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Who Demonstrates?
Disaffected Rebels, Conventional Participants,
or Everyone?

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Synopsis: The rise in demonstrations activism raises important questions about the causes of this phenomenon, and in particular concerning who engages in demonstrations. Three contrasting accounts exist in the literature explaining and interpreting demonstration activism: disaffection, strategic resource, and contextual approaches. After comparing rise in protest politics in two dozen older and newer democracies, the study focuses upon Belgium, a postindustrial society exemplifying these developments. The social background, attitudinal, and behavioral characteristics of demonstrators are scrutinized drawing upon the Belgian general election survey of 1999 and on a unique dataset of surveys conducted with the participants of seven different demonstrations in Belgium (1998-2001). The study establishes that, compared with party members and civic joiners, demonstrators are similar to the Belgian population and there is little evidence that Belgian demonstrators are disaffected radicals. Yet there are some significant social, attitudinal, and behavioral contrasts among different groups of demonstrators, which supports the contextual perspective. Far from representing a major threat or challenge to the state, the evidence in this case study suggests that demonstrations have become one of the major channels of public voice and participation in representative democracies.

Keywords: political participation, demonstrations, new social movements

Many studies have drawn attention to rising levels of political protest whether understood as the spread of 'demonstration democracy' (Etzioni 1970), the growth of the 'protest society' (Pross 1992), an expression of 'global civic society' (Kaldor 2000), or more popularly in the contemporary headlines as the rise of the so-called 'Genoa generation'[1]. This phenomenon raises important questions about the causes and consequences of these developments, in particular about *who* demonstrates, the focus of this study. Understanding this issue highlights familiar methodological challenges about how far ad hoc and irregular protest activities can be measured through traditional survey techniques and through event (content) analysis[2]. To understand these developments, *Part I* summarizes alternative theories commonly used in the literature to explain and interpret demonstration activism, contrasting disaffection, resource-based, and contextual accounts. Today, are most demonstrators disaffected radicals? Are they conventional participants using protest as one more repertoire or strategic resource just like any other such as election campaigns or community organizing? Or do demonstrations provide a meeting place that can bring together both radicals and moderates, depending upon the particular contextual issue, political actors, and cultural frame? *Part II* describes the sources of evidence used to evaluate these accounts. The study draws upon three main sources of survey evidence. (i) We compare the 1973-76 baseline Political Action study with successive waves of the World Values Survey 1981-2001 to establish cross-national trends in the extent of protest activity. (ii) The study then focuses upon Belgium, chosen as a postindustrial society exemplifying the rise of protest politics, where we analyze the 1999 Belgian-Flanders general election study to provide a representative cross-section of the electorate. Lastly (iii) we use a unique series of surveys of protestors engaged in a range of seven different demonstrations in Belgium. *Part III* examines the results of the trends since the mid-1970s showing the substantial rise of protest activism in many countries. *Part IV* analyzes who demonstrates in Belgium by comparing the social background and attitudinal characteristics of party members, civic joiners, and demonstrators. *Part V* compares similar models among those engaged in different Belgian demonstrations. The conclusion summarizes the major findings and considers their implications for understanding the rise of demonstration activism and the challenges this creates for representative democracy.

Part I: Theoretical Framework

The literature seeking to explain protest politics is divided between macro and micro-level approaches, each belonging to a distinct scientific tradition and separate scholarly domains. The macro approach, grounded in historical sociology, comparative politics and political institutions, can be traced back to Barrington Moore's 'Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy' (1966). Macro accounts, closely related to mainstream social movement theory, seek to explain outbreaks of

protest, the mobilization of collective action, and the process of 'contentious politics' as systemic phenomenon[3]. Alternative micro accounts focus upon individual-level political behavior, drawing from social psychology, political behavior, and sociology, originating with Almond and Verba's 'The Civic Culture' (1960). Micro accounts study the specific characteristics, social background, and attitudinal orientations leading some individuals to engage in protest activism while others stand passively on the sidelines[4]. Within the micro-level perspective, the primary explanations have emphasized the role of disaffected radicalism, conventional strategic resources, and contextual factors.

Disaffected Radicalism

Perhaps the most common explanation for the growth of protest politics, and the main reason for popular concern, claims that growing political disaffection and alienation has generated this phenomenon. Early social movements scholars like Gustave Le Bon stressed the dangers of collective action (1895). In the mid-1970s the widely influential Trilateral report 'The Crisis of Democracy' by Crozier, Huntington and Watanuki[5] regarded the May 1968 street uprisings and their subsequent reverberations as a serious threat to the stability of the Trilateral democracies. Protest politics, the authors suggested, challenged established sources of authority, and this phenomenon was generated by the rise of a more critical and autonomous media, the growth of post-materialist values among the younger generation, the development of an adversarial intellectual class, and in particular by the way that the demands on government were thought to be growing, while the capacity of the state to meet these demands appeared to be stagnating. Along related lines, seminal work of Ted Robert Gurr regarded violent acts as an expression of discontent with the conventional channels of representative democracy and the search for alternative ways to challenge the regime, including the propensity to engage in riots damaging property or people, and in non-violent direct protest actions such as the willingness to block traffic or to occupy buildings[6]. In this view, protest represents an avenue to channel and express deep-seated feelings of frustration, anger, and alienation, not just with particular political leaders or public policy issues, but also with the political process and system. Studies have interpreted rising protest politics in the United States and Western Europe as an expression of disaffection with the conventional channels of political participation and mobilization in representative government, as well as symbolizing lack of trust and confidence in political institutions[7].

Yet the claim that disaffection with the political system motivates protect activism receives little, if any, support from the available systematic empirical studies of the survey evidence. For example, the original 8-nation Political Action study failed to establish a significant association between protest potential and feelings of 'external efficacy', or beliefs in the responsiveness of the

political system[8]. In the follow-up study, Thomassen compared political attitudes in the Netherlands and West Germany and confirmed that support for the political regime was unrelated to protest potential[9]. In the 1960s, Parkin criticized mass society approaches and found that people who were willing to protest in the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament were more likely to be engaged in conventional forms of political activism, not less[10]. More recently, Dalton examined whether willingness to protest was stronger among the alienated and deprived in the United States, Britain, Germany and France, based on the 1990-1 World Values Survey, concluding that there was no support for this proposition.

The available empirical evidence therefore throws considerable doubt on the claim that disaffection motivates protest, nevertheless there are many reasons why this is worth exploring further with alternative sources of data. First, many previous empirical studies have often been limited to examining 'protest *potential*', although critics have long suggested that this represents an inadequate indicator of actual protest behavior. Survey items may prompt answers that are regarded as socially acceptable, or just tap a more general orientation towards the political system (such as approval of freedom of association or tolerance of dissent)[11]. Surveys are usually stronger at tapping attitudes and values rather than actual behavior, and they are generally more reliable at reporting routine and repetitive actions ('How often do you attend church?') rather than occasional acts. Unfortunately hypothetical questions ('might you ever demonstrate or join in boycotts?') may well prove a poor predictor of actual behavior[12]. By contrast, random surveys conducted among demonstrators who are *actually engaged* in these events should provide far more reliable indicators of the real profile of protestors. Many previous studies have also adopted a fairly limited measure of system support, focusing upon a single dimension, rather than using a fuller battery of items monitoring political interest, external and internal efficacy, satisfaction with democracy, trust in government, and civic activism. If system support is multidimensional, as argued elsewhere[13], then many indicators need to be compared. As demonstrated later, given the substantial growth in protest politics in postindustrial societies since the 1970s, older studies also need to be updated to see whether their findings still hold among the current protest population. Lastly, despite the lack of systematic support from empirical studies, popular commentators commonly interpret protest events in different countries as expressions of political disaffection symbolizing serious challenges to authority. Such a popular interpretation has been offered on numerous occasions in mainstream popular culture and journalism for events ranging from peaceful demonstrations exemplified by the 'Million Mom March', through direct action such as European fuel blockades, the anti-poll tax movement in the UK, the anti-globalization and anti-WTO protest in Genoa, the May Day riots in the City of London, the anti-Chavez street movement in Venezuela, and the latest manifestation, the anti-Iraq worldwide demonstrations, drawing an estimated eight million people onto the streets

in mid-February 2003. The sheer pervasiveness and tenacity of this interpretation in popular culture makes it worth exploring further.

Conventional Strategic Resources

An alternative perspective suggests that regarding demonstrators as disaffected radicals only reflects popular stereotypes common in the framing of social movements during the sixties, when the American news media focused on hippies and Black Panther radicals, and when the European press conveyed images of 1968 violent revolutionaries in Paris, London and Berlin. Scholars claim that such images no longer reflect patterns of protest participation in the contemporary world, because the demonstration population has gradually 'normalized' over the years to become mainstream, heterogeneous, and conventional in both attitudes and social characteristics[14]. This account builds upon the theories of societal modernization developed by Ronald Inglehart and by Russell Dalton[15]. For Inglehart, societal modernization involves the shift from agrarian to industrial and then post-industrial societies. The process of modernization is associated with multiple complex developments in the workforce, home, and public sphere. The social and economic shifts characterizing post-industrial societies include among others the rise of a highly educated, skilled and specialized workforce; rising living standards and growing leisure time; the expansion and fragmentation of mass media channels, technologies and markets; and the growth of multilayered governance with power shifting away from the nation state towards global and local levels. The most important consequences of these developments for political participation, these theorists suggest, is that secular trends in secondary and higher education, in leisure hours, and in mass communications in post-industrial societies have generated far more cognitively skilled, informed, and demanding citizens. Such citizens, it is argued, come to use political protest as another strategic resource for civic expression, whether concerned about the issues of environmental protection, jobs or welfare.

