

The Politics of Purchasing: Ethical Consumerism, Civic Engagement, and Political
Participation in the United States

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Dissertation submitted to the faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Sociology

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November 1, 2011
Blacksburg, Virginia

Keywords: ethical consumerism, political consumerism, labor rights, political participation,
consumer activism, citizen-consumer, social justice

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ABSTRACT

Although the United States is the world's leading consumer nation, limited empirical research exists on the relationship between consumer choices and political participation. This study provides the first quantitative analysis of the demographic characteristics, motivations, and political activities of political and ethical consumers in the United States. Ethical consumers are broadly defined as socially responsible consumers including the subset of political consumers. Political consumers, while also socially responsible, are primarily concerned with achievement of political or social change through purchasing decisions. While political and ethical consumers engage in similar behaviors, the distinguishing factor between the two is motivation. Participation in both political and ethical consumerism is measured through boycotting (intentionally purchasing) or boycotting (intentionally abstaining from purchasing) of particular products or companies.

Based on data from the 2002 National Civic Engagement Survey II, this study finds income and education significantly predict participation in political and ethical consumerism, while race and gender do not. Across political parties, the stronger a respondents' political affiliation, the less likely they are to boycott or buycott. This study also finds the primary motivation of participation for 80 percent of boycotters and buycotters is altruistic (ethical consumerism) rather than the achievement of political objectives (political consumerism). Additionally, political and ethical consumers indicate little belief in the ability for their purchases to alter business practices and do not consider their actions a part of organized campaigns.

Political and ethical consumers are politically active and those individuals who contact public officials, protest, and sign email or written petitions are significantly more likely to boycott or buycott than those who do not. This research adds to existing consumer culture and political participation literatures highlighting the viability of citizen-consumerism and nuanced forms of political action. In lieu of these findings, suggestions are offered to consumer-activist groups and social change organizations regarding the most effective strategies for mobilizing a broader base of political and ethical consumers.

This dissertation is dedicated to workers worldwide.

“The only revolution that might work is a consumer revolution. We stop buying produced by slave labor and stop working for companies that enslave us.”-Anonymous

Acknowledgments

This Ph.D. would never have happened without the love, help, and support of so many of you. Here are my thank you's. The list is long, but I am so grateful.

To my family. My mother, sister, and grandmother. I know it sometimes seemed as if I would never finish school, but today, I finally am (seriously, this time). I am so grateful to come from a family of women who encourage me to pursue my dreams and to follow my heart. I do not think you all realize how rare that actually is. Thank you.

To my committee. Kwame Harrison, you have been with me since day one. I am so grateful for your guidance and for your encouragement to produce my best work. John Ryan, thank you for your amazing theoretical insight and your ability to see the wide-ranging implications of this project. Dale Wimberley, you are a true scholar-activist. In many ways, your Global Division of Labor class was the catalyst for this dissertation and my introduction to labor rights work. Thank you for the reminder that change is possible, even at the highest of levels. Marian Mollin, your vast knowledge of labor rights made this project immeasurably better. Thank you for reminding me that everything is not “activist,” as much as I sometimes want it to be.

To my mentors. Dean DePauw, thank you does not suffice for my level of gratitude. Thank you for believing in me, for teaching me, for supporting me, and for providing me with international experiences that changed my life. Polanah, I am so thankful my obstinate freshman self landed in your Introduction to Africana Studies class so many years ago. I am proud to call you not only mentor, but friend. Thank you for all your unsolicited advice and the ways you challenged my thinking throughout the years.

To my friends. I love you all. Thanks to the following for being phenomenal friends and all around stellar people: Laura Toni Holsinger—my sister in social justice. It seems only fitting we met at a protest ten years ago. Your commitment to social justice continually challenges and inspires me. Ari-Anne Fuchtman-you taught me the invaluable lesson of learning what it means to surround myself with people and to make choices that are life-giving. Molly Hanson-you are the most generous soul on this planet. How fortunate I am to call you friend. Lynn Caldwell-I am so glad we did the grad school gig together. Twice. Thank you for the reminders to have fun along the way. I am pretty sure we did. Libbey Bowen-along with being the smartest and wisest person I know, you are an amazingly faithful friend. Thanks for all the advice—you have never been wrong. Ed and Maya Skopal-you remind me of the joys of a simple life. Your presence is a sanctuary. Linsey Barker- I love how open and honest our friendship is. Thank you for continually reminding me I could do this. Laura Boutwell- you have the most fantastic perspective on life. I hope to one day, too, see everything as a miracle. Jeff Toussaint-your presence in this world makes it more peaceful for the rest of us. Amanda Sikes-your laugh cheers me up instantly. Your realness inspires me. Anna Kozicki-Skopal- you simply have an amazing heart. Everyone should be fortunate enough to have a friend like you. Tara Frank- thank you for never letting me off the hook with easy answers. Nicole Sanderlin-your presence and outlook on life are so peaceful. Remember, whether it is clear to you or not, no doubt the universe is working out as it should. Monica Licher-your intentionality helped me through so many days. Thank you for reminding me to see the truth. Jamie MacLean-our Saturday morning runs kept

me sane. You are so genuine and I love it. Amy Sorenson-you are amazingly talented and I am so privileged to call you friend. All those rides sure made for some great conversations. Tiffany Gayle Chenault-I'll always be your BC. Brennan Shepard and Tim Lockridge-you are the brothers I never had. Thanks for always looking out for me. Ennis McCreery-you might just be the best listener on the planet. Thank you for always having an open door. Carson Byrd-your statistical knowledge (and incredible patience) were invaluable to this project. Please know your generosity did not go unnoticed. To 302 Upland-Callie Raulfs-Wang, Dongbo Wang, Sher Vogel, and Amanda Davis—thank you for including me in the family. I've missed our dinners for over a year now. Emily Martin, Jill Casten and Cory Epler-I cannot imagine being packed in the back of a sweaty cab in Kuwait with anyone else. We sure have a lifetime full of memories. JP Mason-your enthusiasm for social justice is contagious. I am so grateful to have caught some of it and to have had the privilege of working alongside you. To my Blacksburg family—Joe and Shauna Mugavero, Natalie and Mark Cherbaka, Jed and Stacie Castro, JP Mason, and Terri Dewey. Our infamous NHT times, communal dinners, Villa Appalachia trips, Palisades dinners, cabana and spring break trips are some of my most cherished memories. I have never laughed so much (or fallen off as many benches) as I have with you all.

Finally, Oakland. At the time I did not know what leaving would look like. Apparently it was a Ph.D.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | |
|-----------|---|------|
| | Abstract | ii |
| | Dedication | iv |
| | Acknowledgments | v |
| | Table of Contents | vii |
| | List of Tables | viii |
| | | |
| Chapter 1 | Introduction | 1 |
| | | |
| Chapter 2 | Literature Review | 11 |
| | Consumer Culture | 11 |
| | Citizens or Consumers? | 23 |
| | Measuring Political Participation | 29 |
| | Defining Political and Ethical Consumerism | 30 |
| | Political Participation | 35 |
| | Debates: Purchasing as Politics | 37 |
| | Redefining Political Participation | 40 |
| | Predictors of Participation in Political Action | 41 |
| | Precursors to Action | 54 |
| | Consumption Matters | 58 |
| | | |
| Chapter 3 | Methodology | 63 |
| | Data | 63 |
| | Analytic Strategy | 65 |
| | Data Limitations and Question Selection Criteria | 68 |
| | Research Questions | 71 |
| | | |
| Chapter 4 | Results | 81 |
| | A Profile of Survey Respondents | 81 |
| | RQ1: Who are Boycotters and Buycotters? | 85 |
| | RQ2: Do Political Consumers Engage in Other Forms of Political Action? | 88 |
| | RQ3: Is there a Difference Between Individuals who Boycott and Buycott? | 92 |
| | RQ4: Why Do Individuals Participate in Political Consumerism? | 94 |
| | RQ5: Do Individuals Who Boycott or Buycott Most Often Act Alone or as a part of an Organized Campaign? | 100 |

| | | |
|------------|--|-----|
| Chapter 5 | Discussion and Conclusions | 146 |
| | Overview of Ethical Consumers | 146 |
| | Characteristics of Ethical Consumers | 149 |
| | Political Activities of Ethical Consumers | 158 |
| | Activities and Rationales of Ethical Consumers | 164 |
| | Reasons for Boycotting | 169 |
| | Reasons for Buycotting | 175 |
| | Research Contributions | 184 |
| | Limitations | 187 |
| | Future Research | 189 |
| | Concluding Thoughts | 190 |
| | References | 191 |
| Appendix A | Codebook | 208 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | |
|--|-----|
| Table 1: Frequency Distributions of Dependent and Independent Variables for Entire Sample Compared to Boycotters Only and Buycotters Only | 104 |
| Table 2: Frequency of Boycotting and Number of Products Boycotted by Boycotters | 106 |
| Table 3: Frequency of Buycotting and Number of Products Buycotted by Buycotters | 107 |
| Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Selected Variables for Entire Sample | 108 |
| Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of Political Activities Variables for Entire Sample | 109 |
| Table 6: Pearson's Correlation Matrix of Independent and Dependent Variables | 110 |
| Table 7: Cross-tabulations of Boycotting by Respondents' Frequency of Participation, Race, Sex, Age, Education, Income, Political Affiliation, Strength of Political Affiliation, and Voting | 111 |
| Table 8: Cross-tabulations of Buycotting by Respondents' Frequency of Participation, Race, Sex, Age, Education, Income, Political Affiliation, Strength of Affiliation and Voting | 114 |
| Table 9: Binary Logistic Regression Models for Boycotting with Political Participation Independent Variables | 117 |
| Table 10: Binary Logistic Regression Models for Buycotting with Political Participation Independent Variables | 119 |
| Table 11: One-way ANOVA Showing the Relationship Between Demographic Characteristics of Respondents who do not Boycott or Buycott, Who Only Boycott, Who Only Buycott, and Who Boycott and Buycott | 121 |
| Table 12: Binary Logistic Regression Models for Boycotting and Buycotting | 122 |
| Table 13: Cross-tabulations of Rationales of Participation in Boycotting or Buycotting by Race, Sex, Age, Education, Income, and Political Affiliation | 123 |
| Table 14: Cross-tabulations of Level of Belief of Boycotters and Buycotters of How Much Their Actions Will Change Business Behavior | 125 |
| Table 15: Cross-tabulations for Open-ended Questions on Rationale for Participation of Boycotters by Race, Sex, Age, Income, Education, and Political Affiliation | 128 |
| Table 16: Cross-tabulations for Open-ended Questions and Rationale for Participation of Buycotters by Race, Sex, Age, Income, Education, and Political Affiliation | 131 |

Table 17: Cross-tabulations of Boycotting Mode of Participation by Race, Sex, Education, 134
Income, and Political Affiliation

Table 18: Cross-tabulations of Buycotting Mode of Participation by Race, Sex, Education, 137
Income, and Political Affiliation

Table 19: Cross-tabulations for Information Sources of Boycotters by Race, Sex, Age, 140
Income, Education, and Political Affiliation

Table 20: Cross-tabulations for Information Sources of Buycotters by Race, Sex, Age, 143
Income, Education and Political Affiliation

Chapter 1 Introduction

The United States is the world's leading consumer nation. A recent report from *The Wall Street Journal* indicates American spent \$1.2 trillion dollars between February 2010 and February 2011 on non-essential goods, up 3.3 percent from the prior year and 9.3 percent from a decade earlier. Today, expenditures on non-essential goods¹ total 11.2 percent of overall consumer spending (Whitehouse 2011) and consumer spending constitutes two-thirds of overall spending (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2011; Cohen 2003). Consumer spending has risen in the past half-century, up from 62.4 percent in the early 1960's (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2011). With the recent recession and financial crisis, however, Americans have re-examined their consumption choices and patterns-either by necessity or choice and consumers are increasingly questioning the companies their purchases support (Dalton 2008; Bennett 2004).

Product labels including “environmentally friendly,” “fair trade,” “sweatshop free,” “buy local,” “buy organic,” and “buy American,” are ubiquitous, found everywhere from big-box retailers to local coffee shops. These labels encourage individuals to “vote with their dollar” and exercise their politics through consumer choice (Newman and Bartels 2010). Individuals who routinely express their politics through their purchases are termed political consumers (Terrangi 2007; Micheletti 2006; Stolle, Hooghe and Micheletti 2005). More specifically, political consumerism refers to the “the intentional use of consumer choice over products and producers within the marketplace as a means of expressing policy preferences and achieving political objectives” (Newman and Bartels 2010:2).

¹ Non-essential goods refers to items including alcohol, jewelry, and luxury items and essential goods includes costs associated with housing, food, and medicine (Whitehouse 2011).

The term political consumerism prompts the question: *what makes consumerism political?* Moreover, if a particular product or business is not directly linked to a political party or affiliation, how and why is a purchase considered political? Political consumerism necessitates expanded definitions of both what is considered “political” and political participation (Newman and Bartels 2010).

In their seminal work on political participation, Verba and Nie (1972) define political participation as citizen behaviors meant to “influence the authoritative allocations for society, which may or may not take place through governmental decisions” (p. 2). The major distinction of political consumerism, contrasted with other forms of political participation, is political consumers target the market, not the government, as the desired source of change (Vogel 2004). Political consumerism, therefore, is both “political” and a form of political participation because political consumers, similar to other political actors, engage in specific tactics to express their policy preferences for specific political and economic outcomes (Newman and Bartels 2010).

The use of the market to influence societal allocations, however, is not a new phenomenon. Historical examples of political consumerism include, but are not limited to, the boycotting of British goods during the American Revolution (Smith 1994), the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott of 1955 (Vogel 2004), the “buy where you can work” campaign of the early 1960s (Cohen 2003; Skotnes 1994) and the Nestlé infant formula boycott of the 1980s (Micheletti 2004). Today, examples of political consumerism include broad consumer-activist campaigns associated with “green” consumption (Tallontire 2001), anti-sweatshop activism (Featherstone 2007; Micheletti 2003), and support of fairly traded goods (Webb 2007). Most recently, campaigns by universal health care advocates to boycott Whole Foods because of CEO John Mackey’s public opposition to single-payer health care plans (Friedman 2009) and the call

by environmentalists to boycott British Petroleum (BP) after the 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill (Reed 2010) offer examples of specific political consumer campaigns.

While the BP and Whole Foods boycotts illustrate recent examples of political consumerism, it's important to note that political consumerism incorporates a broad array of strategies. Most commonly, political consumerism is associated with either boycotting, (intentionally supporting) or boycotting (intentional abstention from supporting) specific products or businesses. However, other strategies such as culture jamming², an activist strategy which turns corporate power against itself through a recontextualization of brand identification (Peretti and Micheletti 2004), and consumer cooperatives, a business strategy where consumers share in partial ownership of a business (Birchall and Ketilson 2009), also constitute political consumerism. Culture jamming and consumer cooperatives, similar to boycotting and boycotting, attempt to shape the market through intentional consumer choice. For the purposes of this research, however, I specifically focus on the tactics of boycotting and boycotting as a measure of political consumerism. While distinctive in their own right, I regard consumer cooperatives and culture jamming as strategies of action that facilitate the likelihood of consumers boycotting or boycotting. For example, a consumer who chooses to patronize a cooperative as opposed to a chain retail store offers an example of boycotting because the consumer is intentionally choosing to shop at one particular business over another. The very practice of culture jamming often occurs in an attempt to dissuade people from supporting a specific product or business that may result in boycotting. In this regard, though not

² Culture jamming is a subversive tactic means to fight corporate advertising through “the practice of parodying advertisements and hijacking billboards in order to drastically alter their message” (Klein 2000:280). *Adbusters Magazine* (<http://www.adbusters.org/>), termed “culture jammer headquarters”, offers culture jamming examples such as slapping a “grease” sign across Ronald McDonald’s mouth, recharacterizing Joe Camel as Joe Chemo, and sponsoring “Buy Nothing Day” as an alternative to the largest shopping day of the year, “Black Friday.”

interchangeable, I view consumer cooperatives and culture jamming as a means to facilitate the political consumer strategies of boycotting or buycotting.

Despite the long history and recent examples of political consumerism in the United States, studies of political consumers are surprisingly absent from sociological literature. Moreover, the existing literature specifically fails to: (a) identify the characteristics of political consumers in the United States, (b) explain the rationales behind individual's engagement in political consumerism, and (c) explore whether political consumers really believe that their purchasing patterns can affect business practices (Dunn 2008; Klintman 2004). The few studies of political consumers in the United States focus on niche purchasing groups, such as fair trade (Arnould et al. 2007; Webb 2007), anti-sweatshop (Peretti and Micheletti 2004), or "green" consumers (Tallontire 2001; Mainieri, Barnett, Valdero, Unipan, and Oskamp 1997). The majority of research on political consumers beyond specific niche markets has been conducted on European consumers from a select number of countries (Stolle and Hooghe 2005; Stolle and Micheletti 2005; Anderson and Tobaisen 2004; Strong 1996).

Given the rise of hyperconsumerism, a trend towards increased rates of and value placed on consumption (Dunn 2008; Ritzer 2001), and given that the United States is the world's leading consumer nation (Pimental et al. 2007), it is surprising that political consumerism has not received more attention in sociological or civic activism literatures (Newman and Bartels 2010; Adugu 2008). Studies of consumption highlight dominant social relationships in society and consequently, have immense social and political implications (Ewen and Ewen 1992). However, the majority of sociological discussions of political consumerism either mention political consumerism within a broader discussion of political participation (Dalton 2008; Norris 2002) or are theoretical in nature (Schudson 2007). The neglect of consumption studies in sociology may

be due to an assumption that political activity only occurs within the sphere of production (Adugu 2008). Historical theories of sociology are often rooted in the thinking of Karl Marx, Max Weber and Emile Durkheim. Each of these theorists tended to focus on the productive, rather than consumptive, side of social relations. Marx believed that “political power is located in the sphere of production only. The power to shape society depends, therefore, on the control over the sphere of production and the capacity to transform relationships between worker and capitalist in the intermediate labor processes” (Goodman and DuPuis 2002:6). According to Slater (1997), Durkheim’s view of consumption led him to believe that “if modern society, and especially the economy, unleashes consumers’ boundless desires, it destroys the moral basis of social order” (p. 74). Thus, the study of consumption and the potential for consumers to harness power for social change was all but absent from the foundational theories of sociology that instead emphasized production over consumption. However, studying consumption, and more specifically, political consumers, provides sociologists with the opportunity to study changing forms of political engagement, the effects of consumer culture, and individual beliefs in creating social change.

This study examines how demographic, social, and political factors may interact to predict participation in political consumerism, boycotting, or buycotting. This study uses data from the National Civic Engagement Survey II (NCES II) to identify political consumers, their frequency of consumption patterns, and other political activities, as well as the motives behind their actions. Differences among demographic variables including race, sex, age, education level, household income, are measured for possible differing rates of participation. This discussion is framed by political participation and consumer culture literatures to identify and understand political consumers through quantitative analysis.

The purpose of this study is two-fold. First, studying political consumerism provides sociologists with insight into the changing and dynamic nature of political participation. Participation in boycotting or buycotting may reflect consumer doubt that existing political institutions are inadequate in addressing citizens' concerns through traditional political institutions in post-industrial societies (Adugu 2008; Inglehart and Baker 2000). In this respect, citizens may circumvent conventional avenues of political participation (voting, contacting public officials, signing petitions) via governmental avenues to directly confront the market and companies for social change (Stolle and Hooghe 2005). Thus, overall political participation may not be declining (Putnam 2000), but rather, only conventional acts of political participation may be declining (Norris 2002; Putnam 2000), while unconventional forms such as political consumerism may be rising (Adugu 2008).

Political consumerism represents a form of lifestyle politics, the practice of "politicizing the personal," whereby individuals identify the impacts of their everyday personal choices to affect political change (Newman and Bartels 2010; Bennett 1998). Inquiry into the possible lifestyle politics of political consumers is yet to be studied in the United States. This is the first study to quantitatively identify political consumers across the broad spectrum of political consumer choices. Quantifying political consumers using survey data is necessary in order to identify and measure the breadth of political consumer activities.

Second, this study measures the breadth of political consumerism in addition to other political activities, and in doing so, provides an opportunity to situate political consumerism within the spectrum of political engagement. Studies from Europe indicate that almost one-third of survey respondents participated in either buycotting or boycotting as a form of political participation (Stolle and Hooghe 2005; Anderson and Tobiasen 2004). It would be informative to

know if similar patterns of activity exist in the United States. To date, there is no quantitative measurement of United States political consumers measuring the frequency of boycotting and/or buycotting. Moreover, by measuring the frequency of boycotting and buycotting and in comparison to other rates of political participation (i.e. voting, campaign organizing, protesting), we are able to understand whether political consumers are also politically active in actions directed towards governmental change, or if political consumers direct their efforts solely towards changing market practices.

The primary objective of this research is to identify the motivations and demographic characteristics of present-day United States political consumers. By holistically identifying political consumers, we are able to understand who political consumers are, and who they are not, the motives behind their purchasing patterns, and how they choose, or do not choose, to engage their politics with their purchases. Once we understand who political consumers are and what motivates their involvement, we can utilize that information to potentially recruit more individuals for involvement.

The overall research question for this project is to understand if and how political consumers negotiate political participation living in the world's leading consumer nation. While a more in-depth discussion of each specific research question follows, these questions are detailed here to guide the discussion of the literature.

RQ1: Who are boycotters and buycotters?

RQ2: Do political consumers also participate in other forms of political action?

RQ3: Is there a difference between individuals who boycott and buycott?

RQ4: Why do people engage in political consumption?

RQ5: Do individuals who buycott or boycott more often act alone or as a part of an organized campaign?

Answers to these research questions provide both disciplinary and practical relevance.

The study of political consumerism in the United States would advance the discipline of sociology in three primary ways. First, studying political consumerism offers the possibility to better understand current forms of civic and political engagement. By not examining political consumerism as a form of political participation, sociological researchers may misattribute a decline in conventional forms of political action such as voting and civic league participation as a decline in all forms of political participation (Putnam 2000).

Second, the study of political consumers helps to understand and contextualize the relationship between consumer choice and political activism within consumer societies (Bennett 2004; Blumler and Kavanaugh 1999). Political consumers present an opportunity to disrupt the current citizen-consumer dichotomy, the idea that fulfilling one's role as a citizen and one's role as a consumer are inherently oppositional. Citizens are commonly defined as those individuals who fulfill their obligation to civic duty through service in an effort to earn basic rights and privileges. Consumers, conversely, are commonly assumed to be preoccupied with the acquisition of material goods, often in lieu of fulfilling civic duties (Cohen 2003). Political consumerism merges these two roles, citizen and consumer, and offers an example of how individuals can embody both their identities as citizen and consumer simultaneously (Schudson 1999).

Finally, political consumerism offers a unique opportunity for individuals to engage in political action over a sustained period of time. Political consumerism, as opposed to other forms of political participation, is not organized around the passage of a specific law or bill. Because

individuals are likely to be consumers throughout their life, political consumerism provides an opportunity for long-term, sustained engagement. Furthermore, the continuous nature of political consumerism provides an opportunity to study political consumerism over the life course, and throughout various political, economic, and social times.

Practically, studying political consumers provides an opportunity to examine if and how individuals understand or acknowledge a relationship between consumer choices and the workings of broader social institutions and markets. Moreover, political consumers expand the scope of political action beyond specific bounds of a particular nation or government and target the global market. In essence, political consumers challenge us to reconsider our definitions of political participation and engagement beyond conventional and institutionalized action. Lastly, understanding the demographics of United States political consumers as well as their rationale for engaging in political consumerism helps shape future strategies in effectively mobilizing consumers for social change.

This study utilizes publicly available, nationally representative survey data on the breadth of activities of United States political consumers, the 2002 National Civic Engagement Survey (NCES) II. This study examines demographic characteristics, participation in political action, rationale, and the organizational or individualized nature of political consumers. Understanding the demographics of political consumers, along with their possible engagement in other forms of political activity, contributes to both the new social movements and the sociology of consumption literatures. Research on political consumerism contributes to nuanced understandings of the dynamic nature of social movements. Political consumers, while they may act individually through personal shopping decisions, may remain a part of a broader organized social movement for advocating social change through market practices. Studying political

consumers helps bridge the citizen-consumer divide, the assumption that individuals are either good citizens or good consumers, but never both (Schudson 2006). Finally, identifying the motivations, shopping, and political behaviors of political consumers contributes to a broader understanding of new tactics and tools for collectively organizing individuals for social change in a consumer society.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Consumer Culture

Before we can examine and understand the motives, actions, and rationales of political consumers, a broader historical, political and cultural framing of consumer cultures is needed. Those frameworks include identifying the characteristics of consumer cultures, measuring the impacts of living in a consumer culture, and recognizing that differential rates of participation in consumer culture exist.

Consumption is not a new phenomenon, but consumer culture is (Dunn 2008; Trentman 2006; Hilton 2004; Kennedy 2004). Consumption, defined as the cultural, historical, and economic exchange of goods and services (Arnould and Thompspon 2005; Lury 1996) and is a process that is likely to continue unless individuals become completely self-sufficient (Appadurai 1986). Conversely, mass culture emerged during the transition from an agrarian societies to mass industrialized ones. Mass industrialization is characterized by a social landscape of consumer industries, mass media, and merchandising. As a result of an increasing divide between a pre-industrial agrarian society and an industrialized one, individuals, out of sheer necessity, were forced to the marketplace to consume. In this respect, mass culture “posed nature as an inhospitable force” to necessitate the demand of a consumerist ideology (Ewen and Ewen 1992: 36). Subsequently, a consumptionist ideology evolved in conjunction with the shift towards an industrialized society (Ewen and Ewen 1992).

Consumer cultures signify fundamental cultural and social shifts defining gratification through the accumulation of consumer goods (Dunn 2008). “The good life,” so to speak, is achieved by the acquisition of certain levels of the correct consumer goods. Zygmunt Bauman (2001) defines consumer cultures as those cultures that “proclaims the *impossibility* of

gratification and measures its progress by ever-rising demand” (p. 13). In other words, satiation is impossible in a consumer culture.

Consumer cultures also emphasize the values, practices and meanings associated with consumption. In consumer cultures, the majority of individuals value consumption, and as a result, the majority of individuals in that culture routinely engages in and derives meaning from consumption. For example, the daily trip to the fast food restaurant or the weekly trip to the mall is evidence of a societal impetus to consume. Consequently, the practice of consumption becomes routinized and reinforced through interpersonal interactions, whereby individuals derive increasingly more meaning and self-worth from their consumer spending habits (Ritzer 2007; Trentmann 2006; Bauman 2001; Miles 1998).

However, consumer cultures are not only defined in terms of consumption rates and the overall societal value placed on consumption, they can also be defined by the effects and pressure on the poor within a culture to consume. Consumer cultures include those cultures where the poor are often forced into a situation where they can spend money on resources or on “senseless objects rather than basic necessities in order to deflect total social humiliation” (Shresta 1997: 26).

Historically, in Western industrialized nations, a long trajectory exists of individuals consuming beyond their basic needs, as an expression of identity or to meet a need for societal validation and inclusion. While individuals expressing their identity through consumption patterns dates back to the early 1900s in the United States, a dramatic shift in consumer spending and the values placed on consumption transpired post World War II (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2011; Ritzer 2007; Cohen 2003). This post-war shift occurred for numerous reasons including the advent of the credit card, a transition from a Fordist to a post-Fordist economy, a cultural

shift towards postmodernism, the rise of the youth market, the proliferation of advertising, and the expansion of superstores.

The introduction of lay-away and the credit card in the 1950s revolutionized consumer spending (Ritzer 1999). The advent of the credit card industry occurred almost simultaneously with the rise in consumer trends in the 1950s. While the increase in consumption rates may have occurred without the credit card, the proliferation of the credit card contributed to the explosive growth of consumption. Credit cards, while allowing consumers to purchase items they cannot pay cash for, also contributed to consumers spending more than they would have spent if they purchased items with cash (Prelic and Simester 2001; Frank 2000; Ritzer 1999).

Today, the average American consumes twice as much as he or she did fifty years ago. Americans, on a per capita basis, consume more than any other nation in the world. Consumer spending represents more than two-thirds of total overall spending, the highest rate in over fifty years (Norris 2003). Additionally, the United States is the world's leading consumer nation, consuming 24% of the world's resources despite comprising only 5% of the world's population (Pimental, Gardner, Bonnifield, Garcia, Grufferman, Horan, Schlenker and Walling 2007). The large discrepancy between world population and global resource use is, in part, a result of the consumer culture of the United States. Another explanation for American's exorbitant global resource must be framed within the context of shifting economic models, from a Fordist to a post-Fordist economy.

A Fordist economy, characteristic of advanced industrialized nations between the 1940s and the 1960s, was an economic model based on mass production and mass consumption. Named after Henry Ford's example at the Ford Motor Company, the basic premise of the Fordist model is three-fold: products are standardized through an assembly model of production; specialized

machinery is used to produce those products; and employees are paid high enough wages to afford the products he or she produces. Ford's seminal example, the Model T, was a mass produced product priced low enough to make it affordable for the average consumer or Ford employee. While the mechanization and mass production characteristics of the Fordist model eliminated the need for skilled laborers in the production process, pay remained high for workers (Tolliday and Zietlin 1987).

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, a post-Fordist economy emerged as a result of slow economic growth and an overall shift from a manufacturing to a service-sector and knowledge-based economy. Manufacturing jobs declined as industries shifted their workforce overseas. Overseas production provided companies with a means to maximize profit by employing a cheaper workforce with less environmental and worker regulations. Compared to the Fordist model when mass production and consumption occurred within the same nation, a post-Fordist economy was characterized with goods being cheaply produced in one country, often "third-world," and purchased in another, often "first-world." Workers were no longer paid enough to purchase the products they produced.

This shift contributed to the rise of consumer culture in the United States in two primary ways (Lunt and Livingstone 1992). As already mentioned, the first shift involved the outsourcing of manufacturing from the United States to countries with cheaper labor. Maria Mies (1986) referred to this divide between "first world" consumers and "third world" producers as the new international division of labor. In the new international division of labor, goods are cheaply produced in third world countries to be purchased at relatively low costs in "first world" countries. This process results in a divide, both geographic and economic, between producers and consumers (Lunt and Livingstone 1992).

The second shift involved a shift from the mass production characteristic of the Fordist economy to the niche markets of the post-Fordist economy. Post-Fordist economies, characterized by flexible specialization, translate into a diversification of market goods. Compared to the mass production of the Fordist era, flexible specialization allows companies to diversify their product lines and target specific consumer niches, such as cultural taste or fashion. The flexibility of this post-Fordist model allows the market to respond more easily to consumer demand and shifting trends in taste and fashion (Jones 2001). Additionally, the rise of technological advances in this period also facilitated the shift as products were produced more quickly and cheaply. The diversity of products produced in the post-Fordist model provides increased opportunities for differentiation based on consumer choice. As a result, niche markets arose providing increased opportunities for individuals to express their identity through the consumption of products which may be different than the one their neighbor purchased (Lunt and Livingstone 1992).

The emergence of a postmodern intellectual framework also frames our present-day conversations about consumer culture. While individuals have historically defined themselves through consumer goods long before the intellectual rise of postmodernism in the 1970s, some definable characteristics of postmodernism coincide with consumer culture. Postmodernist thought values the social construction of reality. That is, rather than assuming there is one absolute universal truth, postmodernist thought views truth and reality as multiple constructed realities across individuals and cultures. The postmodern framework also provides the space for individuals to create and recreate identities. Postmodern identity is regarded as an ongoing and fluid process where individuals have the freedom to construct their identities as they see fit (Macey 2006).

One of the primary ways individuals construct and articulate identity is through self-presentation (Eakin 2001; Goffman 1959). In postmodern societies objects are increasingly used to define individual identities. Consumer choices help to define who we are, and who we are not. “In the postmodern world, objects and commodities are signs...[and] we are making statements about ourselves” (Ritzer 2005: 39). In a post-Fordist economy and in a postmodern culture, consumers have an abundance of both choice and pressure to define themselves through those choices. As a result of fluid identities and a larger array of niche markets and products, individuals negotiate identities through their displays of consumer choice (Berger 2005).

In *I Shop Therefore I Am*, Colin Campbell (2004) proposes epistemological and ontological frameworks to help explain the role of superfluous consumer choice in the formation of postmodern identities. Campbell’s epistemological framework is rooted in a postmodern, individualist belief that the ‘self’ is the only authority in matters of truth. Campbell’s epistemology, however, assumes individuals know what they want, while simultaneously minimizing the role of market culture on perceived wants. Reminiscent of the Frankfurt School, individuals act based on their wants, while failing to acknowledge how the market itself helped create those perceived wants³.

Campbell’s consumerist ontology supplements his consumerist epistemological framework by explaining how consumers discover and construct their identities through shopping. Campbell is apt to point out that while tastes and preferences change over time,

³ The Frankfurt School, a group of German-American neo-Marxist critical social theorists, argued mass culture often dupes individuals into a state of passive consumption. Within the context of a consumer culture, individuals have become passive cogs in the wheel constantly consuming as a result of the manufactured wants created by mass culture. However, the Frankfurt School perspective fails to recognize that living a consumer culture also provides opportunities (Macey 2006).

especially in postmodern societies, the desire for consumption remains. Campbell relies upon the notion of *latent want* to explain rationales for consumption and changes in consumer taste patterns. *Latent want* necessitates consumers to conjure up desire for previously undesirable, or unknown, material goods. When individual or cultural taste patterns change, the evocation of latent wants is modified accordingly. Campbell's epistemological framework compliments that of Baudrillard (1998)⁴, that the fluidity of postmodern identities actually fosters continual consumption as a means to rearticulate and reconstruct new identities.

However, as Lizabeth Cohen (2003) notes in her historical account of consumer history, *A Consumer's Republic*, we should not misread the postmodern turn and life in a post-Fordist economy as if prior to World War II individuals only used goods and services for strictly utilitarian purposes. Rather, we should understand and contextualize the rise of consumer culture in terms of an ever-increasing insatiable demand for gratification through goods regardless of cost (Bauman 2001). Shopping comprises more than an American pastime. Shopping teaches individuals how to live in market societies through the normalization of buying and selling. Shopping has evolved into the principal means for creating and displaying values: "shopping has come to define, who we, as individuals, are and what we, as a society, want to become" (Zukin 2004: 8).

The rise of the youth market provides a poignant example of how early on in life individuals are taught to consume. Children play a vital role in family decisions about consumption and also constitute a consumer market themselves. Middle-class children,

⁴ Jean Baudrillard was a French post-modern social theorist who believed consumption, rather than production, was the most significant factor in the perpetuation of a capitalist society. Baudrillard's concept of *sign value* (in contrast to Marx's *use value*) illustrates how consumption is used as an expression of style or luxury. In postmodern capitalist societies, *sign value* is an important expression of identity and is perpetuated through the reinvention of identities through continual consumption (Kellner 2009).

especially as they transition into adolescence, have larger amounts of disposable income. The advertising industry markets to parents through children, whether it is the latest new toy in the McDonald's happy meal or the newest Disney movie or themepark. As children transition to adolescence, the advertising also shifts to meet the needs of another consumer market. Instead of happy meals and Disney themeparks, the marketing targets adolescents with teenage brands of cosmetics, magazines, and music (Ritzer 1999). Marketing towards children is a \$330 billion dollar industry. The average kindergartner can identify over 300 logos and the average 10 year old has memorized over 400 brands (Schor 2004).

Technological advances also increased overall consumer choice in two primary ways. First, the creation of the Internet in 1991 and the advent of online shopping in the mid 1990s⁵ (Palmer 2007), no longer restricted shopping within a given geographic location or specific hours of the day. Consumers now had access to an entirely new shopping mall available to them via the Internet (Kim and Eastin 2011) and as a result, over half of U.S. households report shopping online (Palmer 2007).

