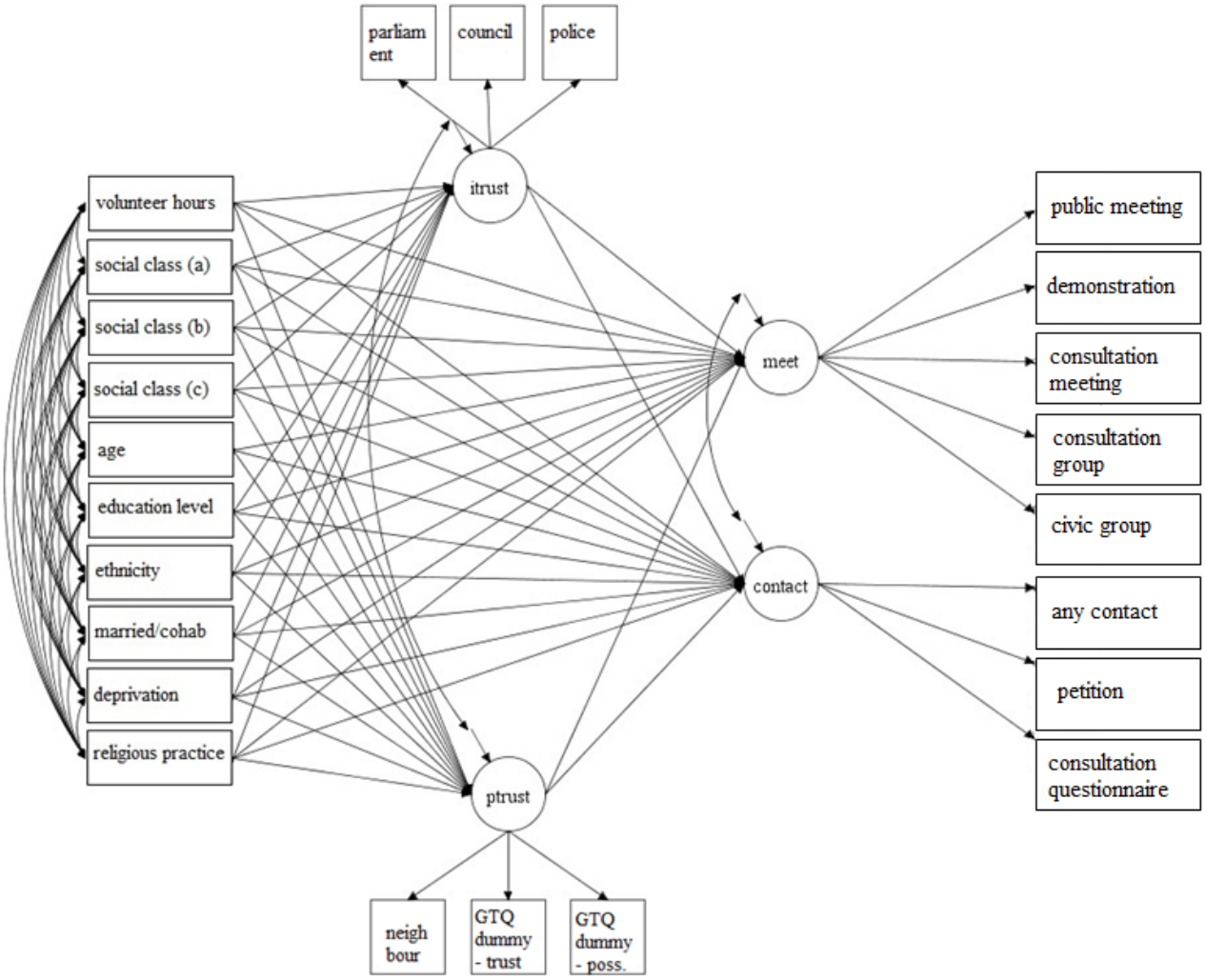
This question has the advantage that it limits respondents to a short, recent time period. The order of questions encourages honesty because participants are able to acknowledge their longer-term volunteering before being asked to consider their recent activity.

A selection of control variables was also drawn from the CS 2009/10 dataset. They were selected based on the literature to control for potential joint causes of trust and political engagement. The effects of social class, age, education level, ethnicity, marital status, deprivation, and religious practice were controlled for. The details of the construction of these variables is available in Appendix D.

Structural equation modelling (SEM) was used to explore the theorised path from volunteering to political engagement via trust. The estimator used was WLSMV (Muthen & Muthen, 2006, p.600). WLSMV is an appropriate robust estimator for use with non-normal continuous, categorical and ordered data (Brown, 2006, p.389).

The hypothesised model is shown in Figure 4.1, below. In the path diagram, squares represent observed or indicator variables while circles represent latent variables. Single-headed arrows are used to imply the direction of hypothesised causal influence. Double headed arrows denote covariance. Volunteer hours are hypothesised to have both a direct and indirect effect on political engagement, modelled as ‘meet’ and ‘contact’. The indirect effect is mediated by institutional trust (itrust) and generalised social trust (ptrust). The effects of social class, age, education level, ethnicity, marital status, deprivation, and religious practice are controlled for.

Figure 4.1: Hypothesised model



The 'itrust'variable was constructed using trust in parliament, trust in the local council and trust in the police. The 'ptrust' was constructed using trust in neighbours and two dummy variables from the GTQ: these represent trusting and possibly trusting. 'Meet' was based on attendance at a public meeting, demonstration, consultation meeting, consultation group or civic group. 'Contact' was based on having made any contact with a politician or official, having a signed a petition or responded to a consultation questionnaire.