Yet there are some important differences within this strategic-resource perspective, discussed fully elsewhere[16]. For example Bennett suggests that, as in a zero-sum game, societal modernization leads towards the *decline* of traditional activities such as voting and party membership, and the simultaneous rise of newer forms of more demanding activities, exemplified by involvement in new social movements and referendum campaigns, or to the development of alternative 'lifestyle politics'[17]. Other accounts see the rise of protest politics as essentially *supplementing,* rather than replacing, traditional channels of political expression and mobilization in representative democracies[18]. In this latter view, many mainstream activists will turn strategically to whichever alternative form or mode of political organizing they feel will be most effective at the time, whether campaigning through parties and elections, working through traditional interest group

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organizations such as trade unions and civic associations, joining social movements, using consumers power to support or boycott manufacturers, or publicizing their concerns on the streets, rather than regarding demonstrations as a distinct type of radical activism. Others suggest that protest activism has become more conventional over time because of less repressive policing of these activities, lowering the barrier for mainstream mass participation[19].

Contextual Factors

Another alternative theory suggests that the social groups who demonstrate, and their underlying attitudinal motivations, depend critically upon the specific context set by the particular event, issues, political actors, coalition partners, mobilization processes, and cultural frames surrounding each demonstration. In this view, attempts to generalize about 'demonstrations' or 'demonstrators' are essentially mistaken, involving a category mistake, if this label lumps together disparate events that need to be carefully disentangled into a typology of events. In this argument, some protests will indeed bring together multiple disaffected groups challenging authority, by violent means if necessary, perhaps exemplified by street action attempting to bring about the downfall of the Chavez regime in Venezuela, the May Day anti-capitalist protestors damaging property in the City of London, or the anti-Ramos demonstrations in the Philippines. By contrast other conventional mainstream groups can adopt public protest as just one strategy out of a mélange available to publicize their issue or cause. Certain heterogeneous coalitions provide a meeting place including both radicals and moderates: for example, anti-globalization events at Genoa combined a range of mainstream charities like Oxfam and Christian Aid, with radicals like British Drop the Debt protestors and the German Freie Arbeiterinnen Union. Some demonstrations gather youth, others the elderly. Some protests mobilize blue-collar workers, others middle class professionals, or even employers[20]. Some draw highly educated protesters, while others bring together low-skilled workers.

In the contextual view, there is little about the activity of protest politics *per se* that predicts the attitudes or social background of participants. This may seem a relatively uncontroversial claim, perhaps even tautological, unless the diversity of the protest population is explicitly contrasted with resource-based interpretations predicting a systematic bias in the protest population towards the middle-class and university-educated. If protest politics is commonly used by all major sectors of society, not just the well resourced and cognitively skilled, the rise of such activism will not necessarily exacerbate, and indeed may even reduce, existing social inequalities in public life.

One way to understand these contextual factors draws upon the classic distinction made in social movement theory between 'traditional' interest groups, exemplified by trade unions and

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churches, and 'new' social movements such as environmentalists and women's groups[21]. Most demonstrations are organized rather than being spontaneously mobilized[22]. Since traditional interest groups differ from new social movements in their core issues, constituencies, and relationship with the state, it is reasonable to expect dissimilarities among the demonstrators they mobilize. The classic ideological distinction between issues on the left and right of the ideological spectrum can also expect to generate important differences among type of demonstrations, such as those meetings concerned with pay and working conditions organized by trade unions and professional associations, and others focused on anti-immigrant feelings mobilized by far right parties. If protest activity is essentially contextual, as this perspective claims, then this should be evident if we compare different types of demonstration events.

Part II: Data, Methods and Hypotheses

Hypotheses

What social and attitudinal differences might we expect to find among party members, civic joiners, and demonstrators, based on these theories? The testable propositions examined in this study are formally summarized in Table 5. What kind of demonstrators would each theory predict?

Disaffection hypotheses

If the disaffection account is correct, we hypothesize (H1.1) that, all other things being equal, compared with party members and civic joiners, *demonstration activists will display low levels of system support*, as measured by satisfaction with the performance of democracy, trust in government, and external political efficacy (belief in the responsiveness of the political system). Moreover disaffection theories also suggest that there will be important differences in political behavior, as demonstrators are a distinctive group who turn to protests out of frustration with the traditional democratic channels of political expression and mobilizing, such as electoral or interest group politics. This leads to the second hypotheses, (H1.2) namely that, all other things being equal, compared with party members and civic joiners, *demonstrators will have low levels of traditional political participation,* as measured by active membership of civic associations, labor organizations, and political parties. Moreover, according to this thesis activists will be drawn disproportionately from extremists and radicals, who are alienated with mainstream moderate parties and policies. This suggests our third hypothesis, (H1.3) namely we would expect that *demonstrators would cluster to the far right or far-left of the ideological spectrum,* well away from the median voter. Lastly, by implication, we might expect this group of activists to come from among the poor and dispossessed, who may have the most legitimate cause to feel that their interests are neglected by the established political system. The fourth hypothesis (H1.4) is therefore that *demonstrators will display a distinctive socioeconomic profile compared with party*

members and civic joiners, as they will be drawn disproportionately from among working class, less educated and lower-status sectors.

Strategic resource hypotheses

Alternatively if the strategic resource theory is correct, then this also generates certain testable propositions about the characteristics of demonstrators. In particular, a series of books by Verba and colleagues, and many subsequent studies, have established that certain standard social and attitudinal characteristics are commonly associated with traditional forms of political participation like campaigning and community activism[23]. If demonstrations have now become conventional, then similar characteristics can be expected to help predict participation in demonstrations as well. Again we can compare our three groups: party members, civic joiners, and demonstrators. First, in terms of political attitudes, if the strategic resource theories are correct, then (H2.1) we would *expect to find greater similarities than differences between the motivational attitudes of demonstrators, party members, and civic joiners*, including levels of political interest, internal efficacy (the belief that people can effect politics and the policymaking process), and external efficacy. In terms of behavior, if demonstrations supplement rather than replace other modes of activism, (H2.2) *demonstrators should also be active in traditional forms of political participation*, as members of civic associations and political parties. Thirdly, if demonstrations have become mainstream politics, we would expect demonstrators to be not on the far left or right side. Therefore we could hypothesize that demonstrators will not show extremist political preferences and will (H2.3) *display similar political preferences within the ideological spectrum* compared with civic joiners and party members. Lastly, the characteristics of education, socioeconomic status, and age usually help predict party membership and associational activism. If the protest population has normalized then these characteristics should also help identify demonstrators as well. We therefore hypothesize that (H2.4) *demonstrators will share the social characteristics of other forms of activists,* in particular that they will have higher than average educational qualifications and socioeconomic occupational status, and will be drawn mainly from among the middle-aged and male population. Some support for this latter proposition comes from analysis of the 1973-76 Political Action Study as Marsh and Kaase found that in earlier decades protest potential was more common among men than women, as well as among the highly educated, both characteristics of traditional forms of participation. At the same time the study noted two important areas of contrast between conventional and unconventional activists. Marsh and Kaase found that in the 1970s protestor potential was strongest among the younger generation, not the middle-aged. They also established a middle class bias among traditional or conventional activists, but somewhat mixed indicators of the propensity to protest by socioeconomic status and income[24]. All these

characteristics need to be reexamined given contested expectations generated by the rival theories that we examine, and also the immense social and political changes that have occurred during recent decades.

Contextual theory hypothesis

The contextual theory's central claim is that the type of event matters, and that demonstrations therefore cannot all be lumped into the same category. In this view, demonstrations diverge strongly, and as do the social and attitudinal characteristics of their participants. 'Old' and 'new' social movements, for example, as well as rightwing and leftwing issues, may bring different kinds of people onto the streets. The greater the differentiation between demonstrations, the more the contextual theory is corroborated. The core hypotheses derived from this account are straightforward: first, (H3.1) *support for the political system will vary significantly among participants in different types of demonstration, rather than proving uniform across the demonstration population.* More specifically, some demonstrations may bring together anti-state radicals with low system support while others will attract those trusting in government. In addition, given what we know from many previous studies of activism in interest group and new social movements, as a secondary hypothesis we expect (H3.2) that *the social characteristics of demonstrators will also vary significantly by the type of event.* In particular, we expect that 'New Left' demonstrations are likely to mobilize younger, highly-educated, more female, and middle-class activists, whereas by contrast we anticipate that 'Old Left' events may attract more working class, older, and male participants, while New Right demonstrations can be expected to mobilize less educated, male participants. These hypotheses can be explored by comparing the social and political characteristics of participants attending different demonstration events.

To examine these issues, the study draws upon three sources of survey evidence: (i) trend data showing the rise of protest activism derived from the Political Action Survey and the World Values survey; (ii) the general election survey of a representative cross-section of the Belgian electorate; and lastly (iii) the Van Aelst and Walgrave survey of a random sample of Belgian demonstration participants.

(i) The Political Action Study and World Values Study

Longitudinal evidence of trends in protest activism comes from comparing the eight nations included in the original Political Action survey conducted by Barnes and Kaase in 1973-1976, namely Britain, West Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, the United States, Italy, Switzerland and Finland[25]. To update trends we can compare evidence in these same countries from successive waves of the World Values Study that replicated the items gauging experience of protest politics[26].

(ii) The 1999 General Election Study

To explore developments, this case study focuses upon Belgium, chosen as an established democracy exemplifying the rise of protest politics. Belgium has the highest proportion of demonstrators of any country in our comparative data, with the sharpest rise in demonstration activism from the early 1980s onwards[27]. To assess the distribution and characteristics of political activism in the general population, evidence is drawn from the 1999 General Election Study of Flanders-Belgium. This cross-sectional face-to-face survey with a supplementary mail-back questionnaire is representative of the Flanders electorate, interviewing 2099 respondents in total, and a response rate of 74%[28].