The Internet also substantially increased the sheer breadth of the consumer base with the ease of much more flexible and immediate service. On the Internet, the customer is the central focus more than they could ever be in a 'real' store. Additionally, Internet shopping created a tracking mechanism for previous purchases and also personalized shopping. Suggestions for future purchases (i.e. "if you like this, you'll love this" comparison) further encouraged brand loyalty and consumption (Molenaar 2010).

The Internet had a second, and perhaps, unintended effect on consumer culture--the Internet also gave consumers increased access to product information and an ability to establish

⁵ Internet shopping developed throughout the 1990s with the introduction of online banking in 1994, the launch of Amazon in 1995 and eBay in 1996 (Palmer 2007).

social networks with other consumers. The Internet, while providing superfluous choice to consumers, also creates an opportunity for individuals to become more informed about their consumer choices. The Internet, particularly via mediums such as company websites, blogs, Facebook, and Twitter, allows individuals and companies to circulate information to consumers.

Additionally, these very same mediums also expanded the advertising industry. In the 1990s, the emergence of the Internet coincided with consumers becoming ‘worldlier’ due to greater mobility and travel (Molenaar 2010). It was also during the 1990s that American chain stores, what George Ritzer (1999) terms the McDonaldization of society, occurred throughout the world. Resultantly, consumers could have the same experience, or purchase the same product, regardless of location. The expansion of stores came about with the rise in advertising and household use of the Internet (Molenaar 2010). Advertisements were no longer limited to street side billboards or television commercials, but could be increasingly found on the medium individuals spend most of their time on—their computers. The rapid pace of dissemination is also a particularly noteworthy feature of Internet sharing—within minutes messages can reach thousands of individuals. The Internet, therefore, did more than just create an online 24-hour shopping mall—it created an opportunity for individuals to share information rapidly across a broad base of individuals.

The advent of credit cards, a transition to mass industrialization, the rise of post-modernism, and the advent of the Internet all contribute to the exponential rise of what George Ritzer (1999) terms hyperconsumerism. Americans spend three to four more times the amount of money shopping than other Western Europeans. This obsession with shopping in the United States, similar to other consumer cultures, is evidence of a growing, worldwide trend known as affluenza (Hamilton 2005).

Affluenza refers to the confusion surrounding what individuals must possess in order to lead worthwhile lives. In consumer cultures, these required “needs” are ever-increasing. The root of affluenza stems from a confusion between wants and needs. Consumer markets, compounded by the rise of branding, have dramatically altered perceptions of necessity (needs) versus luxury (wants) (Lury 2004). “Luxury fever,” as it was affectionately termed by Robert Frank (1999), often leads individuals into a perpetual cycle of work and spend (Schor 1999).

In *The Overspent American: Why We Want What We Don't Need*, Juliet Schor (1999) argues consumer culture has engulfed U.S. culture. Schor's two primary theories on consumer culture include *competitive consumption* and *the work and spend cycle*. Competitive consumption relies heavily upon Thorstein Veblen's (1899) theory of conspicuous consumption, the tendency for individuals to emulate consumption patterns of those above them in the social hierarchy. Veblen argues we consume for a multitude of reasons including to emulate others, to possess more than others, and as a source of comparison and differentiation from others. Consumption becomes conspicuous because as our consumption increases, our satisfaction with consuming decreases, resulting in an insatiable desire for more. Schor subsequently expands on Veblen's theory arguing the referent social group is no longer those of similar means or one step higher in the social hierarchy. Rather, the point of comparison are the lifestyles and consumption patterns of the upper middle class and rich, thus increasing the rate of consumption of many Americans in an attempt to “keep up with the Joneses.” Juliet Schor terms this expansion of conspicuous consumption, competitive consumption.

As a result of competitive consumption, individuals often find themselves trapped in the work and spend cycle. Entrapment within this cycle means individuals must work longer hours to be able to afford their purchases. The creation of large one-stop superstores such as Wal-Mart

and Costco also to rising rates of consumption. With limited time to consume, and the accessibility of all one's needs in one store, consumer spending has increased (Ritzer 1999). Ironically, because of the need to work additional work hours to pay for purchases, individuals don't have time to enjoy their purchases they spent all their time working for. The average American household now spends \$508 on general shopping per month, excluding food and drink (Visual Economics 2010) and individuals spend an average of 8.7 hours working per day (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2009).

Schor's (1999) work and spend cycle is also reminiscent of arguments made by Horkheimer and Adorno (1969), who in their essay *The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception*, argue that choice is illusory. Underlying both arguments is the production of manufactured want and false needs. Consumers are marketed to under the false premise that they are purchasing something new and necessary to live the good life. However, consumers are led to believe that spending their lives working to acquire the means to purchase these items will alter and differentiate their lives from the lives of others. What they find, however, is that all they are left with is a lack of leisure time. Another consequence of competitive consumption and entrapment within the work and spend cycle is its inverse relationship to leisure time. The combination of this lack of time for leisure, amount of hours worked, coupled with the amount of time spent shopping, and often leaves little time for civic engagement.

However, other scholars would disagree with this juxtaposition of consumption and civic engagement, arguing that increased consumption rates do not necessarily correlate with a decline in civic engagement (Cohen 2003). Consumer culture theorists, in particular, regard consumers as interpretive agents who make meaning through lifestyle, consumer, and citizenship choices (Arnould and Thompson 2005). In this regard, living in a consumer society actually offers

greater opportunity for individuals to display their lifestyle, politics, and taste through consumption patterns (Dunn 2008; Hebdige 1988; Bourdieu 1976) and allows individuals to direct their purchases, as an articulation of lifestyle or political views, which actually helps, rather than hinders, social change. Previous discussions by Schor (1999) and Horkheimer and Adorno (1969) assume a unilateral relationship between passive consumers and an all-engulfing consumer culture. However, consumers have historically used consumer culture to express and identity and style, and as this project investigates, politics. Political consumerism provides agency for consumers to merge their politics with consumption choices as an expression of political consciousness.

Additionally, subcultures provide a prime example of the creative appropriation of consumer goods and alternative meaning making which is possible in a consumer society. Subcultures are frequently identifiable through their creative appropriation or transformation of style, particularly in music and fashion. Theorists from the Birmingham School Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies emphasized relationships between cultural expression with surrounding broader political and social contexts (Macey 2006). Dick Hebdige's (1979) *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* offers an example of post-World War II youth in Britain using style, through the subversion of common objects, to separate themselves from the mass culture of which they are a part. Through an exercise of nonconformity and expression of punk style, Hebdige details how British youth appropriate cultural goods in order to distinguish themselves from mass culture and mass conformity. The creation of an alternative punk style, and a refusal to visually adhere to social norms, illustrates how Britain's youth exercise resistance utilizing and subverting mainstream consumer choices. Andy Bennett (1999), however, critiques the concept of subcultures and instead offers an alternative, *neo-tribes*. According to Bennett,

subcultures provide arbitrary and rigid distinctions uncharacteristic of late modern lifestyles. Neo-tribes, in contrast, create a space where identities are fluid and constructed, rather than the fixed and given nature of subcultures. Both, however, demonstrate that alternative meaning making within the context of a parent culture is possible.

Citizens or Consumers?

Despite the potential for creative expression in consumer societies, a frequent critique is that living in a consumer culture adversely affects other areas of life, namely the time needed for individuals to be engaged and responsible citizens. In other words, is it possible to be an engaged citizen *and* a consumer, or must individuals choose one over the other?

In *Bowling Alone*, Robert Putnam (2000) provides a thorough, yet debatable, analysis of the decline of social capital and civic engagement in the United States. Through an extensive analysis of research on civic engagement over the past 30 years, Putnam concludes individuals are less engaged in voluntary organizations today than in the 1950s. Putnam attributes this decline in civic engagement to a decline in social capital. People are less engaged because they are less connected. Putnam cites shifts and decreases in participation in community organizations, voting, and philanthropy as evidence of the erosion of social capital.

However, Jeffrey Alexander (2006) notes “the contradictions of civil society make it restless” (p. 213). In other words, Alexander argues, Putnam’s claim that citizens are less civically engaged today than they were in the 1950s is too simplistic and is measuring today’s level of civic engagement against an outdated classic model of engagement. Alexander posits that instead a shift, not a decline, is occurring. Historically, measures of social movements and civic engagement have relied upon a classic social movements model emphasizing the instrumentality of the movement through the redistribution of goods. For example, classic social

movements, such as the Civil Rights Movement, fought for the redistribution of rights and goods from those who had to those who did not. While this component is still present in modern day social movements, a more updated conceptualization of the classic model is imperative in order to account for the dynamic nature of social movements in a civil society. Updated classic social movement models are framed in a manner in which “social movements are practical and historical” and are only successful when they employ the civic metalanguage of a given historical time period (Alexander 2006: 233). The success of social movements rests on the ability of the movement to highlight the “deficits in civil society itself” and demonstrate how that movement closes that gap (Alexander 2006:209). Today, because social movements are facing different problems than they did in the 1950s, the tactics needed to confront those problems are also different. It is, therefore, a vast overgeneralization to make assumptions like Putnam that individuals are less civically engaged today than in prior eras. Rather, dominant societal institutions have changed, so have the tactics to bring about social change. As a result of this shift, political consumers, and the aim of this work, is to illustrate how changing consumption patterns has the potential to enact social change.

Putnam’s argument on declining social capital speaks to a broader assumption of a citizen-consumer dichotomy, the assumption that if individuals were not consumers they would be more engaged citizens. For instance, in her historical account of consumption in post-war America, Lizabeth Cohen (2003) notes that Americans’ identities as citizens and consumers are often presented as opposites. Citizens, Cohen argues, are perceived as individuals who have a political relationship with the government and an obligation to fulfill specified civic duties in order to earn basic rights and privileges. Conversely, consumers are seen as preoccupied with the satisfaction of private material desires, and in the words of Raymond Williams (1958), seek to

“devour, waste, and spend.” Cohen’s account of post-war America argues citizens and consumers are not two mutually exclusive ideal types, but rather, fluid categories that reveal economic and political insights of given time periods.

Michael Schudson (2007) contends individuals are both citizens and consumers. Schudson rejects the romanticized claim that if it weren’t for consumerism, people would be more politically engaged. Schudson (2007) goes so far as to state, “measuring the virtue of ‘the citizen’ against the virtue of ‘the consumer’ should be recognized as a ridiculous act on its face, since nearly all of us, with the possible exceptions of Mother Theresa, Mahatma Gandhi, and Ralph Nader, are and necessarily must be consumers as well as citizens” (p. 237). Instead, Schudson argues consumer choice can, and has historically been, political and is therefore, not inherently oppositional to the notion of a citizen. Historical examples⁶ support Schudson’s claim including the “buy where you can work” campaign (Cohen 2003; Skotnes 1994); the Montgomery County Bus Boycott; the Woolworth sit-in (Vogel 2004); Nestlé infant formula boycott (Micheletti 2004); the United Farm Workers’ Union boycott (Benford and Valdez 1998) and the White Label Campaign (Micheletti 2003). The recent calls for boycotting Whole Foods (Friedman 2009) and British Petroleum (Reed 2010) indicate that citizens and consumers are not dichotomous roles, but rather, can be complimentary. Buying in the marketplace is no less an “inferior form of human activity compared to voting at the polling place or otherwise exercising citizenship” (Schudson 2007: 237).

⁶ Each of these examples, with the exception of the Woolworth sit-in, are discussed in further detail later in this chapter. The Woolworth sit-in refers to a series of sit-in’s, originating with four African American men who were refused service at a “whites only” lunch counter at a Woolworth’s in Greensboro, North Carolina. Subsequent sit-in’s at that store and others throughout the South attracted media attention leading to the desegregation of Woolworth’s lunch counters (Vogel 2004).

However, the self-interested consumer is often juxtaposed to this notion of a virtuous citizen. The result, according to Schudson (2007), is that consumers, by default, are contrasted with citizens. Rather than assuming citizen versus consumer, Schudson reframes the debate as citizen as consumer. Redefining the terms citizen and consumer provides an opportunity to consider how consumption may create the conditions for political mobilization and action. Relying on examples from the United Farm Workers grape boycott and the Boston Tea Party, Schudson demonstrates that consumer choice can, and historically has been, political. It is therefore unfounded to juxtapose consumption with citizenship, assuming the two cannot coexist. Rather, history has shown that consumption may create the conditions for political mobilization and action (Schudson 2007: 240).

Richard Dalton (2008) takes Schudson's argument further arguing prior research has misattributed the decline of political participation and civic engagement by narrowly defining political action. While Robert Putnam (2000) provides the seminal example in this literature, there are others. For instance, the American Political Science Association and the Brookings Institution co-released a report about the current state of political engagement and its subsequent threat to American democracy. The report states, "the risk comes not from some external threat but from disturbing internal trends: an erosion of the activities and capacities of citizenship...citizens participate in public affairs less frequently, with less knowledge and enthusiasm, in fewer venues, and less equally than is healthy for a vibrant democratic polity" (Macedo 2005: 1). There is a similar argument echoed in political science literature claiming the declining voting trends as an alleged indicator of a less active and participatory public (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse 2002; Wattenberg 2002).

Race-based examples of political consumerism such as the “buy where you can work” campaign and the Montgomery Bus Boycott highlight that political consumerism is not limited to whites. In the first half of the 20th century, African Americans employed the market as a strategy to express their disapproval of Jim Crow laws. African American boycotts of white owned segregated businesses led to the creation of Black-owned businesses and the “buy where you can work” campaigns across the United States from the late 1920s to the late 1940s (Cohen 2003; Skotnes 1994). These campaigns not only allowed African Americans to express their politics through purchasing, but also demonstrated that African American purchasing power was powerful enough to keep businesses afloat.

The “buy where you can work” campaigns also helped establish consumer alliances between African-American women and white women. Organizations such as the Consumers’ National Federation and the Cooperative League of America created a space for African Americans and whites to work together towards the common goal of consumer rights. African American women directed their consumer activism towards securing their rights as producers, i.e. Black-owned businesses, whereas white women fought for better overall protection of consumer rights. The consumer mobilization of both women and African Americans provides an example of how marginalized political groups were able to collectively organize to show how the consumer is an effective agent of protest (Cohen 2003).

Examples from the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the Woolworth sit-in, and the Nestlé infant formula boycott all demonstrate how boycotts have “broken the cycles of history” through the dissemination of alternative visions and information (Stolle et al. 2003; Micheletti 2003; Friedman 1999). These examples illustrate the effectiveness of boycotts on a broader, public scale and the eventual impact this can have on changing business practices.

The Nestlé infant formula boycott of the late 1970s and early 1980s offers an example of transnational consumer activism. The boycott was sparked by a controversy that Nestlé specifically targeted poorer countries to market their infant formula as an alternative to breast milk. Nestlé hired women to dress as nurses and dispense free samples of formula to women in “third world” countries. The samples lasted long enough for a woman’s breast milk to dry up, resulting in reliance upon Nestlé formula. Due to unsanitary water conditions, the use of Nestlé formula also posed a health hazard for babies. A transnational consumer boycott resulted in Nestlé ending their formula campaign showing the power of collective action to change business practices (Micheletti 2004a).

The United Farm Workers (UFW) Union boycott is another example of consumer driven activism that resulted in changing business practices (Benford and Valdez 1998). In 1968-69, the UFW launched a national boycott of all table grapes to protest the pesticides farm workers encountered harvesting the grapes. At the height of the boycott, more than 14 million Americans participated in the grape boycott. The grape boycott negatively impacted business enough that in 1969 the UFW signed a contract ensuring worker protection from exposure to harmful pesticides and unsafe working conditions (Benford and Valdez 1998). The effectiveness of the UFW grape boycott demonstrates the collective power of coalitions between producers and consumers.

Finally, the White Label Campaign, which ran from 1898-1919, exemplifies collective consumer activism through educating consumers. The White Label Campaign, initiated by the National Consumers League (NCL), encouraged consumers to patronize stores that supported fair working conditions, “no-sweat” apparel, and unionization of workers. The NCL published shopping guides and created an approved “white list” of stores that met these specified criteria. The work of the NCL and the White Label campaign offers one of the first examples of effective

means of boycotting to encourage corporate social responsibility to eliminate sweatshop labor. The White Label campaign, nearly a hundred years prior, is a precursor to another modern form of political consumerism, the anti-sweatshop movement (Micheletti 2003; Sklar 1998).

While citizens and consumers are often thought to be oppositional identities, it is also possible for individuals to exercise their citizenship and civic engagement through their own personal consumer choices and involvement in broader-based consumer movements. The aforementioned examples exemplify that individuals are not either citizens or consumers, but the embodiment of citizen-consumer whereby consumerism actually creates opportunities for enhanced political consciousness and participation.

Measuring Political Participation

Historically, political participation has been measured relying on the most conventional and most public forms of political action and civic engagement including voter turnout, civic organizational meeting attendance and working on political campaigns (Putnam 2000). One result of narrowly measuring political participation is the most privileged and visible members of society are the ones primarily assumed to be politically active. This is due in large part to the fact that these are the same individuals who have the luxury of time to be politically active or volunteer in civic organizations. If we expand the definition of political action to include more unconventional forms of political participation, the possibilities for engagement expand, rather than narrow.

Much of the political science literature misattributes a decline in civic engagement and political participation as a result of narrowly defined measures of participation. Rather than focusing on the emergent and rising forms of participation, such as unconventional political action, there is an emphasis on declining measures of conventional activity (Stolle et al. 2005;

Gundelach 1984). Further, critics of the declining engagement thesis argue that participation today, especially among younger generations, is more fluid, less hierarchical, and may not involve participation in formal organizations (Dalton, Scarrow and Cain 2004).

In the first survey study of political consumerism in Europe, Stolle et al. (2005) note the exclusion of nuanced forms of political participation from the literature creates an opportunity for new repertoires of political action to go unnoticed. The work of Richard Dalton (2008) points to difficulties of measurement for civic engagement. Dalton identifies two forms of citizenship, duty-based and engagement-based citizenship. Dalton's study of shifting citizenship norms, based off the 2005 Center for Democracy and Civil Society survey, reveals the changing nature of civic and political action. Active citizens today no longer act in accordance with traditional forms of participation (Dalton 2008). Rather, today's engagement is aligned with post-materialist values (Inglehart 1997) where belonging, self-expression, and quality of life are prioritized above stability and security. The result, particularly for younger generations, is a willingness to align politics with lifestyle. Perhaps American citizens are still engaged, but are focusing on issues most relevant and accessible to them.

Defining Political and Ethical Consumerism

The notions of political and ethical consumerism are not new. These terms first appeared in the social science literature in the early 1960s. Originally, the preferred terminology was ethical consumption, defined broadly as socially responsible consumption. It wasn't until the turn of the millennium that ethical consumption garnered attention in the political participation literature (Gulyas 2008). However, the inclusion of ethical consumption as political action still remains absent from the majority of political participation and nationally representative surveys in the United States.

The terms political and ethical consumerism are commonly used interchangeably. For instance, prominent Swedish researcher Michelle Micheletti (2004a) uses the term political consumerism to refer to individuals who use the market as an arena for politics. British researchers Terry Newholm and Deidre Shaw (2007) prefer the use of 'ethical consumerism' as an all-encompassing term for everyone from fair trade consumers, 'green' purchasers, to anti-sweatshop activists. Newholm and Shaw identify the possibility of a 'political project' as one potential component of ethical consumption, but not a necessity. Political consumerism, conversely, often includes an ethical element but the primary goal of the purchasing is to alter or affect business practices (Gulyas 2008).

The terminology becomes further complicated by whether the discussion refers to ethical consumption or the ethics of consumption. The ethics of consumption questions an overall system of capitalist commodity production (Crocker and Linden 1998) while ethical consumption refers to consumption as a medium for moral and political action (Barnett, Cafaro, and Newholm 2005). The ethics of consumption and ethical consumption are not completely separate issues, but should not be assumed to be interchangeable. The question then becomes, is consumption itself the problem, or can it be seen as a potential resource to change other social practices and bridge social inequities (Barnett et al. 2005)?

For the purposes of this research, I employ the terminology of political consumerism. I do not view political and ethical consumerism as synonymous, though political consumerism certainly incorporates ethics. Ethical consumers are conscientious consumers. For instance, individuals may purchase certain items (i.e. organic) because they are health conscious, not because they are concerned with environmental stewardship. I should also acknowledge that the

line between ethical and political consumerism is difficult to define because completely different motivations may underlie the same action (Clarke, Barnett, Cloke, and Malpass 2004).

However, because the study of political consumerism is relatively new, particularly in the United States, parsing out specific definitions and delineations for what constitutes political consumerism and what does not are difficult. In large part, this becomes a question of what matters more—the motivation behind the purchase or the purchase itself? Thus, while relying upon previously held definitions of political consumerism, I recognize these definitions as malleable and “alive” as research in this area develops.

Despite the recent resurgence of the idea of “voting with your dollar,” sociologists still know very little about political consumerism in the United States. Since the late 1990s, political consumerism resurged as boycotts and buycotts increased in visibility and participation (Anderson and Tobiasen 2004; Norris 2002). The uncovering of the unsafe working conditions producing Kathie Lee’s apparel line and the Nike boycott re-introduced the term ‘sweatshop’ into the nation’s consciousness as something of the present, rather than just of the past.

In 1996 a National Labor Committee investigation discovered that the Honduran factory responsible for producing clothing for Kathie Lee’s apparel line at Wal-Mart engaged in sweatshop practices. After the investigation, workers from the factory testified at a trial against the Global Fashion factory. As a result of Kathie Lee’s public persona as a talk show host, the factory “bust” garnered massive media attention, thrusting the term ‘sweatshop’ back into the public vernacular. Details of the factory working conditions revealed the often unseen and unspoken about end of consumption: the conditions of production.

The Global Fashion factory employed girls as young as 13, required 75 hour work weeks, permitted only one to two bathroom breaks in a 15 hour workday, and forbade workers to

attend school. Workers were paid an average of \$0.39 per hour for making pants sold at Wal-Mart for \$19.96. In one day, the factory produced \$15,968 worth of Kathie Lee apparel, but the combined wages of the factory's 65 workers was \$203 (National Labor Committee 1996). The public exposure from the Kathie Lee case provided the general public with a new understanding of what a sweatshop is and a general understanding of working conditions in those factories.

In 2000, the term sweatshop again entered the public sphere, this time in relation to Nike. Nike had just introduced the option for customers to order customized shoes online. Nike framed this option as an opportunity for customers to express their freedom and identity by ordering customized shoes. Nike, however, used sweatshop factories to produce these customized shoes and others. Nike's sweatshop factory conditions provided inadequate wages for workers, extended work hours, and overall sub-human conditions for employment. Culture jammer, Jonah Peretti, found Nike's framing offensive in lieu of Nike's history of labor abuses. Peretti decided to order a pair of shoes and make a public political statement regarding the irony of consumers in the "first world" paying for customization of cheap labor in the third world. When Peretti ordered his customized shoes, he requested the term 'sweatshop' be sewn into the shoes. This act of culture jamming, a strategy turning corporate power against itself through the cooption or recontextualization of meaning, caught Nike's attention (Peretti and Micheletti 2004). After receiving the order, Nike responded via email that they could not fulfill the order. This original email began an exchange between Peretti and Nike employees that Peretti ended up sending to a few friends. Those friends sent it to others and the email chain continued to spiral reaching over 11 million individuals. The example of Nike sparked a larger discussion about sweatshops and other acts of culture jamming as subversive political action (Peretti and Micheletti 2004). Now

referred to as the “Nike Sweatshop Email,” Peretti’s individual example of culture jamming sparked awareness around the country about Nike’s labor practices.

While these relatively recent events spearheaded more in-depth studies into sweatshops and fair trade activists, it is important to acknowledge that it is not as if consumers in the late 1990s became ‘political’ and ‘ethical’ again (Harrison, Newholm, and Shaw 2005). However, the reasons behind the most recent resurgence in political consumerism in the U.S. remain unclear.

Ulrich Beck (1999) and Anthony Giddens (1990) would contextualize this resurgence within a broader framework of living in a consumer society. Beck’s (1999) term *risk society* describes the types of risks created as a result of the processes of industrialization and modernization. The resurgence is a result of more of *manufactured risks* that are a result of human activity and in a consumer society, these risks are politicized. For example, humans have created the risk of pollution, in large part, due to our own personal and consumer choices. In consumer societies individuals cannot shy away from the potential consequences of their consumption and therein, consumption itself becomes a site for political action (Harrison et al. 2005).

Terry Newholm (2000) explains the resurgence of ethical consumption as a bi-product of overall rising levels of consumption. Individuals may choose to express their ethics and politics through their consumption patterns because shopping is such a time-consuming activity. After an average of a 45-hour workweek, the average American also spends almost four hours per week shopping (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2010). Because some level of shopping is required for household items, political consumerism offers another route for self-identity and expression. What often happens is individuals define themselves as much by what companies and products they support (fair trade, green, sweatshop free) as by those they don’t (i.e. Wal-Mart, Starbucks).

Political Participation

Defining what constitutes political participation is an arduous task. Political participation is often divided into two primary categories, conventional and unconventional. Conventional measures of participation include low-risk activities such as voting, working on campaigns, and sending letters to elected officials (Corning and Meyers 2002). Unconventional, or non-institutional, forms of participation include signing petitions, protests, and political consumerism (Marien et al. 2009; Dalton 2008; Norris 2002).

Despite prior research that generalized conventional acts as all measures of participation, unconventional measures of political participation are on the rise (Stolle and Hooge 2005; Norris 2002; Inglehart and Cattleberg 2002). The rise of political consumerism in recent years is partially attributed as a response to globalization (Stolle et al. 2005; Norris 2002; Friedman 1999). Individuals, whether acting individually or collectively, have become increasingly aware of the politics behind their products leading to a speculative rise in political consumerism (Stolle et al. 2005). This may seem ironic, given in globalized world producers and consumers are increasingly disconnected. Yet, as a result of increasing avenues for communication (i.e. Internet) and subsequent accessibility of information, the potential favor awareness on the part of consumers is greater than ever. However, labor solidarity organizations such as the AFL-CIO, United Students Against Sweatshops, and Co-Op America, have used the Internet as a source of mobilization heightening consumer awareness to the impacts of their purchases.

For example, Anderson and Tobiasen's (2004) study of Danish political consumers revealed political consumers regarded all forms of political participation as more efficient than those who were not political consumers. These results differ from previously held assumptions that a motivating factor for engagement in unconventional political activity is because people

distrust the formalized political system for change (see Norris 2002; Inglehart and Baker 2000). Further, it strengthens the argument that citizens are not less engaged, but are engaged differently. Those different measures may include participation in more unconventional forms, which are often more difficult to measure.

Methodologically, it is difficult to decipher how many people are political consumers since political consumption is not always tracked by organizational membership or meeting attendance. Political consumers are less organized, less structured, and more transient than more conventional political actors (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002). However, this less formalized structure also has the potential to broaden the scope of individuals involved in political action because it does not require additional time, association fees, or attending meetings. All that is required is a change in shopping patterns (Micheletti 2004b).

Research on political consumers also differs from other studies of social movements and political participation because political consumers constitute an infrequently studied population—the mobilized, as opposed to the mobilizers. Traditionally, political participation and social movements literatures focus on the characteristic, tactics, and the overall collective action framing of social movements (Benford and Snow 2000). In essence, we tend to study the mobilizers—their strategies for mobilization, how they mobilized, and the outcomes of their efforts. Political consumers, conversely, represent the mobilized. Political consumers additionally constitute a population whereby individuals may implement their own framing or re-framing of the movement through consumer choice. Political consumers create the possibility for the reconstitution of choice in the midst of a consumer culture. Rather than being engulfed by the myriad of options available in consumer culture, political consumers model how intentional consumer choices have the potential to have a substantial impact

Debates: Purchasing as Politics

Political consumerism is not only a relatively low-risk form of political participation, but is also made possible because individuals are able to simultaneously participate in both economic and political spheres of life (Holzer 2006). Two primary debates exist regarding the effectiveness and role of political consumerism. The first major debate surrounds whether political consumerism constitutes a distinct form of political action, or if political consumerism is merely a supplement to more formalized political action. The second debate is whether political consumerism is an effective strategy for political action or if it further encourages consumption.

Two major distinctions underlie the argument for the distinctiveness of political consumerism. The first is the individualized nature of political consumerism. The individualized nature of shopping presents a tension for conceptualizing political consumerism as a social movement. Traditionally, social movements are characterized by organized, change-oriented collective action targeting the state or other authority structures (McAdam and Snow 1997). More recently, however, the definition of social movements broadened to incorporate “collective challenges to systems of or structures of authority” including challenges that are not “manifestly political” and aimed at “various levels of social life,” including the individual (Snow 2004:11). Social movement theorist David Meyer (2007) also recognizes the fluidity and difficulty defining social movements because “[social movements] contain some amount of sloppiness, because movements themselves are rarely tidy affairs, with loose and elastic boundaries and varieties of demands and tactics, ranging from approaches that seem like conventional politics to those that don’t even make explicitly political claims” (p. 2). In other words, similar to the fluid and changing nature of various forms of political participation (conventional and unconventional), social movement boundaries also change over time.

Lifestyle movements are social movements that intentionally and actively promote lifestyle actions as a means to foster social change (Haenfler, Johnson and Jones 2008; Miller 2005). Differing in tactics, structure and organization from both traditional and new social movements, lifestyle movements are characterized by integrating overall movement values to individualized action; ongoing rather than episodic action; and aim to change cultural and economic practices rather than the government. Political consumerism and other “social responsibility movements” embody a lifestyle movement seeking social change through the transformation of consumption choices and the “mundane” tasks of daily living. Participants in lifestyle movements “subjectively understand their individual actions as having an impact beyond their personal lives” (Haenfler et al. 2005:6).

In this respect, both lifestyle movements and political consumerism constitute a relatively low-risk form of political action (Micheletti 2003). Political consumers make purchasing decisions and may, or may not, be a part of a broader consumer-based movement. For example, individual consumers may purchase fair trade coffee in an effort to support living wages for coffee farmers. Collectively, the summation of individual purchases creates increased demand and support for the fair trade movement (Webb 2007). In this respect, fair trade consumers exemplify the ideology of a lifestyle movement—individual actions, collectively, have the potential to bring about social change. This does not mean, however, that political consumerism only qualifies as such if specific consumer actions are a part of a broader organized movement or imagined community. Rather, it demonstrates the collective ability of consumers to change business practices, whether those individuals are organized as a collective or not.

The second major distinction is political consumers target the market as a source of change, as opposed to the government (Micheletti et al. 2004; Vogel 2004). In an increasingly

globalized world, political consumers choose to target the market, rather than legislation or national government, because the government doesn't always have the capacity to regulate international labor standards, while companies do (Stolle et al. 2005).

The second debate regarding political consumption questions whether it is possible to utilize the market as a site of political action, or if using the market as a political tool actually encourages people to purchase more, even if those purchases are in support of specific products or companies. In her signature work, *No Logo*, Naomi Klein (2000) argues that the market must be politicized to liberate people from the dominance of consumer society. Klein, an unashamed anti-capitalist and staunch critic of the branding of consumer society, argues that by politicizing the market, corporate dominance is challenged. Klein hopes that challenging the market will result in the creation of increased ethical options for consumers. Klein's position resounds similar to that of Scammell (2000) and Slatter (1997) who both argue that consumer choices offer the possibility to commit to global ethical issues through purchasing patterns.

On the other side of the debate are those who say using the market as a tool for political action still supports the capitalist system. As previously mentioned, one of the most notable arguments is that civic participation and consumption are inversely related. That is, as consumption increases, civic engagement declines. This thesis was popularized in *Bowling Alone*, Robert Putnam's (2000) seminal text on the decline of American community. While Putnam does not directly attribute the decline in civic participation solely to consumerism, he does suggest that the activities Americans are now engaged in result in less social capital, and essentially, are engaged in alone. One of the main critiques of Putnam's thesis, that those who believe in the value of political consumerism may offer, is that Putnam's definition of civic engagement is dated. Putnam measured civic participation in terms of duty based citizenship

norms (i.e. signing petitions, community organization membership) rather than engaged citizenship, for instance, political consumerism (Dalton 2008).

Redefining Political Participation

The inclusion of political consumerism as a new form of political participation is beneficial to understanding civic and political participation in a postmodern society (Stolle and Micheletti 2005; Anderson and Tobiasen 2004). First, in a postmodern society, civic participation has shifted. Michael Schudson (1999) identifies this change as a shift from model citizen to monitorial citizen. Monitorial citizens are individuals who do not solely participate in traditional forms of political action, but rather, selectively participate with political forms that fit within their existing activities (Schudson 1999). Thus, for monitorial citizens, political consumerism provides a viable option of political engagement and participation as it fits in with an activity most individuals must do, shop.

Political consumerism provides an opportunity for individuals to routinely participate in political action through an alteration of shopping patterns without the additional demands of meetings or membership in formal political organizations (Micheletti 2004). Further, political consumerism is also an opportunity for individuals, who live in the midst of consumer culture and who have increasing restraints on time, to be politically active in the activities they already engage in.

Political consumerism is an opportunity for individuals to demonstrate what Anthony Giddens (1991) terms *life politics*. Through life politics, individuals express their values and personal narratives through choice. Political consumerism allows individuals to express life politics through their purchases and to establish a consistency between self-identity and taste patterns (Solomon 1992). Schudson (1999) contends model citizens, such as those Putnam

(2000) referenced in *Bowling Alone*, no longer exist. Monitorial citizens have replaced model citizens, scanning all available information and selectively participating in those activities most salient with existing lifestyles and schemas (Schudson 1999). Monitorial citizenship, then, provides an opportunity for individuals to not chose either to be a citizen or a consumer, but rather, a citizen-consumer (Schudson 2007).

Predictors of Participation in Political Action

The literature on consumerism assumes the consumer is a universal figure located across cultural, historical and institutional settings (Littler 2009; Jacobsen and Dulrud 2007). That is to say, when broadly discussed, consumers are assumed to be a homogenous group of buyers. However, consumers are no more homogenous a group than the general population. Therefore, when discussing consumers, and consumer behavior, it's vital to consider how social identities, access to resources, and opportunities all affect consumption. Notably, gender, race, socioeconomic status, age, and education, all affect consumer behavior and action (Barnett et al. 2005; Miles 1998).

As a result of the lack of studies on United States political consumers, there is little known about the "typical" United States political consumer. A recently published study by two political scientists, Newman and Bartels (2010), "Politics at the Register: Political Consumerism in the United States," provides some insight into the demographics of political consumers. Newman and Bartels used data from the 2005 United States Citizenship, Involvement, and Democracy survey to measure individual sources of political consumerism, situating political consumerism within the political spectrum of voting and protesting. Their research found predictors for participation in political consumerism include strong party affiliation, being young (28 and under), having a sense of duty to political life, political discontent, being educated, and

being white. There were no significant effects for gender or income. While this study does provide a small understanding of political consumers in the United States, I still rely upon the broader political participation literature to understand who is most likely to participate.

As previously mentioned, political participation literature tends to measure more public forms of political participation. One result of this skewed measurement is it often leaves out women who may occupy more private spaces and underrepresented racial groups who organize political participation outside of traditional measures of action such as voting. Consequently, the political participation literature commonly emphasizes only institutional, or conventional, forms of political participation. Narrowly defining political participation in these terms privileges certain individuals and identities over others, resulting in a skewed and narrow definition of what constitutes political participation. Incorporating political consumerism as a measure of political participation broadens definitions of political participation creating opportunities for the work of existing, and previously unmeasured, groups to count as political participation.