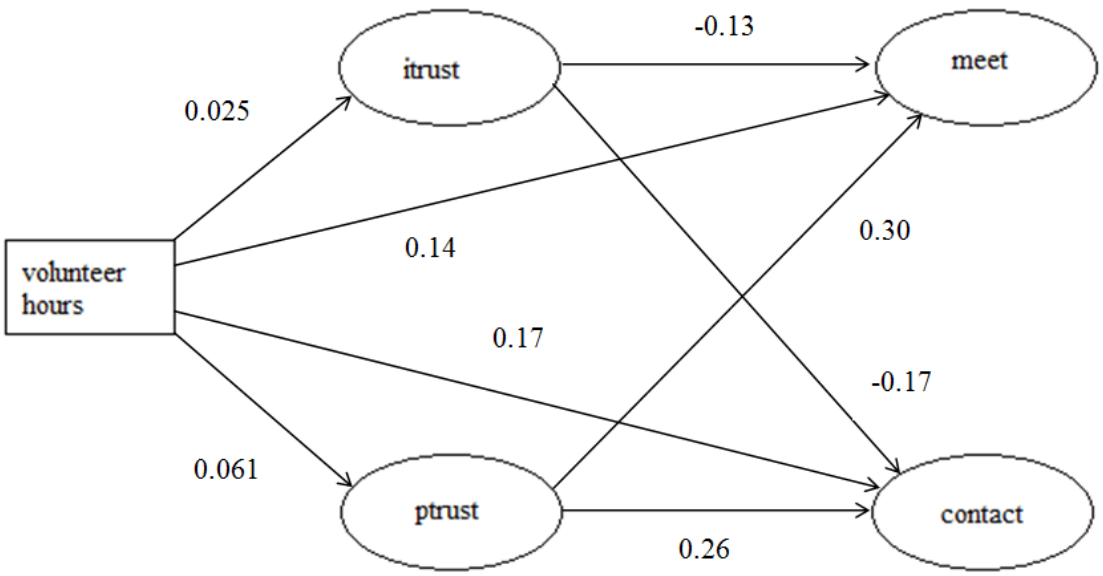
4.4 Results

The model illustrated in Figure 4.1 was run using MPlus v.7. The standardised estimates for the model are printed in full in Appendix E. The variables are standardised according to the variances of both the observed and latent variables. This approach is not suitable for the categorical control variables, so the results are also reported in unstandardised form in Appendix E (Kelloway, 2015). The standardised estimates are interpreted as the effect, in standard deviations, of a one standard deviation change in the predictor.

The estimated, standardised effects of volunteering on political engagement via trust are illustrated in Figure 4.2, which shows the five key variables from Figure 4.1 and the paths connecting them. The effect of volunteer hours on institutional trust was small (0.025 of a standard deviation) but significant ($p<=0.05$). Generalised social trust in other people, however, was significantly predicted by all the independent variables. As seen in Figure 4.2, the direct effects of volunteer hours on political engagement were much larger than the effects of volunteer hours on trust.

Institutional trust had a negative effect on political engagement once the socio-demographic variables had been controlled for. Generalised social trust, on the other hand, had relatively large positive effects on 'meet' and 'contact'.

Figure 4.2: standardised estimates for the final model of the relationship between volunteering and political engagement, via trust



The INDIRECT command was then used to obtain standardised estimates of the direct and indirect effects of volunteer hours on 'meet' and 'contact'[17].

[17] The regression coefficients for indirect effects are multiplicative. The estimate for the specific indirect effect of volunteering hours on 'meet' via ptrust may be obtained by multiplying the effect of volunteering hours on ptrust (0.061) and the effect of ptrust on 'meet' (0.30) to give 0.018.

Table 4.2: Standardised direct and indirect effects if volunteer hours on 'meet'

	Estimate	SE	Est/SE	Two-tailed p value
Total effects	0.153	0.014	11.297	0.000
Total indirect	0.015	0.005	2.921	0.003
Specific indirect via itrust	-0.003	0.002	-1.616	0.106
Specific indirect via ptrust	0.018	0.005	3.485	0.000
Direct	0.138	0.013	10.263	0.000

It can be seen that there is no relationship between volunteering and 'meet' via institutional trust, and only a relatively small indirect relationship via social trust. The direct relationship is much the largest.

Table 4.3 was also produced using the INDIRECT command and shows the standardised estimates of the direct and indirect effects of volunteer hours on 'contact'.

Table 4.3: Standardised direct and indirect effects if volunteer hours on 'contact'

	Estimate	SE	Est/SE	Two-tailed p value
Total effects	0.179	0.019	9.490	0.000
Total indirect	0.012	0.005	2.418	0.016
Specific indirect via itrust	-0.004	0.002	-1.634	0.102
Specific indirect via ptrust	0.016	0.005	3.341	0.001
Direct	0.167	0.020	8.504	0.000

As in Table 4.2, it can be seen from Table 4.3 that the direct relationship is much the largest. There is no relationship between volunteering and 'contact' via institutional trust, and only a relatively small indirect relationship via social trust.

Turning to the statistical control variables, generalised social trust was more strongly predicted by the control variables than it was by volunteer hours. The largest effects were related to age (a positive effect of 0.328 of a standard deviation) and deprivation (coincidentally, a negative effect of

-0.328 of a standard deviation). Institutional trust was not well predicted by the variables in the model. The effect sizes were small (less than 0.1 of a standard deviation change in the outcome for each standard deviation change in the predictor) or non-significant.

4.5 Discussion

The hypothesis tested here was that **the key mechanism linking volunteering and political engagement is generalised social trust**. According to the social capital literature, individuals who volunteer more hours should be more likely to become trusting, and therefore more likely to be politically engaged. I found that volunteers were indeed more likely to be politically engaged, and more likely to be trusting. However, I found only limited evidence that the relationship between volunteering and political engagement was mediated by trust. Institutional trust was not a mediator between volunteering and either collaborative or contact forms of political engagement. Social trust played a small mediating role. However, the vast majority of the relationship between volunteering and political engagement was not explained by mediation through social trust.

While this result runs somewhat counter to the predictions from theory, it fits with much of the available empirical evidence. Although there is a positive relationship between voluntary association membership and political engagement, it is not adequately explained through trust (Kaase, 1999; Newton, 2001; van der Meer & van Ingen, 2009; Wollebaek & Selle, 2002). At the risk of over-stretching the social capital spaghetti metaphor (Sonderskov, 2010), the strand I have been slowly twirling around my fork is rather short. Recent research in this area has focussed on the different roles of active and passive association membership (Alexander, Barraket, Lewis, & Considine, 2010; Sonderskov, 2010; van der Meer & van Ingen, 2009). According to theory, active and passive memberships should have rather different effects on trust and political engagement, but this is not borne out by the evidence. I have taken this approach one step further, by investigating the relationship between hours of activity (volunteering, this case) and trust and political engagement. Even with this improved measure, there is no important role for trust.