Typology of Activists

The work of Verba and his colleagues in the early 1970s originally distinguished among four conventional modes of political participation: voting, campaign activism, community organizing, and particularized contacting activity[29]. Barnes and Kaase later added the battery of protest items to the standard survey items. Barnes and Kaase monitored protest activism ('have done') and protest potential ('would do'). The distribution of the available evidence monitoring activism in the 1999 Belgian general election study is shown in Figure 1, ranging from voting, which is almost universal, down to the more unorthodox forms of protest like refusing to pay taxes and damaging property. In this study, we focus on comparing the attitudes and behavior of three groups of activists: party members, civic joiners, and demonstration activists.

Party members are understood as one of the most important standard indicator of traditional or conventional political participation, especially in Western European mass-branch parties, and an area generating considerable concern about declining membership rolls weakening linkages between citizens and the state[30]. Belgium in particular is widely considered as a so-called 'partitocracy', where mass-membership parties permeated society and politics[31]. The survey estimates suggest that overall 11.5% of Belgians said that they belonged to a political party or political association. This is a higher estimate than that available from official party records (6.5%), but differences between these sources of evidence are not uncommon, as there are limitations with both measures[32]. The inclusion of 'association' in the survey item may account for some of the difference, along with measuring self-reported 'passive' members (7.2%) as well as 'active' members (4.3%).

Civic joiners have received considerable emphasis in Putnam's theory of social capital as vital for community organizing and political participation[33]. We define this group as including those who currently belong as active or passive members to any of nine different types of voluntary associations and community organizations, including sports clubs, charitable groups, religious-

affiliated societies, environmental movement, and cultural groups, excluding membership of political parties. The list includes both traditional interest groups as well as new social movements. We develop a summary scale of how many civic organizations people joined and weight this according to whether the respondents reported themselves to be active (2) or passive members (1) of each organization. The full list of organizations is provided in Figure 1 showing the distribution of memberships, ranging from those like labor associations and sports clubs with the highest popularity down to environmental groups and district committees that were minority interests.

[Figure 1 about here]

Demonstration activists are defined as those who report *actually* taking part in a series of 13 different types of demonstrations, listed with their distributions in Figure 2. These range from demonstrations about labor conditions, that proved most popular, involving one fifth of the Belgian electorate, compared with others that attracted only small minorities such as women's issues and agriculture. The list includes both traditional bread-and-butter welfare issues exemplified by labor conditions and jobs, as well as 'newer' post-materialist concerns like the environment and anti-racism. One common limitation with the previous literature was that it usually focused upon protest *potential*, but this has proved a poor indicator of what activities people actually perform. As Topf argues, responses can best be understood as what citizens think they ought to do, rather than what they actually will do[34]. The reason is that surveys are generally stronger at tapping attitudes and values rather than actual behavior, and they are normally more reliable at reporting routine and repetitive actions ('How often do you attend church?') rather than occasional acts. Given these considerations, this study focuses on whether people say they actually *have* demonstrated, taken as the most accurate and reliable indicator of behavior, and excludes those acts that people say they *might* do, or protest potential.

[Figure 2 about here]

(iii) The Van Aelst and Walgrave Survey of Demonstration Activists

To explore the characteristics of the protest population in more depth, and to scrutinize the claim that context matters, we draw upon a unique series of face-to-face and postal surveys of demonstration participants in Belgium conducted by Van Aelst and Walgrave from 1998 to 2001. The methodology and design of this survey is reported extensively elsewhere[35]. Here we will briefly outline the methodology, sampling frame, and fieldwork.

Selection of demonstration events

The seven demonstrations in Belgium were selected on the basis of their expected popularity. The surveys succeeded in covering most of the biggest demonstrations held in Brussels during the 1998-2001 period. A relatively small anti-drugs demonstration was also surveyed, to enlarge the issue diversity of the demonstrations. The demonstrations were staged by the 'White Movement' (protesting against the failings of the justice system in the Dutroux case of child abuse and murder), the anti-racist movement, the anti-globalization movement, white-collar unions (nurses and teachers), general unions, and by political parties supporting the movement against drugs. The events were organized by typical traditional interest groups and political parties as well as by 'new' social movements.

The events were classified on theoretical grounds into four major categories reflecting the type of organizer and the location of the issue across the ideological spectrum: '*New-left*' demonstrations (anti-globalization and anti-racism), '*Old-left*' demonstrations (social security, non-profit sector, and education), '*New-mixed*' demonstrations (White March), and '*New-right*' demonstrations (anti-drugs). The latter categorization might be somewhat awkward, because the movement against drugs cannot automatically be considered as belonging to the 'New-Right', which in Western Europe is normally associated with anti-immigrant movements and neo-Nazi events. Nevertheless the anti-drugs demonstration was classified as a 'New-right' gathering because the participants displayed an overwhelming sympathy for the Flemish-Belgian extreme right party, Vlaams Blok. No less than 70% of all anti-drugs demonstrators voted for the Vlaams Blok and 84% of the party members among the demonstrators belonged to that same extreme right party. Future research which is in the process of data-collection, expanding the methodology to cover other additional protest events such as anti-war demonstrations over Iraq, will allow us to explore the implications of this typology more fully."

Random sample of survey participants

The survey covers a random sample of demonstrators engaged in seven different events, involving 2,448 respondents in total. Interviewing participants at protest demonstrations is not a common research technique. Favre and colleagues even speak of 'a strange gap in the sociology of mobilizations'[36]. To the best of our knowledge, few studies have used this approach. Most elaborate is the work of the French research team including Favre, Mayer and Fillieule, who developed a method designed to offer all participants an equal opportunity of being interviewed. Their method was refined further in this research. The actual survey process used in this study to establish a random survey of demonstration participants was twofold. First, fieldwork supervisors counted the rows of participants, selecting every Nth row, to ensure that the same number of rows

was skipped throughout. Then a dozen interviewers selected every Nth person in that row and distributed questionnaires to these individuals during the actual protest march.

The selected participants were asked to complete the questionnaire at home and to mail it back. The questionnaire maintained a common core, including the participants' profile, the mobilisation context, and the political attitudes and values of the demonstrator, with a few specific items adapted slightly for each demonstration. In addition to the mail-survey, a random sample of other demonstrators was interviewed in person before the demonstration's departure. The gathering crowd before the demonstration's departure was divided into sectors, and the interviewers each randomly selected a fixed number of respondents in 'their' sector. These (shorter) face-to-face interviews were used as a crosscheck to evaluate how far response to the mail-survey generated a representative random sample of demonstrators. Confidence in the surveys' reliability is strengthened by the fact that hardly anyone refused a face-to-face interview, and by the absence of significant differences between the two types of interviews. The overall response rate for the postal survey was more than 40%, which is satisfactory for an anonymous survey without any reminders, which also increases confidence in the procedure.

[Table 1 about here]

Surveys of demonstrations raise important questions about reliability and the representativeness of sampling procedures. Two kinds of representativeness are at stake here: the selection of the particular events and then the selection of the random sample of respondents and the response rate within each event. Concerning the first point, the selected demonstrations were not a perfectly representative sample of *all* demonstrations in Belgium; the study lacks the typical student and farmers' protests, and we only focused on larger demonstrations in the capital. Yet, big demonstrations in Brussels represent a large majority of protest events and of Belgian demonstrators. The incidence of farmers' and students' protests is unevenly spread over time, with sudden highs and lows succeeding each other, but those events are not continuously present[37]. Moreover, analysis of the 1999 General Election Study shows that the type of issues that we selected, including labor conditions, education, social security, and racism, roughly reflected the distribution of issues among the general public who demonstrated in Flanders-Belgium in the 1990s (see Figure 2). In addition, *longitudinal* analysis of demonstration events in Belgium from the 1950s onwards reveals that the balance of themes covered in the dataset reflects the bulk of the Belgian demonstrations during the post war era[38]. The selected protests used in the survey are therefore a fairly satisfactory reflection of these events in Belgium and they provide sufficient evidence to explore the issues raised in this study.

Concerning the respondents who responded within a demonstration, three elements might be considered problematic. First, if the demonstration is large and fairly static, and if all the streets become congested with people, it becomes difficult for the interviewers to cover the whole of the march since they are also immobile. Second, it is impossible to get a good sample of respondents in violent and/or irregular demonstrations, although these kind of protest events are usually small in number. Third, in some exceptional cases extremist groups of demonstrators *within* a peaceful event refuse to accept the questionnaires. This was the case when surveying the anti-globalization demonstration on 14 December 2001 and also a small group of 'black-box'-demonstrators refused to accept the postal questionnaire. Yet again, this is rare and demonstrators, like many other types of political activist, are usually highly collaborative.

<p style="text-align:center">Part III: Trends in Protest Activism</p>

Despite cyclical theories, emphasizing the unpredictability and contextuality of contentious politics, the available systematic evidence suggests that protest politics has risen, and risen dramatically, in many countries during the late twentieth century. Data is available from content (event) analysis of media coverage[39], from official statistics monitoring the number of protests and demonstrations[40], and also from cross-national surveys, providing alternative estimates of the proportion of citizens engaged in protest politics. Surveys show that political acts such as petitioning, consumer boycotts and demonstrations have become far more common since the mid-1970s, especially among the public in affluent post-industrial societies[41]. The most striking finding in Table 1 is the consistency of the trends during the last quarter century in the Political Action countries (printed in bold). The growth in demonstration activism is evident across all eight nations, although not as strong in all places, with the Netherlands, Italy and West Germany as leaders, and Britain and Finland as laggards.