The research indicates forms of political participation including voting and political party affiliation are associated with higher levels of education, social class, being male and being older (up to age 65) (Dalton 2008; Norris 2002). As noted above, the emphasis on conventional measures of political participation may skew the realities of the breadth of political actors. As a result, studies have not accurately represented the breadth of political participation, especially those of less-institutionalized measures of participation, including political consumerism. Do we see similar unequal rates of participation in unconventional participation, namely political consumerism, as we do in conventional measures (Marien et al. 2009)?

Race. According to conventional measures of political participation, in the United States, across all racial categories, whites are most likely to participate in political action (Hochschild

2006). Additionally, across racial categories, higher socioeconomic status and strong social ties are correlated with higher levels of political participation (Leighley and Vedlitz 1999). However, it is a misnomer to assume that whites have higher rates of political participation because they are more interested in politics. Rather, political participation may not include membership in community organizations and race-based institutional resources that have historically served as integral sites for political action (Harris 1994). The limited scope of questions partially explains why research reports whites are more likely to participate in political action. For instance, African Americans may also be involved in political action, but it may be through more informal networks or community based organizations not traditionally measured in survey questionnaires (Verba, Burns, and Schlozma 1997). Therefore, the discrepancy in measurement should not be misinterpreted as only whites are politically active. Both the Montgomery bus boycott and the “buy where you can work” campaign evidence a historical lineage of black-led political action and consumerism.

Accounting for race in political consumerism is informative, particularly against the criticism that political consumerism is a privileged form of engagement. African American spending topped \$964 billion dollars in 2009. In a consumer society, the purchasing patterns of African Americans cannot be ignored (Podoshen 2008). Research conducted in the 1980s suggested African Americans had stronger rates of brand loyalty than whites (Wilkes and Valencia 1986). Brand loyalty was presumed to be a means to garner “street credibility” or as a symbol of success and economic achievement. Recent research, however, suggests no significant overall racial difference in brand loyalty (Podoshen 2008). Perhaps, all consumers, regardless of race now express brand loyalty—the only difference might be across brands, not race.

Brand loyalty and political consumerism can also be seen in terms of support for Black-owned businesses. In a study measuring the relationship between political ideology and support for Black-owned businesses of black consumers, Crockett and Wallendorf (2004) found those individuals with stronger political ideologies are more likely to support Black-owned businesses. They also found that while this unconventional measure of political participation was increasing, overall measures of participation in conventional forms decreased. One possible explanation for this discrepancy is a lack of trust in “the system” as a source of social change (Micheletti and Stolle 2006). As a result of distrusting the system, individuals direct their energies elsewhere, in more unconventional, and commonly less frequently measured, forms of political action. There are very few studies that specifically address the relationship between race and political consumerism. It is crucial to understand not only how people politically consume, but who political consumers are.

Gender. According to conventional measures of political participation, women’s overall rates of political participation are lower than men’s (Burns 2001; Golebiowska 1999; Kelly 1996; Verba et al. 1997). There are several explanations for this gender difference. One potential explanation is men and women have differing levels of political interest. Thus, men’s higher rates of political participation are a result of overall greater interest in politics. A second explanation is that politics is a gendered space where men are assumed to have greater knowledge and interest than women. Thus, men’s higher rates of political participation may be a bi-product of the fulfillment of gendered expectations. For instance, if we parallel men’s interest in politics to men’s interest in sports: while some men may genuinely enjoy sports, and politics, others become interested as a fulfillment of a gender role and become interested in politics because they assume they are supposed to be (Verba et al. 1997).

However, if we expand the definition of political participation to include more unconventional measures of political participation, women are more likely to participate than men (Marien et al. 2009; Anderson and Tobiasen 2004; Micheletti 2003; Stolle and Micheletti 2003). This is a significant finding as it indicates the reason for women's lower levels of political participation is not necessarily a lack of interest in politics, but rather, a limited scope of measurement. Thus, it is not that women tend to have less interest in politics or participate at lower levels, but rather, the forms of measurement have emphasized the forms of political action men are more likely to be involved in.

The inclusion of unconventional political action helps dissolve the public-private distinction in political participation literature. First, women's roles as provisioners of households often occur through shopping (Neilson 2010). Shopping, a traditionally feminized activity, allows for women to merge political action with an activity they already engaged in. The option for women to express their politics with an activity they're already engaged in aligns with Schudson's (1999) model of monitorial citizenship. Political consumerism via provisioning allows women, who may have limited time and opportunities for other time-consuming political activities, to be politically active by voting with their wallets (Terrangi 2007; Stolle and Hooghe 2005; Goss 2003).

In a 26 country study of the 2004 International Social Survey of non-institutionalized forms of political participation, including boycotting and boycotting, Marien et al. (2009) found women were more involved in non-institutionalized forms of political participation than men. The authors note this finding is theoretically significant as it may help to explain why women are less involved in politics, especially formalized party politics. Lower rates of political participation for women in conventional and institutionalized forms of action should not be

misinterpreted as a lack of political interest. Rather, with the inclusion of non-institutionalized forms of participation, a more inclusive measurement of political participation is achieved (Marien et al. 2009).

Laura Terrangi (2007) echoes this dissolution of the public and private distinction and views political consumerism as an outlet for women's political engagement. Often disenfranchised from other social affiliations, Terrangi (2007) argues, "consumption represented an entrance into the public sphere as a recognizable collective subject" (p. 3). One of the most notable contributions of women to political consumerism was the National Consumer's League White Label Campaign. The White Label Campaign, established in 1898, was a compilation of department store names that met high standards for labor conditions, equal pay, child labor, and minimum wage for sales girls. Once the stores made the white list, approved garments were adorned with white labels that read, "made under healthful and lawful conditions" for consumers to easily identify. The White Label Campaign specifically targeted women as the "economic managers" of households to vote with their dollar (Sklar 1988). The White Label Campaign, deemed the original anti-sweatshop campaign, was spearheaded by women who understood the power of the purse to propel social change (Terrangi 2007).

Age. There are no consistent results to indicate that younger generations are less politically active than older generations. According to the Pew Research Center, members of the Dot Net generation (born after 1977) are less likely to vote than their elders, but are just as politically active. One explanation for why younger generations have lower voter turnout is they distrust the political system as a source of change. As a result, younger generations focus their political efforts on less institutionalized, yet more direct forms of political action (Zukin et al. 2006).

Research from the Center for Information and Research on Civic and Learning Engagement (CIRCLE) Project specifically studies emergent forms of civic and political engagement among youth. The National Civic Engagement Survey I (NCES I), the first nationally representative study measuring civic engagement and consumption patterns in the U.S. suggests age-related differences in political consumerism. For example, there is some evidence that political engagement increases as age increases until age 65. In addition, there may be generational differences across age cohorts with respect to types of political engagement. Dot Nets (born 1977-1984) are less likely to vote and give money to political campaigns than Dutifuls (born before 1945), and Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964) and Gen Xers (born 1964-1976) (Zukin et al. 2006).

With regards to more unconventional participation, there is some evidence that Dot Nets are more likely than Dutifuls or Baby Boomers to have signed e-mail petitions in the past 12 months. This may be because of more frequent Internet use and engagement via online social networks among persons in this age group. In terms of political consumerism, Dot Nets are just as likely to have boycotted and buycotted in the past 12 months as Gen Xers and Baby Boomers. However, only the Dutiful generation is significantly less likely to politically consume (Zukin et al. 2006).

Findings from the NCES I study are surprisingly high for engaging in political consumerism. Thirty-eight percent of Dot Nets, 43 percent of Gen Xers, 41 percent of Baby Boomers and 28 percent of Dutifuls reported participating in boycotting at some point in their lives. Respectively, 35 percent of Dot Nets, 42 percent of Gen Xers, 37 percent of Baby Boomer, and 25 percent of Dutifuls reported boycotting in the past 12 months (Zukin et al. 2006).

While some general preliminary analyses have been conducted using the NCES I data, the majority of the research from the CIRCLE project focuses on age-related differences in engagement and participation. This study expands those parameters incorporating a broader spectrum of political consumers across a breadth of demographic variables and purchasing patterns.

The most recent trends in consumption also suggest shifting forms of political engagement. While younger generations are more likely to participate in unconventional measures, older generations are just as, if not more, likely to participate in conventional forms of political action (Zukin 2004). The significant decline in participation among the elderly, particularly for political consumerism, provides an opportunity for future work to better understand why older individuals may be less likely to participate.

These findings are contested by other work suggesting that college-age political consumers in Belgium, Canada, and Sweden are particularly interested and active in political consumerism (Stolle et al. 2005). This may be because these young consumers have not developed an established pattern of consumer choice and are more open to altering their consumption patterns in accordance with their politics (Harrison et al. 2005). This finding is notable since college students, while economically privileged enough to attend college, are not necessarily financially well off. While college students may charge a lot of their purchases on credit cards, they remain the most interested and participatory demographic of political consumerism, indicating that financial well-being is not a necessary precursor for political consumerism (Stolle et al. 2005).

Interest in political consumerism among college-aged individuals may also be evidence of college-attending youth are more politically liberal and open-minded. For example, college-

aged youth may be more likely to participate in more nuanced or unconventional measures of political participation such as political consumerism. In a national election day survey in 2004, 32 percent of voters aged 18-24 identified a liberal, while 27 percent identified as conservative (Zukin et al. 2006). Zukin et al. (2006) concluded that older cohorts are slightly more likely to be conservative than younger, which may be partially explained by the ageing of the Reagan generations through the years. This open-mindedness also affects political engagement, as younger people may be more willing to engage outside what is commonly known as the bounds of traditional political participation (Adugu 2008). This may result in younger generations being more open to participation in unconventional forms of political engagement (Zukin et al. 2006).

For example, Dalton (2008) measured the effects of United States citizenship norms on political participation. Dalton found older individuals were more likely to participate in traditional forms of engagement such as voting and donations, but not political consumerism. However, in Europe, middle-aged consumers are the most likely to be political consumers. Stolle and Hooghe (2005) explain this may be evidence of the ageing of the protest generation. Those who used to initiate petition signings and protests now express their politics in a low-risk form of engagement, political consumerism.

The shift from protest politics to political consumerism may help explain the shifting nature of political participation over the life course. As individuals age, they may be less likely to engage in more high-risk forms of political participation. High risk political activities are most commonly associated with actions having greater risk for interference with the law, such as protesting or occupying a public space. Low-risk political activities are often associated with conventional forms of political participation such as voting and pose little threat to interference with the law (Corning and Meyers 2002).

While older European consumers may be more likely to express their politics through purchasing patterns, the same trend does not remain consistent for older American consumers. Dalton's (2008) research indicates a strong relationship between older Americans and duty-based citizenship norms which include obeying the law, always voting, military service, reporting crimes, and serving on a jury. Younger generations of Americans, however, have stronger ties to engaged citizenship norms including forming their own opinions, supporting those less well off, being politically active and being an active member of volunteer organizations. Engaged citizenship, which relies heavily upon post-materialist values, may contribute to individual willingness to participate in more unconventional measures of political participation.

Ronald Inglehart (1997) argues these shifts all indicate a silent cultural revolution in an altered political agenda. The post-materialist agenda, according to Inglehart, means individuals are more likely to engage in elite-challenging forms of political participation. Post-materialists are characterized by their strong value emphasis on the environment, equality, human rights, and sustainability, coupled with a strong value for self-expression, choice, and political action (Inglehart 1997). The alignment of the post-materialist agenda with political consumers allows individuals to connect their values with their consumer choices (Ferrer and Fraile 2006; Stolle et al. 2005).

Social Class. Class is often characterized as privilege in political action. According to conventional measures of political participation, individuals with higher socioeconomic statuses are more likely to be politically active and are also more likely to engage in political consumerism (Stolle and Micheletti 2003; Leighley and Vedlitz 1999; Holt 1998). The assertion that political participation is an outgrowth of class privilege is especially relevant for the study of political consumerism. Individuals of higher class are assumed to have more disposable income

to “shop their values” and also have greater access to goods and services that may allow them to be political consumers. In this sense, political consumerism is commonly characterized as an elite activity. If we examine political consumerism from a historical perspective, however, it was not solely the elite and privileged that voted with their wallet. Only recently has the concept of voting with your wallet been characterized as an elite activity.

In their study of European political consumers, Ferrer and Fraile (2006) note political consumerism provides opportunities to test the extent to which labor market positions, and income, affect participation in more unconventional forms of political participation. Resource-based citizens, or those who are the most well-educated, employed, students or middle-aged were likely to be political consumers. Social class, however, had the strongest effect for predicting the likelihood of participation in political consumption (Ferrer and Fraile 2006). While findings from this study reinforce the contention that political consumerism is an elite form of political participation, the broader and historical trajectory of political consumerism does not indicate that is always the case, especially in the United States.

Education. Social class is intimately tied to education. Across conventional and unconventional forms of political action, education is consistently the greatest predictor of political involvement (Dalton 2008; Anderson and Tobiasen 2004; Norris 2002; Verba et al. 1995). One explanation for this effect of education is that education is partially explained by social class. Individuals with higher socioeconomic status are more likely to have higher levels of education and thus, are more likely to be politically active (Ferrer and Fraile 2006). Additionally, higher levels of education may also predict participation in unconventional measures of political participation as more highly educated individuals strive for nuanced forms of political influence. In other words, if highly educated individuals are dissatisfied with

electoral politics, they may not wait until the next election to express their political views. Rather, perhaps due to a heightened sense of self and political efficacy, they develop nuanced forms of political action including joining political organizations, engaging in direct action, or political consumerism (Dalton 2008; Stolle et al. 2005; Norris 2002). In this respect, social class, mediated by education, is tied to high self and political efficacy. That is, individuals with higher socioeconomic status and education levels may have a greater belief that their actions and purchasing patterns can change “the system” resulting in increased participation rates.

However, this may not always be the case. While the majority of research (Dalton 2008; Anderson and Tobiasen 2004; Norris 2002; Verba et al. 1995) points to education as the strongest predictor for involvement in political action, results from a study conducted by Stolle et al. (2005) on boycotting and boycotting of supermarket products in Europe found no significant differences in participation rates across education levels or social class. Thus, as with other demographic variables, there is difficulty predicting and generalizing how specific variables impact political consumerism in the United States.

Social Networks. In an increasingly globalized and connected world, social networks are vital to understanding the relationship between connectivity and political participation. Individuals are no longer only connected to those in their immediate proximity and community. Information is constantly accessible on the Internet that fosters opportunities to be networked and connected to like-minded people, even if those people don’t live in your immediate community.

Social networks and political participation have a reciprocal relationship. Participation in collective action is shaped by social networks and also shapes networks (Diani 1997; Bourdieu 1994). Social capital theorists contend the more an individual is embedded within an

organization, the more likely it is that the individual will remain actively involved in the organization in spite of the difficulties associated with collective organizing. Integration and embeddedness in social networks fosters both recruitment and retention in political action (Hooghe and Stolle 2003). Social networks are crucial for the longevity and success of a movement over time (Poletta and Jasper 2007; Della Porta and Diani 2006).

For example, in his study of white involvement in the Civil Rights Movement, Douglas McAdam (1986) found connections, or social networks, were crucial to long-term movement involvement. Organizational ties and social networks, particularly for those who may participate in high-risk political action or nuanced political action, is crucial for involvement and activist identity in the long term (McAdam and Paulsen 1993). The more integrated an individual is in an organization, the more connections and the broader their social network is. Their embeddedness within the organization increases the likelihood of long-term participation. In other words, the more invested you are in an organization or movement, the more likely you are to remain a part of the movement, even in the midst of difficulty. If we apply the social network theory to political consumers, we can assume socially networked individuals are more likely to be long-term political consumers than individuals who are not networked (Stolle et al. 2005).

However, the distinction between individual action and collective action is more difficult to delineate for political consumers. Many individuals shop alone, thus making their political action an individualized activity. However, many of these same shoppers, while shopping alone, may make certain purchases as a part of a broader collective movement.

Alternative food networks offer a good example of negotiating individual shopping choices within a broader movement of consumer organizing. Alternative food networks, comprised of individuals termed “food citizens,” support their visions for sustainable, locally

produced food through targeted purchases. Patronizing farmer's markets, sharing plots in community gardens, or buying shares in community supported agriculture, food citizens achieve their goals of purchasing local and sustainable food by developing alternative locales of consumption (Lockie 2009). While shopping individually, alternative food networks are just that, networks. Consumers may find information on local farmer's markets or other sustainable food initiatives online or from other community resources. Thus, in one sense, individuals may be networked and acting as a part of a broader collective, and in another, they remain individualized shoppers and political actors.

Precursors to Action

Just as it is essential to understand the demographics of those most likely to be politically engaged, it is also vital to understand the sociological and psychological processes underlying various rates of political participation. Two important processes to understanding participation in political consumerism include the attitude-behavior gap and social movement framing.

The attitude-behavior gap is an important factor to understanding possible rationale behind political action and engagement. The attitude-behavior gap is the disjuncture that occurs between an individual's expressed belief and their actual behavior (Tallontire, Rentsendorj, and Blowfield 2001). Utilizing the attitude-behavior gap, we are able to assess whether or not specific attitudes translate into specific actions or behaviors on the part of the consumer and what psychological tools individuals employ to separate their professed attitudes about consumption from their actual behaviors. For instance, the attitude-behavior gap helps explain why individuals who profess support of the fair trade movement do not always purchase fair trade products (Chatzidakis, Hibbert, and Smith 2007).

In 2006, Kimeldorf, Meyer, Prasad and Robinson conducted the first behavioral confirmation study on survey data of the attitude-behavior gap. Prior survey data suggested between 61 and 86 percent of people were willing to pay more to ensure clothing was not produced in a sweatshop. For their study, Kimeldorf et al. (2006) priced socks made in good working conditions at \$1.20 compared to \$1 for the same pair of socks not produced in good working conditions. In this experiment, only 30% of customers actually purchased the socks made in good working conditions. However, once educated on the impact of good working conditions, a larger percentage of individuals said they would purchase socks produced in good working conditions.

The attitude-behavior gap occurs as individuals neutralize the impact of their behavioral choices on others. Neutralization occurs when individuals engage in behavior that is norm violating or contrary to expressed attitudes and beliefs. A 2007 study conducted by Chatzidakis et al. measured the attitude-behavior gap of individuals who identified purchasing fairly traded products as an ethical concern and their subsequent purchasing of fair trade items in the supermarket. The study demonstrated how individuals rationalize, through neutralization, their norm-violating behavior between professed attitudes and subsequent behaviors.

Generally, neutralization manifests itself in one of five ways. For this study, norm-violating behavior refers to not purchasing fair trade items. The first is denial of responsibility as individuals express lack of understanding of the potential impact of their individual purchase. For instance, in explaining why they didn't purchase fair trade products, responses included, "it is so much more expensive, and to be honest, money is tight at the moment." A second form of neutralization is denial of injury to another party. Denial of injury or denial of benefit allows individuals to rationalize behavior on the basis that no one really suffered, and therefore, their

behavior doesn't matter. For example, one respondent from the study stated, "I wouldn't feel bad for not buying fair trade...in my view, the causes of unfair trade are much more systemic...I'm not going to do anything that contributes to an improved trading system." Denial of victims occurs when a condemned individual shifts the blame back to the victim including, "it's their fault, if they had been fair with me, I wouldn't have done it." Fourth, condemnation of others occurs when the individual blames the condemning party, "e.g. you do the same thing." Finally, appeal to higher loyalties happens when individuals neutralize norm or attitude-violating behavior in pursuit of a greater purpose. In response to why they did not purchase fair trade, a one respondent remarked, "fair trade might be a consideration, but when I go shopping, I look for the cheapest and nearest thing to me" and another said, "I've thought many times that I should be more ethical in what I buy...but part of me is quite lazy actually" (Chatzidakis et al. 2007:92). In other words, value and convenience, or lack thereof, appears to deter consumers from shopping their values.

The studies on the attitude-behavior gap reaffirm what Benford and Snow (2000) identify as the most crucial task for political consumerism: framing. Framing allows individuals to identify a problem, potential solutions, and calls to action. Framing is comprised of three main processes. The first is frame transformation. Frame transformation translates individual actions into public consequences (Stolle et al. 2005; Micheletti 2003). For example, individuals may be told specifically that their purchase will contribute a certain amount of money to a worker as compared with a conventional purchase. The fair trade coffee movement uses frame transformation to show the power of consumer purchases. TransFair, the national certifier of fair trade products in the United States, places their labels on certified fair trade products. Similar to the White Label Campaign, this label identification makes it easy for consumers to recognize and

purchase goods made in fair working conditions. For example, purchasing fair trade coffee ensures coffee farmers are paid a fair wage for their goods. Currently, the market price is \$1.21 pound for conventional coffee, and fair trade purchases add another \$0.10 on per pound plus another \$0.20 per pound for organic. If the market rate ever exceeds the fair trade price, coffee farmers are paid above the market rate (Equal Exchange 2010). Thus, fair trade coffee consumers, through label identification, are ensured their purchases support fair working conditions.

Second, through frame bridging individuals may realize that there is more than one reason to boycott or boycott a product. For instance, the campaign to boycott Nestlé infant formula coupled issues of gender and development establishing a broader base of mobilization than each campaign would independently (Micheletti 2004a). Because the campaign was not centered on the resolution of one particular issue, the movement was able to evolve and continue to flourish beyond its original goals.

Finally, prognostic or motivational framing reminds and energizes individuals that they can ‘make a difference’ through specific purchases (Holzer 2006). Through prognostic or motivational framing, individuals are made to feel good about making specific purchases contributing to their likelihood of purchasing similarly framed items in the future. Often prognostic framing reconnects the consumer with the producer by “putting a face” on the producer, which is often a rare occurrence in a globalized market.

The importance of the value of framing is exemplified through the emergence of the term “sweatshop” in the 1990s. This term was highly publicized through child labor law violations of factories producing apparel for Kathie Lee and also the culture jamming email strand to boycott Nike (Micheletti 2004a; Peretti 2004). Today, most people, even if they cannot specifically

define what a sweatshop is, generally associate it with a negative connotation as a result of successful framing.

Currently there are similar framing tactics, drawing attention to the terminology surrounding fair trade, organic and local. These examples go to show that high visibility and education matters. If individuals do not understand what 'buzz word' terms mean, then they are definitely going to be less likely to make purchasing decisions based upon labeling with those terms. However, framing also speaks to the potential impact of a political consumer movement. Thus, the informed consumer is more likely to participate and to also understand what role their participation plays.

Consumption Matters

Sociology is a latecomer to the study of consumerism, particularly in the United States (Dunn 2008). Although the rest of the world studies United States consumption patterns, the American Sociological Association does not have a section on consumption studies (Ritzer 2010). This discrepancy, according to Ritzer, highlights the disjuncture between worldwide focus and concern on consumption and the lack of consumption studies within the United States.

The study of consumerism, and more specifically, political consumerism, advances the discipline of sociology in numerous ways. First, political consumerism is an under-developed and under-studied phenomenon worldwide, and even more so within the United States (Zukin et al. 2006; Klintman 2004). Preliminary research on European and United States political consumers indicates high rates of participation in boycotting and boycotting with an average of one-third of respondents indicating participation (Newman and Bartels 2010; Marien et al. 2009; Stolle and Hooghe 2005; Stolle and Micheletti 2005, Anderson and Tobiasen 2004). Despite these high levels of participation, consumption research in the United States is limited. While

studies of political consumers in other cultures provide a general understanding and demographic composite of political consumers, this research remains limited in terms of its cross-cultural generalizability (Jacobsen and Dulsrud 2007). Thus, if sociologists are concerned with community, connectivity, and social change, it seems only prudent that we would want to develop a greater understanding of new forms of civic and political engagement and who and why certain individuals participate and others do not.

Second, studying United States political consumers is significant not only to understanding if, and how, United States political consumers operate, but also to assess whether political consumerism patterns are similar across cultures. As previously mentioned, political consumerism is not a new phenomenon, even within in the United States. However, studies of political consumers are limited in scope, and have often been limited to specific purchasing niches such as “green” purchasing or anti-sweatshop activism (Featherstone 2007; Brenton and Hacken 2006; Auger et al. 2003). While these studies are useful for understanding how individuals express politics in specific purchases, they do not offer insight into if, and how, individuals consistently express their politics across purchasing patterns as an expression of lifestyle politics.

Furthermore, measuring political consumerism across multiple products is necessary to ensure that individuals are indeed political consumers, not merely boycotting or buycotting one specific product for other reasons, such as an attempt to gain cultural or subcultural capital, to appear “hip.” Bourdieu’s (1976) theory of cultural capital references the dispositions and cultural habits of individuals, which may contribute to the achievement of some individuals over others. Relying upon Bourdieu’s theory of cultural capital, Sarah Thornton (1996) developed the notion of subcultural capital. Subcultural capital is a form of cultural capital individuals acquire within

their own social world or scene. While subcultural capital is often associated with “hipness,” nothing depletes subcultural capital more than an individual trying too hard to obtain it.

In 2011, participating in political consumerism may be regarded as a “hip” thing to do. Some individuals may regard it as trendy to participate in the boycotting of certain items or the boycotting of others in a quest to obtain subcultural capital. Analyzing participation in political consumerism across multiple products helps differentiate those individuals who embrace political consumerism as a lifestyle versus those who may purchase an occasional product because it’s the “hip” thing to do.

Third, studying political consumerism helps better understand individual choice and political activism within consumer societies. In a consumer society such as the United States, consumption choices are the nexus between individuals and politics (Bennett 2004; Blumler and Kavanaugh 1999). Thus, studying the confluence of politics and consumption, political consumerism, provides insight into nuanced ways individuals express their support or disapproval of specific products through purchasing patterns. Political consumerism provides an opportunity to subvert the citizen-consumer dichotomy and instead redefine being a responsible citizen as being a good consumer (Schudson 1999).

Finally, political consumerism is distinctive from other forms of political participation because political consumerism has the potential for continuous, low commitment, and long-term involvement—political consumerism exemplifies a form of lifestyle politics (Newman and Bartels 2010). Forms of political participation such as voting, signing petitions, or contacting public officials, are often directed toward the achievement of one specific goal (i.e. candidate elected, bill passed), and once that achievement occurs, those previously mobilized tend to dissipate. This trend was exemplified in the loss of momentum and mobilization of Obama

campaign volunteers—after Obama was elected the goal was achieved and that mobilization and momentum dissolved. Political consumers, however, are distinctive from other forms of political action because their goals are continuous, as individuals have to make purchasing decisions on a routine basis.

Perhaps one of the reasons political consumerism, and consumerism in general, is relatively absent from the sociological literature is because consumption is not always seen as an area worthy of study. In *A Theory of Shopping*, Daniel Miller (1998) justifies the study of consumption as a means of understanding contemporary social relations. Increasingly, Miller argues, we understand our social world through the production and consumption of material goods. The purpose of consumption, “is not so much to buy the things people want, but to strive to be in a relationship with the subjects that want these things” (Miller 1998: 148). Thus, studying consumption helps us better understand our social world not only in terms of the products themselves, but how products mediate our relationships with others.

Studying political consumerism as a new form of social engagement provides an opportunity to study nuanced forms of political participation merging social movements and political participation literatures. Additionally, it provides an opportunity to study the interplays of social identities, consumption, and the organization of private choice (Holzer 2006). It is informative to understand how individuals who are non-experts and may not be a part of a formal organized social movement behave as intermediaries in the market (Webb 2007). Political consumerism rejects the notion of consumption as inherently “bad” and instead seeks everyday purchases as a means for mobilization and the expression of political agendas. Discussions around consumption are often polarizing, assuming binary opposites such as fair trade versus unfair trade, simplicity versus consumption, and ethical consumption versus unethical

consumption (Barnett et al. 2005). Consumerism is regarded as a “problem of growing proportions” (Amin and Thrift 2005:230).

However, without ‘ordinary’ consumption, there would be no possibility for ‘ethical’ consumption. In a sense, the existence of the market creates the possibility to use the market as a source of social change. To assume everyday consumption is unethical unless specifically stated otherwise alienates instead of recruits people. People may be less likely to engage in ethical consumption if they feel condemned or trapped in other areas of consumption. The success of ethical consumption is best realized when individuals realize their ability to enact change through consumption patterns but don’t feel entrapped by them (Barnett et al. 2005).

Finally, as a cultural sociologist it is important to study the dynamic nature of culture. I view culture as a key to understand broader sociological phenomenon and how people make meaning in everyday life (Berger and Luckmann 1967). If we are able to better understand how people resist, alter, and even subvert culture through purchases, we are able to better understand individuals as active agents of social change, even if that change comes in the form of shopping patterns.

Chapter 3 Methodology

This study used nationally representative data from the 2002 National Civic Engagement Survey (NCES) II to identify political consumers and to understand the rationale, political activities, and behavior of political consumers. The survey was designed to include a representative sample of United States households measuring civic and political opinions and rates of participation. In addition to demographic information, the dataset contained information about a variety of factors that may influence participation rates such as beliefs in altering business and political practices, strength of political party affiliation, and participation in specific measures of civic and political engagement.

Prior quantitative analyses of political consumers have positioned political consumerism as a mid-point between institutionalized (voting) and non-institutionalized (protest) forms of political participation (Newman and Bartels 2010). Since quantitative studies on United States political consumers are relatively limited, the goal of this study was to establish an overall measurement of political consumerism. Using survey data allowed me to identify political consumers and to understand the rationale for their action in a manner in which narrower studies on specific forms of niche markets of political consumerism cannot accomplish.

Data

The 2002 National Civic Engagement Survey (NCES) II is a publicly accessible dataset collected by The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) and funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts (www.civicyouth.org). The NCES II dataset is a national probability survey of 1,400 youth and adults in the United States examining various measures of civic and political engagement. The NCES data series (NCES I includes an oversample of young people) is one of a few publicly available data series questioning

respondents on political consumerism, and the only survey to specifically ask respondents about their rationale for engaging in political consumerism.

The NCES II data was collected from November 14-20, 2002, by a random digit dialing of households in the 48 continental United States (excluding Alaska and Hawaii). The random digit dialing method avoids “listing” bias sampling both listed and unlisted numbers. Each of the numbers used was selected proportionately to the county based on 2000 Census estimates. For each randomly selected number, the researchers attempted to contact the household at least seven times to complete the interview. In order to ensure the highest probability for response, the researchers called at various times of the day and different days of the week. For those households in which there was a refusal to participate or an incomplete interview, the household was contacted one additional time in an attempt to complete the interview (Zukin et al. 2006). Cellular telephone numbers were not included in the possible list of dialed numbers that limits the possible sample and may contribute to an age effect based on available respondents. In sum, approximately 1,400 responses comprise the NCES II survey data.

The NCES II survey was designed to assess the broad spectrum of civic and political behaviors of the American public. To date, the NCES data series are the only surveys quantitatively measuring the breadth of political consumer activities in the United States. Questions of particular interest for this study include those measuring overall levels of political participation along with participation in boycotting and buycotting. The advantage of using survey data for this study is that survey data helps identify the demographics of political consumers in the United States and to quantify the range and breadth of other forms of political participation. Because no holistic study of political consumers has yet been conducted in the United States, a quantitative analysis of the NCES II data provides a baseline understanding of

the characteristics of political consumers establishing a foundation for future research on United States political consumers.

Analytic Strategy

Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistical techniques including frequencies, analyses of variance, and crosstabs were used to examine the demographic characteristics of political consumers. Logistic regression models were used in a model-building process to examine the effect of demographic (age, race, gender), social (SES), and political factors (political affiliation) on two dependent variables – boycotting and buycotting. Through these analyses, this study examined how demographic, social, and political factors interacted to predict participation in political consumerism, boycotting and buycotting. Finally, this study examined whether political consumers were more or less likely than their counterparts to act alone or as a part of an organized campaign.

Dependent Variables.

There were two dependent variables of interest in this study. The first dependent variable was boycotting and the second dependent variable was buycotting. Each dependent variable represented a specific form of political consumerism and was measured independently. Boycotting and buycotting were measured separately because while related, boycotting and buycotting are theoretically distinctive behaviors. Boycotts have shown to be favored by activists groups who are more likely to engage in protest and target specific businesses whereas buycotts are usually multi-target (i.e. union-made or fair trade apparel across businesses) and attempt to reward specific labor practices over specific businesses (Friedman 1996). Thus, boycotts and buycotts may appeal to different types of consumers and cannot be assumed to be uniform (Neilson 2010). Therefore, I measured boycotting and buycotting separately while looking for

commonalities and differences between the two behaviors. All survey questions about boycotting or buycotting were included in the analysis and are listed below.

1. Participation in boycotting and buycotting includes information from survey question PP7G/H⁷: “Now I am going to read you a quick list of things people have done to express their views. For each one, please tell me whether or not you have done it—(G) NOT bought a good or service because of the conditions under which the product is made, or because you dislike the conduct of the company? (H) Bought a product or service because you like the social or political values of the company that produces or provides it.” N = 961

2. Boycotting includes information from survey questions BOY1: “Earlier you said that during the past 12 months, you had not bought something because of the conditions under which the product was made, or because you dislike the conduct of the company that produces it. How often do you choose not to buy a product for these reasons...would you say you do this every week, about once a month, a few times a year, or less often than that?” and BOY2: “Over the course of the past 12 months, how many different TYPES of goods and services have you not bought for these reasons?” N= 508

3. Buycotting includes information from survey questions BUY 1: “Earlier you said that during the past 12 months, you had bought something because of the conditions under which the product was made, or because you dislike the conduct of the company that produces it. How often do you choose to buy a product for these reasons...would you say you do this every week, about once a month, a few times a year, or less often than that?”

⁷ This survey question is difficult to measure as respondents may have routinized boycotting of a particular product or company and thus, fail to include that action in their responses.

and BUY2: “Over the course of the past 12 months, how many different TYPES of goods and services have you bought for these reasons?” N= 461

Independent Variables.

This analysis includes a number of independent variables. The coding of these variables along with the coding of the three dependent variables is included in Appendix A. The independent variables examined for their influence on the three dependent variables are listed below:

- Race/ethnicity was based on a constructed variable measuring the respondent’s race and ethnicity and includes two categories: White, and racial ethnic minorities N= 1,400 (Whites= 1,200; Racial ethnic minorities= 170; don’t know/refused=30)
- Gender was derived from self-reported data. N=1,400 (Males=651, Females=749)
- Income was derived from the midpoint of survey question D18: “So that we can group all answers, what is your total family income before taxes?” N=1,400 (Under \$20,000=213; \$20-\$40,000=338; \$40,000-\$65,000=307; \$65,000-\$100,000=221; Over \$100,000=119; don’t Know/Refused=202)
- Education was based on information from survey question EDUC: “What was the last grade or class that you completed in school?” N=1,398 (Some high school=111; High school graduate=442; Some college=370; College graduate=461; don’t know/refused=14)
- Age was based on information from survey question AGE: “What was your age on your last birthday?” N= 1,400 (18-24=114; 25-34=228; 35-44=289; 45-54=254; 55-64=193; 65+=279; don’t know/refused=43)

- Political affiliation was based on information from survey question D2: “In general, would you describe your political views as...(read list), very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal, or very liberal?” N= 1,400 (Conservative=525; Moderate=514; Liberal 260; don’t Know/Refused=101)

Data Limitations and Question Selection Criteria

Dependent Variable Limitations

While the NCES II data is the only publicly available and nationally representative sample of political consumers in the United States, the survey was limited in a number of ways. The first was an overall methodological problem in measuring participation in boycotting. It was difficult to discern and accurately measure how many times an individual did *not* purchase. Survey question PP7G asks respondents how many times they had “NOT bought a good or service because of the conditions under which the product is made, or because you dislike the conduct of the company?” Follow up questions BOY1 and BOY2 have similar problems in reporting the frequency of not purchasing. Respondents may not accurately remember, and therefore report, how many times they did not purchase a product or support a company. Furthermore, if individuals routinely do not purchase a particular product or shop at a certain company, not frequenting a particular business or purchasing a specific product may be so routinized that respondents do not consider their behavior boycotting.