Other mechanisms remain to be investigated, however, (see Chapters 1 and 3). The other plausible mediators, as explored in Section 3.2, are skills, knowledge and socialisation. Although an attempt was made to model these using the data available in the BHPS, it was impossible to draw firm conclusions. Indeed, although civic skill looms large in the theoretical literature, it is rather difficult to test empirically. Most of the attempts which have been made have followed adolescents (whose civic skill set is just beginning to develop) and have used different types of high school clubs as a way of comparing activities which seem likely to develop civic skills, such as debate club, with those which offer fewer civic or political opportunities, such as football (Quintelier, 2008, 2012).

Some attempt has been made to account for the mixed empirical evidence presented here. Hooghe (2003), for example, has suggested that previous memberships, which are rarely explored through surveys, can have a strong effect on civic attitudes. The effect of active membership on social trust might be being masked by drop-out or churn: not everyone who is generally active is active when they complete the survey (Kamerade, 2014).

The research presented here, distinguishing between institutional and social trust, also underlines the difficulties of treating volunteering (or, indeed, voluntary association membership) as one activity. Eliasoph shows that volunteering is diverse, and that some volunteers are explicitly apolitical or even anti-political (Eliasoph, 1998). Their chosen volunteer activities are underpinned by their distrust in institutions and their desire to act on the world outside those established bodies/methods. Other volunteers, meanwhile, are explicitly part of the 'system', acting within established political and civic boundaries. Future research could usefully investigate this distinction.

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Chapter 5: Conclusion

The engagement of its citizens is the lifeblood of a democracy. In the UK, engagement with formal electoral politics is on the slide. Turn-out is low. Political party membership has fallen. Trust in politicians is lower even than in estate agents, bankers and journalists (Skinner & Evans, 2015). Political engagement is also profoundly unequal. It is more common among the well-educated and well-remunerated, and among older adults. It has been argued that volunteering is, itself, an alternate form of civic engagement; a direct substitute for electoral engagement. It has also been treated as part of a complex social capital equation (see Chapter One). In this world view, volunteering promotes generalised social trust by facilitating face-to-face contact with various dissimilar others. Any policy which increases rates of volunteering should also therefore increase levels of trust and levels of political engagement. However, volunteering is as unevenly spread as other types of civic engagement: it, too, is more common among the middle classes and those with higher education.

In UK public policy, volunteering has been treated as part panacea, part placebo (Finnegan, 2013; Matthews, 2015). Governments of all stripes have promoted volunteering as a way of improving levels of civic and political engagement and also as a good in itself. Perhaps because it is easier than electoral turnout to manipulate directly, volunteering has been used as a part of a battery of measures to promote wider civic and political engagement, particularly among otherwise disengaged young people, for example as part of the National Citizen Service. Policies like this, which promote volunteering as a way of shoring up and equalising civic engagement, rest on an argument from social capital (see Chapter One), which has been extensively criticised both in empirical and theoretical terms (see Fine, 2010 for an engaging summary).

5.1 Key findings

The main purpose of the research presented in Paper One (Chapter Two) was to investigate, using cohort data, whether volunteering in young-adulthood can be said to be formative of levels of political engagement in middle age. Longitudinal data was also employed in Paper Two (Chapter Three) to look in detail at short-run effects: that is, whether volunteering is associated with political engagement immediately, or in the next few years. Longitudinal data are particularly useful for investigating cause and effect because they capture changes in response over time (Ní Bhrolcháin & Dyson, 2007). The purpose of the third and final paper (Chapter Four), meanwhile, was to investigate just one of the plausible mechanisms by which the relationships investigated in the first two papers might function: trust. In the social capital literature in particular, trust is a crucial component in explaining the pro-social circular relationship which encompasses both volunteering and political engagement.

5.1.1 Volunteering can be a formative civic experience

The analysis in Paper One showed that young adult volunteers are more likely both to volunteer and to vote in their 50s than individuals who did not volunteer in early-adulthood. An individual who reports volunteering at age 23 has 2.5 times higher odds of being a volunteer at age 50 than someone who did not volunteer at age 23. An individual who reports volunteering at age 23 has 1.4 times higher odds of being a voter at age 50 than someone who did not volunteer at age 23. This is in keeping with the literature on the formative nature of volunteering, which shows an increase in future community service, voter-registration, greater intent to vote, and interest in politics associated with voluntary association membership and community service in high school.

However, the effect was strongly differentiated by social class. Individuals born into homes supported by a professional or managerial worker were more likely to volunteer, and those middle-class volunteers were also more likely to remain civically engaged in middle-age than their working class volunteer counterparts. The class effect was more pronounced for later volunteering than for later voting. The probability of volunteering at age 50 was roughly equal for 23 year old volunteers and non-volunteers from a social class V background. However, for those from social class I households, the probability of volunteering at age 50 was more than doubled by volunteering at age 23. Nevertheless, volunteering at age 23 had a positive effect on voting at age 50 for all but those with the most working class backgrounds (for whom the effect was actually negative).

5.1.2 Volunteering encourages political engagement in the short term

In Paper Two, the effect of volunteering on political engagement was investigated over the short run. Much of the literature focuses on the formative effects of adolescent and early-adult volunteering, rather than effects for all adults over a shorter period. Volunteering had a positive effect on political interest, using fixed effects modelling to account for individuals' backgrounds. Although the effect size was reduced by using these strong controls, it remained statistically significant at the 1% level. This finding is particularly important because fixed effects modelling partials out the effects of all time-invariant influences. In other words, fixed effects modelling controls for everything that a person is, her personality, her upbringing and education, everything she has experienced up until her data are collected. Since both volunteering and political engagement are strongly predicted by social class, upbringing and education, a smaller effect size is to be expected as likely confounders are accounted for.

However, there was no difference between volunteers and non-volunteers when it came to strength of political party support. The volunteers became more politically engaged (*qua* political interest),

but this did not translate well into the formal electoral sphere. The effect of volunteering on political engagement is not consistent over different types of political engagement.

5.1.3 Trust is a mediator between volunteering and political engagement

The research in Paper Three was intended to investigate just one of the possible causal mechanisms described in Chapters One and Three: trust. There were statistically significant indirect relationships, mediated through generalised social trust, between volunteer hours and political 'meeting' activity and between volunteer hours and political 'contacting' activity. Volunteering is associated with increased levels of social trust, and that increase in trust is associated with an increase in political activity: this is the thesis suggested in the social capital literature, and particularly by Robert Putnam. However, the size of these indirect relationships via social trust was small compared to the overall effect size: most of the relationship between volunteering and political acts is explained by something other than trust. This finding contrasts with the theoretical literature, much of which expects a somewhat more important role for trust, but does fit with existing empirical evidence.