<p style="text-align:center">[Table 2 about here]</p>

The original Political Action countries were all established democracies and affluent postindustrial societies. Do we find comparable developments in other countries as well, and are similar trends evident in a shorter time perspective? Table 1 shows experience of demonstrating from the early-1980s to 2000 in two-dozen societies where evidence from the World Values Survey is available at both time points. It indicates that the rise of protest politics is by no means a phenomenon confined to postindustrial societies and established democracies. Experience of demonstrations have become more common in most nations, with particularly marked increases in some of the smaller consensus democracies, including Belgium, the Netherlands, and Sweden. According to successive waves of the World Values Surveys, 14% of citizens attended legal demonstrations in Belgium in 1981, 23% in 1990, but a remarkable 39% in 2000, the latter figure

corroborated independently elsewhere[42]. Estimates based on the World Values Survey suggest that demonstrating (experienced by 16% of the public overall) has become more widespread today than many traditional forms of political participation such as active party membership (5%), or active trade union membership (5%).

<p align="center">**Part IV: The Characteristics of Demonstrators**</p>

The rise in Belgium means that we chose to look in more detail at activists in this country, particularly the social and attitudinal characteristics of demonstrators compared with party members and civic joiners. The analytical model in Table 3 presents standard factors that are commonly used in previous studies of political participation to predict activism. In terms of social background, the profile confirms that age continues to prove significant, with participation in parties and in civic associations increasing as people enter middle age, before slightly tapering off among the elderly. Among demonstrators the sign remains negative, indicating that protest activity remains more popular among the younger generation than for their parents or grandparents. But this is the *only* social factor that proves significant in explaining demonstration activism. Gender helps to predict civic membership, with women slightly more likely to join than men. As shown elsewhere, gendered patterns of membership are highly dependent upon the type of civic organization, since some remain predominantly male (such as sports clubs) while others are predominately female (such as charitable work), reflecting well-established sex roles[43]. But gender is no longer important today in distinguishing either party membership or demonstration activism. Education is important in predicting party membership but the impact is negative, suggesting that Belgian parties of the left are more successful in mobilizing the working class into their membership than the parties of the right manage to activate the middle or upper classes[44]. Patterns of education are strong predictors of many types of political participation in the United States but their influence varies cross-nationally, depending upon the ability of parties to mobilize their base. By contrast, class proves to be strongly related to joining civic groups like cultural and religious organizations, which remain, as expected, very middle class in background. Yet, most importantly, social class fails to predict engagement in demonstrations, as Barnes and Kaase first found three decades ago. Therefore the way that socioeconomic status influences patterns of participation is by no means straightforward, with no effect upon demonstration activism, but with civic associations a more middle class channel of participation in Belgium, while party membership is a more working class route. This suggests that if demonstrations are gradually displacing traditional modes of engagement like parties and groups, as Dalton suggests[45], this will not necessarily generate greater social inequality in political activism. Lastly religiosity is negatively associated with party membership but positively linked to

civic joining. Comparing the three types of activists and their social background variables, it becomes clear that of all groups, demonstrators most closely resemble the electorate at large.

[Table 3 about here]
Turning to the motivational attitudes of activists, the common denominator across all types of engagement concerns political interest, a simple 5-point scale that nonetheless proves strong and significant in helping to explain party membership, civic joiners, and demonstrators. Similar results are found with alternative standard indicators of political interest (not shown here), such as the frequency of political discussion or the propensity to follow the news in the media. Internal efficacy, meaning how confidently people felt that they had sufficient skills and knowledge to participate in politics, was strongly related to civic joining, but proved unrelated to the other forms of activism[46].

The different predictions made by the disaffection and the strategic resource theories, however, are in sharpest contrast when it comes to systems support. While disaffection theories predict that demonstrators will be particularly unhappy about government and dissatisfied with democracy, strategic resource theories suggest that they will not differ sharply from other forms of activists in these regards. If system support is a multidimensional orientation, as argued elsewhere[47], then it is important to compare a variety of indicators, including external political efficacy, trust in government, and satisfaction with democracy. The results in Table 3 show that *all* the system support indicators fail to predict demonstration activism: people who take to the streets to express their cause cannot be regarded as particularly critical of the political system, whether in terms of satisfaction with how democracy works in Belgium, how far government and politicians are responsive to their needs and concerns, or how far they trust government. While the Crozier et al. thesis may appear plausible to many popular commentators, in fact there is no systematic evidence for these claims according to this study, confirming the previous behavioral literature.

Two other important findings about motivational attitudes are worth noting. Demonstrators are drawn disproportionately from the left, according to where they place themselves ideologically on a 10-point scale. It could well be that groups on the left have been particularly successful at using these tactics to mobilize their supporters in Belgium, including the labor and environmental movements, as well as educationalists and welfare professionals, or it could be that left-wing citizens are more willing to engage in this form of political expression. But at the same, while on the left of the political spectrum, demonstrators were not found disproportionately on the far-left, as the anti-state account would expect; instead they were on the center-left. Other evidence about political behavior also supports the strategic resource thesis: people who demonstrate are significantly *more* likely to be civic joiners, party members and labor organization members, not less. In this

regard, demonstrations can be seen as another way that people can connect to public life, joining with others to express their concerns about racism, globalization, or jobs. As such, this does not mean that demonstrations replace or even threaten traditional associational life, as some fear. Rather demonstration activism complements it; the main reason, social capital theories suggest, is that the social ties forged in groups like community associations and unions create the social networks and bonds that may encourage people to participate in demonstrations [48]. In this regard, it seems likely that there is a 'pull'-factor at work, if people go on a protest march in part because they are asked to by their workmates, neighbors, friends, and colleagues, complimenting the 'push'-factors derived from self-motivated political interest. This suggests that the specific mobilization context in which a demonstration takes place may play an important role in bringing people to these events.

Part V: Variations by types of demonstrations

The evidence analyzed so far supports the strategic resource account yet so far we have not looked directly at the third explanation, the claim that context matters so that important differences exist among alternative types of demonstrations. If correct, then we may need to distinguish between radical and middle-of-the-road protests, as well as between blue-collar marches about bread-and-butter issues like pay and jobs and more middle class events concerning anti-racism or anti-globalization. One difficulty about examining the contextual thesis is that in the past we have often lacked sufficient evidence to be able to compare and contrast the participants attending different types of protest events. The Van Aelst and Walgrave survey of a random sample of participants engaged in a series of seven separate demonstrations held in Belgium from 1998 to 2001 are well suited to scrutinize the contextual claim. This section focuses upon running similar models to those that we have already examined, since the demonstration surveys contain functionally equivalent items, analyzing and comparing the results in each of the separate demonstrations as the units of analysis. The binominal logistic regression models compare participation in each of the selected types of demonstrations as dummy (1/0) variables compared against the weighted pooled sample of all other demonstrators, as the reference category. The results can therefore be understood to show how far the characteristics of participants in each of the different demonstrations prove distinctive to all demonstrators in the pooled sample. Using the theoretical classification of the demonstration into the categories of *New-Left* (anti-globalization and anti-racism), *New-Right* (anti-drugs), *Old-Left* (social security, non-profit sector and education), and *Mixed* (White March), we ran the models predicting participation in a *type* of demonstration. The results are presented in Table 4.

[Table 4 about here]

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The claim that the characteristics of demonstrators vary systematically among these different types of events receives some support from the analysis. In terms of social background, as expected, compared with other demonstrators, New-Left demonstrators are usually younger, well educated, and middle class. In contrast, Old Left demonstrations mobilize a more working class constituency, while New Right events bring out older groups onto the streets. The most plausible reason for these differences concern the type of issue and the type of organizers. For example, some old-left demonstrations deliberately targeted and mobilized a specific professional group such as teachers or nurses engaged in conflict over wages or labour conditions. The education demonstration, for example, brought many highly educated teachers onto the streets, mainly those working in Christian schools. The least distinct social profile was found in the White March, which appealed to no particular faction in society, and which managed to get a heterogeneous mass public onto the streets of Brussels.

The comparison of motivational attitudes shows that political ideology plays an important role so that, as expected, New Left and New Right events draw participants with differing ideological views. There are also some contrasts by political interest, with this higher than average among New Left demonstrators, and with lower than average among the Old Left. This could be related to the contrasts in educational background that we have already observed, since education has often been found to be strongly associated with interest[49].

In terms of system support, however, the main contrast is that Old Left demonstrators expressed higher than average satisfaction with democracy, while the opposite pattern was evident among New Right participants. What is clear, however, is that across all indicators there is no consistent difference among groups in their level of system support and there is little evidence of anti-state radicalism[50]. Democratic satisfaction does vary, but external efficacy and political trust hardly discriminate the demonstrations from each other. Not only are demonstrators as a group *generally* not disaffected about government and democracy, as we showed earlier, but none of the seven *specific* demonstrations was crowded with anti-state radicals, not even the anti-globalization protest. People who take to the streets in Belgium do not generally consider government and politicians to be unresponsive to their needs and concerns, nor do they deeply distrust government[51].

Lastly the measures of political behavior also generated important differences, which are probably best explained in terms of the characteristics of the event organizers, with unions strongly mobilizing supporters for Old Left events, and fewer than average union members at New Left and New Right events. Parties also seem to have played an important role in getting their supporters to New Right marches, while civic associations fulfilled this function in New Left events. The one *'New*

Mixed' (White March) demonstration in our sample, a mass protest against the failings of the judiciary in a case of child abduction and murder, can be differentiated from the other demonstration types on a number of variables, but the adjusted R² of its model is much lower. The White March succeeded in getting a rather heterogeneous constituency onto the streets. As discussed elsewhere, this kind of internally diverse demonstrations may have become more frequent recently[52].