A second limitation of the survey questions was the questions on the frequency of participation in boycotting and buycotting. Survey questions BOY1/BUY1 asked respondents of either boycotting or buycotting, “would you say you do this every week, about once a month, a few times a year, or less often than that?” The possible responses to this question are extremely vague categories in which individuals may differ significantly but were categorized as the same

response. If a respondent boycotts every day versus once a week, for instance, those responses were combined together. Additionally, while it is informative to know how frequently respondents participated in boycotting or boycotting, the survey did not measure the impact or monetary amount either spent or withheld. For example, an individual could intentionally purchase a high-cost item such as a car. However, in the survey, this was quantified as one instance of boycotting or boycotting. Conversely, respondents could choose daily or weekly to purchase specific items at the supermarket, such as fair trade coffee, increasing the frequency of reported participation, although the amount of money spent is significantly less.

Independent Variable Limitations and Selection Criteria

Race. The racial composition of the NCES II data, while a nationally representative sample, contained an over sample of whites and an under sample of Blacks and Hispanics. White respondents comprised 85.7 percent of the entire sample and racial ethnic minorities comprised 12.2 percent. In 2002, the actual racial composition of the United States was 69.1 percent white, 12.3 percent Black, 13.3 percent Hispanic, 4.3 percent Asian Pacific Islander and 1.0 percent American Indian (Demographic Research Unit 2004). Thus, although the NCES II was a nationally representative sample, the survey oversampled whites and under sampled racial and ethnic minorities. As a result of the oversample of whites, and subsequent under sample of other racial categories, I collapsed race into a dichotomous variable: white and racial ethnic minorities. I, however, recognize the inherent problematic nature of this methodological choice, measuring white as “normal” and therefore implying homogeneity, or “not-normal” within the category of racial ethnic minorities. I acknowledge there are significant differences between Blacks and Hispanics, and even differences within the broadly defined category Hispanic. However, recent literature suggests that present-day political consumerism is a predominately white form of

engagement. Thus, dichotomously comparing whites to racial ethnic minorities allows us to understand the extent to which recent political consumerism is primarily about whiteness.

Socioeconomic Status. Socioeconomic status was a proxy-measure taken by the midpoint of reported household income categories. The first difficulty was socioeconomic status was measured by overall household income which did not account for regional disparities in cost of living, number of members in the household, and if the respondent was the primary household earner (the survey measured respondents as young as age 18). I chose to collapse the overall income categories and take the mid-point of the categories in order to achieve as even a distribution as possible. The overall categories were collapsed from a broader range of reported household income and categorized into five categories: under \$20,000 (N=213); \$20,000-\$40,000 (N=338); \$40,000-\$65,000 (N=307); \$65,000-\$100,000 (N=221); Over \$100,000 (N=119). I chose to measure those under \$20,000 separately because in most instances, those households are most likely to fall below the poverty line. The second (\$20-40,000), third (\$40-65,000) and fourth (\$65-100,000) categories were created to achieve as even of distribution as possible across individuals considered to be middle class. Finally, those making over \$100,000 were measured separately because there is a wide range of possibilities and the likelihood that household incomes over \$100,000 are either upper-middle class or upper class. If boycotting and buycotting were, in part, determined by an individual's socioeconomic status, it's important to measure if socioeconomic status impacts participation.

Political Affiliation. Political affiliation was measured by respondent's answer to the question D2 which asked, "In general, would you describe your political views as..." Possible responses included very conservative (N=86), conservative (N=439), moderate (N=514), liberal (N=194), very liberal (N=66) and don't know/refused (N=101). I collapsed these categories into

four overall categories: conservative (N=525), moderate (N=514), liberal (N=260) and don't know/refused (N=101). I collapsed these categories in order to achieve a more even distribution of political affiliation and also to increase the statistical power that political affiliation may have on involvement. It is, however, noteworthy that this sample has a small number of self-reported liberals. This may be a result of an overall skewness of the sample or that while individuals are liberal in their attitudes and beliefs, they do not choose to identify as politically liberal. The skewness in measurement in political affiliation also has implications for the results of this study. If political consumerism is a liberal activity, and there were low numbers of self-reported liberals in this sample, we may find a lower rate of participation in this study than we would if there was a higher sample of liberals. I also chose to measure political affiliation based on self-reported identification rather than voting patterns. The survey also asked individuals if they identified as Republican, Democrat, or Independent. I chose to measure political affiliation instead of party affiliation because I do not equate the two as synonymous. For instance, some liberals may see the Democratic party as too conservative while some conservatives may see the Republican party as too liberal (hence, the rise of the Tea Party). Furthermore, individuals may not agree with all the politics of a particular party, and therefore, may be reticent to identify with a given party. For these reasons, I chose to measure self-reported political affiliation over specific political party affiliation.

Research Questions.

This study uses the NCES II data to identify political consumers, their frequency of consumption patterns and other political activities, as well as the motives behind their actions. Across all research questions, I will test for differences based upon race, sex, age, education

level, household income, and political affiliation. The specific research questions that will be examined are discussed in detail below.

RQ1: Who are boycotters and buycotters?

The first research question seeks to identify the demographic characteristics of those who boycott and buycott. As a result of the limited research on United States political consumers as a whole, an overall composite of who is most likely to be a political consumer in the United States is limited. In one of the only studies on United States political consumers, using the 2005 USCID data, Newman and Bartels (2010) found political consumers were more likely to be white, educated, young (28 and younger), possess a strong political party affiliation, but did not find any differences in participation based on income. While this study provided an overall baseline understanding of political consumers in the United States, Newman and Bartels did not address the range of political activities in addition to boycotting and buycotting, nor the reasoning behind the purchasing patterns. Their study, rather, aimed to position political consumerism as a form of political participation in the middle of the spectrum between protest and voting.

Aside from Newman and Bartels, the majority of previous studies on United States political consumers overwhelmingly address either a particular niche of political consumers (i.e. fair trade, anti-sweatshop activists) or the demographics of overall politically active individuals. However, the majority of the holistic (across products and businesses) research on political consumers is conducted in Europe, and thus, is limited in its generalizability to United States political consumers. This research fills a gap in the literature by identifying those individuals most likely to be political consumers in the United States.

In this study, I measured the demographics of political consumers through frequencies, descriptives, and crosstabs on the overall sample from the NCES II. Descriptive statistics were

the appropriate form of measurement because they describe numerical data and provide an overall summary of the available data, while frequency distributions describe the overall count of numerical data (Neuman 2003). I ran frequencies for demographics on the dependent variables of respondents' race, gender, level of education, household income, and political affiliation. These descriptives and frequencies provide an overall demographic analysis of the sample. In order to parse out the demographics of political consumers from the overall sample, I ran a second set of frequencies for respondents who answered they boycotted or buycotted in the past 12 months (answered "yes" to question PP7G or PP7H). Based upon the frequencies of those who answered yes to PP7G and PP7H I identified the characteristics of political consumers and compare them to the overall sample to assess if they are different than the overall characteristics of the sample.

Second, I conducted logistic regression to determine exactly which individuals were most likely to be political consumers. An advantage of using logistic regression is that it is used with categorical variables to determine dichotomous variable outcomes and is often used to predict group membership (Neuman 2003). For the purposes of this research, the group membership was participation in political consumerism, either boycotting or buycotting.

Because research on United States political consumers is limited, prediction based solely on political consumerism literature is somewhat restricted. Newman and Bartels (2010) study on political consumers found that increases in education, age (up to age 28), interest in politics, and strong party affiliation (regardless of party) all increased the probability of participation in political consumerism. Additional specific studies on specific forms of political consumerism, such as the fair trade movement and anti-sweatshop movement, suggest those niche political consumers are more likely to be white, middle-class, college-educated, and politically left-leaning (Chatzkidias et al. 2007; Featherstone 2007).

Combining the literature on who is most likely to be politically active in the United States along with the political consumerism literature from Europe, I expect political consumers would most likely be white, female, college-educated, middle-class, and liberal. I expect a higher percentage of political consumers to be women because shopping is a traditionally feminized activity, and women's provisioning in the household often includes the role of shopping. I also expect a higher percentage of whites to participate in political consumerism than the percentage of racial ethnic minorities who participate. That is, I believe college-educated whites are more likely to know about the ethics of certain products or companies as a result of both potential exposure or networking with these issues on college campuses and because of the strong effect of education on political participation from previous studies (Ferrer and Fraile 2006; Holzer 2006; Anderson et al. 2004). These individuals are also more likely to have the financial capital to make these choices and may even be more likely to live in areas where alternative products are offered for boycotting. Finally, I expect political consumers to be liberals because I believe these individuals may be more likely to believe there is a problem in the market, and therefore, are more likely to direct their purchases in an attempt to alter the market. In other words, liberals may be more likely to seek change via the market because they may be more likely to acknowledge a problem with the current organizational structure of the market, thus, contributing to an increased likelihood of participation to alter it.

RQ2: Do political consumers participate in other forms of political action?

This second research question addresses a fundamental question underlying political consumerism: are political consumers more likely to be politically active overall, thus political consumerism is another form of political action, or do political consumers solely direct their

efforts to changing the market, and therefore, are not active in political action targeting governmental change?

Using responses to the three survey questions below, I test whether political consumers are also active in other forms of political action and if so, what types of action they are most likely to engage in.

VOT1 Did you vote in the 2002 general election on November 5th, or did something prevent you from voting?

- 1-Voted
- 2-Did not vote
- 8-Don't know
- 9-Refused

PP6 In the past 12 months, did you work for or contribute money to a candidate, a political party, or any organization that supported candidates?

- 1-Yes
- 2-No
- 8-Don't know
- 9-Refused

PP7 Now I'm going to read you a quick list of things that some people have done to express their views. For each one I read, please just tell me whether you have ever done it or not. (For each yes probe,: And have you done this in the last 12 months, or not?)

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

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

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

D Taken part in a protest, march, or demonstration?

E Signed an e-mail petition? About a social or political issue

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

G NOT bought a good or service because of the conditions under which the product is made, or because you dislike the conduct of the company?

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

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

J Besides donating money, have you ever done anything else to help raise money for a charitable cause?

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

First, I ran descriptives on the responses to each of the following responses above, PP7 A-K. I then created a dummy variable of political consumerism by recoding G and H (1= yes to G or H, 0 = no to G or H). The minimum/maximum, mean and standard deviation for political activities are reported in Table 3. Using dummy variables and creating a scale (Chronbach's alpha= .731) of overall other measures of political action (everything excluding G and H), I ran separate frequencies and correlations for each response against boycotting and buycotting separately. I then coded the responses from VOT1 as a dummy variable (1=yes, 0=no) and combined those responses with those from PP7 to obtain a broader picture of participation in political activities. I also used PP6 as a measure of strength of political affiliation, if individuals contributed money in addition to participation or support of specific political candidates or parties. I then conducted separate logistic regressions to see if participation in boycotting or buycotting significantly predicted participation in other political activities. The results of boycotting are found in Table 7 and buycotting in Table 8.

The possible responses for answers to question PP7 have a broad scope, meaning individuals who may have taken part in a protest may vary from those who worked as a canvasser for a campaign or called into a radio or television program. Thus, while I expect to find political consumers are also politically active in other areas as well, I expect this participation to be unevenly distributed across activities. I expect to find that political consumers are most likely to sign e-mail and written petitions, participate in marches or protests, donate and help to raise money for a charitable cause, and will be less likely to call into a radio or television show, contact a newspaper or magazine, contact a public official and to work as a canvasser on a political campaign. As Newman and Bartels (2010) study on United States political consumers found, boycotters and buycotters have a higher level of discontent with existing political

arrangements than those who do not boycott and buycott. As a result, I don't believe boycotters and buycotters will likely contact a public official or work on a political campaign, as they don't believe these efforts will substantiate meaningful change. Therefore, I believe political consumers are more likely to participate in activities that either enact immediate social change or that challenge the existing political structure that political consumers are discontent with.

RQ3: Is there a difference between individuals who boycott and buycott?

This third research question further delineates the specific actions of political consumers, boycotting and buycotting. Based on the frequencies and descriptives generated from RQ2, I identify the overall measures of the likelihood of boycotting and buycotting. I expect to find a difference in frequencies between boycotting and buycotting and I expect that political consumers will be more likely to boycott than to buycott. It may be easier for consumers to not purchase a particular product or support a particular business, than it is to find an alternative business or product to purchase, increasing the likelihood individuals will boycott more frequently than they buycott.

As a result of the significant difference between the frequencies of boycotting and buycotting, I first conduct independent a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to measure the statistical significance of differences between those who boycott and buycott. Next, I conducted logistic regression to measure if individuals who boycott or buycott are more likely to participate in other forms of political action. That is, do boycotters engage in other forms of political action that are different from the political activities of buycotters? I independently regress boycotting (G) and buycotting (H) on other forms of political participation from survey question PP7 to determine whether a significant difference exists. Finally, I conduct logistic regression on the

demographics of boycotters and boycotters, to determine whether individuals who boycott have different characteristics than those who buycott.

RQ4: Why do people engage in political consumption?

This fourth research question helps examine the rationale behind political consumerism. This fourth question is both quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative portion of this question uses the survey questions BOY/BUYA and B below. These questions on boycotting and buycotting help explain the rationale and further articulate the motivation behind purchasing choices. Further, these survey questions aid in explaining consumer beliefs in the possibility of altering business practices, as well as how their potential belief that change is possible may impact participation.

BOY6/BUY6A In general, how much of an effect do you believe your buying decisions have on changing the behavior of businesses? A great deal, a fair amount, not very much, or none at all?

- 0 None at all
- 1 Not very much
- 2 A great deal
- 3 A fair amount
- System Missing- Don't know/refused

BOY6/BUY6B And in general, do you do this kind of thing mostly because you believe it will change the behavior of businesses, or mostly because you think it is a good thing to do?

- 1 It will change the behavior of business
- 2 It is a good thing to do
- System Missing- Don't know/refused

While prior research questions help quantify the likelihood of participation in political consumerism, this research question also contains a qualitative component. While this study cannot be considered mixed methods, this qualitative component provides additional information

that could not be ascertained from a strictly quantitative analysis (Crewswell and Plano-Clark 2007).

For respondents who answered yes to either BOY1/BOY 2 or BUY 2/BUY 2, half the sample were then asked a follow up question, BOY 3 and/or BUY 3

BOY/BUY3: “Thinking about the last time you did this, can you tell me a little bit about what you did...what you did (or did not for BOY 3) buy, and why?”

Responses to BOY/BUY 3 provided additional insight into not only the specific products individuals may choose to boycott or buycott, but also the rationale behind their choices. While the earlier survey questions provide a broad perspective for the rationale behind consumer choices, this open-ended question provides more in-depth information and specifics to understand the rationale of consumer choices.

Analysis of BOY/BUY 3 is conducted by dummy coding of the data. Initially, an open coding process is used to identify emergent themes from the data. Selective, and axial, coding followed as specific themes or categories were identified (Westbrook 1994). Emergent themes for boycotting include unfair labor conditions/worker’s rights; country of origin of product/company; company support of likeminded causes; personal reasons (i.e. religious) and refused/can’t remember. Emergent themes for buycotting include animal/environmental/food rights; country of origin of product/company; company support of likeminded causes; personal reasons (i.e. religious) and refused/can’t remember. For each theme, the cross-tabulations of the demographic traits of the respondents are provided.

RQ 5: Do individuals who boycott or buycott more often act alone or as a part of an organized campaign?

This final research question helps to position political consumerism within the spectrum of political activism and consumerism. Because shopping is often an individualized activity this

question helps position political consumerism within the spectrum of political activities. The following survey questions are used to help answer this final research question. If we are able to understand where individuals are most likely to obtain their information for making consumer based choices, this information may also be helpful to specific companies or activist organizations seeking the most effective means to disseminate information to consumers. Based upon the responses to these questions, I conducted logistic regression on whether individuals acted alone or as a part of an organized campaign testing each independent variable separately for statistical significance and if acting alone or as a part of a campaign significantly predicts participation.

BOY4/BUY 4 Thinking about the last time you did this, was this a part of an organized campaign to not buy something, or is it something you just decided to do on your own?

- 1 Organized campaign
- 2 On my own
- 3 BOTH (Vol)
- System Missing- Don't know/refused

BOY5/BUY 5 Where did you get the information that helped you make your decision to do it... from friends or family members, from the news media, from the Internet, from a group or organization, or somewhere else?

- 1 Friend or family member
- 2 News media
- 3 Internet/email
- 4 Group or organization
- 5 Somewhere else

Chapter 4

Results

In this chapter, I begin with an overall descriptive profile of survey respondents and then discuss the findings of each research question. While this study sought to identify and examine political consumers holistically, it was sometimes necessary to discuss the attributes and activities of boycotters and buycotters independently as distinctive acts of political consumerism. Frequencies, cross-tabulations, and descriptive statistics are employed to identify the characteristics of political consumers and logistic regressions are used to test hypotheses that those characteristics may determine participation in either boycotting or buycotting.

A Profile of Survey Respondents

The 2002 National Civic Engagement Survey II is a nationally representative sample comprising approximately 1,400 non-institutionalized individuals in the United States. Table 1 compares frequency distributions of the dependent and independent for the entire sample, for respondents who stated they boycotted in the past 12 months (boycotters), and for respondents who have buycotted within the past 12 months (buycotters). Table 2 presents the frequency of boycotting and number of products boycotted and table 3 presents the frequency of buycotting and number of products buycotted. Table 4 presents descriptive statistics for the same selected

variables for the entire sample and Table 5 presents descriptive statistics on a variety of specific political activities for the entire sample.

Table 1⁸ shows that the survey includes a slight oversample of women, with females constituting roughly 54 percent of the sample and males 46 percent. Whites constitute approximately 86 percent of the sample, racial ethnic minorities constitute 12 percent and 2 percent gave no answer for their race. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the sample is disproportionately white relative to the overall population in 2002. As reported in table 4, the median annual household income for respondents is approximately \$45,000 and the mean age of respondents is 48. Approximately 10 percent of the sample has less than a high school education, 27 percent are high school graduates, 30 percent have enrolled in college, and 33 percent completed college, graduate school or professional schooling. In terms of political affiliation, 38 percent of the sample identified as politically conservative, 37 percent as moderate, 19 percent as liberal, and 7 percent refused or did not identify their political views. Approximately 67 percent of boycotters and 78 percent of buycotters participated in these activities within the past 12 months. Reported engagement in these two forms of political consumerism is comparable, and even greater, than other forms of engagement. For example, in the past 12 months, 34 percent of the sample reported contacting a public official, 19 percent contacting a newspaper or magazine and 12 percent contacting a talk or news show to express their political opinions. Moreover, 15 percent of the sample participated in a protest, approximately 21 percent had signed a petition and 48 percent signed an email petition. Finally, 62 percent of the sample reported voting in the 2002 general election, 52 percent of the sample reported either raised or donated money for a

⁸ Specific percentages are rounded to the nearest unit the text. Approximate percentages and sample sizes can be found in the tables.

political candidate, political party, or organization that donates to political campaigns, and 12 percent reported canvassing for a particular candidate⁹.

As can be found in table 2, nearly 41 percent of boycotters report boycotting every week or once a month and 59 percent report boycotting less often or a few times a year. Forty percent of boycotters reported boycotting a little (for one or two specific products), 32 percent reported boycotting some (for three to ten products), 16 percent reported boycotting a lot (more than ten products), and 12 percent did not know or refused.

The cross-tabulations of boycotting in table 7 indicate that 56 percent of whites in the sample boycott and 48 percent of racial ethnic minorities in the sample boycott. In terms of sex, 54 percent of males in the sample boycott and 55 percent of females in the sample boycott. In terms of age, boycotters are fairly evenly distributed across age cohorts. Of those between the ages of 18-24, 46 percent report boycotting. For respondents between the ages of 25-34, 56 percent report boycotting compared with 59 percent between the ages of 35-44, 61 percent between the ages of 45-54, 60 percent between the ages of 55 and 64 and 43 percent of respondents older than 65 that boycott.

In terms of education, 30 percent of those with less than a high school degree boycott. Of those who are high school graduates, 40 percent boycott along with 60 percent who have some college or technical training, and 68 percent of individuals who are college, professional or graduate degree earners boycott. For respondents with household incomes under \$20,000, 37 percent report boycotting. Additionally, 52 percent of those with a median household income of \$30,000, 62 percent of those with median household incomes of \$52,500, 67 percent of those

⁹ The overall frequencies for participation in political activities are not reported in a separate table. The means of participation in political activities are found in table 5.

with median incomes of \$82,500 and 65 percent of those with incomes over \$100,000 report boycotting.

Finally, within the entire sample, 57 percent of conservatives, 56 percent of moderates, and 57 percent of liberals report boycotting. Of those who worked for or contributed money to a candidate, political campaign, or organization that supports a political candidate, 75 percent also boycotted while 25 percent of those who worked or donated money did not boycott. Of those who voted in the 2002 election, 60 percent report boycotting while 49 percent of those who boycott did not vote.

Boycotting is less common than boycotting. As can be seen in table 3, within the entire sample, 43 percent of respondents report boycotting at some point in their life and 78 percent report boycotting within the past 12 months. Of boycotters, 44 percent indicated boycotting every week or once a month and 56 percent boycott less often or a few times a year. In terms of the breadth of boycotting, 35 percent of boycotters report only boycotting a little (for one or two specific products), 34 percent some (for three to ten products), 34 percent a lot (more than ten products), and 12 percent did not know or refused.

The cross-tabulations of boycotting in table 8 indicate 42 percent of whites in the sample and 46 percent of racial and ethnic minorities report boycotting. Within the entire sample, 40 percent of men and 45 percent of women report boycotting. With respect to age, of those 18-24, 43 percent boycott. Additionally, for those ages 25-34, 48 percent report boycotting. Forty seven percent of those 35-44, 46 percent of those 45-54, 43 percent and 30 percent of those 65 and older boycott. Twenty three percent of respondents with less than a high school education, 34 percent of high school graduates, 48 percent with some college or technical training, and 50 percent of those with a college, professional, or graduate degree reported boycotting. With

respect to income, 32 percent of individuals with household incomes less than \$20,000 boycott. Further, 40 percent of households with a median income of \$30,000, 51 percent of households with a median income of \$52,500, 51 percent of households with a median income of \$82,500, and 51 percent of respondents with household incomes over \$100,000 report boycotting.

Finally, 40 percent of conservatives, 46 percent of moderates, and 51 percent of liberals boycott. Additionally, 59 percent of individuals who worked for or contributed money to a political candidate or political campaign also boycotted while 41 percent of those who raised or donated money did not boycott. Of those who voted in the 2002 general election, 46 percent also reported boycotting.

Research Question 1: Who are boycotters and buycotters?

In this section, the attributes of political consumers (boycotters and buycotters) are measured and discussed independently of each other. This section provides details of characteristics of boycotters and buycotters including gender, race, education, age, income, and measures of political affiliation. Table 7 provides the cross-tabulations for boycotters and table 8 provides the cross-tabulations for buycotters.

Boycotters

The cross-tabulations (table 7) indicate significant relationships between the attributes of individuals and participation in boycotting. For respondents in this sample, race, age, income, education, and voting in the 2002 election are all significantly related to participation in boycotting. Raising or donating money for a political candidate or campaign is significantly negatively associated with boycotting (in other words, individuals who raise or donate money are significantly less likely to boycott than individuals who do not raise or donate money). The

cross-tabulations indicate no significant relationship between the sex or political affiliation of the respondent and boycotting.

More specifically, the cross-tabulations indicate little or no relationship between race and boycotting and a weak¹⁰ relationship between age and boycotting. The relationship between income, education and boycotting is moderately strong. Strength of political affiliation, measured by donating or raising money for a political candidate or campaign indicates a weak negative relationship with participation in boycotting. Finally, voting in the 2002 election is significant, but not strongly associated with boycotting.

In addition to the cross-tabulations that show us who are most likely within the sample to boycott, I also assessed the likelihood that certain demographic characteristics could predict participation in boycotting. I included each independent variable in a binary logistic regression model to determine the likelihood of participation. The regression model can be found in table 12. When comparing the cross-tabulations to the regression models, some of the significant bivariate relationships are no longer significant. It is worth noting that further analyses were conducted to test for multicollinearity between education and income, as this may bias results. However, the relationship between income and education were not statistically significant (Pearson's $R=.386$, Tolerance=.489, VIF=1.178), and as a result, both independent variables were left in the models. When controlling for other variables in the model, only income, education, and strength of political affiliation significantly predict boycotting. With every categorical increase in income, respondents are 1.15 times more likely to boycott and with every categorical increase in education, individuals are 1.50 times more likely to boycott. Respondents who donate or raise money for political campaigns are almost half as likely to boycott than those

¹⁰ Descriptions of strength or weakness of any given relationship are based on Cramer's V and Phi statistics shown in tables.

who do not donate or raise money for political campaigns. In the regression model, race, sex, age and political affiliation do not significantly predict participation.

Buycotters

The cross-tabulations (table 8) indicate significant relationships for certain demographics and attributes of buycotters. For respondents in this sample, age, income, education and political affiliation are all significantly related to participation in buycotting. Raising or donating money to a political campaign or a political party is significantly negatively related to buycotting. The cross-tabulations indicate no significant relationship between race, sex, and voting in the 2002 general election and buycotting.

The cross-tabulations indicate a weak relationship between the age of the respondent and buycotting. The relationship between the respondents' income and education are also weakly related to buycotting. The political affiliation of the respondent shows little or no association with buycotting and donating or raising money to a political campaign indicates a weak negative relationship with buycotting (in other words, respondents who donate or raise money are significantly less likely to buycott, although the strength of the relationship is weak).

In addition to the cross-tabulations of the relationship between individual demographics and participation in buycotting, I conducted binary logistic regression (found in table 12) to determine the likelihood that those demographics would predict participation. As with boycotting, neither race nor gender significantly predict participation in buycotting. Additional characteristics that are related in the cross-tabulations are still related, but the strength of the relationship is reduced in the regression model.

For example, the relationship between level of education and buycotting is highly significant in the cross-tabulations but the strength of significance is reduced in the regression

model. For every categorical increase in education, respondents are 1.13 times more likely to boycott. Additionally, in the cross-tabulations, age is strongly associated with boycotting, but in the regression model, the effect for age is reduced. For each categorical increase in age respondents are 0.91 times less likely to boycott. Political affiliation is significantly related to boycotting, and as individuals become more liberal (i.e. across three categories from conservative to liberal), they are 1.23 times more likely to boycott. Finally, donating or raising money to a political campaign or political party remains highly significant, as individuals who donate or raise money are half as likely to boycott than individuals who do not raise or donate money for a political campaign.

Research Question 2: Do political consumers engage in other forms of political action?

In order to assess whether political consumers engage in other forms of political participation, I examined boycotting and buycotting separately with all other forms of political participation. In the first model, I regressed participation in several kinds of political activities on boycotting and buycotting in order to determine if a significant relationship exists between boycotting or buycotting and participation in political activities. In the second model, I added demographic characteristics to each regression model to then determine whether or not the traits of the respondents had an effect on the overall model. Table 9 includes the two logistic regression models for boycotting and table 10 includes the two logistic regression models for buycotting.

Boycotting

Boycotting is significantly related to engagement in other political activities. In the first model, which includes all forms of political participation, respondents who had contacted a public official, participated in a protest, signed an email petition, signed a written petition,

walked or biked for charity, and raised or donated money to a political campaign, party, or organization are significantly more likely to have boycotted than those who did not participate in those activities. The first model (found in table 9) indicates that respondents who contact a public official have 1.70 times higher odds of boycotting than those who do not contact public officials. Individuals who protest have 2.17 times higher odds of boycotting than those that do not protest. For those who sign petitions, those who sign email petitions have 2.24 times higher odds of boycotting and those who sign written petitions have 2.84 times higher odds of boycotting than those who do not sign petitions. Respondents who walk or bike for charity have 1.43 times higher odds of boycotting than those who do not walk or bike for charity. Finally, individuals who raise or donate money to political candidates, campaigns or organizations have 1.70 times higher odds of boycotting than those who do not donate or raise money.

Political activities including contacting a newspaper or a magazine to express political views, contacting a radio show to express political views and canvassing for a political candidate are not significantly related to boycotting. The Cox and Snell pseudo R-squared indicates that roughly 21.6 percent of the variation of boycotting was explained by the model which included participation rates of contacting a public official, participating in protest, signing email and written petitions, donating or raising money for political campaigns or political parties, contacting a newspaper or magazine, contacting a radio show, and walking or biking for charity. The Nagelkerke pseudo R-squared shows us that 29.0 percent of the variation of boycotting was explained by the previously mentioned independent variables. The pseudo R-squares tells us that the variables in the model are strongly associated, meaning that individuals who participate in those political activities that are significant above are also more likely to boycott.

In the second model, which included all forms of political participation and the demographic characteristics of respondents, respondents who had contacted public officials, contacted talk show or radio shows to express political views, participated in protest, signed email and written petitions, walked or biked for charity, and raised or donated money to a political candidate or campaign were more likely to boycott than those who had not participated in those activities. Additionally, in the second model, the only additional independent variable significantly predicting boycotting in relation to other political activities was education. For every unit increase in education, respondents have 1.22 higher odds of boycotting than those with the proceeding level of education. Race, class and gender reduced the strength of the relationship between contacting a public official and signing email and written petitions. Adding race, class, and gender to the second boycotting model weakens the model meaning that explanations of participation are lower than if the variables were not included in the model. However, the addition of race, class, and gender to the model strengthened the relationship between boycotting and protesting meaning that the addition of these variables to the model helps explain a higher rate of participation than if these variables were excluded. In the second model, racial ethnic minorities are 0.84 times less likely to boycott than whites and women are 0.99 times less likely to boycott than men. Every unit increase in income is associated with 1.04 higher odds of boycotting, although these racial, gender and income differences were not significant.

Buycotting

The two regression models for buycotting revealed that buycotters participate in other political activities, although fewer additional political activities than boycotters. The regression models for buycotting are found in table 10. In the first model, respondents who contacted a

public official, signed email and written petitions, walked or biked for charity, and donated or raised money for political candidates or political organizations were more likely to boycott than those who did not participate in those activities. The first model indicates that individuals who contacted a public official to express political views have 1.50 times higher odds of boycotting than those who did not contact a public official. Additionally, respondents who signed email petitions have 1.71 times higher odds of boycotting and those who signed written petitions have 2.30 times higher odds of boycotting than those who do not sign petitions. Individuals who either walked or biked for charity have 1.87 times higher odds of boycotting than those who have not walked or biked for charity. Individuals who donated or raised money for a political campaign or party have 1.36 times higher odds of boycotting than those who did not donate or raise money.

In the second model, which included all political participation and the demographic characteristics of the respondents, those who contacted a public official, protested, signed written or email petitions, and who walked or biked for charity were more likely to boycott than individuals who did not participate in those activities. Additionally, in the second model age, and education were significantly related to participation in boycotting. For every one unit increase in age, respondents are 0.85 times less likely to boycott than those in the previous age cohort. In other words, as individuals age they are less likely to boycott. For education, individuals with lower levels of education are 0.90 times less likely to boycott than those with higher levels of education. As an individual's education increases, so does the likelihood they will boycott. In the second regression model for boycotting, participation in political activities accounts for the variance in the first model that is attributed to education and income.

In the second model, the Cox and Snell pseudo R-squared indicates that roughly 19 percent of the variation of boycotting was explained by the model which included participation

rates of contacting a public official, participating in protest, signing email and written petitions, raising campaign funds, boycotting, contacting a newspaper or magazine, contacting a radio show, and walking or biking for charity. The Nagelkerke pseudo R-squared shows us that 25 percent of the variation of boycotting was explained by the previously mentioned independent variables, meaning that individuals who participate in the aforementioned political activities are also significantly more likely to boycott than those who do not participate. The pseudo R-squares indicate that we can assume the variables included in each of the models explains roughly 19 and 25 percent of the factors contributing to boycotting, respectively.

Research Question 3: Is there a difference between individuals who boycott and buycott?

In order to test if there are common or differing attributes amongst boycotters and buycotters, I first conducted a one-way ANOVA between boycotting and buycotters to assess whether significant differences exist between the characteristics of boycotters and buycotters. I then conducted separate binary logistic regressions for participation in boycotting and buycotters. In each model, boycotting or buycotters are the dependent variables and the independent variables included the respondent's race, sex, age, income, education, political affiliation and the strength of their political affiliation. The regression models indicate some significant differences between boycotters and buycotters, as discussed below. The purpose of these models is to test what demographic characteristics predict the likelihood that individuals will either boycott or buycott. The results of the one-way ANOVA are found in table 11 and the regression models for boycotting and buycotters are found in table 12.

As can be seen in the first model of boycotting in table 12, controlling for race, sex, and age, income and education significantly predict participation in boycotting. An individual's strength of political affiliation significantly negatively affects participation in boycotting.

Specifically, with every unit increase in income, individuals have 1.15 times higher odds of boycotting than individuals in the previous income bracket. For every categorical increase in education, individuals have 1.50 times higher odds of boycotting than individuals in the previous educational cohort. Finally, raising or donating money to a political campaign or political candidate significantly decreases the odds by .49 of participating in boycotting.

In the first model, race, sex, age, and political affiliation do not significantly predict boycotting. In other words, we cannot say based on race, gender, age or political affiliation that an individual has an increased likelihood of participation in boycotting than individuals of different races, genders, age, or political affiliations. In this regard, boycotting appears to be influenced by social class (income and education) more than any other variable.

The Cox and Snell pseudo R-squared is relatively low, with race, sex, age, income, education, political affiliation and donations to political campaigns accounting for only 8 percent of the variation in the model. The Nagelkere pseudo R-squared, including all the aforementioned independent variables, accounts for 11 percent of variation in boycotting. The pseudo-R squared indicates that only 8 percent and 11 percent of participation in boycotting is explained by the variables in the model. Thus, while this model shows that income and education predict participation in boycotting, we should be cautious in our conclusions regarding how much influence education and income factor into overall participation in boycotting.

Boycotters share a commonality with boycotters of income and education as significant predictors of participation. For boycotters, every categorical increase in income is associated with 1.13 times higher odds of boycotting and for every categorical increase in education, individuals have 1.19 times higher odds of boycotting. Donating or raising money for a political campaign, party, or organization decreases the odds by 0.51 that individuals will participate in

boycotting. Political affiliation is significantly related to participation for boycotting although it was not a significant predictor for boycotting. As individuals increase in liberalness, their odds of boycotting increase 1.23 times. Additionally, boycotting is also significantly related to age, and for every age cohort increase, individuals are 0.91 times less likely to boycott than those in the previous cohort.

For boycotting, the Cox and Snell pseudo R-squared shows that race, sex, age, income, education, political affiliation and strength of affiliation only explain 5 percent of the variation of boycotting. The Nagelkerke pseudo R-squared is slightly higher with the independent variables predicting 6 percent of the variation in boycotting. Again, the lower pseudo R-squares mean that the demographic characteristics in the model only explain roughly 5 to 6 percent of the variables for why individuals boycott. In other words, variables outside of a respondent's demographic characteristics explain rates of participation.

Overall, boycotters and boycotters share the commonality of education and income significantly predicting participation, while the likelihood of participation in either boycotting or boycotting decreases if individuals donate or raise money for a political candidate or political party. The regression models found in table 10 also indicate that the likelihood of participation in boycotting increases as individuals become more liberal, and decreases as individuals age. In terms of race, racial ethnic minorities have 1.36 times higher odds of boycotting than whites and women have 1.26 times higher odds of boycotting than men. However, in both models, neither race nor gender are significant.

Research Question 4: Why do individuals engage in political consumption?