The role of institutional trust was also investigated. Institutional trust did not have a mediating role between volunteer hours and either 'meeting' or 'contacting' forms of political engagement. In the literature, the role of volunteering in promoting institutional trust, and of institutional trust in promoting political engagement, is contested: some authors predict that institutional trusters will be more engaged, while others contend the opposite. Some predict that volunteering should promote institutional trust, and others that the knowledge acquired through volunteering could diminish that trust. For this population, volunteering is associated with slightly increased levels of institutional trust, while institutional trust is associated with reduced meeting and contacting behaviour. However, institutional trust is not a mediator between volunteering hours and political activities.

5.1.4 All these effects are limited

The research presented here shows that volunteering is formative of future civic and political engagement; that volunteering also influences political engagement in the shorter term, and that trust is a mediator in the relationship. These findings are not, in themselves, novel: but the data and methods used here allow them to be stated in more confidence than from previous research. However, all the effects described above are strictly limited, either in size or scope. The formative nature of early life volunteering is constrained by social class. Individuals born into professional or managerial class homes see a larger civic effect from their voluntary work than those from manual or working class backgrounds. The short-run effect of volunteering on political engagement applies only to political interest, and not to formal electoral engagement. And the role of generalised social trust is rather small, compared to the overall size of the relationship found between volunteering and political activity in the Citizenship Survey data.

It is useful both to test the relationship between volunteering and political engagement and to explore the strength or extent of that relationship. While the findings in this dissertation bear out the predictions from the theoretical literature, it is clear that there are limitations in how useful the effects can be in public policy terms.

5.2 Implications for public policy

Public policy is being made on the basis of the broad social capital view of volunteering and political engagement which is explored critically here. This research shows that, although volunteering exerts some civic leverage over certain types of people and certain types of political engagement, it shouldn't be relied on up as a method to bring currently disengaged voters back into the electoral fold.

Firstly, the effects of volunteering on civic and political engagement are strongest for those who are already most likely to be engaged. Early-adult volunteers from manual work backgrounds are no more likely to be civically engaged in middle-age than those who did not volunteer in early adulthood: they are no more likely to volunteer and less likely to vote. It seems likely that, if it had an effect at all, improving rates of volunteering in early adulthood would produce a civic and political benefit mostly among the middle classes, whose rates of engagement are already higher. This should be part of the continued conversation about inequality in civic and political participation. Those with least power, who are most reliant on the state and its institutions, are the least likely to be active participants in the systems which govern the state and its institutions. The results presented in Paper One suggest that volunteering policy is not likely to be an effective tool in tackling this inequality.

Secondly, Paper Two shows that volunteering can affect political interest, but does not influence party support. Political interest is a motivator in formal electoral engagement, but does not guarantee it: indeed, political interest and other types of engagement are seen to be jointly caused, rather than causal. Politically interested individuals may be merely 'spectators' rather than active participants. Further work (see section 5.4) would be required before volunteering could be suggested as a tool to increase political engagement via political interest.

5.3 Limitations of the study

There are particular difficulties in analysing the relationship between volunteering and political engagement which might broadly be summarised as measurement problems. The terms are difficult to define and operationalise, and may be particularly subject to measurement error because of social desirability bias and difficulties in recall. Respondents were offered no assistance in defining "voluntary work" in the BHPS data used in Paper Two. The NCDS questionnaires offered varying levels of assistance over the years. At age 23, a definition was offered and examples

given; at age 50, no assistance was provided, and the question was rolled into a short battery on leisure activities. In the CS questionnaire, the data from which form the basis of Paper Three, people were asked about their "helping" hours with voluntary organisations. These questions are so different as to preclude direct comparison. Some rely entirely on respondents own internal definitions of volunteering or voluntary work. None make useful distinctions between different fields or types of voluntary work.

This last is particularly important because it is clear from the volunteering literature that "volunteering" is not a single monolithic activity, but rather a loose collection of work or work-like acts which have in common a lack of pay and a focus on helping other people or a cause. Volunteers come to their volunteering with a wide range of motivations and desired outcomes; they carry out many different tasks and they operate in many fields. It some ways, then, it is surprising that it is possible to identify an 'effect' from volunteering at all. However, having identified statistically significant effects of volunteering on political engagement, it is important to note that the effects are for large populations and not for all volunteers, or indeed for all types of volunteering.[18]

In fact, as noted in sections 2.4 and 3.7, there are some very real problems of generalisability from the longitudinal data used here. Although initially drawn from a representative sample of the British population, the BHPS data may be representative only of that segment of the population which may be persuaded to answer questionnaires over a period of years, essentially for the benefit of other people. This is particularly problematic when the topic of investigation is similarly pro-social. It is even more difficult to generalise from the NCDS cohort, who were born in a single week in March 1958: the experiences of that cohort will have been unique to them, and not replicated in preceding or following cohorts. Equally, findings from their data may not, therefore, be replicated in other cohorts. It is wiser to treat the findings as illustrative, rather than drawing direct inference from them for other cohorts. The nature of the data therefore limits the direct generalisability of Papers One and Two.

Finally, the research presented here is also limited in scope. Although four mechanisms linking volunteering and political engagement have been drawn out of the literature (see sections 1.4 and 3.2) only one of those mechanisms, trust, has been investigated explicitly (in Paper Three).

[18] It is interesting to compare and contrast this work with qualitative work on the subject which takes a more constructionist approach (Blackstone, 2004; Eliasoph, 1998). In a constructionist reading, people who answer positively about their engagement in politics and volunteering are the people who allow themselves to make that connection. This is a particular issue for women (Blackstone, 2004), and those from non-dominant-statuses (Hustinx et al., 2010): they are less likely to make a connection between volunteering and politics. Those with non-dominant statuses are also less likely to respond positively to questions about volunteering, but there is an argument to be made about whether they actually volunteer less than dominant status individuals. Some have argued that the volunteering of non-dominant status individuals is not well-recorded by existing volunteering survey questions (Dean, 2011).