Conclusions

Establishing the root causes of rising levels of protest politics is important, not just for its own sake, but also because of the insights this can provide into its consequences for democratic stability and the legitimacy of elected governments. If the anti-state theory is correct, so that protests represent a warning sign of deep-seated public disaffection with traditional channels of civic engagement and political participation, and if there has been a rising tide of demonstrations, then this phenomenon could indeed raise important challenges to the legitimacy of representative democracy. If, however, demonstrations are chosen as just one more legitimate and increasingly conventional channel of expression, drawn from a varied repertoire of alternative actions including involvement in election campaigns, traditional interest groups, and community organizations, bringing together concerned citizens, then the attitudes and values that these acts symbolize could be regarded as far healthier for the state of democracy. And if demonstrators can be either radical or mainstream, anti-state or pro-state, involving both excluded minorities and privileged elites, depending upon the particular context, then this also provides important insights into their potential for both challenging and strengthening democracy.

[Table 5 about here]

Table 5 recapitulates the core hypotheses more formally and also summarizes the key findings to have emerged from the analysis. The results of the analysis of the Belgian general electorate suggests that overall the anti-state theory of Crozier et al., while often popular among journalistic commentators and contemporary observers, as well as heard among political leaders, fails to find support in the evidence. Today demonstrations have become conventional in Belgian politics, as almost four out of ten Belgians have participated through these events at some time in their lives. The comparison of the frequency of all types of political acts established that voting was by far the most ubiquitous (mostly because it is compulsory). But signing a petition is the next most common act followed by experience of having demonstrated. We established that demonstrators are as supportive as other citizens of the political system in Belgium, by many indicators, while being more willing to join civic groups, as an indicator of traditional activism. They are not drawn disproportionately from the poorer sections of society, indeed demonstrations as a channel of

participation cut across conventional divisions of class, education and gender, drawing disparate groups to the streets, although at the same time there remains a bias towards the younger generation more than the middle aged. Demonstrators are not anti-state radicals who belong to socially marginal groups or who despise conventional forms of political participation. By contrast, they are more similar to the Belgian population as a whole than civic joiners and party members.

Yet focusing on a range of demonstrations revealed that context does matter. Considering all demonstrations as equivalent phenomena is a category mistake. The social characteristics, systems support, motivational attitudes, and the political behavior of demonstrators varied by the type of event. The analysis confirmed that anti-state radicalism is not the dominant motive for demonstrators, nor is it a prevailing type of demonstrations in Belgium. But the strategic resource perspective has its flaws too. Some demonstrations mobilize educated middle-class professionals, but others bring workers or students onto the streets. The specific issues, organization, and mobilization processes involved, in short the context of a specific demonstration, makes a considerable difference. This supports the contextual account pointing towards specific issues, organizations, and mobilization processes to explain demonstration activity and contrasts between events. Probably a large part of the solution of the 'who demonstrates?' puzzle lies exactly in these mobilization contexts. With whom are people attending a demonstration? Via which channels are they informed and persuaded to participate? Understanding these issues further is an important topic for further research.

In general, therefore, popular concern that demonstrations are undermining representative democracy, by displacing conventional channels with radical and extremist politics, even violent tactics, due to political disaffection, seems misplaced. Clearly some demonstrations do result in destruction or damage to property and even illegal acts. But on balance demonstrations appear to be a growing channel of political expression used for the legitimate articulation of demands in a democratic state, and a form of activism that has evolved and expanded over the years to supplement and compliment existing organizations in civic society. In cases such as massive anti-war demonstrations triggered worldwide by the American and British actions over Iraq, where most citizens are largely powerless to affect decisions through the usual channels of representative democracy within their own countries, mass demonstrations and non-violent civil disobedience may appear to be the only legitimate and effective channels of political expression. Far from threatening or even challenging democracy, demonstrations have become today one of the major channels of public voice.

Table 1: Seven demonstrations dataset, Belgium (1998 and 2001).

Classification	New Mixed	New Left	Old Left	Old Left	Old Left	New Right	New Left
	Second White March	Anti-racism	Non-profit sector	Social security	Education	Anti-Drugs	Anti-globalization
Date	15 Feb. 1998	22 March 1998	26 March 1998	11 Sept. 1998	17 May 2000	30 Sept. 2001	14 Dec. 2001
Aim	Expressing solidarity with all sort of victims + discontent about judiciary system	Demanding equal rights for immigrants + STOP extreme right	For higher wages and more staff in hospitals and non-profit organisations	For higher social allowances and pensions	Teachers demanding higher wages and more staff in schools	Against the government's liberal drug policy + solidarity with parents of addicts	Against neo-liberal globalisation + for another Europe
Organizers (*)							
Unions	-	+	++	++	++	-	-
Social organisations	-	++	-	+	-	-	++
Political parties	-	+	-	-	-	+	+
Others	Family of victims	-	-	-	-	Parents of drug addicts	-
Estimated number of participants (**)	25000 -30000	7000 -15000	12000 -20000	30000	10000-18000	2000 -3000	12500 -25000
Postal questionnaires							
Distributed	270	700	700	730	635	622	1000
Completed	123	337	254	256	299	365	378
Response rate (%)	45.5	48.1	36.3	35.1	47.1	58.7	37.8
Face-to-face interviews	0	125	120	99	92	0	0

(*) ++= primary organiser; += supporting organisation
(**) The first figure is the official estimate of the police, the second is the highest estimate mentioned in the national newspapers.
Source: Van Aelst and Walgrave survey of seven demonstrations in Belgium (1998-2001)

Table 2: Rise in Demonstration Activism: proportion who have demonstrated by nation, mid-1970s to date

	Mid-1970s (i)	Early 1980s (ii)	Early 1990s (iii)	1999 to 2001 (iv)	Change (ii) to (iv)
Belgium		13	21	39	+26
Netherlands	7	12	25	32	+20
Sweden		15	22	35	+20
France		26	31	38	+12
Denmark		18	27	28	+10
Ireland		12	16	21	+9
South Korea (*)		5	19	14	+9
Italy	19	25	34	33	+8
US	12	12	15	20	+8
Norway (*)		19	19	26	+7
South Africa		6	13	13	+7
West Germany	9	14	20	20	+6
Iceland		14	23	20	+6
Canada		13	21	19	+6
Australia (*)		12		18	+6
Britain	6	10	14	13	+3
Japan		7	9	10	+3
Northern Ireland		18	18	20	+2
Spain		22	21	24	+2
Mexico		8	20	10	+2
Finland	6	14	12	14	0
Argentina		19	16	13	-6
Switzerland	8			16	
Austria	7		10	16	
MEAN	9	14	20	21	+7

Note: *"Now I'd like you to look at this card. I'm going to read out some different forms of political action that people can take, and I'd like you to tell me, for each one, whether you have actually done any of these things, whether you might do it, or would never, under any circumstances, do it."* % '*Have actually attended lawful demonstration*'

Data is unavailable for blank entries. (*) Latest available data is 1995-7

Sources: (i) Barnes and Kaase *Political Action: An Eight-Nation Study 1973-76*/

        (ii)-(iv) The World Values Survey early-1980s to 1999-2001.

Table 3: Predictors of party, civic, and demonstration activism, Belgium 1999

	Party Members				Civic Joiners				Demonstrators			
	B	S.E.	St. Beta	Sig.	B	S.E.	St. Beta	Sig.	B	S.E.	St. Beta	Sig.
SOCIAL STRUCTURE												
Age	**.003**	**.001**	**.13**	***	**.015**	**.003**	**.11**	***	**-.013**	**.004**	**-.09**	***
Male sex	.025	.014	.04		**-.346**	**.094**	**-.08**	***	.146	.100	.04	
Education	**-.018**	**.008**	**-.07**	**	**.272**	**.050**	**.15**	***	-.060	.053	-.05	
Social Class	.001	.003	-.01		.030	.023	.03		.001	.024	.01	
Religiosity	-.003	.002	-.03		**.014**	**.011**	**.03**		-.011	.014	-.03	
MOTIVATIONAL ATTITUDES												
Political Interest	**.067**	**.008**	**.20**	***	**.110**	**.054**	**.05**	*	**.311**	**.059**	**.16**	***
Internal efficacy	**-.005**	**.002**	**-.05**	*	**.103**	**.011**	**.22**	***	.016	.016	.03	
Social trust	.003	.008	.01		**.165**	**.051**	**.07**	***	.101	.054	.05	
Left-right self-placement	.001	.003	.01		-.020	.023	-.02		**-.182**	**.024**	**-.17**	***
SYSTEMS SUPPORT												
External efficacy	**-.004**	**.001**	**-.09**	***	**-.024**	**.010**	**-.07**	**	-.017	.010	-.05	
Democratic satisfaction	-.002	.009	-.01		.050	.061	.02		-.017	.066	-.01	
Trust in government	.011	.009	.03		-.083	.061	-.03		-.078	.066	-.03	
POLITICAL BEHAVIOR												
Civic activism	**.016**	**.003**	**.11**	***					**.155**	**.021**	**.16**	***
Party member					**.667**	**.149**	**.10**	***	**.414**	**.159**	**.06**	**
Labor organization member	**.041**	**.011**	**.09**	***	**.383**	**.071**	**.12**	***	**.369**	**.071**	**.12**	***
Constant	-.06				-1.36				1.8			
Adjusted R^2	.11				.15				.15			

Note: The coefficients represents unstandardized betas (B), standard errors, standardized betas, and significance in ordinary least squares regression analysis models predicting party membership, civic joiners and demonstration activists as the dependent variables. Sig. ***=.001 **=.01 *=.05. The variables were entered in the order of the table. *'Party members'* includes both active and passive members. *'Civic joiners'* is a summary index of active and passive membership in a range of eight voluntary organizations and community associations like sports, cultural, charity, environmental, and religious groups (excluding party and labor organization membership). *'Demonstrators'* is a summary index of reported active participation in any of 13 types of demonstrations (for the list see Figure 2). Collinearity statistics were checked for the tolerance of all variables. See the technical appendix A for coding details of all the items.
Source: 1999 General Election Study of Flanders-Belgium N. 1637.