Understanding why individuals engage in political consumption helps explain why certain individuals may participate in comparison with others that do not participate. To address

this research question, descriptive statistics are used to examine the beliefs consumers have on the likelihood of their purchases changing business practices. The cross-tabulations for rationales of boycotters and buycotters are found in table 13 and table 14 provides the cross-tabulations for respondents' beliefs that their purchases can influence business behavior. Tables 15 and 16 provide the recoded open-ended responses for half of boycotters and buycotters regarding their rationale behind their consumer choices.

As can be seen in table 14, the majority of individuals do not believe their purchases greatly impact business practices. Of boycotters, 19 percent do not believe their purchases will have any impact on business practices, 42 percent believe their purchases will not have much of an impact, 27 percent believe their purchases will have a fair amount of impact, and 12 percent believe their purchases will have a great deal of impact. The relationship between an individuals' beliefs of their purchasing impacting business practices is not significantly related to participation. In other words, the lack of belief of boycotters in altering participation does not deter participation.

Amongst buycotters, 17 percent believe their purchases will not have any impact on business practices, 43 percent believe their purchases will not have much of an impact, 28 percent believe their purchases will have a fair amount of impact, and 13 percent believe their purchases will have a great deal of impact. The cross-tabulations indicate a significant but weak relationship between an individual's belief in influencing business behavior and their participation in boycotting.

Table 14 also provides additional statistics of respondents' belief in changing business practices by demographic characteristics. It is noteworthy that within each category of the independent variables, no significant differences exist for belief of changing business practices.

The low rates of respondents' beliefs in altering business practices may also be related to their rationale for making specific purchases. Table 13 provides the cross-tabulations for rationales for half the sample of boycotters and buycotters. When respondents were asked why they boycott or buycott, 80 percent of the one-half of political consumers surveyed indicate they participate because they think it is a good thing to do and 20 percent believe their purchases change the behavior of the business.

As Table 13 illustrates, there is no significant difference between boycotters and buycotters who participate in an attempt to change business practices compared with those who participate because they believe it is a good thing to do.

Finally, the NCES II included one open-ended question that was asked of one-half of those who indicated they had boycotted or buycotted in the past 12 months. Respondents were asked if they could share a bit more about the last time they remember boycotting or buycotting. I thematically coded the open-ended questions for boycotters and buycotters separately. Each respondent was thematically coded only once and the rationales are coded as mutually exclusive categories. The cross-tabulations for the reasons of boycotters' participation are found in Table 15 and the reasons for buycotters' participation are found in Table 16.

Boycotting

For boycotters, the emergent rationales for participation include country of origin of product or company, worker's rights, differing political allegiances, personal or religious reasons, and don't know or refused. Over one-fifth of boycotters reported doing so as a result of the country of origin of the product or company. The most frequently cited responses included not wanting to purchase something made in China or not purchasing a product because it was not made in the United States, once again highlighting the overlap between boycotting and

boycotting. Interestingly, since the survey was conducted in 2002, there were numerous references to boycotting particular countries also as a result of September 11, 2001, namely not wanting to purchase products made in Arab countries or the boycotting of oil. Responses were broad in scope including “well, there are certain countries I just don’t buy products from” to more narrowly defined, “a Kuwait-made shirt because of the political situation.”

The second category for respondents boycotting was due to a history of worker’s rights abuses or sweatshop labor. Fourteen and one-half percent of boycotters reported the last time they boycotted was because of labor abuses. Although specifics were not always given respondents would say they did not purchase a product because, “clothes were made in adverse conditions overseas by underage workers” to a more specific reference to boycotting “Nike shoes (that) are made in sweatshops and I don’t want to support them.”

The third possible explanation given for boycotting included having a different political affiliation from the particular company or not being in support of other causes that company supports, which only roughly 6 percent of boycotters reported doing. However, responses for this particular question were often polarizing including not supporting “telephone long distance companies because they support gay rights” or boycotting “Domino’s pizza because the owner gives a lot of money to gay rights” or boycotting “Pepsi because they sponsor the NAACP and homos.”

The fourth category for boycotting included religious or personal reasons, which 13 boycotters cited as their rationale. Respondents indicated boycotting because the “company advertised un-Christian values” or boycotting “Sunny Delight because I heard the owner worships the Devil.”

The final category of boycotters was do not know or refused to answer. Among boycotters, 10 percent did not remember or refused to answer. This may be due, in part, to the general infrequency of boycotting for some individuals so remembering the last time is difficult. However, one respondent explicitly refused to answer or said, “I do not want to go there-but it has something to do with 9/11.”

A more detailed cross-tabular analysis found in Table 15 shows the within category percentages of each theme and demographic characteristics. It is worth noting that due to the low sample sizes in each category, generalizability is limited. For instance, it is interesting that the percentage of 31 percent of the females surveyed reported boycotting for labor rights violations as opposed to only 14 percent of the males surveyed. While an emergent theme, it is worth noting that in general, and across demographic characteristics, differing political affiliations between the consumer and the company did not contribute to a consumer boycott. Across levels of income, individuals did not significantly differ on boycotting due to the country of origin. Approximately 46 percent of individuals surveyed with household incomes under \$20,000 and 34 percent of individuals surveyed with household incomes over \$100,000 boycotted due to country of origin.

Boycotting

For boycotters, several related emergent themes arose including country of origin, animal/environmental/food rights, support of likeminded causes, personal or religious reasons, and don't know or refused. Of boycotters, 11 percent report intentionally purchasing a product due to the country of origin or because they want to support the company. Again, responses vary from one respondent indicating, “I bought Phat Pharm pants because it was an African-American made product” to another responding, “guns, because it was American made.” Eight percent of

buycotters intentionally purchased products for food, animal, or environmental rights. The majority of respondents in this category cite purchasing organic or local products or products not tested on animals. For instance, “every time I shop at a health food store and I support organic every time” to purchasing “organic milk because it is better for people and cows and it supports dairy farmers.”

Just over 12 percent of respondents indicate purchasing an item because the company supported a like-minded cause or some charity they also support. Examples include Yoplait yogurt tops for breast cancer research and Duncan Hines cake boxes for education. Respondents also bought products they may not routinely purchase, such as a paper from the homeless or Girl Scout cookies because they wanted to support those efforts. One respondent indicated, “I choose a company for goods that has been active in supporting things I agree with.” Companies that may traditionally be associated with boycotting, such as Starbucks¹¹, were also mentioned “because they provide literacy programs.”

Agreement with personal or religious beliefs accounted for 11 percent of buycotters last purchase. For example, one respondent indicated, “I buy things from Christian organizations because they support my beliefs.” Finally, 18 percent of buycotters cannot recall the reason they did so the last time or refused to answer.

Table 16 provides a more detailed cross-tabular analysis of the rationale of buycotters with demographic characteristics. Similar to boycotting, many responses were fairly evenly distributed across categories. For example, regardless of political affiliation, respondents are about equally as likely to purchase a product or support a company if that company supports like-minded causes (24 percent of conservatives, 25 percent of moderates, and 24 percent of

¹¹ Starbucks is a common site of boycotting by individuals who choose to support local businesses and by those who object to the proliferation of Starbucks around the world.

liberals). Additionally, 16 percent of women surveyed report boycotting for personal or religious reasons compared with 26 percent of men.

In sum, the percentage of boycotters who do not purchase an item or support a company due to the country of origin is twice the percentage of boycotters who purchase products due to country of origin. Violation of worker's rights also contributes to boycotting with 15 percent of respondents indicating that as the source of their last boycott. Political affiliations have differing effects for boycotting and boycotting. Boycotters are twice as likely to purchase a product or support a company if they also support like-minded causes than a boycotter is to abstain from purchasing due to differing political opinions. Surprisingly, personal and religious beliefs largely impact both boycotting and boycotting decisions fairly evenly. Finally, it's worthy to note that the high rate of don't know/refused is likely due to the relative infrequency of boycotting and boycotting for many respondents.

Research Question 5: Do individuals who boycott or boycott more often act alone or as a part of an organized campaign?

In order to determine how boycotters and boycotters shop, respondents were asked if the last time they boycotted or boycotted they did so alone or as a part of an organized campaign. Respondents were then also asked where they got their information that helped them make their decision. Table 17 provides the cross-tabulations for boycotting and table 18 provides the cross-tabulations for boycotting with the style of participation. The cross-tabulations for the information sources of boycotters can be found in table 19 and in table 20 for boycotters.

Boycotters

Boycotters are almost twice as likely to act alone than as a part of an organized campaign. Of boycotters, 63 percent indicated the last time they boycotted they did so alone and

37 percent boycotted as a part of an organized campaign. The mode of style of boycotters is highly significant and is strongly related with participation. Thus, boycotters are significantly more likely to act alone than as a part of an organized campaign and acting alone is strongly related to boycotting.

As can be seen in table 17, the only other statistically significant characteristic associated with boycotting style of participation is age. However, the strength of the relationship between the age of the respondent and boycotting style is weak. Consistent with the overall cross-tabulations, each age cohort is significantly more likely to act alone than as a part of an organized campaign. As the additional demographic characteristics illustrate, respondents are more likely to act alone than as a part of an organized campaign, while these differences are not significant.

Overall, of respondents who boycott, 38 percent reported receiving that information from news media, 15 percent from a friend or a family member, 9 percent from a group or an organization, 7 percent from the internet or email, 25 percent from somewhere else (not specified), 4 percent from more than one of the above sources and 3 percent did not remember or refused.

In table 19 the specific demographic breakdowns for information sources of boycotters is found. It is worth mentioning, that of the boycotters surveyed with household incomes over \$100,000, 55 percent of those respondents indicated their information source was the news media. Perhaps not surprising, but the percentage of boycotters surveyed in younger age cohorts are more likely to cite the Internet or email as their source of information compared with older cohorts. Of 18-24 year old boycotters surveyed, 18 percent cited the Internet or email in comparison with 4 percent of boycotters over the age of 65.

Buycotters

Similar to boycotters, buycotters are also significantly more likely to act alone than as a part of an organized campaign. However, the percentage of buycotters that reported acting alone is greater than the percentage of boycotters that act alone. Within each demographic variable, buycotters more frequently act alone, although when each variable is measured independent of the overall model, there is no statistical difference within each variable.

It is interesting to note that as respondents' level of education increases, they are more apt to report buycotting as a part of an organized campaign than alone. For example, of respondents with less than a high school education, none reported buycotting as a part of an organized campaign. However, for respondents with college, graduate, or professional training, 7 percent of those surveyed indicated participation in an organized campaign. Although not statistically significant, it is also worth citing that only 3 percent of liberal respondents, compared to 7 percent of conservative respondents, indicated they buycotted as a part of an organized campaign.

Information sources influencing purchasing decisions are fairly similar between boycotters and buycotters. 35 percent of buycotters cited the news media, 22 percent a friend or family member, 11 percent from a group or organization, 6 percent from the internet or email, 21 percent from another unspecified source, 3 percent from more than one of the aforementioned sources, and 2 percent did not remember or refused.

Table 20, showing the cross-tabulations for information sources of buycotters, offers a more detailed analysis of information sources compared with the demographics of buycotters. The cross-tabulations indicate very little difference in information sources based upon the respondent's race. Whites who buycott, and racial ethnic minorities who buycott, report almost

equal distributions across categories of information sources. Similar to boycotters, buycotters who come from households earning over \$100,000 most commonly cite the news media (45 percent) as their information source.

Overall, while measured separately, a lot of similarities exist between the modes and information styles of boycotters and buycotters. First, boycotters and buycotters act alone at almost twice the rate they act as a part of an organized campaign. Additionally, for both boycotters and buycotters, the news media is the most commonly cited source of information guiding their last purchasing decision. Respondents are approximately half as likely to receive information from a friend or family member than they are from the news media. Groups or organizations play a minor role in actually influencing the sources of purchasing decisions. However, a large discrepancy in purchasing rationale exists for boycotters and buycotters with another unspecified source that accounts for almost one-quarter of information sources guiding purchasing decisions. As a result of this lack of information, we are unable to understand almost one-quarter of the rationales behind boycotting and buycotting.

Table 1. Frequency Distributions of Dependent and Independent Variables for Entire Sample Compared to Boycotters Only and Buycotters Only¹²

| | <u>Entire Sample</u> | <u>Boycotters</u> | <u>Buycotters</u> |
|----------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <u>Race</u> | | | |
| White | 85.7% (N=1200) | 84.8% (N=612) | 81.5% (N=468) |
| Racial Ethnic Minority | 12.2% (N=170) | 15.2% (N=110) | 18.5% (N=106) |
| Don't Know/Refused | 2.1% (N=30) | | |
| Total | 100.0% (N=1400) | 100.0% (N=722) | 100.0% (N=574) |
| <u>Sex</u> | | | |
| Male | 46.5% (N=651) | 46.5% (N=344) | 43.9% (N=257) |
| Female | 53.5% (N=749) | 53.5% (N=395) | 56.1% (N=329) |
| Total | 100.0% (N=1400) | 100.0% (N=739) | 100.0% (N=586) |
| <u>Age</u> | | | |
| 18-24 | 8.1% (N=114) | 7.2% (N=52) | 8.6% (N=49) |
| 25-34 | 16.3% (N=228) | 17.3% (N=124) | 19.2% (N=109) |
| 35-44 | 20.6% (N=289) | 23.3% (N=167) | 21.2% (N=283) |
| 45-54 | 18.1% (N=254) | 21.0% (N=151) | 20.2% (N=115) |
| 55-64 | 13.8% (N=193) | 15.3% (N=110) | 14.4% (N=82) |
| 65+ | 19.9% (N=279) | 15.9% (N=114) | 14.1% (N=80) |
| Don't Know/Refused | 3.1% (N=43) | | |
| Total | 100.0% (N=1400) | 100.0% (N=718) | 100.0% (N=568) |
| <u>Income¹³</u> | | | |
| Less than \$20,000 | 15.2% (N=213) | 11.5% (N=75) | 13.1% (N=68) |
| \$20,000-\$39,999 | 24.1% (N=338) | 26.2% (N=171) | 25.0% (N=130) |
| \$40,000-\$64,999 | 22.0% (N=307) | 28.5% (N=186) | 29.4% (N=153) |
| \$65,000-\$99,999 | 15.7% (N=221) | 22.2% (N=145) | 21.3% (N=111) |
| \$100,000 or more | 8.5% (N=119) | 11.6% (N=76) | 11.3% (N=59) |
| Don't Know/Refused | 14.4% (N=202) | | |
| Total | 1400 | 653 | 581 |

¹² The statistics for non-boycotters and non-buycotters are not shown in this table. Therefore, this table should not be interpreted as cross-tabulations.

¹³ Income was recoded at the mid-point of each category, with the exclusion of households under \$20,000 and over \$100,000. See Chapter 3 for details for the specific recoding of income.

| | <u>Entire Sample</u> | <u>Boycotters</u> | <u>Buycotters</u> |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <u>Education</u> | | | |
| College and beyond | 33.3% (N=461) | 42.2% (N=310) | 38.6% (N=224) |
| Some college/Tech | 26.7% (N=370) | 33.5% (N=246) | 35.1% (N=204) |
| High school | 31.9% (N=442) | 20.1% (N=142) | 22.0% (N=128) |
| Less than High School | 8.0% (N=111) | 4.4% (N=32) | 4.3% (N=25) |
| Don't Know/Refused | 1.1% (N=14) | | |
| Total | 100.0% (N=1398) | 100.0% (N=734) | 100.0% (N=581) |

| | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <u>Political Affiliation</u> | | | |
| Conservative | 37.5% (N=525) | 40.7% (N=287) | 36.0% (N=205) |
| Moderate | 36.7% (N=514) | 39.2% (N=277) | 40.9% (N=233) |
| Liberal | 18.6% (N=260) | 20.1% (N=142) | 23.1% (N=131) |
| Don't Know/Refused | 7.2% (N=101) | | |
| Total | 100.0% (N=1400) | 100.0% (N=706) | 100.0% (N=569) |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <u>Strength of Affiliation</u> | | | |
| Did not participate | 48.1% (N=668) | 79.8% (N=589) | 80.2% (N=469) |
| Participated | 51.9% (N=722) | 20.2% (N=149) | 19.8% (N=116) |
| Total | 100.0% (N=1390) | 100.0% (N=738) | 100.0% (N=585) |

| | |
|---|-------------|
| <u>Boycotting within past 12 months</u> | |
| Yes, I boycotted in the past 12 months | 508 (67.2%) |
| Yes, but not in the past 12 months | 231 (30.6%) |
| Yes, but not sure if in past 12 months | 17 (2.2%) |
| Never boycotted | 614 (95.3%) |
| Don't Know/Refused | 30 (4.7%) |
| Total | 1400 |

| | |
|---|-------------|
| <u>Buycotting within past 12 months</u> | |
| Yes, I buycotted in the past 12 months | 461 (77.6%) |
| Yes, but not in the past 12 months | 125 (21.1%) |
| Yes, but not sure if in past 12 months | 8 (1.3%) |
| Never boycotted | 788 (97.8%) |
| Don't Know/Refused | 18 (2.2%) |
| Total | 1400 |

Table 2. Frequency of Boycotting and Number of Products Boycotted by Boycotters

Boycotting

| | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Did not participate | 661 (46.0%) |
| Participated | 739 (54.0%) |
| Total | 1400 (100.0%) |

Frequency of Boycotting

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Once a week/once a month | 201 (40.7%) |
| Less often/few times a year | 293 (59.3%) |
| Total | 494 (100.0%) |

Number of Products Boycotted

| | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| 1-2 products/a few | 202 (40.2%) |
| 3-10 products/some | 161 (32.0%) |
| 10 or more/ a lot | 78 (15.5%) |
| Don't Know/Refused | 62 (12.3%) |
| Total | 503 (100.0%) |

Table 3. Frequency of Buycotting and Number of Products Buycotted by Buycotters

Buycotting

| | | |
|---------------------|------|----------|
| Did not participate | 788 | (57.4%) |
| Participated | 586 | (42.6%) |
| Total | 1374 | (100.0%) |

Frequency of Buycotting

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|----------|
| Once a week/once a month | 197 | (43.7%) |
| Less often/few times a year | 254 | (56.3%) |
| Total | 451 | (100.0%) |

Number of Products Buycotted

| | | |
|--------------------|-----|----------|
| 1-2 products/a few | 157 | (34.6%) |
| 3-10 products/some | 153 | (33.6%) |
| 10 or more/ a lot | 89 | (19.5%) |
| Don't Know/Refused | 56 | (12.3%) |
| Total | 455 | (100.0%) |

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Selected Variables for Entire Sample¹⁴

| <u>Variables</u> | <u>N</u> | <u>Mean</u> | <u>SD</u> | <u>Minimum</u> | <u>Maximum.</u> |
|---|----------|-------------|-----------|----------------|-----------------|
| Racial Ethnic Minority (reference=white) | 1369 | .1700 | .3780 | .00 | 1.00 |
| Female (reference=male) | 1400 | .5350 | .4990 | .00 | 1.00 |
| Age (cohorts) | 1357 | 3.7524 | 1.5957 | 1.00 | 6.00 |
| Income (cohorts) | 1198 | 2.7454 | 1.2295 | 1.00 | 5.00 |
| Education (cohorts) | 1384 | 2.8967 | .9591 | 1.00 | 4.00 |
| Political Affiliation (Conservative) | 1299 | 1.7960 | .7504 | 1.00 | 3.00 |
| Strength of Affiliation (reference=donated or raised money for political campaign) | 1396 | 1.8539 | .3534 | 1.00 | 2.00 |

Valid N (listwise) 1112

¹⁴ See Appendix A for the coding of variables.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of Political Activities Variables for Entire Sample¹⁵

| <u>Political Activities</u> | <u>N</u> | <u>Mean</u> | <u>SD</u> |
|---------------------------------------|----------|-------------|-----------|
| Contacted Public Official (Yes/No) | 1399 | .3352 | .47224 |
| Contacted Newspaper/Magazine (Yes/No) | 1400 | .1943 | .39579 |
| Contacted Talk Show/Radio (Yes/No) | 1399 | .1194 | .32434 |
| Protest (Yes/No) | 1400 | .1471 | .35437 |
| Signed E-mail Petition (Yes/No) | 1397 | .2090 | .40675 |
| Signed Written Petition (Yes/No) | 1396 | .4785 | .49972 |
| Boycotted (Yes/No) | 1370 | .5518 | .49749 |
| Buycotted (Yes/No) | 1382 | .4298 | .49523 |
| Walked/Biked for Charity (Yes/No) | 1398 | .3741 | .48406 |
| Voted in General Election (Yes/No) | 1113 | .7745 | .41811 |
| Raised Campaign Funds (Yes/No) | 1390 | .5914 | .49980 |
| Canvassed (Yes/No) | 1400 | .1193 | .32424 |

¹⁵ For each political activity, participation is coded as “1” and non-participation is coded as “0”.

Table 6. Pearson's Correlation Matrix of Independent and Dependent Variables

| | Boycott | Buycott | Race | Sex | Education | Income | Age | Political Affiliation | Strength of Affiliation |
|-------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Boycott | ———— | | | | | | | | |
| Buycott | .483*** | ———— | | | | | | | |
| Race | -.058* | .026 | ———— | | | | | | |
| Sex | .005 | .050 | -.042 | ———— | | | | | |
| Education | .263*** | .167*** | -.079** | -.031 | ———— | | | | |
| Income | .191*** | .131*** | -.049 | -.160*** | .386*** | ———— | | | |
| Age | -.038 | -.103*** | -.164*** | .073** | -.086** | -.119*** | ———— | | |
| Political Affiliation | -.001 | .087** | .130*** | .064* | -.018 | -.025 | -.125*** | ———— | |
| Strength of Affiliation | -.166*** | .134*** | .060* | .032 | -.202*** | -.175*** | -.144*** | .075** | ———— |

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 7. Cross-tabulations of Boycotting by Respondents' Frequency of Participation, Race, Sex, Age, Education, Income, Political Affiliation, Strength of Political Affiliation, and Voting¹⁶

| | <u>Boycotters</u> | <u>Non-boycotters</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| | (percent within each category) | | |
| <u>Race</u> | | | |
| White | 612 (55.8%) | 484 (44.2%) | 1096 (100.0%) |
| Racial Ethnic Minority | 110 (48.2%) | 118 (51.8%) | 228 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 4.390 | | |
| Phi | - 0.058 | | |
| P-value | 0.036* | | |
| N=1324 | | | |
| <u>Sex</u> | | | |
| Male | 344 (54.3%) | 289 (45.7%) | 633 (100.0%) |
| Female | 395 (54.9%) | 325 (45.1%) | 720 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 0.036 | | |
| Phi | 0.005 | | |
| P-value | 0.849 | | |
| N=1353 | | | |
| <u>Age</u> | | | |
| 18-24 years (1) | 52 (46.0%) | 61 (54.0%) | 113 (100.0%) |
| 25-35 years (2) | 124 (55.6%) | 99 (44.4%) | 223 (100.0%) |
| 35-44 years (3) | 167 (58.8%) | 117 (41.2%) | 284 (100.0%) |
| 45-54 years (4) | 151 (61.4%) | 95 (38.6%) | 246 (100.0%) |
| 55-64 years (5) | 110 (60.1%) | 73 (39.9%) | 183 (100.0%) |
| 65+ years (6) | 114 (42.9%) | 152 (57.1%) | 266 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 27.075 | | |
| Cramer's V | 0.143 | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | - 0.043 | | |
| P-value | 0.001*** | | |
| N= 1315 | | | |

¹⁶ The N for each category is listed first, followed by the percentage in parentheses.

| | <u>Boycotters</u> | <u>Non-boycotters</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| | (percent within category) | | |
| <u>Education</u> | | | |
| Some high school (1) | 32 (29.6%) | 76 (70.4%) | 108 (100.0%) |
| High school graduate (2) | 146 (40.3%) | 216 (59.7%) | 362 (100.0%) |
| Some college (3) | 246 (59.4%) | 168 (40.6%) | 414 (100.0%) |
| College and beyond (4) | 310 (68.3%) | 144 (31.7%) | 454 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 95.121 | | |
| Cramer's V | 0.267 | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | 0.285 | | |
| P-value | 0.001*** | | |
| N= 1338 | | | |
| <hr/> | | | |
| <u>Income</u> | | | |
| Under \$ 20,000 (1) | 75 (37.1%) | 127 (62.7%) | 202 (100.0%) |
| \$30,000 (2) | 171 (52.0%) | 158 (48.0%) | 329 (100.0%) |
| \$52,500 (3) | 186 (62.4%) | 112 (37.6%) | 298 (100.0%) |
| \$82,500 (4) | 145 (67.1%) | 71 (32.9%) | 216 (100.0%) |
| over \$100,000 (5) | 76 (6.5%) | 41 (3.5%) | 117 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 51.036 | | |
| Cramer's V | 0.210 | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | 0.220 | | |
| P-value | 0.001*** | | |
| N= 1162 | | | |
| <hr/> | | | |
| <u>Political Affiliation</u> | | | |
| Conservative (1) | 287 (56.5%) | 221 (43.5%) | 508 (100.0%) |
| Moderate (2) | 277 (55.6%) | 221 (44.4%) | 498 (100.0%) |
| Liberal (3) | 142 (56.6%) | 109 (43.4%) | 251 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 0.099 | | |
| Cramer's V | 0.009 | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | -0.002 | | |
| P-value | 0.952 | | |
| N= 1257 | | | |

| | <u>Boycotters</u> (percent within each category) | <u>Non-boycotters</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|--|---|-----------------------|---------------|
| <u>Strength of Political Affiliation</u> | | | |
| Did not donate or raise money | 589 (51.2%) | 561 (48.8%) | 1150 (100.0%) |
| Donated funds or raised money | 149 (74.5%) | 51 (25.5%) | 200 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 37.266 | | |
| Cramer's V | 0.166 | | |
| P-Value | 0.001*** | | |
| N=1350 | | | |
| <hr/> | | | |
| <u>Voted in 2002 Election¹⁷</u> | | | |
| Did not vote | 120 (49.4%) | 123 (50.6%) | 243 (100.0%) |
| Voted | 502 (60.1%) | 333 (39.9%) | 835 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 8.890 | | |
| Cramer's V | 0.091 | | |
| P-value | 0.003** | | |
| N= 1079 | | | |
| <hr/> | | | |
| * p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 | | | |

¹⁷ Voting in the 2002 general election has a smaller N than other variables because this survey question was only asked of respondents who identified as registered voters.

Table 8. Cross-tabulations of Boycotting by Respondents' Race, Sex, Age, Education, Income, Political Affiliation, Strength of Affiliation and Voting

| | <u>Buycotters</u> | <u>Non-buycotters</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| | (percent within each category) | | |
| <u>Race</u> | | | |
| White | 468 (42.1%) | 643 (57.9%) | 1111 (100.0%) |
| Racial Ethnic Minority | 106 (45.5%) | 127 (54.5%) | 233 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 0.894 | | |
| Phi | 0.026 | | |
| P-value | 0.344 | | |
| N= 1344 | | | |
| <u>Sex</u> | | | |
| Male | 257 (40.0%) | 385 (60.0%) | 642 (100.0%) |
| Female | 329 (44.9%) | 403 (55.1%) | 732 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 3.377 | | |
| Phi | 0.050 | | |
| P-value | 0.066 | | |
| N= 1374 | | | |
| <u>Age</u> | | | |
| 18-24 years | (1) 49 (43.4%) | 64 (56.6%) | 113 (100.0%) |
| 25-34 years | (2) 109 (48.2%) | 117 (51.8%) | 226 (100.0%) |
| 35-44 years | (3) 133 (47.0%) | 150 (53.0%) | 283 (100.0%) |
| 45-54 years | (4) 115 (45.8%) | 136 (54.2%) | 251 (100.0%) |
| 55-64 years | (5) 82 (43.2%) | 108 (56.8%) | 190 (100.0%) |
| 65+ years | (6) 80 (29.7%) | 189 (70.3%) | 269 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 24.467 | | |
| Cramer's V | 0.136 | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | -0.117 | | |
| P-value | 0.001*** | | |
| N= 1332 | | | |

| | | <u>Boycotters</u> (percent within each category) | <u>Non-boycotters</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|--|-----|---|-----------------------|---------------|
| <u>Education</u> | | | | |
| Some high school | (1) | 25 (22.9%) | 84 (77.1%) | 109 (100.0%) |
| High school graduate | (2) | 128 (34.0%) | 248 (66.0%) | 376 (100.0%) |
| Some college | (3) | 204 (48.1%) | 20 (51.9%) | 424 (100.0%) |
| College and beyond | (4) | 224 (49.8%) | 226 (50.2%) | 450 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi Square | | 43.197 | | |
| Cramer's V | | 0.178 | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | | 0.117 | | |
| P-value | | 0.001*** | | |
| N= 1359 | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | |
| <u>Income</u> | | | | |
| Under \$ 20,000 | (1) | 68 (32.4%) | 142 (67.6%) | 210 (100.0%) |
| \$30,000 | (2) | 130 (39.5%) | 199 (60.5%) | 329 (100.0%) |
| \$52,500 | (3) | 153 (50.7%) | 149 (49.3%) | 302 (100.0%) |
| \$82,500 | (4) | 111 (50.9%) | 107 (49.1%) | 218 (100.0%) |
| over \$100,000 | (5) | 59 (50.9%) | 57 (49.1%) | 116 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | | 25.987 | | |
| Cramer's V | | 0.149 | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | | 0.154 | | |
| P-value | | 0.001*** | | |
| N=1175 | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | |
| <u>Political Affiliation</u> | | | | |
| Conservative | (1) | 205 (39.9%) | 309 (60.1%) | 514 (100.0%) |
| Moderate | (2) | 233 (46.1%) | 272 (53.9%) | 505 (100.0%) |
| Liberal | (3) | 131 (51.2%) | 125 (48.8%) | 256 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | | 9.585 | | |
| Cramer's V | | 0.087 | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | | 0.093 | | |
| P-value | | 0.008* | | |
| N= 1275 | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | |
| <u>Strength of Political Affiliation</u> | | | | |
| Did not donate | | 469 (40.0%) | 704 (60.0%) | 1173 (100.0%) |
| Donated funds | | 116 (58.9%) | 41 (41.1%) | 157 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | | 24.626 | | |
| Phi | | - 0.134 | | |
| P-Value | | 0.001*** | | |
| N=109 | | | | |

| | <u>Boycotters</u> | <u>Non-boycotters</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| | (percent within each category) | | |
| <u>Voted in 2002 Election</u> ¹⁸ | | | |
| Did not vote | 100 (41.0%) | 144 (59.9%) | 244 (100.0%) |
| Voted | 386 (45.5%) | 462 (54.5%) | 848 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 1.578 | | |
| Phi | 0.047 | | |
| P-value | 0.209 | | |
| N= 1092 | | | |

* p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

¹⁸ Voting in the 2002 general election has a smaller N than other variables because this survey question was only asked of respondents who identified as registered voters.

Table 9. Binary Logistic Regression Models for Boycotting with Political Participation Independent Variables

| Independent Variable | <u>Model 1</u> | | <u>Model 2</u> | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| | Odds Ratio | <i>b</i> | Odds Ratio | <i>b</i> |
| Contact Public Official | 1.699 | .530*** (.166) | 1.537 | .430* (.186) |
| Contact Newspaper/Magazine | 0.920 | -.084 (.206) | 0.830 | -.186 (.230) |
| Contact Talk Show/Radio | 1.534 | .428 (.232) | 1.860 | .621* (.270) |
| Protest | 2.173 | .776** (.244) | 2.310 | .837** (.284) |
| Signed E-mail Petition | 2.241 | .807*** (.190) | 1.794 | .584** (.205) |
| Signed Written Petition | 2.840 | 1.044*** (.148) | 2.705 | .995*** (.167) |
| Walked or Biked for Charity | 1.437 | .462* (.152) | 1.231 | .207 (.173) |
| Raised Campaign Funds | 1.700 | .531*** (.147) | 1.684 | .521** (.165) |
| Canvassed for Political Campaign | 1.105 | .015 (.223) | 0.999 | -.001 (.256) |
| Voted in General Election | 0.830 | -.187 (.162) | 0.824 | -.194 (.195) |
| Race | | | 0.845 | -.169 (.225) |
| Sex | | | 0.989 | -.011 (.165) |
| Age | | | 0.934 | -.068 (.056) |
| Income | | | 1.044 | .004 (.073) |

| Independent Variable | <u>Model 1</u> | | <u>Model 2</u> | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| | Odds Ratio | <i>b</i> | Odds Ratio | <i>b</i> |
| Education | | | 1.221 | .200* (.097) |
| Political Affiliation | | | 1.010 | .010 (.112) |
| Strength of Affiliation | | | 0.865 | -.145 (.235) |
| Constant | .402 | -.911 (.245) | 0.469 | .756** (.731) |
| Cox and Snell pseudo R ² | 0.216 | | 0.209 | |
| Nagelekere pseudo R ² | 0.290 | | 0.283 | |
| N | 1066 | | 870 | |

Note. Standard errors are in parentheses. Boycotting is coded as “1” if the respondent reported boycotting one or more products in the past 12 months and “0” if the respondent did not.

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 10. Binary Logistic Regression Models for Boycotting with Political Participation Independent Variables

| Independent Variable | <u>Model 1</u> | | <u>Model 2</u> | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| | Odds Ratio | <i>b</i> | Odds Ratio | <i>b</i> |
| Contact Public Official | 1.502 | .407** (.156) | 1.659 | .506** (.177) |
| Contact Newspaper/Magazine | 0.980 | -.020 (.185) | 1.156 | .145 (.211) |
| Contact Talk Show/Radio | 1.564 | .447 (.208) | 1.413 | .346 (.243) |
| Protest | 1.772 | .572** (.202) | 1.612 | .477* (.236) |
| Signed E-mail Petition | 1.715 | .539*** (.166) | 1.489 | .398* (.187) |
| Signed Written Petition | 2.294 | .830*** (.146) | 2.405 | .878*** (.166) |
| Walked or Biked for Charity | 1.867 | .624*** (.143) | 1.716 | .540** (.164) |
| Raised Campaign Funds | 1.363 | .310 (.144) | 1.300 | .262 (.162) |
| Canvassed for Political Campaign | 1.159 | .147 (.207) | 1.211 | .241 (.191) |
| Voted in General Election | 1.011 | .011 (.153) | 0.712 | -.339 (.191) |
| Race | | | 1.359 | .307 (.215) |
| Sex | | | 1.259 | .231 (.159) |
| Age | | | 0.848 | -.165** (.055) |
| Income | | | 0.982 | -.019 (.070) |
| Education | | | 0.903 | -.102* |

| Independent Variable | <u>Model 1</u> | | <u>Model 2</u> | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| | Odds Ratio | <i>b</i> | Odds Ratio | <i>b</i> |
| Political Affiliation | | | 1.252 | (.096) -.176 |
| Strength of Affiliation | | | 0.839 | (.218) -.176 |
| Constant | 0.207 | -1.575 (.240) | 0.743 | (.218) -.297 |
| Cox and Snell pseudo R ² | 0.174 | | 0.189 | (.695) |
| Nagelkerke pseudo R ² | 0.233 | | 0.252 | |
| N | 1080 | | 877 | |

Note. Standard errors are in parentheses. Boycotting is coded as “1” if the respondent reported boycotting one or more products in the past 12 months and “0” if the respondent did not.