5.4 Further research directions

Further work in this area should include a more detailed examination of the other potential mechanisms linking volunteering and political engagement: skills, knowledge and socialisation. Although a potentially causal pathway via trust has been identified in Paper Three, the majority of the effect remains unexplained. The suggested mechanisms which remain are rather hard to study using existing data, and may be better suited to an experimental approach. However, it should be borne in mind that the different mechanisms are likely to be more or less relevant depending on the political engagement outcome chosen. For example, the development of civic skills is more likely to be relevant to a high-skill outcome, such as participating in a public meeting, than a low-skill outcome, such as voting.

It is clear from the research presented here that different types of engagement have different relationships to volunteering. Paper Two (Chapter Three) echoes the literature in finding a link between volunteering and political interest but, as discussed in sections 3.2.2 and 3.7, political interest does not necessarily drive further engagement, and may be subject to an endogeneity problem of its own, being driven by personality and intellectual ability, which also drive voter turnout. Paper Three finds a potentially causal link between volunteer hours and both political 'contacting' and political 'meeting'. These are interesting political outcomes, in part because they are linked to the formal system of institutional politics without requiring a commitment to a political party. Paper One links volunteering to both civic participation (in the form of volunteering) and voter turnout. Taken together, these political outcomes are a reasonable cross-section: however, other useful outcomes, such as protests, are omitted.

There is also scope for a more in-depth study of volunteering, political engagement and inequality than was possible in Paper One. Such a study would need to address the structural inequalities introduced by existing volunteering survey questions, which focus on formal volunteering within the auspices of voluntary associations, and therefore on volunteering as it is defined and experienced by the dominant middle class. It would be instructive, in public policy terms, to look particularly at inequalities in formative civic experience, since much policy in this area focuses on young people.

Appendices

Appendix A NCDS question wordings

Volunteering question (at age 23)

We are interested in the voluntary work that people do, that is, work for which they are not paid, which is of service to others apart from their immediate family.

SHOWCARD W Here are some examples of the type of activity we mean. Have you done any of the things on this card, in the past 12 months, that is since ... 1980 (QUOTE CURRENT MONTH)?

RAISING MONEY FOR A GOOD CAUSE

GIVING DIRECT HELP OR ADVICE TO SOMEONE e.g. the sick or handicapped, elderly people, youth clubs, play groups, guides and scouts, alcoholics, drug addicts, vagrants, adult illiterates.

ASSISTING PUBLIC SERVICES e.g. hospitals, schools, the police, working as a JP or school governor

IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT e.g. building a playground, clearing a canal

GIVING PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FREE OF CHARGE e.g. electrician, plumber, lawyer, doctor, teacher

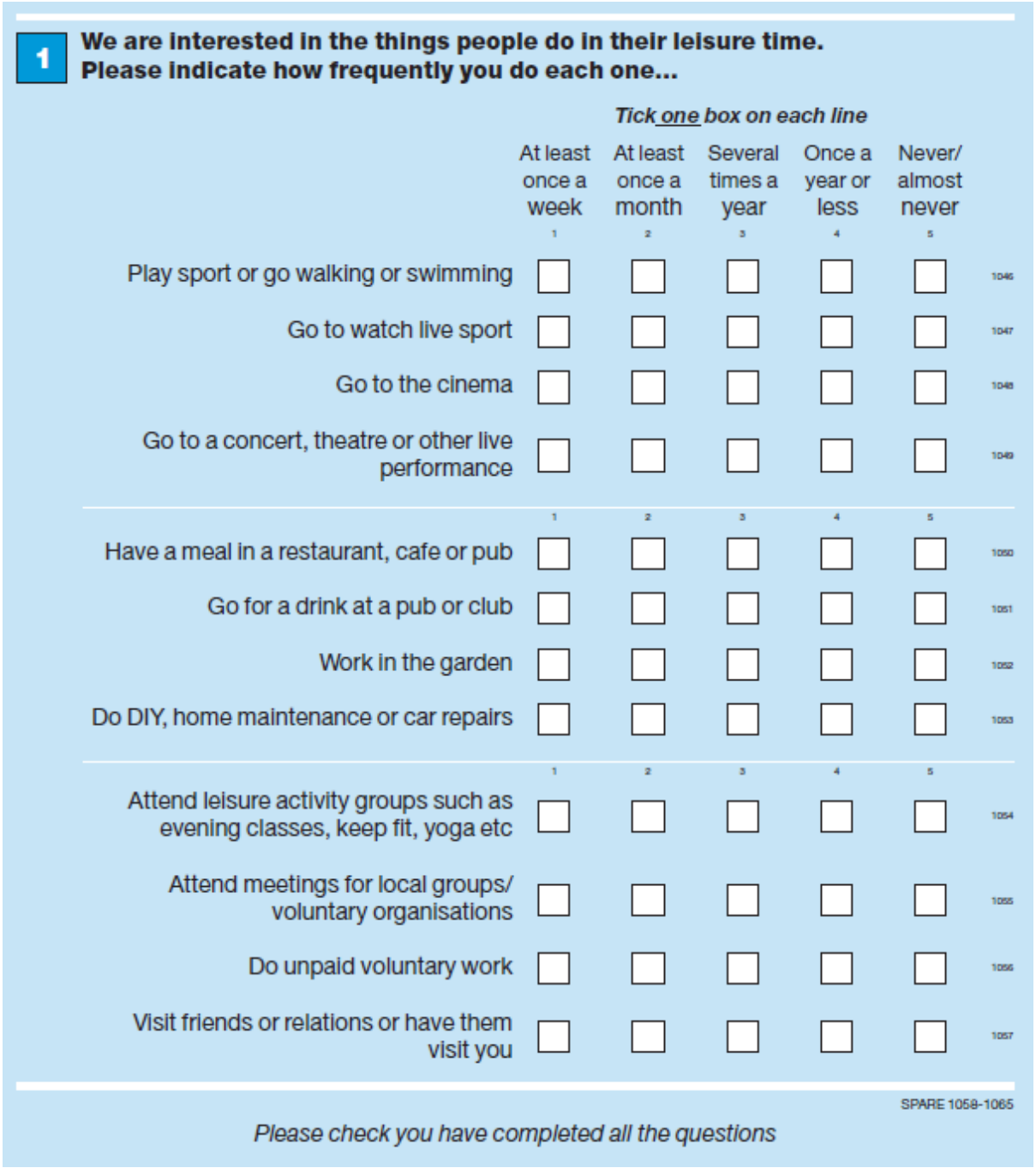
WORKING FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS OR PRESSURE GROUPS e.g. local residents' or community groups, women's groups, prison reform