Table 4: Predictors of demonstration by type of event, Belgium 1998-2001

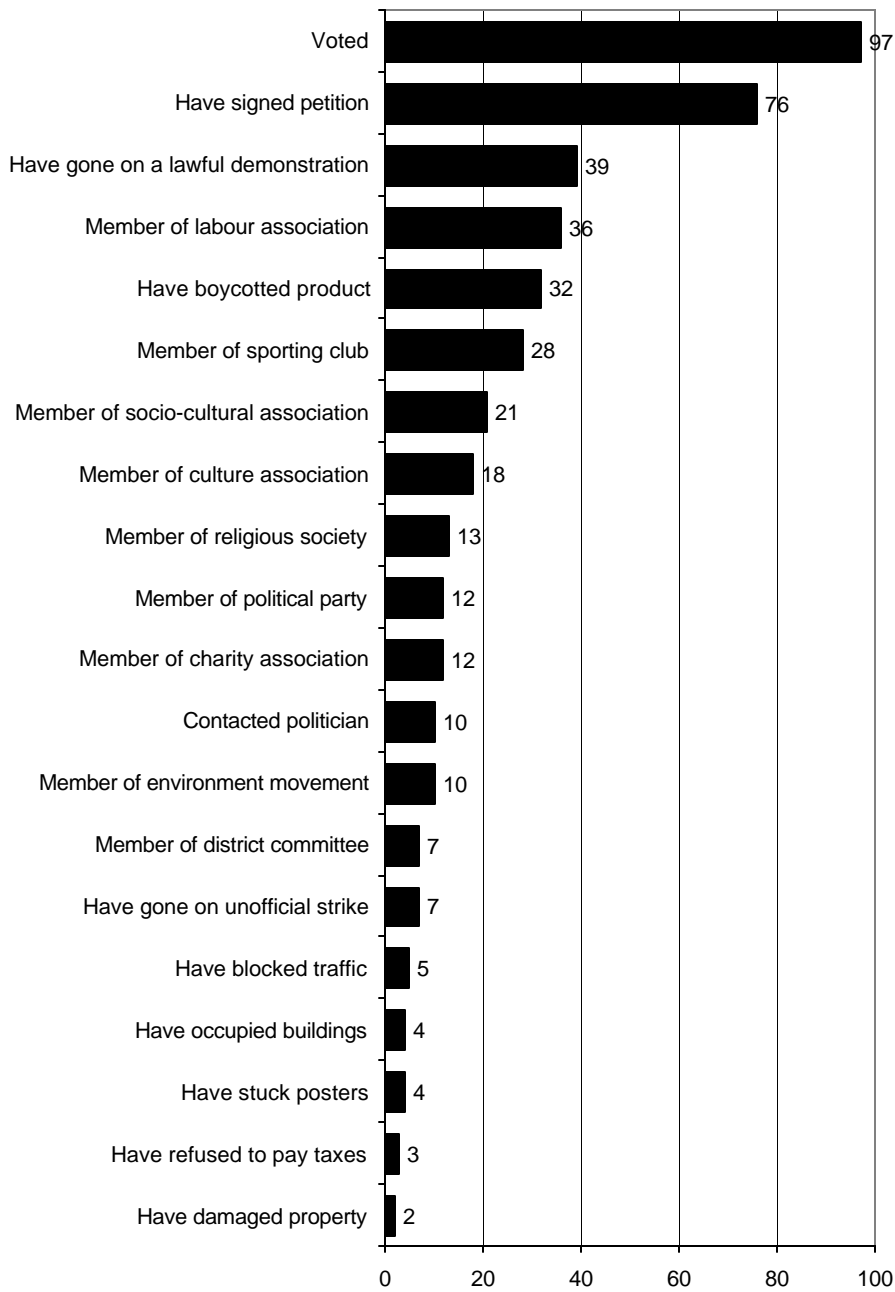|	New-left (Anti-globalization and anti-racism)		Old-left (Non-profit sector, social security and education)		New-right (Anti-drugs)		New Mixed (Second White March)	
	B	Sig.	B	Sig.	B	Sig.	B	Sig.
SOCIAL STRUCTURE								
Age	**-.038**	***	.001		**.046**	***	**.011**	*
Male sex	.255		-.171		.082		-.029	
Education	**.244**	*	-.177		-.090		-.021	
Social Class	**.192**	*	**-.171**	*	.071		**.115**	*
Religiosity	-.338		.315		.362			
MOTIVATIONAL ATTITUDES								
Political Interest	**.482**	***	**-.603**	***	-.128			
Internal efficacy	.100		-.128		.012			
Left-right scale	**-1.460**	***	.073		**2.127**	***	**-.238**	***
SYSTEM SUPPORT								
External efficacy	.004		-.019		-.007			
Democratic satisfaction	-.262		**.856**	***	**-.727**	**		
Trust in government	0.87		.038		-.043		**-.238**	***
POLITICAL BEHAVIOR								
Labor association membership	**-1.264**	***	**3.349**	***	**-3.879**	***	-.096	
Party membership	**-.643**	**	-.127		**.979**	**	**-.372**	*
Civic activism	**.446**	*	-.324		.017		**-1.131**	***
N	1199		1199		1199		1373	
Percentage correct	84.9		83.1		94.2		77.6	
Adjusted R^2	0.57		0.59		0.84		0.20	

Note: The coefficients represent unstandardized betas (B) and their significance in binominal logistic regression analysis models predicting participation in one type of demonstration (versus the pooled sample of the other six demonstrations) as the dependent variables. Sig. ***=.001 **=.01 *=.05. The variables were entered in the order of the table. Collinearity statistics were checked for the tolerance of all variables. See the technical appendix B for coding details of all the items. The data are weighted so that every demonstration has an equal number of respondents in the analysis. This weighting procedure did not make much difference, except for the White March (New-mixed), where the initial N was small, and some variables became significant after weighting.
Source: Seven demonstrations dataset (1998-2001). Belgium. Peter Van Aelst & Stefaan Walgrave.

Table 5: Formal statement of hypotheses and summary of findings

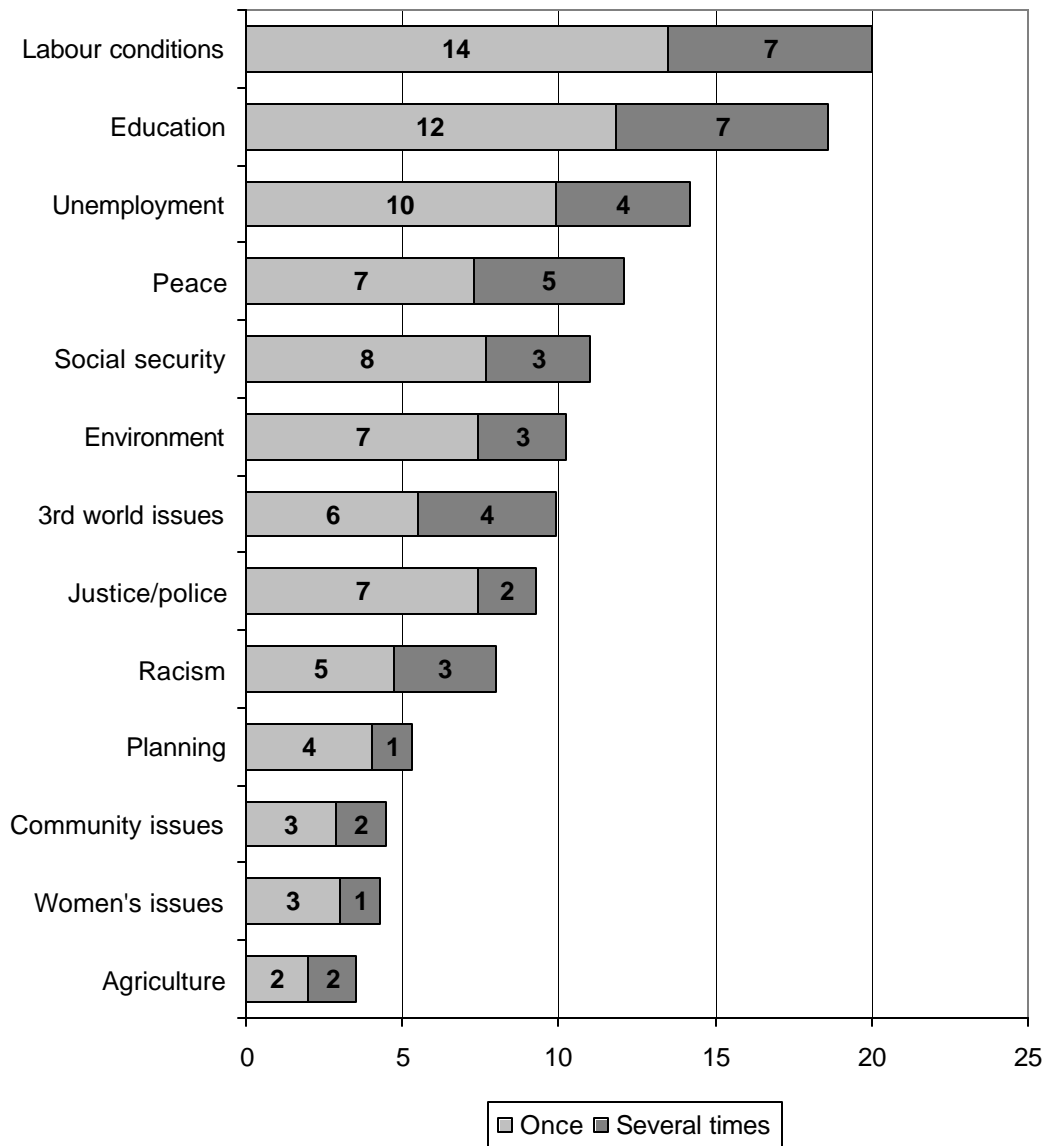|		All other things being equal, compared with party members and civic joiners, demonstrators will:	
Anti-state theories			
	(H1.1)	Display low levels of system support such as trust in government	False
	(H1.2)	Fail to engage in traditional channels of political activism	False
	(H1.3)	Cluster to the far right or far-left of the ideological spectrum	False
	(H1.4)	Be drawn disproportionately from working class, less educated, and lower-status sectors.	False
Strategic resource theories			
	(H2.1)	Display similar motivational attitudes like political interest.	True
	(H2.2)	Belong to traditional civic associations.	True
	(H2.3)	Display similar political preferences within the ideological spectrum	True
	(H2.4)	Be drawn disproportionately from the educated, middle class, male, and middle-aged.	Mixed
Contextual thesis			
	(H3.1)	Support for the political system will vary significantly among demonstrators according to the type of event.	Mixed
	(H3.2)	The social characteristics of demonstrators will vary according to the type of event.	True