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 11. One-way ANOVA Showing the Relationship Between Demographic Characteristics of Respondents Who Do Not Boycott or Buycott, Who Only Boycott, Who Only Buycott, and Who Boycott and Buycott

| | <u>Neither</u> | <u>Boycotting Only</u> | <u>Buycotting Only</u> | <u>Both</u> |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| Racial Ethnic Minority | 0.143 | 0.143 | 0.142*** | 0.143 |
| Female | 0.249 | 0.248* | 0.249 | 0.249 |
| Income | 1.464*** | 1.509 | 1.512 | 1.475*** |
| Education | 0.875*** | 0.916** | 0.916** | 0.879*** |
| Political Affiliation | 0.563 | 0.560** | 0.563 | 0.561*** |
| Strength of Political Affiliation | 0.123*** | 0.125 | 0.125 | 0.122*** |

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 12. Binary Logistic Regression Models for Boycotting and Buycotting

| Variable | <u>Model 1(Boycotting)</u> | | <u>Model 2 (Buycotting)</u> | |
|---|----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| | Odds Ratio | <i>b</i> | Odds Ratio | <i>b</i> |
| Racial Ethnic Minority (reference=White) | .794 | -.230 (.174) | 1.059 | .057 (.169) |
| Female (reference=male) | 1.027 | .027 (.131) | 1.220 | .199 (.127) |
| Age | .993 | -.007 (.042) | .910 | -.095* (.042) |
| Income | 1.154 | .143* (.058) | 1.129 | .121* (.056) |
| Education | 1.504 | .408*** (.073) | 1.191 | .175* (.071) |
| Political affiliation | 1.095 | .091 (.087) | 1.234 | .210* (.084) |
| Strength of affiliation | .486 | -.722*** (.197) | .509 | -.675*** (.181) |
| Constant | .945 | -.056 (.544) | 1.092 | .088 (.516) |
| Cox and Snell pseudo R ² | 0.080 | | 0.047 | |
| Nagelkerke pseudo R ² | 0.107 | | 0.062 | |
| N | 1082 | | 1092 | |

Note. Standard errors are in parentheses.

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 13. Cross-tabulations of Rationales of Participation in Boycotting or Buycotting by Race, Sex, Age, Education, Income, and Political Affiliation

| | <u>Because it will change business behavior</u> | <u>Because it is a good thing to do</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|--------------------------|---|---|--------------|
| <u>Entire Sub-sample</u> | 48 (19.6%) | 197 (80.4%) | 245 (100.0%) |
| <u>Race</u> | | | |
| White | 40 (20.0%) | 160 (80.0%) | 200 (100.0%) |
| Racial Ethnic Minority | 7 (17.5%) | 33 (82.5%) | 40 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 0.132 | | |
| Phi | 0.023 | | |
| P-value | 0.716 | | |
| N= 240 | | | |
| <u>Sex</u> | | | |
| Male | 20 (18.0%) | 91 (82.0%) | 111 (100.0%) |
| Female | 28 (20.9%) | 106 (79.1%) | 134 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 0.319 | | |
| Phi | -0.036 | | |
| P-value | 0.572 | | |
| N=245 | | | |
| <u>Age</u> | | | |
| 18-24 years | (1) 2 (11.8%) | 15 (88.2%) | 17 (100.0%) |
| 25-34 years | (2) 9 (18.4%) | 40 (81.6%) | 49 (100.0%) |
| 35-44 years | (3) 12 (19.0%) | 51 (81.0%) | 63 (100.0%) |
| 45-54 years | (4) 12 (23.1%) | 40 (76.9%) | 52 (100.0%) |
| 55-65 years | (5) 7 (17.9%) | 32 (82.1%) | 39 (100.0%) |
| 65+ | (6) 5 (25.0%) | 15 (75.0%) | 20 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 1.559 | | |
| Cramer's V | 0.081 | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | -0.046 | | |
| P-value | 0.906 | | |
| N=240 | | | |

| <u>Education</u> | | <u>Because it will change business behavior</u> | <u>Because it is a good thing to do</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|----------------------|-----|---|---|--------------|
| Some high school | (1) | 0 (0.0%) | 10 (100.0%) | 10 (100.0%) |
| High school graduate | (2) | 8 (18.6%) | 35 (81.4%) | 43 (100.0%) |
| Some college | (3) | 19 (21.6%) | 69 (78.4%) | 78 (100.0%) |
| College and beyond | (4) | 21 (20.4%) | 82 (79.6%) | 103 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | | 2.718 | | |
| Cramer's V | | 0.106 | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | | - 0.038 | | |
| P-value | | 0.437 | | |
| N=234 | | | | |

| <u>Income</u> | | | | |
|----------------------|-----|------------|------------|-------------|
| Under \$20,000 | (1) | 5 (18.5%) | 22 (81.5%) | 27 (100.0%) |
| \$30,000 | (2) | 10 (20.8%) | 38 (79.2%) | 48 (100.0%) |
| \$52,000 | (3) | 14 (23.0%) | 47 (77.0%) | 61 (100.0%) |
| \$82,500 | (4) | 8 (15.4%) | 44 (84.6%) | 52 (100.0%) |
| Over \$100,000 | (5) | 5 (16.1%) | 26 (83.9%) | 31 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | | 1.321 | | |
| Cramer's V | | 0.078 | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | | 0.039 | | |
| P-value | | 0.858 | | |
| N=219 | | | | |

| <u>Political Affiliation</u> | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|------------|------------|-------------|
| Conservative | (1) | 23 (25.8%) | 66 (74.2%) | 89 (100.0%) |
| Moderate | (2) | 16 (16.8%) | 79 (83.2%) | 95 (100.0%) |
| Liberal | (3) | 8 (14.8%) | 46 (85.2%) | 54 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | | 3.421 | | |
| Cramer's V | | 0.106 | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | | 0.099 | | |
| P-value | | 0.181 | | |
| N=235 | | | | |

Note. The survey question asked of a random subsample (half) of boycotters and buycotters was "In general, do you do this kind of thing mostly because you believe it will change the behavior of businesses, or because you think it is a good thing to do?"

Table 14. Cross-tabulations of Level of Belief of Boycotters and Buycotters of How Much Their Actions Will Change Business Behavior ¹⁹

| <u>Independent Variables</u> | <u>How Much Respondent Believes Actions Will Change Business Behavior</u> | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|-----------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| | <u>None</u> | <u>Not Much</u> | <u>A Fair Amount</u> | <u>A Great Deal</u> | <u>Total</u> |
| <u>Boycotters (total)</u> | 47 (18.5%) | 107 (42.1%) | 69 (27.2%) | 31 (12.2%) | 254 (100.0%) |
| <u>Buycotters (total)</u> | 41 (16.5%) | 107 (43.1%) | 68 (27.5%) | 32 (12.9%) | 248 (100.0%) |
| <u>Race</u> | | | | | |
| White | 43 (18.5%) | 102 (44.0%) | 62 (26.7%) | 25 (10.8%) | 232 (100.0%) |
| Racial Ethnic Minority | 8 (15.7%) | 20 (39.2%) | 14 (27.5%) | 9 (17.6%) | 52 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 2.058 | | | | |
| Phi | 0.085 | | | | |
| P-value | 0.560 | | | | |
| N=284 | | | | | |
| <u>Sex</u> | | | | | |
| Male | 29 (22.0%) | 56 (42.4%) | 31 (23.5%) | 16 (12.1%) | 132 (100.0%) |
| Female | 24 (15.4%) | 69 (44.2%) | 45 (28.8%) | 18 (11.6%) | 156 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 2.538 | | | | |
| Phi | 0.094 | | | | |
| P-value | 0.468 | | | | |
| N=288 | | | | | |

¹⁹ Note. The survey question asked of a random subsample (half) of boycotters and buycotters was “In general, do you do this kind of thing mostly because you believe it will change the behavior of businesses, or because you think it is a good thing to do?”

Independent VariablesHow Much Respondent Believes Actions Will Change Business Behavior

| | | <u>None</u> | <u>Not Much</u> | <u>A Fair Amount</u> | <u>A Great Deal</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|----------------------|-----|-------------|-----------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| <u>Age</u> | | | | | | |
| 18-24 years | (1) | 7 (21.1%) | 15 (45.5%) | 5 (15.2%) | 6 (18.2%) | 33 (100.0%) |
| 25-34 years | (2) | 7 (14.0%) | 19 (38.0%) | 16 (36.0%) | 6 (12.0%) | 108 (100.0%) |
| 35-44 years | (3) | 10 (15.9%) | 22 (34.9%) | 19 (30.2%) | 12 (19.0%) | 63 (100.0%) |
| 45-54 years | (4) | 10 (16.4%) | 30 (49.2%) | 13 (21.3%) | 8 (13.1%) | 61 (100.0%) |
| 55-65 years | (5) | 8 (21.7%) | 18 (48.6%) | 10 (27.0%) | 1 (2.7%) | 37 (100.0%) |
| 65+ | (6) | 10 (26.3%) | 17 (44.7%) | 10 (26.4%) | 1 (2.6%) | 38 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | | 18.012 | | | | |
| Cramer's V | | 0.146 | | | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | | - 0.104 | | | | |
| P-value | | 0.262 | | | | |
| N=340 | | | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | | |
| <u>Education</u> | | | | | | |
| Some high school | (1) | 3 (30.0%) | 3 (30.0%) | 2 (20.0%) | 2 (20.0%) | 10 (100.0%) |
| High school graduate | (2) | 15 (25.0%) | 21 (35.0%) | 18 (30.0%) | 6 (10.0%) | 60 (100.0%) |
| Some college | (3) | 14 (13.0%) | 48 (44.4%) | 28 (25.9%) | 18 (16.7%) | 108 (100.0%) |
| College and beyond | (4) | 21 (19.5%) | 52 (48.1%) | 27 (25.0%) | 8 (7.4%) | 108 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | | 11.071 | | | | |
| Cramer's V | | 0.114 | | | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | | -0.035 | | | | |
| P-value | | 0.271 | | | | |
| N=286 | | | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | | |

| | | <u>None</u> | <u>Not Much</u> | <u>A Fair Amount</u> | <u>A Great Deal</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|----------------------|-----|-------------|-----------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| <u>Income</u> | | | | | | |
| Under \$20,000 | (1) | 3 (10.3%) | 12 (41.4%) | 10 (34.5%) | 4 (13.8%) | 29 (100.0%) |
| \$30,000 | (2) | 10 (15.6%) | 31 (48.4%) | 15 (23.5%) | 8 (12.5%) | 64 (100.0%) |
| \$52,000 | (3) | 19 (23.8%) | 27 (33.8%) | 23 (28.6%) | 11 (13.8%) | 80 (100.0%) |
| \$82,500 | (4) | 8 (14.0%) | 29 (50.9%) | 13 (22.8%) | 7 (12.3%) | 57 (100.0%) |
| Over \$100,000 | (5) | 7 (23.3%) | 12 (40.0%) | 9 (30.0%) | 2 (6.7%) | 30 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | | 8.593 | | | | |
| Cramer's V | | 0.107 | | | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | | -0.049 | | | | |
| P-value | | 0.707 | | | | |
| N=260 | | | | | | |

| <u>Political Affiliation</u> | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| Conservative | (1) | 21 (19.4%) | 45 (41.7%) | 31 (28.7%) | 11 (10.2%) | 108 (100.0%) |
| Moderate | (2) | 20 (18.9%) | 48 (45.3%) | 28 (26.4%) | 10 (9.4%) | 106 (100.0%) |
| Liberal | (3) | 10 (15.6%) | 28 (43.8%) | 15 (23.4%) | 11 (17.2%) | 64 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | | 3.282 | | | | |
| Cramer's V | | 0.077 | | | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | | 0.029 | | | | |
| P-value | | 0.773 | | | | |
| N=278 | | | | | | |

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 15. Cross-tabulations for Open-ended Questions on Rationale for Participation of Boycotters by Race, Sex, Age, Income, Education, and Political Affiliation (Total N=222)²⁰

| | <u>Country of Origin</u> | <u>Labor Rights</u> | <u>Differing Political Affiliation</u> | <u>Religious/Personal</u> | <u>Asked but Declined/ Refused to Answer</u> |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|--|---------------------------|--|
| <u>Total</u> | 70 (31.5%) | 47 (21.2%) | 18 (8.1%) | 42 (18.9%) | 33 (14.9%) |
| <u>Race</u> | | | | | |
| White | 60 (34.3%) | 42 (24.0%) | 14 (8.0%) | 32 (18.3%) | 26 (14.9%) |
| Racial Ethnic Minority | 9 (29.0%) | 5 (16.1%) | 3 (9.7%) | 9 (29.0%) | 5 (16.1%) |
| Pearson's Chi Square | 0.926 | 0.326 | 0.098 | 1.908 | 0.033 |
| Phi | -0.067 | -0.040 | 0.022 | 0.096 | 0.013 |
| N=205 | | | | | |
| <u>Sex</u> | | | | | |
| Male | 44 (41.9%) | 14 (13.3%) | 10 (9.5%) | 18 (17.1%) | 18 (17.1%) |
| Female | 26 (24.8%) | 33 (31.4%) | 8 (7.6%) | 23 (21.9%) | 15 (14.3%) |
| Pearson's Chi Square | 6.943 | 9.986 | 0.455 | 0.758 | 0.324 |
| Phi | -0.182** | 0.217** | 0.037 | 0.060 | -0.039 |
| N= 209 | | | | | |

²⁰ These data were coded from open-ended questions asked of half of boycotters. Half of boycotters were asked, "thinking about the last time you did this, could you tell me a little bit about what you did...what you did not buy, and why?" Each percentage represents the percentage within each category reporting their given rationale as the above cause. A given respondent might list no rationale or any combination of the five possible rationales listed at the top of the table; i.e., listing one rationale was not mutually exclusive with listing one or more other rationales.

| | <u>Country of Origin</u> | <u>Labor Rights</u> | <u>Differing Political Affiliation</u> | <u>Religious/Personal</u> | <u>Asked but Declined/ Refused to Answer</u> |
|----------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|--|---------------------------|--|
| <u>Age</u> | | | | | |
| 18-24 | 9 (42.9%) | 5 (23.8%) | 2 (9.5%) | 4 (19.0%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| 25-34 | 14 (37.8%) | 10 (27.0%) | 3 (8.1%) | 7 (18.9%) | 3 (8.1%) |
| 35-44 | 17 (32.7%) | 10 (19.2%) | 4 (7.7%) | 16 (30.8%) | 5 (9.6%) |
| 45-54 | 11 (22.4%) | 12 (24.5%) | 9 (18.4%) | 6 (12.2%) | 11 (22.4%) |
| 55-64 | 7 (25.9%) | 7 (25.9%) | 0 (0.0%) | 5 (18.5%) | 8 (29.6%) |
| 65+ | 12 (60.0%) | 3 (15.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 1 (5.0%) | 4 (20.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi Square | 10.742 | 1.684 | 10.304 | 8.708 | 13.288 |
| Cramer's V | 0.228 | 0.090 | 0.224 | 0.206 | 0.254* |
| Kendall's tau-c | -0.018 | -0.027 | -0.032 | -0.092 | 0.186 |
| N= 205 | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| <u>Income</u> | | | | | |
| Under \$ 20,000 | 6 (46.2%) | 2 (15.4%) | 0 (0.0%) | 3 (23.1%) | 2 (15.4%) |
| \$30,0000 | 16 (32.7%) | 16 (32.7%) | 1 (2.0%) | 12 (24.5%) | 4 (8.2%) |
| \$52,500 | 22 (34.4%) | 10 (22.2%) | 8 (12.5%) | 12 (18.8%) | 12 (18.8%) |
| \$82,500 | 16 (35.6%) | 6 (26.1%) | 6 (13.3%) | 8 (17.8%) | 5 (11.1%) |
| over \$100,000 | 8 (34.8%) | 44 (22.7%) | 2 (8.7%) | 4 (17.4%) | 2 (8.7%) |
| Pearson's Chi Square | 0.846 | 0.272 | 0.177 | 0.988 | 3.492 |
| Cramer's V | 0.066 | 0.163 | 0.180 | 0.071 | 0.134 |
| Kendall's tau-c | -0.011 | -0.029 | 0.084 | -0.057 | -0.006 |
| N= 193 | | | | | |

| | <u>Country of Origin</u> | <u>Labor Rights</u> | <u>Differing Political Affiliation</u> | <u>Religious/Personal</u> | <u>Asked but Declined/Refused to Answer</u> |
|----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--|---------------------------|---|
| <u>Education</u> | | | | | |
| Some High School | 2 (33.3%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 3 (50.0%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| High School grad | 12 (32.4%) | 9 (24.3%) | 5 (13.5%) | 4 (10.8%) | 7 (18.9%) |
| Some college | 27 (31.8%) | 20 (23.5%) | 5 (5.9%) | 21 (24.7%) | 12 (14.1%) |
| College or more | 29 (35.8%) | 18 (22.2%) | 8 (9.9%) | 13 (16.0%) | 13 (16.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi Square | 0.327 | 1.868 | 2.644 | 7.382 | 1.584 |
| Cramer's V | 0.040 | 0.095 | 0.133 | 0.188 | 0.087 |
| Kendall's tau-c | 0.033 | 0.010 | 0.003 | -0.035 | 0.008 |
| N= 208 | | | | | |

Political Affiliation

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| Conservative | 26 (33.3%) | 16 (20.5%) | 6 (7.7%) | 14 (17.9%) | 16 (20.5%) |
| Moderate | 21 (28.0%) | 16 (21.3%) | 6 (8.0%) | 17 (22.7%) | 14 (18.7%) |
| Liberal | 21 (43.8%) | 14 (29.2%) | 5 (10.4%) | 7 (14.6%) | 1 (2.7%) |
| Pearson's Chi Square | 3.257 | 1.424 | 0.317 | 1.323 | 8.702 |
| Cramer's V | 0.127 | 0.084 | 0.040 | 0.081 | 0.208* |
| Kendall's tau-c | 0.064 | 0.065 | 0.020 | -0.014 | -0.138 |
| N= 200 | | | | | |

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 16. Cross-tabulations for Open-ended Questions and Rationale for Participation of Buycotters by Race, Sex, Age, Income, Education, and Political Affiliation (Total N= 166)²¹

| | <u>Country of Origin</u> | <u>Food/Animal/ Environmental Rights</u> | <u>Supports Like- Minded Causes</u> | <u>Religious/Personal</u> | <u>Asked but Declined/ Refused to Answer</u> |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|--|---|---------------------------|--|
| <u>Total</u> | 36 (21.7%) | 28 (16.9%) | 40 (24.1%) | 35 (25.1%) | 27 (16.3%) |
| <u>Race</u> | | | | | |
| White | 32 (22.9%) | 25 (17.9%) | 31 (22.1%) | 30 (21.4%) | 21 (15.0%) |
| Racial Ethnic Minority | 4 (18.2%) | 2 (9.1%) | 9 (40.9%) | 4 (18.2%) | 3 (13.6%) |
| Pearson's Chi Square | 0.240 | 1.052 | 3.601 | 0.121 | 0.028 |
| Phi | -0.039 | -0.081 | 0.149 | -0.027 | -0.013 |
| N= 161 | | | | | |
| <u>Sex</u> | | | | | |
| Male | 20 (26.3%) | 11 (14.5%) | 26 (34.2%) | 12 (15.8%) | 6 (7.9%) |
| Female | 16 (18.0%) | 16 (18.0%) | 14 (15.7%) | 23 (25.8%) | 20 (22.5%) |
| Pearson's Chi Square | 1.671 | 0.368 | 7.623 | 2.479 | 6.652 |
| Phi | -0.101 | 0.047 | -0.215** | 0.123 | 0.199** |
| N= 164 | | | | | |

²¹ These data were coded from open-ended questions asked of half of buycotters. Half of buycotters were asked, "thinking about the last time you did this, could you tell me a little bit about what you did...what you did buy, and why?" Each percentage represents the percentage within each category reporting their given rationale as the above cause. A given respondent might list no rationale or any combination of the five possible rationales listed at the top of the table; i.e., listing one rationale was not mutually exclusive with listing one or more other rationales.

| | <u>Country of Origin</u> | <u>Food/Animal Environmental Rights</u> | <u>Supports Like- Minded Causes</u> | <u>Religious/Personal</u> | <u>Asked but Declined/ Refused to Answer</u> |
|----------------------|--------------------------|---|---|---------------------------|--|
| <u>Age</u> | | | | | |
| 18-24 | 4 (28.6%) | 1 (7.1%) | 8 (57.1%) | 1 (7.1%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| 25-34 | 3 (10.0%) | 10 (33.3%) | 9 (30.0%) | 8 (26.7%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| 35-44 | 10 (21.7%) | 8 (17.4%) | 12 (26.1%) | 6 (13.0%) | 9 (19.6%) |
| 45-54 | 9 (32.1%) | 2 (7.1%) | 6 (21.4%) | 7 (25.0%) | 4 (14.3%) |
| 55-64 | 8 (28.6%) | 5 (17.9%) | 3 (10.7%) | 8 (28.6%) | 4 (14.3%) |
| 65+ | 2 (13.3%) | 0 (0.0%) | 2 (13.3%) | 4 (26.4%) | 7 (46.7%) |
| Pearson's Chi Square | 5.831 | 13.060 | 12.520 | 5.461 | 20.040 |
| Phi | 0.190 | 0.274* | 0.579* | 0.184 | 0.356*** |
| N= | 160 | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | | |
| <u>Income</u> | | | | | |
| \$ 20,000 | 5 (25.0%) | 2 (10.0%) | 4 (20.0%) | 6 (30.0%) | 3 (15.0%) |
| \$30,0000 | 7 (20.0%) | 2 (5.7%) | 12 (34.3%) | 6 (17.1%) | 7 (20.0%) |
| \$52,500 | 12 (25.0%) | 14 (29.2%) | 9 (18.8%) | 6 (12.5%) | 7 (14.6%) |
| \$82,500 | 7 (28.0%) | 5 (20.0%) | 5 (20.0%) | 7 (28.0%) | 1 (4.0%) |
| \$100,000 + | 3 (15.8%) | 2 (10.5%) | 8 (42.1%) | 4 (21.1%) | 2 (10.5%) |
| Pearson's Chi Square | 1.236 | 9.610 | 5.984 | 4.165 | 3.405 |
| Phi | 0.092 | 0.256* | 0.202 | 0.168 | 0.152 |
| N= | 146 | | | | |

| | <u>Country of Origin</u> | <u>Food/Animal/ Environmental Rights</u> | <u>Supports Like- Minded Causes</u> | <u>Religious/Personal</u> | <u>Asked but Declined/ Refused to Answer</u> |
|----------------------|--------------------------|--|---|---------------------------|--|
| <u>Education</u> | | | | | |
| Some High School | 1 (12.5%) | 0 (0.0%) | 1 (12.5%) | 5 (62.5%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| High School grad | 12 (30.0%) | 4 (10.0%) | 9 (22.5%) | 8 (20.0%) | 7 (17.5%) |
| Some college | 12 (21.1%) | 10 (17.5%) | 15 (26.3%) | 7 (12.3%) | 13 (22.8%) |
| College or more | 11 (19.0%) | 13 (22.4%) | 15 (25.9%) | 14 (24.1%) | 5 (8.6%) |
| Pearson's Chi Square | 2.247 | 4.321 | 0.868 | 11.340 | 6.058 |
| Phi | 0.117 | 0.163 | 0.073 | 0.264** | 0.193 |
| N= 162 | | | | | |

Political Affiliation

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Conservative | 12 (22.6%) | 5 (9.4%) | 13 (24.5%) | 13 (24.5%) | 10 (18.9%) |
| Moderate | 14 (20.9%) | 9 (13.4%) | 17 (25.4%) | 16 (23.9%) | 10 (14.9%) |
| Liberal | 10 (24.4%) | 11 (26.8%) | 10 (24.4%) | 6 (14.6%) | 4 (9.8%) |
| Pearson's Chi Square | 0.183 | 5.717 | 0.017 | 1.639 | 1.513 |
| Phi | 0.034 | 0.188 | 0.010 | 0.101 | 0.097 |
| N=160 | | | | | |

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 17. Cross-tabulations of Boycotting Mode of Participation by Race, Sex, Education, Income, and Political Affiliation²²

| <u>Participation Style</u> | <u>Alone</u> | <u>Organized Campaign</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|----------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| <u>Entire Sample</u> | 452 (62.6%) | 270 (37.4%) | 722 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 580.930 | | |
| Cramer's V | 0.659 | | |
| P-value | 0.001*** | | |
| N=722 | | | |
| <hr/> | | | |
| <u>Race</u> | | | |
| White | 371 (93.5%) | 26 (6.5%) | 397 (100.0%) |
| Racial Ethnic Minority | 69 (89.6%) | 8 (10.4%) | 77 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 1.429 | | |
| Phi | 0.055 | | |
| P-value | 0.232 | | |
| N=474 | | | |
| <hr/> | | | |
| <u>Sex</u> | | | |
| Male | 218 (94.4%) | 13 (5.6%) | 231 (100.0%) |
| Female | 234 (91.8%) | 21 (8.2%) | 255 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 1.267 | | |
| Phi | 0.051 | | |
| P-value | 0.260 | | |
| N=486 | | | |

²² Actual survey question asked of half of boycotters was, "thinking about the last time you did this, was this a part of an organized campaign to not buy something, or is it something you just decided to do on your own?"

| <u>Independent Variables</u> | <u>Alone</u> | <u>Organized Campaign</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| <u>Age</u> | | | |
| 18-24 years (1) | 37 (94.9%) | 2 (5.1%) | 39 (100.0%) |
| 25-34 years (2) | 86 (95.6%) | 4 (4.4%) | 90 (100.0%) |
| 35-44 years (3) | 92 (86.0%) | 15 (14.0%) | 107 (100.0%) |
| 45-54 years (4) | 104 (95.4%) | 5 (4.6%) | 109 (100.0%) |
| 55-64 years (5) | 74 (95.9%) | 4 (5.1%) | 79 (100.0%) |
| 65+ years (6) | 49 (96.1%) | 2 (3.9%) | 51 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 11.867 | | |
| Cramer's V | 0.157 | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | 0.021 | | |
| P-value | .036* | | |
| N=474 | | | |
| <hr/> | | | |
| <u>Education</u> | | | |
| Some high school (1) | 16 (100%) | 0 (0.0%) | 16 (100.0%) |
| High school graduate (2) | 82 (92.1%) | 7 (7.9%) | 89 (100.0%) |
| Some college (3) | 168 (92.3%) | 14 (7.7%) | 182 (100.0%) |
| College and beyond (4) | 184 (93.4%) | 13 (6.6%) | 197 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 1.184 | | |
| Cramer's V | 0.055 | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | 0.002 | | |
| P-value | 0.686 | | |
| N=484 | | | |
| <hr/> | | | |
| <u>Income</u> | | | |
| Under \$ 20,000 (1) | 38 (97.4%) | 1 (2.6%) | 39 (100.0%) |
| \$30,000 (2) | 95 (93.1%) | 7 (6.9%) | 102 (100.0%) |
| \$52,500 (3) | 119 (93.0%) | 9 (7.0%) | 128 (100.0%) |
| \$82,500 (4) | 101 (91.8%) | 9 (8.2%) | 110 (100.0%) |
| over \$100,000 (5) | 47 (88.4%) | 6 (13.2%) | 53 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 2.684 | | |
| Cramer's V | 0.079 | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | -.040 | | |
| P-value | 0.612 | | |
| N= 432 | | | |

| <u>Independent Variables</u> | | <u>Alone</u> | <u>Organized Campaign</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|------------------------------|-----|--------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| <u>Political Affiliation</u> | | | | |
| Conservative | (1) | 167 (91.8%) | 15 (8.2%) | 182 (100.0%) |
| Moderate | (2) | 174 (94.1%) | 11 (5.9%) | 185 (100.0%) |
| Liberal | (3) | 91 (92.9%) | 33 (7.1%) | 124 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | | 0.734 | | |
| Cramer's V | | 0.040 | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | | 0.014 | | |
| P-value | | 0.693 | | |
| N=465 | | | | |

* p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 18. Cross-tabulations of Boycotting Mode of Participation by Race, Sex, Education, Income, and Political Affiliation²³

| <u>Participation Style</u> | <u>Alone</u> | <u>Organized Campaign</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| <u>Overall</u> | 411 (71.7%) | 162 (28.3%) | 573 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 809.744 | | |
| Cramer's V | 0.771 | | |
| P-value | 0.001*** | | |
| N= 573 | | | |
| <u>Independent Variables</u> | | | |
| <u>Race</u> | | | |
| White | 333 (92.8%) | 26 (7.2%) | 359 (100.0%) |
| Racial Ethnic Minority | 71 (93.4%) | 5 (6.6%) | 76 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 0.042 | | |
| Phi | 0.010 | | |
| P-value | 0.838 | | |
| N= 435 | | | |
| <u>Sex</u> | | | |
| Male | 186 (93.9%) | 12 (6.1%) | 198 (100.0%) |
| Female | 225 (92.2%) | 19 (7.8%) | 244 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 0.499 | | |
| Phi | 0.034 | | |
| P-value | 0.480 | | |
| N=442 | | | |

²³ Actual survey question asked of half of boycotters was, "thinking about the last time you did this, was this a part of an organized campaign to buy something, or is it something you just decided to do on your own?"

| <u>Independent Variables</u> | <u>Alone</u> | <u>Organized Campaign</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| <u>Age</u> | | | |
| 18-24 years (1) | 39 (95.1%) | 2 (4.9%) | 41 (100.0%) |
| 25-34 years (2) | 81 (93.1%) | 6 (6.1%) | 87 (100.0%) |
| 35-44 years (3) | 91 (86.7%) | 14 (13.3%) | 115 (100.0%) |
| 45-54 years (4) | 86 (94.5%) | 5 (5.5%) | 91 (100.0%) |
| 55-64 years (5) | 63 (98.4%) | 1 (1.6%) | 64 (100.0%) |
| 65+ years (6) | 42 (93.3%) | 3 (6.7%) | 45 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 9.764 | | |
| Cramer's V | 0.150 | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | -.028 | | |
| P-value | .082 | | |
| N=433 | | | |
| <hr/> | | | |
| <u>Education</u> | | | |
| Some high school (1) | 15 (100.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 15 (100.0%) |
| High school graduate (2) | 83 (95.4%) | 4 (4.6%) | 87 (100.0%) |
| Some college (3) | 147 (90.7%) | 15 (9.3%) | 162 (100.0%) |
| College and beyond (4) | 163 (93.1%) | 12 (6.9%) | 175 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 3.148 | | |
| Cramer's V | 0.085 | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | 0.016 | | |
| P-value | 0.369 | | |
| N= 439 | | | |
| <hr/> | | | |
| <u>Income</u> | | | |
| Under \$ 20,000 (1) | 45 (95.7%) | 2 (4.3%) | 47 (100.0%) |
| \$30,000 (2) | 84 (92.3%) | 7 (7.7%) | 91 (100.0%) |
| \$52,500 (3) | 116 (94.3%) | 7 (5.7%) | 123(100.0%) |
| \$82,500 (4) | 79 (88.8%) | 10 (11.2%) | 89 (100.0%) |
| over \$100,000 (5) | 46 (92.0%) | 4 (8.0%) | 50 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 3.107 | | |
| Cramer's V | 0.088 | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | 0.032 | | |
| P-value | 0.540 | | |
| N= 400 | | | |
| <hr/> | | | |

| <u>Independent Variables</u> | <u>Alone</u> | <u>Organized Campaign</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| <u>Political Affiliation</u> | | | |
| Conservative (1) | 141 (92.8%) | 11 (7.2%) | 152 (100.0%) |
| Moderate (2) | 158 (90.3%) | 17 (9.7%) | 175 (100.0%) |
| Liberal (3) | 102 (97.1%) | 3 (2.9%) | 105 (100.0%) |
| Pearson's Chi-Square | 4.634 | | |
| Cramer's V | 0.104 | | |
| Kendall's tau-c | -0.028 | | |
| P-value | 0.099 | | |
| N= 432 | | | |

* p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 19. Cross-tabulations for Information Sources of Boycotters by Race, Sex, Age, Income, Education, and Political Affiliation²⁴

| | <u>Friends/Family</u> | <u>News Media</u> | <u>Internet/Email</u> | <u>Organization</u> | <u>Other</u> | <u>One or more</u> | <u>Don't Know/Refused</u> |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| <u>Independent Variables</u> | | | | | | | |
| <u>Race</u> | | | | | | | |
| White | 61 (14.9%) | 163 (39.8%) | 28 (6.8%) | 33 (8.0%) | 99 (24.1%) | 16 (3.9%) | 10 (2.4%) |
| <u>Racial Ethnic</u> | | | | | | | |
| Minority | 13 (16.3%) | 23 (28.7%) | 7 (8.8%) | 10 (12.5%) | 24 (30.0%) | 2 (2.5%) | 1 (1.3%) |
| Pearson's Chi Square 5.770 | | | | | | | |
| Phi | 0.109 | | | | | | |
| P-value | 0.449 | | | | | | |
| N=490 | | | | | | | |
| <u>Sex</u> | | | | | | | |
| Male | 26 (10.9%) | 88 (36.8%) | 23 (9.6%) | 22 (9.2%) | 64 (26.8%) | 9 (3.8%) | 7 (2.9%) |
| Female | 51 (19.3%) | 103 (39.0%) | 12 (4.5%) | 21 (8.0%) | 60 (22.7%) | 10 (3.8%) | 7 (2.7%) |
| Pearson's Chi Square 11.743 | | | | | | | |
| Phi | 0.153 | | | | | | |
| P-value | 0.068 | | | | | | |
| N=503 | | | | | | | |

²⁴ Actual survey question asked of half of boycotters was, "where did you get the information that helped you make your decision to do it...from friends or family members, from the news media, from the Internet, from a group organization, or from somewhere else?"

| | <u>Friends/Family</u> | <u>News Media</u> | <u>Internet/Email</u> | <u>Organization</u> | <u>Other</u> | <u>One or more</u> | <u>Don't Know/Refused</u> |
|------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| <u>Age</u> | | | | | | | |
| 18-24 | 10 (25.6%) | 6 (15.4%) | 7 (17.9%) | 4 (10.3%) | 10 (25.6%) | 2 (5.1%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| 25-34 | 23 (24.2%) | 31 (32.6%) | 9 (9.5%) | 6 (6.3%) | 21 (22.1%) | 5 (5.3%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| 35-44 | 15 (13.3%) | 41 (36.3%) | 5 (4.4%) | 14 (12.4%) | 28 (24.8%) | 6 (5.3%) | 4 (3.5%) |
| 45-54 | 10 (8.9%) | 51 (45.5%) | 8 (7.1%) | 11 (9.8%) | 26 (23.2%) | 2 (1.8%) | 4 (3.6%) |
| 55-64 | 12 (15.2%) | 37 (46.8%) | 4 (5.1%) | 5 (6.3%) | 17 (21.5%) | 1 (1.3%) | 3 (3.8%) |
| 65+ | 5 (9.8%) | 22 (43.1%) | 2 (3.9%) | 2 (3.9%) | 16 (31.4%) | 3 (5.9%) | 1 (2.8%) |

Pearson's Chi Square 46.525

Cramer's V 0.138

Kendall's tau-c 0.022

P-value 0.028*

N=489

Income

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|----------|----------|
| \$ 20,000 | 9 (23.1%) | 8 (20.5%) | 4 (10.3%) | 3 (7.7%) | 12 (30.8%) | 3 (7.8%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| \$30,0000 | 18 (17.5%) | 39 (37.9%) | 7 (6.5%) | 5 (4.9%) | 28 (27.2%) | 5 (4.9%) | 1 (1.0%) |
| \$52,500 | 22 (16.2%) | 55 (40.4%) | 9 (6.6%) | 17 (12.5%) | 26 (19.1%) | 5 (3.7%) | 2 (1.5%) |
| \$82,500 | 16 (14.2%) | 37 (32.7%) | 11 (9.7%) | 12 (10.6%) | 32 (28.2%) | 3 (2.7%) | 1 (1.8%) |
| \$100,000 + | 3 (5.5%) | 30 (54.5%) | 4 (7.3%) | 5 (9.1%) | 12 (21.8%) | 0 (0.0%) | 6 (1.3%) |