SERVING ON A VOLUNTARY COMMITTEE

HELPING TO ORGANISE ANY OF THESE ACTIVITIES

Appendices

Volunteering question (at age 50)



1 We are interested in the things people do in their leisure time. Please indicate how frequently you do each one...

Tick one box on each line

	At least once a week (1)	At least once a month (2)	Several times a year (3)	Once a year or less (4)	Never/ almost never (5)	
Play sport or go walking or swimming	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	1046
Go to watch live sport	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	1047
Go to the cinema	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	1048
Go to a concert, theatre or other live performance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	1049
Have a meal in a restaurant, cafe or pub	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	1050
Go for a drink at a pub or club	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	1051
Work in the garden	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	1052
Do DIY, home maintenance or car repairs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	1053
Attend leisure activity groups such as evening classes, keep fit, yoga etc	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	1054
Attend meetings for local groups/ voluntary organisations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	1055
Do unpaid voluntary work	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	1056
Visit friends or relations or have them visit you	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	1057

SPARE 1058-1065

Please check you have completed all the questions

Voting question (at age 50)

“VOTE01

Did you vote in the last General Election in May 2005?

TYPE IN NUMBER AND PRESS 'ENTER' TO CONTINUE

1 Yes

2 No”

Appendix B Extended Table 3.4

Political interest – contemporaneous independent variables (from Table 3.4)

		(1) naive	(2) re	(3) fe	(4) naive - ctrls	(5) re - ctrls	(6) fe – ctrls
volunteer		0.577***	0.540***	0.191***	0.366***	0.418***	0.189***
		(0.0297)	(0.0644)	(0.0721)	(0.0324)	(0.0640)	(0.0731)
male					0.643***	1.378***	
					(0.0259)	(0.0815)	
age					0.0278***	0.0490***	0.00880*
					(0.000935)	(0.00241)	(0.00533)
education	no quals (ref.)						
	O-level/CSE				0.418***	0.797***	0.895***
					(0.0347)	(0.105)	(0.333)
	A-level				0.717***	1.518***	1.207***
					(0.0401)	(0.117)	(0.337)
	HND/teaching				0.804***	1.769***	0.994**
					(0.0539)	(0.164)	(0.411)
	degree/higher				1.355***	2.650***	1.518***
					(0.0483)	(0.137)	(0.362)
social class	unskilled manual (ref.)						
	semi-skilled manual				0.198**	0.129	0.0929
					(0.0967)	(0.180)	(0.199)

	skilled manual	0.0641	0.0969	0.185
		(0.0955)	(0.181)	(0.200)
	skilled non-manual	0.326***	0.322*	0.128
		(0.0937)	(0.179)	(0.201)
	managerial/technical	0.502***	0.494***	0.159
		(0.0936)	(0.179)	(0.200)
	professional	0.617***	0.832***	0.447*
		(0.114)	(0.221)	(0.250)
	missing	0.319***	0.305*	0.128
		(0.0905)	(0.172)	(0.191)
income quintile	first income quintile (ref.)			
	second quintile	-0.124***	-0.181**	-0.0390
		(0.0427)	(0.0774)	(0.0860)
	third quintile	-0.0834**	-0.264***	-0.122
		(0.0423)	(0.0795)	(0.0902)
	fourth quintile	-0.0825*	-0.279***	-0.0956
		(0.0439)	(0.0844)	(0.0979)
	top quintile	0.0614	-0.214**	-0.0726
		(0.0472)	(0.0940)	(0.112)
financial situation	finding it v difficult (ref.)			
	finding it quite hard	0.126	0.0282	0.00564
		(0.103)	(0.174)	(0.189)
	getting by	0.0437	-0.0489	-0.0421
		(0.0914)	(0.160)	(0.177)
	doing OK	-0.0623	-0.252	-0.243
		(0.0905)	(0.161)	(0.179)

comfortable				0.0425	-0.103	-0.179
				(0.0914)	(0.164)	(0.183)
healthy				0.0268	0.0852	0.0811
				(0.0270)	(0.0518)	(0.0586)
married				-0.0125*	-0.0863***	-0.118***
				(0.00666)	(0.0160)	(0.0224)
constant	0.403***	-0.902***		-2.778***	-4.538***	
	(0.0122)	(0.0445)		(0.136)	(0.278)	
intra-class correlation	0.781			0.733		
	(0.006)			(0.007)		
observations	33,653	33,653	12,207	33,168	33,168	12,021
individuals	9,446	9,446	2,750	9,325	9,325	2,715

Standard errors in parentheses

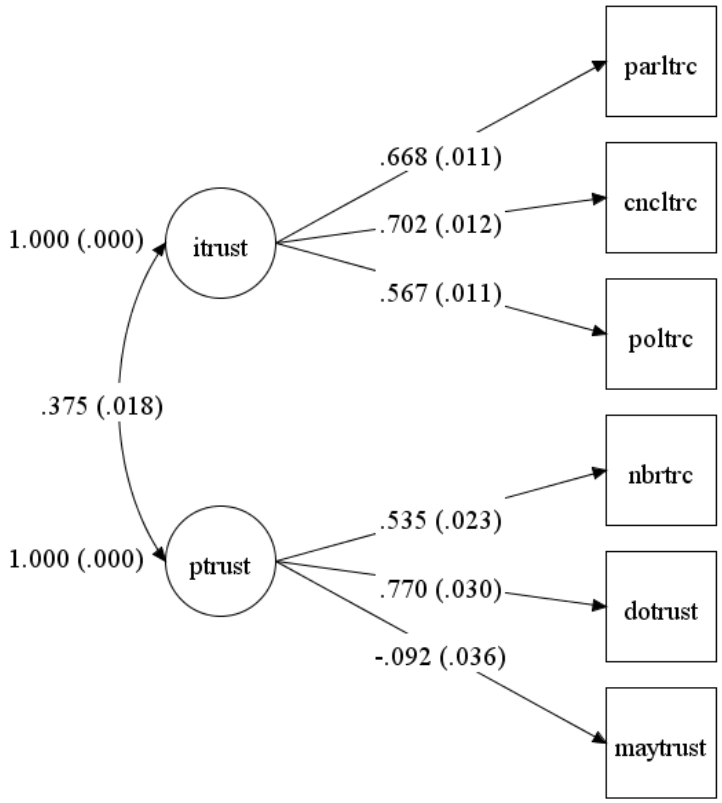
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Appendix C Measurement models

Trust

The model was set up with two types of trust: institutional (designated 'itrust') and social (designated 'ptrust'). Institutional trust was measured using the variables for trust in Parliament, trust in the local council and trust in the police. Social trust was measured using the variable for social trust at neighbourhood level ('nbrtrc') and dummies constructed from the GTQ ('dotrust' and 'maytrust'; the reference category was 'can't be too careful'). The question texts are reported in the 'Data and Methods' section. The diagram below reports the STDYX estimates from the MPlus (v. 7) analysis and their associated standard errors.