Figure 1: Frequency of political and civic activism in Flanders-Belgium, 1999

Activity	Value
Voted	97
Have signed petition	76
Have gone on a lawful demonstration	39
Member of labour association	36
Have boycotted product	32
Member of sporting club	28
Member of socio-cultural association	21
Member of culture association	18
Member of religious society	13
Member of political party	12
Member of charity association	12
Contacted politician	10
Member of environment movement	10
Member of district committee	7
Have gone on unofficial strike	7
Have blocked traffic	5
Have occupied buildings	4
Have stuck posters	4
Have refused to pay taxes	3
Have damaged property	2

Note: 'Current membership' includes both 'active' or 'passive' categories.

Source: 1999 General Election Study of Flanders-Belgium

Figure 2: Issue focus of demonstration activism, Belgium 1999

Issue	Once	Several times
Labour conditions	14	7
Education	12	7
Unemployment	10	4
Peace	7	5
Social security	8	3
Environment	7	3
3rd world issues	6	4
Justice/police	7	2
Racism	5	3
Planning	4	1
Community issues	3	2
Women's issues	3	1
Agriculture	2	2

☐ Once ■ Several times

Note: Q:"*Have you demonstrated on…*" (Percentage responding 'only one time' or 'several times').
Source: 1999 General Election Study of Flanders-Belgium

Technical Appendix A: Coding and measurement for general election survey 1999, Belgium

SOCIAL BACKGROUND	
Age	Years old (Age)
Sex	Male 1, Female 0 (R2)
Education	5-categories from lower 1 to higher 5 (Educ5)
Class	5-categories from unskilled workers (1) to executives-professionals (5) (EGP05)
Religiosity	Intensity of religious beliefs (R27)
POLITICAL ATTITUDES	
Political Interest	(R53) "Some people are very interested in politics. Others are not interested at all. Are you very interested in politics, or are you not at all interested?"
External efficacy	(R79_1 to R79_9) "There's no sense in voting; the parties do what they want to do anyway. Parties are only interested in my vote, not in my opinion. If people like me let the politicians know what we think, then they will take our opinions into account. Politicians have never learned to listen to people like me. Most politicians promise a lot, but don't do anything As soon as they are elected, politicians think they are better than people like me. Most of our politicians are competent people who know what they are doing. At the current time, there is no politician I would trust." (8 Agree/disagree scales)
Internal efficacy	(RS17_1 to RS17_4) "I consider myself to be qualified enough to participate in politics." "I feel that I have a good understanding of the major issues in Belgium." "I'm as capable as anyone else to hold a political mandate." "I feel that I'm more informed about politics and government than most people." "People like me have influence on the government."(5 Agree/disagree scales)
Democratic satisfaction	(R78) "Are you, generally speaking, very satisfied, more or less satisfied, more or less dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the functioning of democracy in Belgium?"
Trust in government	(R113_11) "Now I am going to read you a list of institutions. Could you tell me, for each of these institutions, whether you trust them a lot or a little?… The Government."
Social trust	(R30_10) "Today, most people can still be trusted." (Agree/disagree scales)
Left-right self-placement	(R31) "In politics, people sometimes talk about "left" and "right". Card No. 11 presents this situation. "0" stands for someone whose views are entirely to the "left"; "10" for someone whose views are entirely to the "right". Of course, there are intermediary positions to the degree that one's views are more or less to the "left" or to the "right". When you think about your own ideas on this, where would you place yourself on this scale?"
POLITICAL BEHAVIOR	
Civic activism	(RS26_1 to RS26_9) "Are you at the moment the member of the following kinds

	of organization? For each association, are you an active member (i.e. participated during the last year (1999) in at least one activity), a passive member (coded 1), an ex-member or not a member (coded 0)? "
Member of labor association	R26.10. Same question as above: trade union, association of small businessmen or professional association?
Party member	R26.6. Same question as above: political association/party?

Source: 1999 General Election Study of Flanders-Belgium

Technical Appendix B: Coding and measurement for seven demonstrations dataset (1998-2001), Belgium

SOCIAL BACKGROUND	
Age	Years old (Age)
Sex	Male 1, Female 0
Education	5-categories from lower 1 to higher 5
Religiosity	2-categories: Believer 1(Christian, Catholic, Protestant and Other), Non-believer 2 (non-believer, free-thinker)
POLITICAL ATTITUDES	
Political Interest	"Some people are very interested in politics. Others are not interested at all. Are you very interested in politics, or are you not at all interested?"
Internal efficacy	People like me have influence on the government / For people like myself, politics is far too complicated, you have to be an expert to understand it. (2 Agree/disagree scales)
External efficacy	"There's no sense in voting; the parties do what they want to do anyway / Parties are only interested in my vote, not in my opinion / Most politicians promise a lot, but don't do anything / Most of our politicians are competent people who know what they are doing. (4 Agree/disagree scales)
Democratic satisfaction	"Are you, generally speaking, very satisfied, more or less satisfied, more or less dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the functioning of democracy in Belgium?"
Trust in government	"Now I am going to read you a list of institutions. Could you tell me, for each of these institutions, whether you trust them a lot or a little? Sum of the trust in The Government, The Parliament, and Political Parties"
Left-right position (constructed)	While the classical left-right scale was absent in the questionnaire we constructed this scale on the basis of the voting behavior of the respondents. Each party was placed on this scale on the basis of their average score in the general election study. Example: The voters of the green party in the election study had an average score of 3,8 on the Left-right self-placement scale (0=extreme-left; 10=extreme-right; see appendix A). So we gave all green voters in our demonstration surveys the same score. By consequence, the range of score is rather limited in comparison with the left-right self-placement scale used in the election study.
POLITICAL BEHAVIOR	
Union membership	Are you member of a union? Non-member 0; member=1
Party membership	Are you member of a political party? Non-member 0; member=1
Civic activism	Are you an active member (i.e. during the last year), have you participated in activities or meetings) of any club, association or society? Non-member 0; member=1.

Source: Van Aelst and Walgrave seven demonstrations dataset (1998-2001), Belgium

[1] A. Etzioni, *Demonstration Democracy*. (NY: Gordon and Breach, 1977); H. Pross, *Protestgessellschaft. (*Munchen: Artemis and Winkler, 1992); Mary Kaldor. ''Civilising' globalisation? The implications of the 'Battle in Seattle.' *Millennium-Journal Of International Studies* 29 (1) (2000): 105-+.

[2] Dieter Rucht, Ruud Koopmans and Friedhelm Neidhardt. Eds. *Acts of Dissent: New Developments in the Study of Protest.* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999).

[3] See, for example, Doug McAdam, John D, McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald. Eds. *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements.* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996). See also Sidney Tarrow. *Power in Movement*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Hans Kriesi, et al. *New Social Movements in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis.* (MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1995); Hans Kriesi, Donatella Della Porta and Dieter Rucht. Eds. *Social Movements in a Globalizing World.* (London: Macmillan, 1998); Donatella Della Porta and Mario Diani. *Social Movements.* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999). For a recent review and synthesis of the literature see Ronald Aminzade et al. *Silence and Voice in the Study of Contentious Politics.* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[4] See for example: Bert Klandermans. *The social psychology of protest.* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995).

[5] Michel Crozier, Samuel P. Huntington, and Joji Watanuki. *The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission.* (New York: New York University Press, 1975).

[6] Gustave Le Bon. *Psychologie des foules.* (Paris 1895); Ted Robert Gurr. *Why men rebel.* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970).

[7] For a discussion see Joseph S. Nye. "Introduction: The Decline Of Confidence In Government." In *Why People Don't Trust Government*, eds. Joseph S. Nye, Philip D. Zelikow, and David C. King. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997); Susan J. Tolchin. *The Angry American: How Voter Rage is Changing the Nation.* (Boulder. Co: Westview Press, 1996).

[8] Barbara G. Farah, Samuel H. Barnes, and Felix Heunis. 'Political Dissatisfaction.' In *Political Action: Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies*. Eds. Samuel H. Barnes and Max Kaase. (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1979).

[9] Jacques Thomassen. 'Economic Crisis, Dissatisfaction and Protest.' In *Continuitites in Political Action.* Eds. M. Kent Jennings, Jan w. van Deth, et al. (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1990). See also Russell Dalton *Citizen Politics.* 3rd Ed. (Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 2002); R. Koopman.

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'New social movements and changes in political participation in Western Europe.' *West European Politics.* 19(1) (1996): 28-50. For a comparable study on Belgium see: Peter van Aelst, Stefaan Walgrave and Kristof Decoster. 'Politiek wantrouwen en protest. Over het democratisch kapitaal van Belgische betogers.' Tijdschrift voor Sociologie, 20 (1999): 441-470.

[10] Frank Parkin. *Middle class radicalism.* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1968).