Pearson's Chi Square 27.647

Cramer's V 0.124

Kendall's tau-c 0.006

P-value 0.275

N=446

| <u>Education</u> | <u>Friends/Family</u> | <u>News Media</u> | <u>Internet/Email</u> | <u>Organization</u> | <u>Other</u> | <u>One or more</u> | <u>Don't Know/Refused</u> |
|------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Some HS | 4 (25.0%) | 6 (37.5%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) | 6 (37.5%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| HS grad | 13 (14.6%) | 31 (34.8%) | 4 (4.5%) | 10 (11.2%) | 23 (25.8%) | 5 (5.6%) | 3 (3.4%) |
| Some college | 33 (17.6%) | 70 (37.2%) | 14 (7.4%) | 15 (8.0%) | 47 (25.0%) | 7 (3.7%) | 2 (1.1%) |
| College or more | 26 (12.6%) | 83 (40.1%) | 17 (8.2%) | 18 (8.7%) | 123 (24.6%) | 7 (3.4%) | 9 (4.3%) |

Pearson's Chi Square 15.038

Cramer's V 0.100

Kendall's tau-c 0.008

P-value 0.659

N=500

Political Affiliation

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Conservative | 31 (16.4%) | 72 (38.1%) | 18 (9.5%) | 51 (27.0%) | 5 (2.5%) | 5 (2.6%) | 3 (1.6%) |
| Moderate | 26 (13.7%) | 78 (41.1%) | 13 (6.8%) | 43 (22.6%) | 7 (3.7%) | 7 (3.7%) | 6 (3.2%) |
| Liberal | 18 (17.6%) | 36 (35.3%) | 10 (9.8%) | 23 (22.5%) | 6 (5.9%) | 6 (5.9%) | 3 (2.9%) |

Pearson's Chi Square 5.770

Cramer's V 0.109

Kendall's tau-c 0.028

P-value 0.449

N=490

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 20. Cross-tabulations for Information Sources of Buycotters by Race, Sex, Age, Income, Education and Political Affiliation²⁵

| | <u>Friends/Family</u> | <u>News Media</u> | <u>Internet/Email</u> | <u>Organization</u> | <u>Other</u> | <u>One or more</u> | <u>Don't Know/Refused</u> |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| <u>Independent Variables</u> | | | | | | | |
| <u>Race</u> | | | | | | | |
| White | 79 (21.4%) | 130 (35.1%) | 22 (5.9%) | 42 (11.4%) | 77 (20.8%) | 13 (3.5%) | 7 (1.9%) |
| REM | 16 (20.5%) | 28 (35.9%) | 5 (6.4%) | 9 (11.5%) | 17 (21.8%) | 2 (2.6%) | 1 (1.3%) |
| Pearson's Chi Square | 0.394 | | | | | | |
| Phi | 0.030 | | | | | | |
| P-value | 0.999 | | | | | | |
| N=448 | | | | | | | |
| <u>Sex</u> | | | | | | | |
| Male | 35 (17.2%) | 79 (38.9%) | 16 (7.9%) | 25 (12.3%) | 39 (19.2%) | 7 (3.4%) | 2 (1.0%) |
| Female | 63 (25.0%) | 81 (32.1%) | 11 (4.4%) | 26 (10.1%) | 56 (22.2%) | 8 (3.2%) | 7 (2.8%) |
| Pearson's Chi Square | 9.693 | | | | | | |
| Phi | 0.146 | | | | | | |
| P-value | 0.138 | | | | | | |
| N=455 | | | | | | | |

²⁵ Actual survey question asked of half of buycotters was, "where did you get the information that helped you make your decision to do it...from friends or family members, from the news media, from the Internet, from a group organization, or from somewhere else?"

| <u>Age</u> | <u>Friends/Family</u> | <u>News Media</u> | <u>Internet/Email</u> | <u>Organization</u> | <u>Other</u> | <u>One or more</u> | <u>Don't Know/Refused</u> |
|------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 18-24 | 15 (35.7%) | 12 (28.6%) | 3 (7.1%) | 2 (4.8%) | 10 (23.8%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| 25-34 | 23 (25.6%) | 22 (22.4%) | 7 (7.8%) | 10 (11.1%) | 23 (25.6%) | 4 (4.4%) | 1 (1.1%) |
| 35-44 | 27 (25.2%) | 33 (30.8%) | 4 (3.7%) | 17 (15.9%) | 20 (18.7%) | 2 (1.9%) | 4 (3.7%) |
| 45-54 | 11 (11.7%) | 40 (42.6%) | 8 (8.5%) | 12 (12.8%) | 19 (20.2%) | 2 (2.1%) | 2 (2.1%) |
| 55-64 | 9 (13.6%) | 35 (53.0%) | 4 (6.1%) | 5 (7.6%) | 9 (13.6%) | 4 (6.1%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| 65+ | 10 (21.3%) | 15 (31.9%) | 0 (0.0%) | 5 (10.6%) | 12 (25.5%) | 3 (6.4%) | 2 (4.3%) |

Pearson's Chi Square 47.463

Cramer's V 0.146

Kendall's tau-c 0.035

P-value 0.022*

N=446

Income

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|----------|----------|
| \$ 20,000 | 16 (32.7%) | 14 (28.6%) | 1 (2.0%) | 2 (4.1%) | 11 (22.4%) | 2 (4.1%) | 3 (6.1%) |
| \$30,0000 | 28 (28.8%) | 28 (29.8%) | 4 (4.3%) | 13 (13.8%) | 18 (19.1%) | 3 (3.2%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| \$52,500 | 19 (15.1%) | 47 (37.3%) | 10 (7.9%) | 16 (12.7%) | 28 (22.2%) | 6 (4.8%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| \$82,500 | 15 (19.8%) | 33 (36.3%) | 10 (11.0%) | 13 (14.3%) | 15 (16.5%) | 2 (2.2%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| \$100,000 + | 7 (13.7%) | 23 (45.1%) | 2 (3.9%) | 6 (11.8%) | 12 (23.5%) | 0 (0.0%) | 1 (2.0%) |

Pearson's Chi Square 43.190

Cramer's V 0.035

Kendall's tau-c 0.162

P-value 0.009**

N=411

| | <u>Friends/Family</u> | <u>News Media</u> | <u>Internet/Email</u> | <u>Organization</u> | <u>Other</u> | <u>One or more</u> | <u>Don't Know/Refused</u> |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| <u>Education</u> | | | | | | | |
| Some HS | 5 (29.4%) | 4 (23.5%) | 1 (5.9%) | 0 (0.0%) | 7 (41.2%) | 0 (0.0%) | 0 (0.0%) |
| HS grad | 23 (25.6%) | 34 (37.8%) | 3 (3.3%) | 8 (8.9%) | 16 (17.8%) | 3 (3.3%) | 3 (3.3%) |
| Some college | 35 (21.3%) | 56 (34.1%) | 7 (4.3%) | 21 (12.8%) | 39 (23.8%) | 5 (3.0%) | 1 (0.6%) |
| College and beyond | 33 (18.2%) | 65 (35.9%) | 16 (8.8%) | 22 (12.2%) | 33 (18.2%) | 7 (3.9%) | 5 (2.8%) |

Pearson's Chi Square 19.203

Cramer's V 0.119

Kendall's tau-c 0.037

P-value 0.379

N=452

Political Affiliation

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|----------|----------|
| Conservative | 32 (20.3%) | 56 (35.4%) | 7 (4.4%) | 19 (12.0%) | 38 (24.1%) | 4 (2.5%) | 2 (1.3%) |
| Moderate | 37 (20.8%) | 79 (31.1%) | 12 (6.7%) | 16 (9.0%) | 31 (17.4%) | 6 (3.4%) | 5 (2.8%) |
| Liberal | 26 (24.1%) | 31 (28.7%) | 7 (6.5%) | 16 (14.8%) | 22 (20.4%) | 4 (3.7%) | 2 (1.9%) |

Pearson's Chi Square 8.889

Cramer's V 0.100

Kendall's tau-c -0.011

P-value 0.712

N=444

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusions

This study sought to identify United States political consumers, their motives for action, modes of participation, and to assess whether political consumers²⁶ were also engaged in other political activities. This study's findings demonstrate that consumption and civic engagement are not opposing entities, but rather, living in a consumer society creates opportunities for individuals to broaden the scope of political engagement through purchases, thereby becoming citizen-consumers (Schudson 2007). Below, I organize the discussion around the study's central themes and research questions.

Overview of Ethical Consumers

One of this project's main goals was to identify and understand United States political consumers beyond our limited, existing knowledge of niche market consumption. At the outset, political consumers were identified as individuals who routinely purchase particular products or avoid others, and who aim to influence or change market and institutional practices through purchasing patterns (Terrangi 2007; Micheletti 2006; Stolle et al. 2005). A central component of political consumerism, and by extension lifestyle politics (Newman and Bartels 2010; Bennett 1998), is the routinization of participation. However, this study found that while a large number of the entire sample either boycotted or buycotted, the frequency and the breadth of participation was limited. Boycotting and buycotting are activities that respondents engaged in sporadically and across a limited number of products or companies. The lack of frequency, coupled with the

²⁶ As will be discussed in this chapter, this research was initially framed as an investigation of political consumers in the United States. However, based upon the findings of this study, respondents are more aligned with ethical, rather than political, consumers. In this final chapter, references to existing political consumerism literature is still referenced as political consumerism but respondents from this study are termed ethical consumers.

lack of participation across multiple products or companies, raises further question whether or not these individuals should be identified as political consumers.

Prior research on European political consumers (Marien et al. 2009; Ferrer and Fraile 2006) suggests frequency and breadth of participation comprise defining characteristics of political consumerism. Additionally, the operational definition used for political consumerism in this study includes routinization and frequency (Terrangi 2007; Micheletti 2006; Stolle et al. 2005), along with market-changing political motives, as defining components of political consumerism. However, this study found the motivating factor for consumers was more altruistic (i.e. wanting to do “the right thing”), than market-change oriented. In many respects, this finding makes me reconsider whether or not individuals in this study should be termed political, as opposed to ethical consumers. Upon the completion of this project, I believe the use of the term ethical consumerism more appropriately characterizes the consumptive choices and motivations of respondents in this study. Additionally, individuals who participate in boycotting and buycotting also participate in other political activities. As a result of engagement in both political activities and participation in boycotting or buycotting, I believe the respondents in this study are best termed politically active ethical consumers. In other words, individuals concurrently occupy roles of political actors and ethical consumers, but these two spheres of participation are distinctive.

The next question then arises, is political or ethical consumption merely another avenue to legitimate consumption? Or, should we remind ourselves that without ‘ordinary’ consumption, the possibility for political ethical consumption could not exist (Barnett et al. 2005)? On the one hand, I wonder if political or ethical consumption is merely a way for individuals to maintain existing levels of consumption while simultaneously feeling good about themselves for doing

“the right thing” (through their purchases). After all, if you believe your purchases help another person, or is “the right thing” to do, you may feel better about those choices than choices that do not contain an altruistic element. If this is the case, ethical consumerism may legitimate, and even encourage, high(er) consumption rates as individuals may purchase items they otherwise would not have purchased (Barnett et al. 2005). Therefore, it is important to remember the distinctions, which are more than semantic, between the *ethics of consumption* and *ethical consumption*—of questioning the capitalist mode of production (Crocker and Linden 1998) versus making ethical consumer choices within the framework of an existing capitalist system (Barnett et al. 2005).

However, the reality is the United States is the world’s leading consumer nation (Whitehouse 2011) and very few of us are able to survive without consuming goods at some level (Schudson 2007; Appadurai 1986). Additionally, United States consumers live in a post-Fordist economy where producers can no longer purchase the goods they produce. In post-Fordism, consumers and producers are increasingly disconnected, both geographically and economically (Lunt and Livingstone 1992). One result of this disconnect is the superfluous choice of cheaply made goods, produced by “third world” workers and cheaply purchased by “first world” consumers (Lunt and Livingstone 1992; Mies 1986). Given these realities, and for United States consumers, ethical consumerism provides an opportunity for consumers (who will likely need to purchase products regardless), to have an opportunity to make those decisions ethically.

According to the findings of this study, a substantial portion of consumers incorporate ethics into their purchasing decisions. The majority of respondents reported boycotting (54 percent) and buycotting (42 percent) at some point in their life, and of those who have boycotted

or boycotted in their life, 67 percent boycotted and 78 percent boycotted within the past year. While it would be an overgeneralization to assume that all respondents who either boycotted or boycotted did so on the basis of ethics, these findings indicate, at some level, consumers are concerned with the companies and products they support. Moreover, 80 percent of boycotters and boycotters cited their rationale as believing it is “the right thing” to do (as opposed to changing business practices). Of course, “the right thing” has differing, and perhaps even conflicting, meanings amongst respondents. Overall, however, respondents demonstrate an altruistic desire to ensure their purchases matter.

Characteristics of Ethical Consumers

Who then are these political and ethical consumers? The first goal of this project was to identify which demographics, if any, significantly predict the likelihood that certain individuals will participate in political consumerism compared to others. Due to the limited quantity of studies on United States political and ethical consumers, I relied more broadly on the research of political and ethical consumers in European countries (Stolle et al. 2005; Anderson and Tobiasen 2004; Micheletti 2004a), on the limited research of United States political consumers (Newman and Bartels 2010), and the research on specific niche markets of political consumers in the United States (Arnould et al. 2007; Ross 2006; Auger et al. 2003) to hypothesize about the demographic characteristics I expected would predict participation in ethical consumerism.

Based upon prior research, I expected both boycotters and boycotters to be white, female, college-educated, between the ages of 25-34, middle-class, and politically liberal. This study found only education and income significantly predicted participation in boycotting and boycotting and working for or donating money to a political party, campaign, or organization, significantly decreased the likelihood of participation. While correlated, the race and gender of

the respondents did not significantly predict participation in either form of political consumerism. Additionally, liberal political affiliation was significantly related to an increased likelihood of boycotting, and as individuals gets older, they were significantly less likely to boycott.

Significant Predictors of Participation. Increases in education and income were both associated with an increased likelihood of participation. This finding demonstrates that socio-economic status (income plus education) significantly predicts participation in ethical consumerism. This finding offers support for previous research that education is the greatest significant predictor of involvement in political action (Dalton 2008; Anderson and Tobiasen 2004; Norris 2002; Verba et al. 1995) and prior research on political consumerism that individuals with higher levels of income are more likely to participate than those with lower levels of income (Ferrer and Fraile 2006; Stolle and Micheletti 2003; Leighley and Vedlitz 1999; Holt 1998).

Education's strong effect on participation is theorized multiple ways. The first is education is partially explained by social class. Education and income are highly correlated, and as a result, individuals with higher levels of both education and income (social class) are more likely to be politically active (Ferrer and Fraile 2006). The second theory is individuals with higher levels of education may possess higher levels of self and political efficacy, thereby contributing to increased rates of participation. If individuals are dissatisfied with the current state of political affairs, and have higher levels of self and political efficacy, they may be more likely to engage in direct action and participate in nuanced forms of political engagement, including political consumerism (Dalton 2008; Stolle et al. 2005; Norris 2002). While education was found to significantly predict participation in boycotting and boycotting, it does not appear

that participation was a result of high levels of efficacy. In fact, differing levels of income and education had no effect on individual beliefs that their purchasing decisions would influence business practices (see table 12). Thus, while income and education predict initial participation in boycotting and buycotting, no significant difference exists amongst those with higher levels of income and education that their actions will substantively alter business practices. Across educational and income brackets, respondents had little belief their purchasing patterns would significantly impact businesses. Based upon these results, it appears individuals who engage in ethical consumerism, despite differing levels of education and income, do so for reasons other than changing business practices or the belief that their purchases could actually do so.

The significant effects of income and education indicate participation in ethical consumerism is a result of socio-economic privilege on multiple fronts. First, it requires a certain level of financial capital to even have the opportunity to boycott an item or a company, and alternatively, buycott another. Structural restraints, such as product availability or access to specific products or stores, may also be limited based on geographic location, thereby restricting participation from the outset. Additionally, while not directly measured in this study, price of items may also play a role in participation of boycotting or buycotting. For example, items individuals boycott may tend to cost less such as items made in China or sold at large box-stores. Conversely, items that individuals buycott, including organic, fair trade or local, may cost more than their “less desirable” counterparts (Newman and Bartels 2010). This study’s findings offer support to existing research on political and ethical consumerism which has found consumers with higher socio-economic status are more likely to participate in political and ethical consumerism than consumers of lower socio-economic status (Stolle and Micheletti 2003; Leighley and Velditz 1999; Holt 1998).

Second, the role of income and education predicting participation also attests to an overall heightened awareness the privileges of high levels of education and social class afford. For example, previous research on social networks (Stolle et al. 2005; Hooghe and Stolle 2003) demonstrates that integration and embeddedness within likeminded networks increase recruitment and retention rates in political activism. Thus, if individuals are connected to others of similar mindsets, and their social class allows them the privilege and opportunity to participate, chances of participation amongst those with higher levels of income may increase.

The third explanation, according to the theory of lifestyle politics, is education keeps younger, disconnected, and disinterested individuals from abandoning politics completely (Newman and Bartels 2010; Bennett 1998). With increasing levels of education, younger individuals are able to forge connections between their choices and current social and political problems (Bennett 1998). Rather than growing disenchanted with conventional forms of political engagement and not participating at all, nuanced and unconventional measures may keep an otherwise disinterested demographic engaged (Newman and Bartels 2010).

However, in this study, youth were not significantly more likely to participate than older individuals. This study's findings indicate political consumers were most likely to be between the ages of 35 and 44. This finding supports Stolle and Hooghe's (2005) study on European political consumers that middle-aged individuals were most likely to engage in political consumerism. Stolle and Hooghe attribute the increased likelihood of participation to this age-demographic to the ageing of the protest generation and a transition from a higher risk form of engagement (protest) to a lower risk form (political consumerism).

An additional explanation for this finding is the relationship between age, income, and education. By the age of 35, individuals are likely to have higher levels of education than

younger individuals. Also, by the age of 35, individuals may be establishing their career and have higher levels of income than they did when they were younger, thereby increasing the likelihood that individuals 35-44 are the most likely age demographic to politically consume.

However, this finding also contradicts previous research findings that younger generations are more likely to participate in unconventional political activities and political consumerism (Dalton 2008; Zukin et al. 2006; Zukin 2004). A proposed explanation for younger individuals participation in political and ethical consumerism is an embrace of post-materialist values (Ingleheart 1997) that aligns well with unconventional forms of participation. The adoption of post-materialist values means individuals are likely to engage in behaviors challenging the elite strata of society, including challenging companies through political consumerism. The difference between previous findings of younger ethical consumers in Europe, and a slightly older cohort of ethical consumers in the United States may be a result of the strong effect for higher levels of income and education for United States political consumers. As a result of these effects, the average age for United States ethical consumers are older than European ethical consumers.

The only other variable that was significantly related to boycotting and buycotting was the strength of an individual's political affiliation. For boycotting and buycotting, a strong political affiliation (measured by donating or raising money for a political party, campaign, or organization) was significantly associated with a decreased likelihood of participation in boycotting and buycotting. In this study, I chose to also measure the strength of political affiliation of respondents. This decision stemmed from previous studies on political consumerism which suggested political consumers may distrust conventional forms of political participation targeting governmental change, thereby increasing their likelihood of participation

in political consumerism (Stolle and Hooghe 2005; Micheletti 2004). If respondents were strongly affiliated to a political party, and thus, change via governmental routes, perhaps they would also be significantly less likely to be involved in change via the market (Micheletti and Stolle 2006; Vogel 2004). This study's findings indicate the stronger an individual's political affiliation, the less likely they are to ethically consume.

The inverse relationship between the strength of political affiliation and participation in ethical consumerism can be explained in two ways. First, consumer culture theorists postulate political consumerism represents a distinctive form of political participation comprised of individuals who possess a distrust of more institutionalized political processes. As a result, these individuals chose to express their politics and enact social change through the market instead of the government (Micheletti and Stolle 2006; Norris 2002; Ingelehart and Baker 2000).

However, this study's findings indicate that this is not always the case. Individuals who engage in other political activities also participate in boycotting and buycotting²⁷. It is only the strength of political affiliation that is significantly related to a decline in political participation, not a respondent's actual (conservative, moderate, liberal) affiliation. This difference may be a result of individuals who donate or raise money for political parties or organizations being monetarily invested in the political process. As a result of their efforts, these individuals may have a higher level of commitment, both financial and political, to pursuing change via governmental routes.

The second component was the actual political affiliation of respondents. Liberal political affiliation significantly increased the likelihood of participation in buycotting, but not boycotting. Identifying as a conservative or moderate did not significantly predict participation

²⁷ The specific political activities of those who also boycott and buycott are discussed at length later in this chapter.

in either form of political consumerism. This finding also supports prior niche-market research on food activists in the United States that found liberalness was associated with participation and likelihood to boycott, but not boycott (Adugu 2008). However, Newman and Bartels (2010) study of political consumers found no significant effect for political party affiliation on participation in political consumerism. As Newman and Bartels explain, we are often quick to conceptualize political consumerism as a liberal activity as a result of a perceived emphasis on social welfare, environmental and global justice concerns. However, many initiatives such as “Buying American” and buying local do not necessitate a liberal political affiliation. In other words, perhaps it should not be a surprise that liberals are not the only ones who express their politics through their purchases.

As with age and education, the association of liberalness to participation in ethical consumerism may be explained as an embrace of post-materialist values. Post-materialists pay significant attention to issues of the environment, equality, human rights, and sustainability and also possess a strong value for self-expression, choice, and political action (Inglehart 1997). Post-materialists are also more likely to participate in nuanced forms of political participation, including ethical consumerism. Therefore, the alignment of post-materialist values with liberal political ideologies translates into a greater likelihood that liberals will also participate in political consumerism (Adugu 2008).

Characteristics Not Predicting Participation. While the previous discussion has focused on those characteristics significantly associated with an increased likelihood of participation in ethical consumerism, it is also worth mentioning what demographic characteristics do not significantly predict participation. The first variable is race. As can be seen in the correlation matrix found in table 4, race is correlated with participation in boycotting, but not boycotting.

The correlation between race and boycotting demonstrates that race and participation in boycotting are related, although the lack of significance in the regression model informs us that race does not significantly predict participation in boycotting or buycotting.

However, because only a correlation exists between race and boycotting, the conclusions drawn from this finding are limited. This finding differs from previous studies that suggest United States political consumers are most likely to be white (Newman and Bartels 2010) and prior niche market political consumer studies that found greater participation among whites (Chatzkidias et al. 2007; Featherstone 2007). Further, the lack of significance for race also gives credence to previous research suggesting the purchasing patterns of African Americans should not be ignored (Podoshen 2008). In other words, marketers and organizations should not explicitly assume a white audience, as this study finds no significant difference in participation of ethical consumerism based upon race.

The final demographic characteristic of respondents that did not significantly predict participation in ethical consumerism was gender. Traditionally, women's rates of conventional political participation are lower than men's (Burns 2001). However, when unconventional measures of political participation, including political consumerism, are factored in, women are more politically active than men (Marien et al. 2009; Anderson and Tobiasen 2004; Micheletti 2004; Stolle and Micheletti 2003). The inclusion of unconventional measures of participation allows for less formalized, and often more private, forms of participation to be included in measurements of political activities. As a result, the private-public distinction in political participation dissolves, and women's rates of participation increase (Terrangi 2007).

The addition of unconventional political activities into the analysis, including political consumerism, provides an opportunity for women, whose time and opportunities may be limited

in formalized political activities, to be involved through shopping and household provisioning (Terrangi 2007; Stolle and Hooghe 2003). For example, Stolle and Micheletti's (2003) article, "The Gender-Gap Reversed: Political Consumerism as a Women-Friendly Form of Civic and Political Engagement," found women in Canada, Belgium, and Sweden participated in political consumerism at greater rates than men. Stolle and Micheletti argue that previous measures of political participation are limited in scope, thereby excluding the more informalized and less-hierarchical nature of political consumerism. The researchers conclude participation in political consumerism allows women to be politically active and to engage in a way that "makes politics tangible" (Stolle and Micheletti 2003: 23).

Based upon these previous studies, we would assume to find a significant effect between gender and participation in ethical consumerism. We would expect to find women are more likely than men to participate. However, based upon the results of this study, gender does not significantly predict participation in ethical consumerism. In neither the cross-tabulations for boycotting and buycotting, nor the regression models, was gender significant.

The first explanation for this lack of significance may be due to the fact that the NCES II survey was not specifically focused on the purchasing of household items. Prior research by European political consumer researchers (Stolle et al. 2005; Stolle and Micheletti 2003) has often used the supermarket as a site of inquiry. Therefore, if part of a woman's role in provisioning includes supermarket shopping (see Micheletti 2004; Stolle and Micheletti 2003; Terrangi 2003), it is not surprising that those studies found women had an increased likelihood of participation. In this study, however, respondents answers were limited to a particular type of store or product they boycotted or buycotted. Responses ranged from the boycotting of specific brands of tires to the buycotting of certain salad dressings. This breadth of answers, and of products consumed,

may explain the lack of effect for gender, as both men and women in a consumer society must shop.

Another possible explanation for the lack of effect for gender is that men and women living in the United States, the world's leading consumer nation (Whitehouse 2011), have higher overall rates of consumption compared to our European counterparts. One effect of living in a consumer culture is that both men and women increasingly obtain more meaning and self-worth from consumption²⁸ (Ritzer 2007; Trentmann 2006; Bauman 2001; Miles 1998). As a result of this increasing value attributed to consumption, perhaps women and men alike also place increasing value on making those choices on ethical grounds. Additionally, Newman and Bartels (2010) study on United States political consumers, which also was not limited in scope regarding type or location of consumption patterns, also found no significant effect for gender. The findings from this study, combined with support from Newman and Bartels (2010) study of political consumers, leads me to believe there are significant gender differences in political and ethical consumerism across countries. Further, this finding reinforces the need for more studies of political and ethical consumers in the United States, as studies of European political and ethical consumers may not fully explain the culture, environment, and traits surrounding political consumerism in the United States.

Political Activities of Ethical Consumers

The next question in this study addresses if ethical consumerism is a distinctive form of political participation, or if an overlap exists between individuals who participate in other forms of political action and ethical consumerism. The central distinction between participation in

²⁸ This statement should not be interpreted that the United States is the only consumer culture in the world. Rather, it should be understood that consumption rates in the United States are higher than other countries in the world as Americans spend three to four times the amount shopping than other Western Europeans (Hamilton 2005).

political consumerism compared to other political activities is the utilization of the market to enact social change instead of the government (Stolle et al. 2005; Micheletti et al. 2004; Vogel 2004). Some researchers argue that political consumers direct their efforts towards changes in the market because they have lost faith in the government to produce any meaningful change (Norris 2002; Inglehart and Baker 2000). It is therefore important to measure the additional activities of political consumers to assess whether or not we see a similar divide amongst United States political consumers.

As a result of the lack of studies on the breadth of engagement of political consumers, it was difficult to base any hypotheses off previous findings. However, Newman and Bartels (2010) study of United States political consumers provided an initial placement of political consumers on the spectrum of political activities as the “middle ground” of political action between the individualized, institutionalized and low-risk act of voting and the collective, non-institutionalized, high-risk act of protest. Relying also upon the theory of lifestyle politics (Newman and Bartels 2010; Bennett 1998), I expected political consumers would also attempt to ‘politicize the personal’ through other political actions. Specifically, I expected individuals who signed e-mail and written petitions, participated in marches or protests, donated and helped to raise money to a charitable cause to have an increased likelihood of participating in ethical consumerism. I also expected those who called into a radio or television show, contacted a newspaper or magazine, contacted a public official and worked as a canvasser on a political campaign to have a decreased likelihood of participation in boycotting or buycotting.

The results from this study indicate that respondents who contacted a public official, participated in protest, signed email and written petitions, walked or biked for charity, and raised or donated campaign funds to a political organization or party were significantly more likely to

boycott (see table 9). Individuals who contacted a newspaper/magazine or talk or radio show to express political views, who canvassed for a political campaign, or who voted in the 2002 general election were not significantly more likely to boycott. In the second regression model (see table 9), when the demographic attributes of boycotters were included, only an increase in education was significantly related to an increased likelihood of boycotting.

Buycotters participate in many similar political activities as boycotters. Respondents who contacted a public official, protested, signed written and email petitions, and walked or biked for charity were significantly more likely to buycott (see table 10). However, respondents who contacted a newspaper/magazine or talk or radio show to express political views, raising campaign funds, canvassing for political campaigns, and who voted in the 2002 election were not significantly more likely to buycott. The inclusion of demographic variables in the second model for buycotting (found in table 10) also shows that increases in education are significantly associated with a higher likelihood of buycotting. Additionally, age is significantly related to buycotting and as respondents' age, they are significantly less likely to buycott.

As previously discussed, education is the greatest significant predictor of participation in political activities (Dalton 2008; Anderson and Tobiasen 2004; Norris 2002; Verba et al. 1995). When education is added to logistic regression models of political activities, it is, therefore, not surprising that education is the only significant demographic variable to predict participation for both the boycotting and buycotting.

The significant relationship between age and buycotting also supports previously discussed findings that younger generations may be more likely to participate in unconventional measures of political action and may also be more likely to align their values with their consumption (Ferrer and Fraile 2006; Stolle et al. 2005). In this study, overall, ethical consumers

were most likely to be between the ages of 35-44. While boycotting also constitutes a method of unconventional political participation, the significant relationship of age to only boycotting may be explained as a result of younger generations being more concerned about the meshing of politics through everyday choices in what they buy, how they dress, and what they eat (Micheletti 2006). In general, younger generations express a greater embrace of post-materialist values (Inglehart 1997) and, as a result, demonstrate an increased propensity to align politics with lifestyle (Dalton 2008). A final potential explanation of why younger people are more likely to boycott than older people is because is due to the fact that younger people have not yet established a firm pattern of consumer behavior, and thus, may be more likely to modify their patterns of consumption through boycotting than older respondents with more established consumption patterns (Harrison et al. 2005).

These findings, of the overlapping nature between the political activities of boycotters and boycotters, emphasize the highly significant relationship between boycotting and boycotting. For example, if individuals boycott some specific items they are likely also knowledgeable about items which they subsequently boycott. Conversely, an act of boycotting could also be regarded as an act of boycotting, again highlighting the overlap between the two forms of engagement. Perhaps this is why the majority of studies on political consumerism do not distinctively measure acts of boycotting and boycotting separately. However, at the onset of this study, I chose to separate and measure these acts separately because I believed, in accordance with Neilson (2010), that boycotting and boycotting represented distinctive forms of participation and may have appealed to different types of consumers. Boycotting and boycotting, while both types of political consumerism, lead to opposing business outcomes and therefore should be measured separately. Additionally, the appeal of boycotting and boycotting may appeal to different

consumers as boycotting has a more altruistic approach and boycotting is a more punitive approach (Neilson 2010). The findings, however, indicate a significant overlap between the two and very little difference between the attributes and political activities of boycotters and boycotters.

To a large extent, the political activities of both boycotters and boycotters are unconventional in nature. Engagement in unconventional forms of participation provides support to previous research (Marien et al. 2009; Dalton 2008; Norris 2002) that identifies boycotting, signing petitions, and protesting as unconventional and highly correlated forms of political participation. Additionally, the increased likelihood of those who protest to also boycott affirms Friedman's (1999) contention that boycotts are favored by individuals or activist groups more likely to engage in protest and Dalton's (2008) claim that boycotters are more likely to engage in contentious, non-institutionalized political activities. In many respects, the overlap between those who participate in additional political activities and who boycott or boycott does not support previous theories that political consumers target the market to the exclusion of the government (Stolle et al. 2005; Micheletti et al. 2004; Vogel 2004). While participation in political activities favors engagement in unconventional forms of political action, those who engage in unconventional forms of action also politically consume, thereby targeting both the market and the government.

On a broader scale, the overlap between participation in political activities and ethical consumerism in this study affirms the rise of participation in unconventional political activities (Agudu 2008; Stolle and Hooghe 2005; Norris 2002; Ingelhart and Catterberg 2002). Participation in unconventional forms of political participation also attests to the necessity of accurately measuring the types of political action individuals participate in within a given

historical time period (Dalton 2008). As Jeffrey Alexander (2006) claims, a shift, as opposed to a decline, has occurred in broader civil society, and as a result, our model of measurement for those forms must also shift. Richard Dalton (2008) conceptualizes this shift as a transition from duty-based to engaged citizens. Engaged citizens, who also embrace the post-materialist values of belonging, self-expression, and quality of life (Inglehart 1997), are also those who are more likely to align politics with lifestyle.

Participation in more formalized political activities and ethical consumerism demonstrates Schudson's (2003) concept of the citizen-consumer. Citizen-consumerism, by definition, means individuals do not have to opt for membership in one category over the other. Rather, citizen-consumers demonstrate how individuals can, and historically have, expressed virtues of citizenship through consumption (Schudson 2007). In this study, individuals who boycott or buycott also participate in a breadth of additional political activities including protesting, signing email and written petitions, contacting public officials. While respondents measured in this portion of the study constitute ethical consumers, as opposed to consumers who are otherwise uninvolved in political activities, these findings suggest it is possible for individuals to actively embrace both the role of citizen and consumer. In this respect, consumers make meaning through the expression of their lifestyle, consumer and citizenship choices (Arnould and Thompson 2005) while also displaying their taste, politics, and lifestyle through their consumptive choices (Dunn 2008; Bourdieu 1976).

The overlap between participation in political activities and ethical consumerism also dispels the theory of Robert Putnam (2000) that individuals are less civically engaged today than in the 1950s. The findings on rates of involvement in political activities suggest that we should pay more attention to the cautious words of Alexander (2006) and Dalton (2008) to ensure that

our measurements for political participation accurately reflect the political activities of a given time period. For instance, Putnam's claim that Americans are less civically engaged than in years past is based upon a model of measurement that does not accurately reflect the activities individuals are engaged in today. If, as this study suggests, individuals participate in more unconventional forms of political participation, and a shift from a duty-based to engaged citizenry has occurred, then our measurement of political participation needs to reflect that shift. Merely assuming that declines in voter turnout, philanthropy and community based organizations translates into an overall decline in political engagement and social capital (see Putnam 2000) misattributes a shift in political participation for a decline. Even in the midst of a consumer society, individuals are not opting to be consumers to the exclusion of citizens, but rather, are merging the two and expanding definitions of what it means to be both a citizen and a consumer.

Activities and Rationales of Ethical Consumers

In theory, political consumerism provides an opportunity for consumers to harness their purchasing power to enact social change via the market (Stolle and Micheletti 2005; Anderson and Tobiasen 2004). Thus, a vital component explaining participation is consumer efficacy. Do consumers believe their purchases can and will change business and market practices, and if so, how much change do they believe is possible?

Boycotters and buycotters were asked their rationale for participation—to alter business practices or because they believe it is a “good thing” to do. As can be seen in table 13, an overwhelming majority, 80 percent, of political consumers indicate their rationale for participation was because it was a “good thing to do,” compared with 20 percent who believed their purchases would change business behavior.

The fact that the respondents' motivations were altruistic, rather than market-change oriented, again raises questions about whether respondents in this study are best categorized as political, or ethical, consumers. Political consumerism, defined as “the intentional use of consumer choice over products and producers within the marketplace as a means of expressing policy preferences and achieving political objectives,” specifically highlights the achievement of political objectives through purchasing (Newman and Bartels 2010:2). Political consumerism has also been termed “voting with your dollar,” highlighting the link between politics and purchasing (Newman and Bartels 2010). This leads me to return to a question asked at the onset of this study—what matters more, the purchase, or the motivation behind the purchase?