Figure C1.1



The fit statistics associated with the model are reported below.

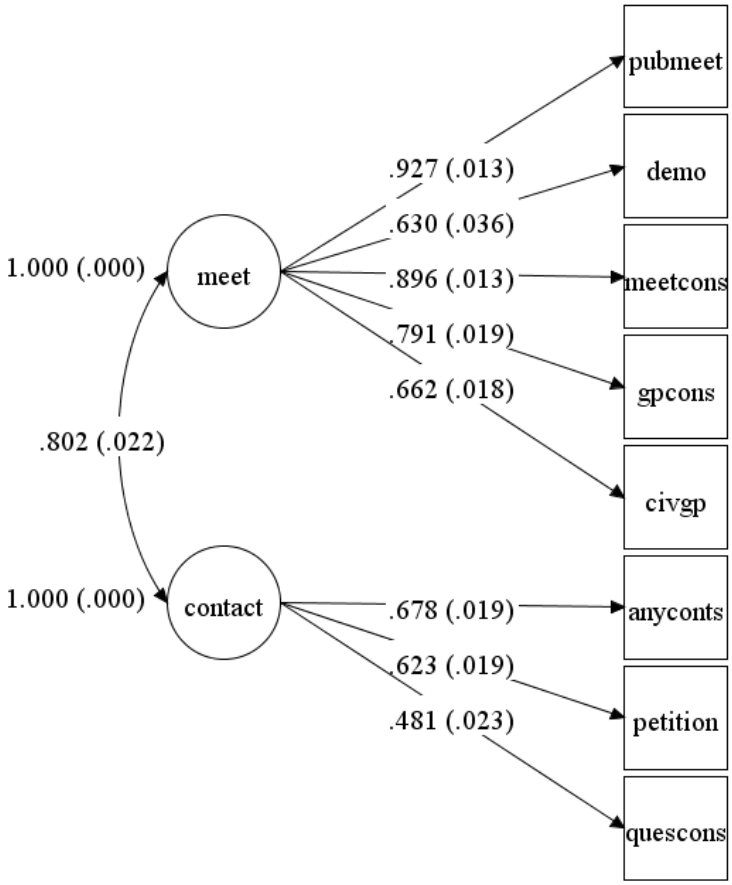
Table C1.1

Fit statistic	Measure	Interpretation
RMSEA	0.038	Based on the 90% confidence interval, the probability that the RMSEA<= .05 is 0.999. This suggests a good fit to the data.
CFI	0.986	CFI is greater than 0.95, which suggests a good fit to the data.
TLI	0.974	TLI is greater than 0.95, which suggests a good fit to the data.

Political engagement

The model was set up with two types of political engagement: face-to-face meeting ('meet') and contacting ('contact') and is illustrated by Figure C1.2. The diagram reports the STDYX estimates from the MPlus (v. 7) analysis and their associated standard errors. The labels given are variable labels. Meeting ('meet') was measured by attendance at public meetings ('pubmeet') or demonstrations ('demo'), attending consultation meetings ('meetcons') and taking part in consultation ('gpcons') or civic decision-making groups ('civgp'). Contacting ('contact') was measured by making contact with a politician or official ('anyconts'), signing a petition ('petition') or answering a consultation questionnaire ('quescons'). The questions are described in detail in the 'Data and Methods' section.

Figure C1.2



The fit statistics associated with the model are reported below.

Table C1.2

Fit statistic	Measure	Interpretation
RMSEA	0.038	Based on the 90% confidence interval, the probability that the RMSEA<= .05 is 1.000. This suggests a good fit to the data.
CFI	0.977	CFI is greater than 0.95, which suggests a good fit to the data.
TLI	0.967	TLI is greater than 0.95, which suggests a good fit to the data.

Appendix D Construction of covariates

Covariates	Original variable name and response type
social class	Derived variable rnssec4 was used to create three dummy variables. 'Routine/semi-routine occupations' was used as the reference category. The other categories were 'intermediate', 'management' and 'other'.
age	Derived variable 'xrage' was used. This is a continuous variable.
education level	From derived variable zquals1. 1 = No qualifications, 2 = GCSE, 3 = A level, 4 = Degree or equivalent.
white	From derived variable ethnic6. 1=white, 0=not white
married/cohabiting	From rmardf. 1=married or cohabiting, 0 =not married or cohabiting
deprivation	From derived variables dwimd and dimd. Deprivation by deciles.
religious practice	From relprac. 1=practices a religion, 0=does not practice a religion.

Sex was used as a covariate in early modelling, but it adversely affected model fit, and had either a small or non-significant effect, so was omitted.