[11] For a fuller discussion see Samuel Barnes and Max Kaase. *Political Action: Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies*. (Beverley Hills, CA: Sage, 1979); Christopher A. Rootes. 'On the future of protest politics in Western democracies: A critique of Barnes, Kaase et al., Political Action.' *European Journal of Political Research* 9 (1981): 421-432.

[12] Richard Topf. 'Beyond Electoral Participation.' In *Citizens and the State.* Eds. Hans-Dieter Klingemann and Dieter Fuchs. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

[13] Pippa Norris. Ed. *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Governance.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

[14] Peter Van Aelst and Stefaan Walgrave. 'Who is that (wo)man in the street? From the normalization of protest to the normalization of the protester.' *European Journal of Political Research.* 39 (2001): 461-486.

[15] Ronald Inglehart. *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977); Ronald Inglehart. *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); Ronald Inglehart. *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic and Political Change in 43 Societies*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997); Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris. *Rising Tide: Gender Equality and Cultural Change Around the World.* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Russell J. Dalton, 'Citizens, Protest and Democracy,' a special issue of *The Annals of Political and Social Sciences* (July 1993); Russell J. Dalton. *Citizen Politics.* 3rd Ed. (Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 2002); Russell J. Dalton. 'Citizen attitudes and political behavior.' *Comparative Political Studies*. 33 (6-7) (2000): 912-940.

[16] See Pippa Norris. *Democratic Phoenix: Reinventing Political Activism.* (New York Cambridge University Press, 2002). Chapter 10.

[17] W. Lance Bennet. 'The uncivic Culture: Communication, Identity and the Rise of Lifestyle Politics'. *PS Political Science and Politics.* 31 (1998): 741-761.

[18] See Pippa Norris. *Democratic Phoenix: Reinventing Political Activism.* (New York Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[19] Donatella Della Porta and Howard Reiter. Eds. *Policing Protest: The control of mass demonstrations in western democracies*. (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1998); Donatella Della Porta. *Social movements, political violence and the state. A comparative analysis of Italy and Germany.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[20] The demonstration held by French employers against the introduction of the 35-hour week appears to confirm this view. On 4 October 1999, two large employers' organisations mobilised approximately 25.000 'bosses' for a sit-in in the French capital (*Le Monde*, 5-10-1999).

[21] Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald. Eds. *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Russel J. Dalton and Manfred Kuechler. *Challenging the Political Order. New social and Political Movements in Western Democracies*. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990); Claus Offe. 'New Social Movements Challenging the boundaries of institutional politics'. *Social Research*. 52 (1985): 818-868; Alberto Melucci. *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[22] In France, for example, Fillieule observed less than 7% 'spontaneous' demonstrations in the 1980s. Olivier Fillieule. 1997. Stratégies de la rue. Les manifestations en France. Paris: Presses de sciences Po.

[23] Sidney Verba and Norman Nie. *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality*. (New York: Harper and Row, 1972); Sidney Verba, Norman Nie and Jae-on Kim. *Participation and Political Equality: A Seven-Nation Comparison* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1978); Sidney Verba, Kay Schlozman and Henry E. Brady. *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics.* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

[24] Alan Marsh and Max Kaase. 'Background of Political Action.' Chapter 4. In *Political Action: Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies*. Eds. Samuel Barnes and Max Kaase. (Beverley Hills, CA: Sage, 1979).

[25] Alan Marsh. *Protest and Political Consciousness.* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1977); Samuel Barnes and Max Kaase. *Political Action: Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies*. (Beverley Hills, CA: Sage, 1979).

[26] It should be noted that not every nation was included in every wave of the WVS survey, so the average figures across all eight nations are presented here, but further examinations suggest that this process did not influence the substantive findings.

[27] This sharp rise in demonstration activity in Belgium is confirmed by a detailed protest event analysis, on the basis of media coverage and police records, from the 1950s onwards. In contrast with the in Belgium common views about the roaring sixties characterized by unequalled protest activities, it were the 1990s that witnessed most demonstrators. See: Peter Van Aelst and Stefaan Walgrave. 'De stille revolutie op straat. Betogen in België in de jaren '90' *Res Publica*, 41 (1999): 41-64.

[28] We are most grateful to the principal investigators Jaak Billiet and Marc Swyngedouw, of the Interuniversity Centre for Political Opinion Research sponsored by the Federal Services for Technical, Cultural and Scientific Affairs (ISPO) at the Departement of Sociology of the University of Leuven for access to the 1999 General Election Study of Flanders-Belgium.

[29] Sidney Verba, Norman H. Nie and Jae-on Kim. *The Modes of Democratic Participation: A Cross-National Analysis.* (Beverley Hill, CA: Sage, 1971); Sidney Verba and Norman Nie. *Participation in America: Social Equality and Political Participation.* (New York: Harper Collins, 1972); Sidney Verba, Norman Nie and Jae-on Kim. *Participation and Political Equality: A Seven-Nation Comparison* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1978); Sidney Verba, Kay Schlozman and Henry E. Brady. *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics.* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

[30] Peter Mair. 'Party membership in twenty European democracies 1980-2000.' *Party Politics.* 7(1) (2001): 5-22.

[31] Lieven De Winter, Donatella Della Porta, and Kris Deschouwer. 'Comparing Similar Countries: Italy and Belgium'. *Res Publica,* 38 (1996): 215-235; Stefaan Walgrave, Tom Caals and Mik Suetens. Ministerial cabinets and partitocracy. A career pattern study of ministerial cabinet members in Belgium. Forthcoming 2003.

[32] For a full discussion and comparison see Pippa Norris. *Democratic Phoenix: Reinventing Political Activism.* (New York Cambridge University Press, 2002). Chapter 6.

[33] Robert D. Putnam. *Making Democracy Work*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995); Robert D. Putnam. *Bowling Alone.* (NY: Simon & Schuster, 2000); Robert D. Putnam. Ed. *The Dynamics of Social Capital.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

[34] Richard Topf. 'Beyond Electoral Participation.' In *Citizens and the State*. Eds. Hans-Dieter Klingemann and Dieter Fuchs. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995). For a fuller discussion see Samuel Barnes and Max Kaase. *Political Action: Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies*. (Beverley Hills, CA: Sage, 1979); Christopher A. Rootes. 'On the future of protest politics in Western democracies: A critique of Barnes, Kaase et al., Political Action.' *European Journal of Political Research* 9 (1981): 421-432.

[35] For more details see Peter Van Aelst and Stefaan Walgrave. 'Who is that (wo)man in the street? From the normalization of protest to the normalization of the protester.' *European Journal of Political Research*. 39 (2001): 461-486.

[36] P. Favre, O. Fillieule and N. Mayer. 'La fin d'une étrange lacune de la sociologie des mobilisations: L'étude par sondage des manifestants: fondaments théoriques et solutions techniques'. *Revue Française de Science Politique* 47 (1997): 3-28.

[37] Peter Van Aelst and Stefaan Walgrave. 'De stille revolutie op straat. Betogen in België in de jaren '90' *Res Publica*, 41 (1999): 41-64.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Dieter Rucht. 'The structure and culture of collective protest in Germany since 1950.' In *The Social Movement Society*. Ed. D. Meyer. (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998).

[40] Donatella Della Porta and Howard Reiter. Eds. *Policing Protest: The control of mass demonstrations in western democracies*. (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1998); Olivier Fillieule. *Strategies de la rue. Les manifestations en France*. (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 1997); Peter Van Aelst and Stefaan Walgrave. 'De stille revolutie op straat. Betogen in België in de jaren '90' *Res Publica*, 41 (1999): 41-64.

[41] For details see Pippa Norris. *Democratic Phoenix: Reinventing Political Activism*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002). Chapter 10.

[42] This latter estimate was confirmed by the 1999 Belgian NES, which found that 39% of citizens reported having participated in a demonstration.

[43] Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris. *Rising Tide: Gender Equality and cultural change around the world.* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[44] Checking of the official membership figures of the Flemish parties revealed that the right-wing parties count *more* members than the left-wing parties, in contrast to what we expected on the basis of the general election study 1999.

[45] Russell J. Dalton. *Citizen Politics.* 3rd Ed. (Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 2000).

[46] Hierarchical modeling, with the variables entered as social and attitudinal blocks, revealed that internal efficacy was probably strongly related to education, as the effect of education on civic joining dropped considerably once internal efficacy was added to the model.

[47] Pippa Norris. Ed. *Critical Citizens.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

[48] Doug McAdam. 'Micromobilisation Contexts and the Recruitment to Activism', in Bert Klandermans, Hans-peter Kriesi & Sydney Tarrow (eds.), *From Structure to Action.* (Greenwich. JAI-Press, 1988). Pp. 125-154,

[49] Sidney Verba, Kay Schlozman and Henry E. Brady. *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics.* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

[50] It should be noted that when surveying the anti-globalization demonstration on 14 December 2001 a small group of about 200 'black box'-demonstrators refused to accept the postal questionnaire. Our sample of anti-globo demonstrators is thus probably somewhat less representative which could underrate the anti-state radicalism among the anti-globalization protesters.

[51] However, a simple bivariate comparison of the surveyed demonstrators with the total population (General Election Study, Flanders-Belgium 1999) shows that satisfaction with democracy is lower among demonstrators (30%) than in the total population (57%). In the General Election Study, though, democratic satisfaction was no significant predictor of demonstration participation. Perhaps this difference could be attributed to a context effect of surveying people during or just after a demonstration, when they are excited and maybe somewhat 'angry' and therefore more dissatisfied.

[52] Peter Van Aelst and Stefaan Walgrave. 'Who is that (wo)man in the street? From the normalization of protest to the normalization of the protester.' *European Journal of Political Research.* 39 (2001): 461-486; Stefaan Walgrave and Joris Verhulst. 'In search for 'new emotional movements'. An explorative and comparative quest for another kind of movement.' Forthcoming.