Appendix E Model estimates

Standardized model estimates

	Estimate	SE	Est/SE	Two-tailed p value
itrust BY				
Parliament trust	0.689	0.011	62.641	0.000
council trust	0.700	0.011	63.954	0.000
police trust	0.566	0.011	52.821	0.000
ptrust BY				
neighbour trust	0.693	0.015	45.342	0.000
do trust (GTQ dummy)	0.625	0.015	41.741	0.000
may trust (GTQ dummy)	-0.041	0.030	-1.391	0.164
meet BY				
public meeting	0.927	0.012	78.471	0.000
demonstration	0.644	0.032	19.967	0.000
consultation meeting	0.895	0.012	72.077	0.000
consultation group	0.776	0.019	40.977	0.000
civic decision group	0.675	0.018	37.198	0.000
contact BY				
any contacts	0.660	0.018	37.326	0.000
petition	0.646	0.018	35.584	0.000
consultation questionnaire	0.482	0.022	21.725	0.000
meet ON				
ptrust	0.290	0.041	7.049	0.000
itrust	-0.125	0.028	-4.394	0.000
contact ON				
itrust	-0.161	0.026	-6.073	0.000
ptrust	0.257	0.038	6.688	0.000
itrust ON				
volunteer hours	0.025	0.012	2.084	0.037
social class (management)	0.095	0.018	5.411	0.000
social class (intermed.)	-0.009	0.016	-0.558	0.577
social class (other)	0.072	0.014	5.109	0.000
age	-0.008	0.019	-0.425	0.671
education level	0.031	0.019	1.682	0.093
White	-0.070	0.013	-5.267	0.000
married/cohabiting	-0.010	0.014	-0.769	0.442

deprivation	-0.078	0.014	-5.499	0.000
religious practice	0.118	0.014	8.629	0.000
ptrust ON				
volunteer hours	0.061	0.014	4.341	0.000
social class (management)	0.167	0.018	9.068	0.000
social class (intermed.)	0.095	0.017	5.476	0.000
social class (other)	0.034	0.016	2.117	0.034
age	0.328	0.020	16.644	0.000
education level	0.201	0.020	9.871	0.000
White	0.101	0.015	6.703	0.000
married/cohabiting	0.053	0.015	3.628	0.000
deprivation	-0.328	0.015	-22.462	0.000
religious practice	0.030	0.015	2.024	0.043
meet ON				
volunteer hours	0.138	0.013	10.281	0.000
social class (management)	0.136	0.025	5.385	0.000
social class (intermed.)	0.098	0.024	4.114	0.000
social class (other)	0.091	0.023	3.928	0.000
age	0.137	0.030	4.546	0.000
education level	0.169	0.024	7.010	0.000
White	-0.003	0.020	-0.150	0.881
married/cohabiting	0.059	0.018	3.200	0.001
deprivation	0.077	0.023	3.323	0.001
religious practice	0.069	0.018	3.854	0.000
contact ON				
volunteer hours	0.167	0.015	11.213	0.000
social class (management)	0.187	0.023	8.177	0.000
social class (intermed.)	0.086	0.021	4.033	0.000
social class (other)	0.031	0.021	1.497	0.134
age	0.084	0.028	3.035	0.002
education level	0.269	0.024	11.140	0.000
White	0.062	0.020	3.123	0.002
married/cohabiting	0.060	0.018	3.415	0.001
deprivation	0.008	0.021	0.382	0.702
religious practice	0.046	0.018	2.574	0.010
contact WITH				
meet	0.762	0.027	28.289	0.000
itrust WITH				
ptrust	0.387	0.020	18.968	0.000

Appendices

Unstandardised model estimates

	Estimate	SE	Est/SE	Two-tailed p value
itrust BY				
Parliament trust	1.000	0.000	999.000	999.000
council trust	1.016	0.031	32.893	0.000
police trust	0.819	0.026	31.743	0.000
ptrust BY				
neighbour trust	1.000	0.000	999.000	999.000
do trust (GTQ dummy)	0.886	0.042	21.215	0.000
may trust (GTQ dummy)	-0.055	0.036	-1.536	0.125
meet BY				
public meeting	1.000	0.000	999.000	999.000
demonstration	0.673	0.043	15.748	0.000
consultation meeting	0.960	0.024	40.214	0.000
consultation group	0.821	0.030	27.459	0.000
civic decision group	0.707	0.023	30.264	0.000
contact BY				
any contacts	1.000	0.000	999.000	999.000
petition	0.976	0.045	21.644	0.000
consultation questionnaire	0.712	0.044	16.191	0.000
meet ON				
ptrust	0.377	0.054	6.960	0.000
itrust	-0.176	0.042	-4.179	0.000
contact ON				
itrust	-0.160	0.027	-5.946	0.000
ptrust	0.237	0.038	6.151	0.000
itrust ON				
volunteer hours	0.002	0.001	1.668	0.095
social class (management)	0.140	0.028	4.935	0.000
social class (intermed.)	-0.014	0.025	-0.550	0.582
social class (other)	0.161	0.036	4.505	0.000
age	0.000	0.001	-0.379	0.705
education level	0.022	0.013	1.710	0.087
White	-0.173	0.043	-4.010	0.000
married/cohabiting	-0.015	0.018	-0.830	0.407
deprivation	-0.019	0.003	-5.385	0.000
religious practice	0.178	0.024	7.393	0.000
ptrust ON				

volunteer hours	0.004	0.001	4.096	0.000
social class (management)	0.269	0.030	8.863	0.000
social class (intermed.)	0.159	0.027	5.865	0.000
social class (other)	0.083	0.041	2.027	0.043
age	0.013	0.001	14.192	0.000
education level	0.151	0.014	10.676	0.000
White	0.271	0.034	7.956	0.000
married/cohabiting	0.080	0.024	3.365	0.001
deprivation	-0.085	0.005	-16.471	0.000
religious practice	0.050	0.024	2.036	0.042
meet ON				
volunteer hours	0.012	0.002	7.657	0.000
social class (management)	0.285	0.050	5.678	0.000
social class (intermed.)	0.212	0.046	4.635	0.000
social class (other)	0.285	0.070	4.091	0.000
age	0.007	0.001	5.538	0.000
education level	0.166	0.026	6.474	0.000
White	-0.011	0.070	-0.152	0.879
married/cohabiting	0.116	0.040	2.916	0.004
deprivation	0.026	0.007	3.870	0.000
religious practice	0.147	0.041	3.599	0.000
contact ON				
volunteer hours	0.010	0.001	7.302	0.000
social class (management)	0.276	0.036	7.600	0.000
social class (intermed.)	0.132	0.032	4.100	0.000
social class (other)	0.069	0.046	1.500	0.133
age	0.003	0.001	3.135	0.002
education level	0.187	0.017	11.161	0.000
White	0.152	0.045	3.335	0.001
married/cohabiting	0.084	0.024	3.437	0.001
deprivation	0.002	0.006	0.343	0.732
religious practice	0.069	0.028	2.465	0.014
contact WITH				
meet	0.405	0.017	23.467	0.000
itrust WITH				
ptrust	0.163	0.010	16.808	0.000

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