In this study, while respondents may not have had the explicit market-change goals, 67 percent of respondents boycotted and 78 percent buycotted within the past year. However, as also previously noted, while a high percentage of respondents boycotted or buycotted, the commitment and frequency to those activities across products and companies was limited. For these reasons, and as stated previously in this chapter, I believe respondents in this study are best termed politically-active ethical consumers. Respondents are politically active and are also altruistically driven in some of their consumption choices. However, because of the absence of explicit market-change goals, the lack of expressed desire to achieve political objectives through purchasing, and the infrequency of participation, I do not believe these respondents can be classified as political consumers.

Altruistic Nature of Ethical Consumers. The next survey question provides additional clarity on the altruistic nature of respondents. When asked how much they believe their purchases would affect business practices, 11 percent of boycotters and buycotters believed their purchases would have a great impact on business, 26 percent believed their purchases would

have a fair amount of impact, 43 percent believed their purchases would not have much of an impact, and 18 percent believed their purchases would not have any impact at all. The lack of belief among respondents of the ability to affect business practices may explain why only 20 percent of respondents indicate affecting business practices as their primary objective. If respondents do not believe their purchases will greatly alter business practices, they may be less likely to attempt to change those practices at all.

Specifically, it is interesting that no significant difference exists between those of differing levels of education and income and the belief in the ability to alter business practices (see table 14). It is noteworthy that, despite high levels of education and income, previously found to be precursors to high levels of efficacy (Dalton 2008; Stolle et al. 2005; Norris 2002), regardless of income and education level, ethical consumers have little belief in the power of their purchase to alter business practices. Prior research, however, suggests that individuals with higher levels of income and education express greater levels of belief that their actions can change “the system” (Dalton 2008; Stolle et al. 2005; Norris 2002). In this study, respondents across all demographic categories indicate relatively little faith their purchases will alter business practices. It is also noteworthy that consumers did not believe their purchases had no impact at all. Rather, the majority of respondents indicated they did not believe their purchases would have much of an impact. The question then becomes, if individuals do not believe their purchases can alter behavior, why participate?

It appears that consumption choices are made more in line with altruistic rather than political motives. Neilson’s (2010) study of European political consumers yielded similar results. Neilson measured levels of altruism between boycotters and buycotters, and also between political consumers and non-political consumers. Altruism levels were measured based upon

responses to 21 descriptive statements on altruism versus competitiveness in the European Social Survey²⁹. While boycotters were found to have higher levels of altruism than boycotters, overall, political consumers were more altruistic than non-political consumers (Neilson 2010). In Neilson's study, altruism was measured by responses to specific altruistically oriented driven survey questions. Respondents in the NCES II survey, however, only had two choices for responses--either respondents boycotted or boycotted to change business practices or because they believed it was a good thing to do. In other words, by default of the binary nature of this survey question, more respondents may have indicated their rationale was doing the right thing, solely because that answer was the only available alternative to changing business practices. Further, respondents indicating they wanted to "do the right thing" may also be indicative of socially desirable responses. In other words, who would not want to do "the right thing"?

The altruistic motivations of ethical consumers may also explain why individuals express little belief their purchases can affect business practices. Either altering business practices is not their primary aim, and therefore, is not of vital importance, or consumers may also then assume that businesses, like themselves, would also be altruistic in their decisions. If political consumers are more altruistic than non-political consumers (Neilson 2010), political consumers may assume the companies they spend the time, money, and energy to intentionally support would also be concerned with doing "the right thing" as well³⁰.

²⁹ Altruism levels were coded using a six-point scale ranging from "very much like me" to "not like me at all." Sample questions include, "being successful is very important to me. I hope people will recognize my achievements" to "It's very important for me to care for those around me. I want to care for others' well-being" (Neilson 2010).

³⁰ I only reference boycotting in this example because, by definition, I assume that if an individual boycotts a company they are likely not concerned, nor do they likely believe, that company is doing "the right thing."

A second, and more likely, explanation for consumers' lack of belief in changing business practices is the individualized nature of purchasing. Previous research (Poletta and Jasper 2007; Della Porta and Diani 2006) indicates connectedness and integration within a group are vital for long-term involvement. However, the vast majority of political consumers act alone (63 percent of boycotters and 72 percent of buycotters). As a result of the solitary nature of participation, individuals may feel disconnected from either organized consumer initiatives or other individuals making similar purchasing decisions. Therefore, if individuals act alone and are not connected to others engaging in similar activities, they may not understand that others are engaging in similar purchasing decisions. The solitary nature of participation may contribute to a lack of belief that your purchases can affect business practices because individuals may feel as if they are alone in their efforts.

Lastly, a final potential explanation explaining the lack of consumer efficacy may be a result of the behemoth nature of corporations and businesses. The multinational and globalized world of today differs from generations past. Today, connectedness, especially via the Internet, provides consumers with the awareness of conditions or business practices previously not as accessible as it is today. For example, anti-sweatshop organizations (i.e. Clean Clothes Campaign in Europe and United Students Against Sweatshops in the United States) effectively use the Internet as both a tool for disseminating information to consumers about companies and anti-sweatshop campaigns, and for culture jamming and parodying the labor abuses of those companies (Micheletti and Stolle 2008; Peretti and Micheletti 2004). Internet access also provides an outlet for global social justice networks to encourage shoppers to consider the true costs behind consumer goods and corporate brand names (Micheletti and Stolle 2008). For example, the Internet offers a domain for sites such as Good Guide (www.goodguide.com),

which provides consumers with free rankings about the health, environmental, and social performance of products and companies.

However, the abundance of information available via the Internet may have an unintended consequence—overwhelming consumers with information about the actual size and power of companies. This knowledge, while good to know, may inadvertently detract from consumer efficacy and the belief that individual purchases have the potential to alter business practices. Historically, consumer mobilization through boycotting and buycotting has a strong track record for altering business practices³¹. In this regard, consumers can be energized that their purchases have, and still can, influence change on a larger scale.

If ethical consumers do not base their consumer choices on affecting business behavior, and are altruistically driven, what driving factors motivate their choices? To answer this question, half of boycotters and buycotters in the sample were asked an open-ended question to recall the motivation behind their last boycott or buycott. As previously mentioned, the relative infrequency of participation in boycotting and buycotting, and also the lack of consistency across products or business, is worth noting prior to examining the open-ended responses.

Reasons for Boycotting

While approximately 67 percent of the sample reported boycotting within the past year, 40 percent of boycotters reported doing so across only one or two companies or products. Seventy-seven percent of the sample buycotted in the past year and 35 percent of buycotters intentionally purchased across one or two products or companies. The high rate of participation, but low frequency across products, is important to understand prior to a discussion of the motivations as the majority of respondents do not participate in political consumerism as a form

³¹ See previous discussion on pages 26-29 for examples of consumer-driven movements changing business practices.

of lifestyle politics (Newman and Bartels 2010; Bartlett 1998), but rather, intermittently and for a multitude of reasons.

Country of Origin. For boycotters, the most frequently (22 percent) cited rationale was the country of origin of the product or company. This response may be impacted by the survey's proximity to September 11, 2001. Respondents specifically indicated boycotting oil or certain companies based in Middle Eastern countries due to September 11th. Interestingly, the political affiliations of those who boycotted due to country of origin (but not explicitly as a result of September 11th) included 23 percent of conservative, 17 percent of moderate, and 28 percent of liberal boycotters. The lack of significant difference between differing political affiliations, but engagement in the same activity (i.e. boycotting due to country of origin) highlights that consumers, even if for very different reasons, often engage in the same behavior. Moreover, this finding suggests the need for more qualitative research analyzing the motivations of boycotters. As this finding indicates, the measurement of participation or non-participation fails to capture the range of motivating factors underlying the same action of boycotting.

Additionally, the NCES II survey was conducted shortly after the uncovering of the Martha Stewart scandal. As a result of the proximity of the survey to the scandal, boycotters also reported not shopping at Kmart in opposition to Stewart's business practices. The resultant boycott of Kmart as a result of Martha Stewart scandal highlights the magnitude and impact negative media coverage and exposure of unethical business practices has on consumer purchasing and loyalty. Further, it would be interesting to assess whether these same respondents who boycotted Kmart for the Martha Stewart scandal are, ten years later, still boycotting Kmart.

In this respect, future studies should track the long-term trajectory of specific forms of boycotting. To my knowledge, no studies to date have measured the lifespan of boycotting (or

boycotting). Do consumers tend to express a short-term commitment to boycotting on the basis of certain rationales as opposed to others? My inclination is there may be a larger percentage of consumers who still boycott based on the Middle Eastern origin of products than of Kmart, because conflict in the Middle East (in addition to the recent tenth anniversary of September 11th) remains a salient topic of discussion. While theories of life politics (Giddens 1991) and lifestyle movements (Haenfler et al. 2008; Miller 2005) help frame the discussion of consumers who actively merge their life choices with broader expressions of social justice, currently no consumer culture theories or studies have addressed the longevity of political consumer commitment to specific issues.

Finally, respondents who boycotted due to the country of origin specifically cited not purchasing items made in China. One respondent cited not purchasing an item made in China due to the fact that it was likely made by child labor while another boycotter specifically referenced not purchasing a hammer made in China while shopping at WalMart. This respondent highlights the overlap of consumer rationales. For instance, while other respondents specifically cited boycotting WalMart precisely because it was WalMart, this boycotter shops at WalMart, but does not want to support Chinese made products.

The cross-tabulations of boycotting as a result of country of origin with demographic characteristics (see table 15) indicates only the sex of the respondent is significantly, although extremely weakly, related to those who boycott for this reason. In this case, men are more likely to boycott due to country of origin than women. This finding differs from the overall cross-tabulations between boycotting and demographic characteristics (see table 7) that indicate no significant difference between sex and overall participation in boycotting. However, this finding may differ from the overall cross-tabulations because the overall cross-tabulations included a

measurement of boycotters versus non-boycotters, and the cross-tabulation for country of origin includes only measures those previously identified as boycotters.

Labor Rights. The next rationale is boycotting due to labor rights abuses of a particular company or product. For example, one boycotter specifically indicated, “I don’t buy Nike tennis because of their manufacturing facilities in Southeast Asia that use child labor” and another boycotter more broadly stated, “clothing by certain manufacturers because of their worker conditions overseas.” Only sex was significantly related to boycotting due to labor rights violations, and women were significantly more likely than boycott due to labor rights abuses. Historically, this finding has precedent. Women were the leaders of The White Label Campaign (Terrangi 2007; Micheletti 2003; Sklar 1998), the precursor to the anti-sweatshop movement. Thus, this finding supports an existing history of women’s involvement in labor.

While women were significantly more likely to boycott due to labor rights abuses, men were significantly more likely due to country of origin. In some regard, these rationales may overlap in consumers’ minds. For example, individuals may make decisions about labor rights issues as a result of the country of origin. However, as some of the previously mentioned examples indicate, boycotting a Middle Eastern country as a result of September 11th, and boycotting due to child labor in Southeast Asia are differing rationales. For this reason, I measured country of origin and labor rights separately.

Thirteen percent of boycotters cited labor rights abuses as the rationale for their last boycott. This finding should be encouraging to activists and organizations such as United Students Against Sweatshops, The National Labor Committee, Oxfam, and Fair Trade USA, whose organizational efforts center around the exposure of unjust labor practices. Educating consumers about a company’s labor practices does affect purchasing decisions. Previously

mentioned high profile cases including the Nike sweatshop email (Peretti and Micheletti 2004) and the disclosure of the sweatshop conditions in the factory producing Kathie Lee's apparel line (National Labor Committee 1996) further demonstrate the power of negative press and subsequent impact on consumer spending.

Differing Political Affiliations. The third rationale for boycotting included differing political affiliations from a specific company or product. Approximately 6 percent of the boycotters surveyed indicated this as their rationale for the last time they boycotted. For example, one respondent boycotted "a newspaper in the area because I am aware of his political background and I disagree." For differing political affiliations, only age was significantly, although weakly, related to boycotting due to differing political affiliations. Older boycotters (ages 45-54) more frequently boycott due to differing political affiliations than younger boycotters. It is notable that age is the only demographic significantly related to boycotting due to differing political affiliations. While previous studies have found that younger generations are more engaged in political consumerism than older generations (Zukin et al. 2006), older generations have also been found to have more firmly established political views than younger generations (Zukin et al. 2006). The firm establishment of these political ideologies may explain why older political consumers are more commonly boycott on the basis of differing political beliefs—because their beliefs are more solidified than younger political consumers. Another potential explanation is older Americans are also more likely to embrace duty-based citizenship norms than younger Americans (Dalton 2008). A strong embrace of duty-based citizenship norms may also contribute to a strong affinity towards a certain political ideology, and consequently, a greater likelihood of boycotting as a result of differing political views.

Religious/Personal. The fourth rationale for boycotting included religious or personal reasons, which approximately 13 percent of boycotters surveyed cited as their reasoning. Prior studies on political consumers, however, have failed to address the important role between ideology, religion, and consumption. This finding demonstrates that personal ideologies may play more of a significant role than previously thought or measured. While some respondents indicated not supporting a company because it has “un-Christian” values or advertising, others were more blatant, and often discriminatory, in their opposition to certain companies. For example, one boycotter cited not shopping at AT&T because the company supports gay rights. Another respondent boycotts Domino’s because the owner supports anti-abortion groups and yet another respondent boycotts Pepsi because they sponsor the NAACP and “homos.”

As can be seen in the cross-tabulations in table 13, the only significant, but weak, relationship for boycotting as a result of religious or personal reasons was education. Boycotters with less education were more likely to boycott for this reason. As previously stated, the studies I read on political consumerism (in the United States or Europe) did not include a measurement for the effect of religiosity on consumption choices. However, this finding suggests future studies should include religiosity as a potential factor that may influence political consumption. Differing religious or personal beliefs may once again contribute to the overlapping behaviors of boycotting and buycotting. For example, one respondent in this survey cited boycotting as a result of “un-Christian values.” Hypothetically, however, another consumer may also boycott a different company because those values are too explicitly Christian. As a company cannot obviously please all consumer with their support of particular organizations, this finding indicates that boycotters on either end of the ideological spectrum beliefs are strong enough to affect their purchasing decisions.

Don't Know/Refused to Answer. Finally, 10 percent of boycotters either refused or could not recall the specific reason the last time they boycotted. The only significant, but weakly, associated demographic characteristic was age, with older political consumers more frequently not knowing or refusing to answer. As it may not be surprising that older respondents are less likely to recall the reason for the last time they boycotted, another potential explanation is the relative infrequency of participation in boycotting. As table 5 shows, 59 percent of boycotters participated only a few times a year and of those who boycotted, approximately 40 percent did so across one to two products. The infrequency of participation and the lack of routinization across products may also contribute to a boycotters' inability to recall their rationale for participation.

Reasons for Buycotting

Country of Origin. Compared with boycotters, the percentage of buycotters was less (11 percent) than the percentage of boycotters (22 percent) who cite the country of origin as the rationale for their last purchase. One potential explanation for this difference involves the procedural differences between boycotting and buycotting—boycotts commonly target single businesses whereas buycotts are multi-target (i.e. supporting fair trade, organic or locally-made products) across multiple businesses (Neilson 2010). In this respect, in terms of time and convenience, it may be easier to boycott one store or product than it is to buycott multiple stores. For example, boycotters of Made in China products are able to still purchase products made in other countries, but a Buy American buycott is more restrictive (Neilson 2010). A second explanation may be that the negative media attention given to boycotts is more common and more effective than the attention given to buycotts (Neilson 2010; Friedman 1996). As a result, consumers may be more informed about specific countries they boycott products from than

countries to boycott. The cross-tabulations, found in table 14, indicate no significance between boycotting due to country of origin and the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Like-minded Causes. The second category of responses for boycotting included supporting a product or company that supported like-minded causes. Approximately 12 percent of boycotters cited this as the reason for their last boycott. Examples included specifically intentionally buying Ben and Jerry's ice cream because they "donate to a myriad of causes I like" to "I read about the company (unnamed) and liked what they stand for and they donate money for the environment." In the cross-tabulations, only the sex of the boycotters was significantly, although very weakly, associated with boycotting for support of like-minded causes. Men were significantly more likely to boycott for this reason than women.

Respondents who boycott as a result of like-minded causes and also due to country of origin provide enormous support to the effectiveness of corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives and the necessity (in terms of increasing consumer purchasing) of public awareness of those initiatives. This finding provides support to previous research on European political consumers (Micheletti 2008; Stolle et al. 2005; Micheletti 2003) which found consumers may be more inclined to purchase a product if they believe their purchase "makes a difference," including from a charity a company financially supports.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, I wonder if the desire to want to purchase products that "make a difference" is also a way to legitimize consumption in the mind of the consumer. If the company a consumer supports financially contributes to other like-minded causes of the consumer, then is it possible to legitimize that consumption is more beneficial than not consuming at all? For example, in her analysis of "responsibility-taking" of transnational corporations and anti-sweatshop activists who hold those corporations accountable, Michelle

Micheletti (2008) addresses the tensions between consumption and corporate social responsibility initiatives. Micheletti aptly notes it is no coincidence that CSR initiatives, along with subversive tactics such as culture jamming, are now incorporated into the curriculum of business schools. Additionally, Micheletti highlights that some of the most egregious offenders of labor practices, including the high-profiled Nike case, now have firmly established CSR programs (www.Nikebiz.com) promoting the company's commitment to ethical production, as well as a list of the charitable organizations Nike supports³².

Broadly speaking, this finding also supports the increased altruistic nature of political consumers (see Neilson 2010) and the likelihood that individuals will purchase an item if they feel it is a "good thing to do." Buycotters in this study point to the overall effectiveness of CSR marketing models. In other words, all other conditions being equal, if individuals can, in some respect, feel their purchase does good for others, they may be more inclined to purchase that product over another.

On a related note, the altruistic rationale of consumers, and the desire to do "the right thing" may also contribute to the legitimization of consumption and contribute to a rise in what I term, "consumption for a cause." Examples include the buy one, give one business model of TOMS Shoes, donations to AIDS research from the purchase of a Product Red campaign item, and the purchasing of Susan Komen Foundation "Pink" products to support breast cancer research. The aforementioned examples bring up a previously discussed tension between ethics and consumption. Does participation in ethical consumerism encourage consumers to purchase

³² Nike's open-access website of production can be understood as a positive sign of Nike's commitment to "cleaning up" their business practices after so much negative press. Conversely, however, the site can also be seen as a way to show consumers that Nike displays a strong commitment to ethical practices and charitable organizations thereby assuaging the company's other labor rights violations.

products they may otherwise not purchase in an attempt to do “the right thing”? In other words, do marketers capitalize on the altruism of consumers to sell products? I recognize that *ethical consumers* may not be concerned with the *ethics of consumption* (see Crocker and Linden 1998; Barnett et al. 2005). However, I regard the altruistic nature of ethical consumers and the surge of “consumption for a cause” products worthy of note, particularly for consumers living in the world’s leading consumer nation.

Religious/Personal. Similar to boycotting, 11 percent of boycotters cited personal or religious beliefs as the motivation for their last purchase. As the cross-tabulations indicate, only education is significantly, and moderately, related to boycotting. Respondents with less than a high school education are more likely to boycott for religious or personal reasons than any other reason³³. This finding may also indicate that the relationship between religious beliefs and boycotting, in addition to boycotting, needs to be more thoroughly addressed in future research³⁴.

Theories of the attitude-behavior gap help explain the significance of religious beliefs in consumption choices. While research has confirmed the existence of an attitude-behavior gap in consumer decision-making, highlighting the disjuncture between consumers professed attitudes and the lack of translation of those attitudes at the checkout (Chatzidakis et al. 2007; Kimeldorf et al. 2006; Tallontire et al. 2001), this study seems to suggest the opposite. For example, prior research (Chatzidakis et al. 2007) on individuals who profess supportive attitudes about fair trade found those same individuals do not always, and sometimes not at all, actually purchase fair trade products. Other studies indicate similar response trends. For example, in the first behavioral study of the attitude behavior gap (Kimeldorf et al. 2006), 60 to 80 percent of respondents

³³ This finding should be interpreted cautiously due to the low sample size of those who boycott and have less than a high school education (N=6).

³⁴ See prior discussion on the relationship of religious beliefs and boycotting on page 173.

initially indicated they would pay more to ensure their clothes were not produced in sweatshops. However, researchers found only 30 percent of those respondents who professed those attitudes actually paid more to ensure fair labor conditions. These studies demonstrate that consumers' attitudes do not always translate to purchasing choices thereby giving rise to what is known as the attitude-behavior gap³⁵.

In this study, continuity, rather than a gap, exists between beliefs and purchasing patterns. This continuity suggests that individuals can, and do, align their attitudes with their behaviors for certain reasons. This finding has broader implications for the alignment of attitudes and behaviors in terms of ethical or political consumerism. If, as this study's findings indicate, individuals establish continuity between their purchasing for religious or personal reasons, perhaps attitudes regarding labor rights or social justice can also translate into behavior.

Don't Know/Refused to Answer. Finally, a high percentage of boycotters (18 percent) could not recall or refused to answer regarding the last time they boycotted. The cross-tabulations indicate that being older, similar to boycotting, was significantly and strongly related to a lack of ability to recall or refusal to answer. The percentage of individuals (10 percent of boycotters and 18 percent of boycotters) inability to recall or refusal to answer may also speak to the low level of commitment respondents have to either activity. As can be seen in table 1, respondents' level of participation is relatively infrequent and limited across a few products or companies. I would suspect that if individuals were strongly committed to either example of political consumerism, or participated more frequently as a part of a lifestyle movement

³⁵ I wonder if there is something unique about the attitude-behavior gap with respect to purchasing. For instance, in other arenas in life, individual behaviors and attitudes may be more aligned, but when the alignment involves a monetary component, I suspect the disjuncture is greater. This may be due to a financial inability to align attitudes and behaviors or the lack of willingness to make the monetary sacrifices it may require to do so.

(Haenfler et al. 2008; Miller 2005) or as an expression of life politics (Giddens 1991), respondents may be more likely to recall their rationale for participation. Future studies should consider measuring the strength of the influence of certain rationale on purchasing decisions. For example, does a tipping point exist, whereby individuals are so committed to a reasoning that they will not purchase, or will always purchase, a particular product for that particular reason.

In sum, boycotters and buycotters are guided by common motivations. Individuals are likely to participate in ethical consumerism because they believe it is a good thing to do, not because they believe their purchases will affect or change business practices. However, existing definitions of political consumerism (see Gulyas 2008; Stolle and Hooghe 2004; Micheletti et al. 2004) emphasize the importance of guiding political motives that motivate purchasing decisions. Based upon this study's findings, and as previously mentioned throughout this discussion, perhaps ethical consumerism, and more specifically, politically active ethical consumers, should be the preferred terminology to explain consumers in this study. Respondents in this study make purchasing decisions out of a desire to do "the right thing" rather than to change corporate behavior. The terminology of ethical consumerism, as opposed to political consumerism, allows for a wide array of ethics, including altruism and altering business behavior, to be a motivating force behind purchasing decisions.

Individualized Nature of Participation

The final research question of this study addresses how political consumers act—alone or as a part of an organized campaign. This question emerges from a major debate surrounding political consumerism regarding where, if at all, political consumerism falls within the range of political actions and social movements. Historically, classic social movement models have emphasized the collective nature of action targeting the state or other authority structures

(McAdam and Snow 1997). Political consumerism, however, does not target the state, and in this study, political consumers do not act in a collective fashion.

As social movement theorist David Meyer (2007) reminds us, the boundaries of social movements need to be fluid and adaptive to adequately address the needs of a given time period. In today's consumer culture, where gratification is met through the accumulation of consumer goods (Dunn 2008), social movements surrounding consumption must also address the values, practices, and meanings derived from living in a consumer culture (Trentman 2006; Miles 1998). The expansion of the definition of social movements to include lifestyle movements creates a space for the role of political consumerism within a consumer culture. Lifestyle movements seek social change through the everyday "mundane" activities of life, including shopping, and whose members understand their individual actions have a broader impact beyond their personal lives (Haenfler et al. 2008; Miller 2005).

In this study, ethical consumers do not act as a part of an organized campaign. In fact, 63 percent of boycotters and 72 percent of buycotters report acting alone. As the cross-tabulations found in tables 15 and 16 show, acting alone is significantly and strongly associated with participation in boycotting and buycotting. Only a small percentage of boycotters and buycotters consider their actions a part of an organized campaign.

This finding is explained, in part, by the inherent individualized nature of shopping. While individuals are likely to shop alone, individuals can act alone while still being connected to a part of a broader social movement. For example, Lockie's (2009) study of alternative food networks found that consumers, even if shopping alone, were able to remain connected to others through the Internet or community resources distributed at the farmers market or food co-operatives. In other words, the act of shopping alone did not necessarily preclude individuals

from participation in a broader organized campaign. Today, with the advent of the Internet and online social networks, consumers have the potential to be informed and connected, even if only electronically, with other like-minded individuals. A reciprocal relationship is therefore created as participation in collective action is shaped by social networks and also shapes networks (Diani 1997; Bourdieu 1994).

Another explanation for why ethical consumers regarded their actions as solitary, rather than as a part of an organized campaign, is the conceptual difficulty associated with measuring this question. First, the question's binary nature did not allow for respondents to indicate shopping alone while as a part of an organized campaign. Other conceptual difficulties arise from the question itself. For example, if a consumer purchases fair trade coffee or purchases a product solely based on the country of origin, the consumer may report acting alone as opposed to a part of an organized campaign because they do not conceive of themselves as a member of an organized campaign. The nature of lifestyle social movements, as opposed to classic social movement models, requires a shift in the conceptualization of participation. Because lifestyle social movements involve the enactment of change through participation in everyday activities, participation does not necessarily include formal gatherings, the presence of large multitudes of people, or other activities traditionally associated with movement mobilization (Haenfler et al. 2008). If respondents still conceptualize social movements in terms of a classic model of participation mentioned above, it makes sense they would not see themselves as a part of a broader movement.

For the longevity and success of political consumerism as a movement, individuals need to feel connected to others. Previous research on social movements demonstrates that connectivity is a crucial component to the longevity of movement involvement (McAdam 1986).

Feeling a part of a movement contributes to your commitment to that movement. Thus, if the majority of political consumers believe they are act alone, organizations targeting consumer mobilization need to do adjust their strategies in order to create a more inclusive atmosphere. Based upon this finding, an important question for future research would be to measure impact of acting alone as it relates to long-term involvement. If individuals feel connected to other political consumers, even if they shop alone, are they more likely to remain engaged for longer periods of time? Future studies may want to measure the relationship between network embeddedness and the longevity of participation in political consumerism. As altruistically motivated as political consumers may be, being connected to other like-minded consumers may increase the overall length of participation and objectives of political consumerism.

The individual nature of participation, coupled with the lack of frequency and routinization of boycotting or buycotting, leads me to conclude that individuals in this study do not constitute actors in a social movement (lifestyle or classic models). Perhaps if respondents in this survey were driven more by political, rather than ethical motivations, the potential for labeling these respondents social movement participants would increase. Additionally, I wonder if the motivations behind consumer purchasing decisions were more politically or market-change oriented if this difference would result in increased levels of commitment and frequency of participation. If consumers consider themselves a part of a movement to alter market or business, they may also have a higher level of commitment to altering those practices, thereby increasing the frequency of participation.

However, the inability to characterize these consumers as social movement participants should not be misread, or interpreted as, a lack of overall political participation or civic engagement. Rather, the significant overlap, as discussed earlier in this chapter, between

participation in additional political activities and boycotting or buycotting emphasize the possibility, and the existence, of individuals successfully engaging in roles as both citizen *and* consumer (Schudson 2007).

Research Contributions

This study's findings offer both support and suggestions for existing and emergent forms of political participation in a consumer society. The first, and I believe, paramount contribution of this study is providing support for the existence and viability of the citizen-consumer (Schudson 2007). United States political consumers, living in the world's leading consumer nation, demonstrate that politics through purchasing expands, rather than limits, opportunities for civic and political engagement. Given that ethical consumers are active in other political activities, this finding dispels previous claims (Macedo 2005; Putnam 2000) that individuals are less civically engaged than generations past. Rather, it is our measurement that must be adjusted to accommodate today's forms of political participation (Dalton 2008) as today's active citizens embody the characteristics of monitorial, rather than than model citizens (Schudson 1999). In 2011, the shift towards a monitorial citizenry, or an embrace of life politics (Giddens 1991), allows us to better define and measure engagement within the context of a consumer society as individuals selectively engage in political activities already aligned with their existing lifestyle. Moreover, as consumers become more aware of the politics both behind their purchases and the companies their purchases support, perhaps social change can be enacted through consumption, rather than hindered by it.

Consumers in this study, however, were overwhelmingly motivated by altruism and the desire to do "the right thing." While the driving force behind political consumerism in this study was not the changing of business practices, but rather, doing the right thing, I do not regard this

finding as disappointing or as a deterrent to consumer political activism. Rather, this finding poses a challenge, and offers valuable information about the motivations of consumers to organizations whose primary objective is changing business practices. It also suggests the important role of framing (Benford and Snow 2000), and in particular, the role of motivational or prognostic framing. Motivational or prognostic framing allows consumers to feel good about their purchases (i.e. doing “the right thing”) and resultantly increases the likelihood of making those purchases again in the future (Holzer 2006). The use of prognostic or motivational framing has the potential to be useful for both advocacy organizations and companies, in much of the same way, though potentially for very different reasons.

Ironically, what emerges from this study is a great deal of information and guidance for marketers. While this study’s original intent was not to aid marketers (if anything, it was the opposite), this study does have important findings for them. For example, this study’s results indicate that consumers will either directly purchase products or purchase products from specific companies if that company supports charitable or like-minded causes. Again, in many ways this study demonstrates the effectiveness of corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, some of which have emerged from some of the biggest multi-national and commonly boycotted corporations. In an era when consumers have the potential to be more informed about their choices than previous generations (i.e. company websites, blogs, Facebook, Twitter), the potential to establish a strong consumer base with CSR initiatives is virtually limitless.

A second contribution of this study is this is the first study to quantitatively analyze and holistically measure United States political consumers beyond specific niche markets. While Newman and Bartels (2010) did construct a generalized profile of political consumers using the USCID data, their study did not identify all demographic traits measured in this study. Moreover,

Newman and Bartels did not measure the motivations behind boycotting or buycotting, nor did they measure participation in additional political activities (beyond voting and protest). This study's findings can now be used to provide a baseline understanding of the characteristics and motivating factors of political consumers in the United States. Existing understandings of niche market political consumers in the United States and political consumer studies in Europe provided guidance for framing this broader inquiry. However, this study's findings indicate some substantial differences between European, niche market, and United States political consumers. While political consumerism remains a socio-economic elite activity (i.e. with respect to education and income), it is an important finding that other demographic factors previously thought to predict participation, including race, gender and political affiliation, do not.

A third contribution of this research is that this study differs from previous studies on social movements and political activism as it focused on the mobilized, ethical consumers, as opposed to the traditionally studied mobilizers. This study's findings, particularly the questions asked of boycotters and buycotters about where they received their information that helped them make their consumer choices, is useful information on multiple fronts. First, both boycotters and buycotters were most likely to receive their information from the news media. This, once again, speaks to the power of marketing and the news media's influence on consumer behavior. Second, it is helpful information for social movement or organizational mobilizers to understand where and how information is disseminated. According to this study, only 9 percent of boycotters and 11 percent of buycotters received their information that influenced their purchasing decision from an organization. As groups and organizations understand where consumers are most likely to find information, this information could potentially help them better strategize and target a broader base of potential members.

Limitations

There are several limitations of this study. The first limitation of this study is the 2002 date of the survey. While the NCES II survey provides an adequate initial survey for understanding political consumers in the United States, a more recent survey would help to better gauge the current state of political consumerism in the United States. I would suspect, given an overall increase and general heightened visibility through the media regarding consumer awareness about products and companies, results from a more recently conducted survey would indicate even higher rates of participation in political consumerism.

Second, the wording of some survey questions may not provide the most accurate results. For instance, asking individuals how often they boycotted, or did not purchase a product or frequent a store, is a difficult response to measure. If respondents chose to no longer support a particular company or product they may not consider their abstention from going to that store or purchasing that product as boycotting. Additionally, the binary nature of some survey questions may have contributed to respondents indicating one response because their response was not the other choice offered (i.e. motivation for purchases to change business behavior versus because it was “the right thing” to do).

Third, detailed demographic characteristics, actions, and motivations of respondents were limited due to small sample size. As a result, while overall demographic traits of boycotters and buycotters were given, the lower sample sizes for the specific cross-tabulations are extremely limited in their generalizability as a result of small sample sizes within categories.

Fourth, the NCES II survey questions did not include a measurement for the relative impact or monetary amount individuals either spent boycotting or withheld boycotting. Similar to the amount of money raised or donated to a political party, campaign, or organization

supporting a political candidate serving as a measure for the strength of political affiliation, it is important to also measure the strength of an individuals' commitment to political consumerism. While current survey questions asking respondents how often they participate in political consumerism and across how many products are useful for partially answering this question, they do not fully capture the level of commitment of political consumers. Depending on what product or company a respondent cites, individuals may report differing levels of frequencies that are not indicative of the totality of their commitment. For example, the routine purchasing of some products, including fair trade coffee, may result in higher reported frequencies of participation though the relative impact with respect to amount of money spent is potentially fairly low. Conversely, an individual could make a one-time purchase spending a significant amount of money on an environmentally friendly car or home, but the NCES II survey questions measure those activities as one instance of participation in political consumerism.

Another limitation of the survey is the measurement of socioeconomic status as measured by household income. Household income does not account for the number of individuals in the household, nor if the respondent was the primary earner in the household. For example, younger individuals who may be in college may report their parents income though their parents may or may not be their sole providers. An additional measurement difficulty was the NCES II was conducted by random digit dial via home telephone numbers. Although prior to the proliferation of cell phones, the selection of only home telephone numbers may contribute to an uneven distribution of age, in addition to other demographics, on some level.

Finally, one of the limitations of this study was the sample itself. Even as a nationally representative sample, the study had a slight oversample of women and also an undersample of

racial and ethnic minorities. Future studies may want to consider achieving a more representative distribution across all demographic groups.

Future Research

As mentioned above, one of the limitations of this study was the 2002 date of the survey questionnaire. With the rising attention and awareness given to issues such as fair trade, the buy local movement, and organic, it would be informative to measure whether substantive changes have occurred within both the demographics of political consumers and in the frequency of their purchases. Given that political consumers cited the news media as the number one source of their information, there is reason to believe the increasing public attention to issues surrounding political consumerism may contribute to an overall rise in participation. Further, the rise in social media and organizing via social networks since 2002 may contribute to increased participation rates and should be considered in future research.

Second, this survey contained only one question asking political consumers about their rationale for the last time they boycotted or buycotted. While initial analysis provided surface understanding of political consumerism, it would be useful to ascertain a deeper understanding about why individuals politically consume through qualitative interviews. Through qualitative analysis it would be informative to interview both occasional and committed political consumers in an effort to compare and contrast their motivations to better understand what motivates differing levels of commitment among political consumers. Additionally, the open-ended question also revealed that religiosity was an important guiding motivation for consumption choices. Future studies may want to address the interaction between religiosity and consumption in more detail.

Third, this study's findings indicate a majority of boycotters and buycotters do not believe their purchases will affect business practices. Future studies should pay greater detail to the rationale that drives a lack of consumer efficacy. Further, studies may want to investigate whether the rise in consumer-driven movements in the past decade have altered consumer perceptions regarding the likelihood of enacting social change through consumption choices.

Lastly, future studies on political consumers may also want to consider how different demographic groups politically consume differently. Are their certain purchases (i.e. grocery shopping, household items, automobiles, travel) that certain demographic groups are significantly more likely to boycott or buycott, as opposed to others.

Concluding Thoughts

This study originated from a desire to understand how and why individuals can, and have, historically enacted social change through unconventional avenues. It was ironic to me living in the world's leading consumer nation the sociological literature on the impacts of consumerism was so limited. As someone who, perhaps naively so, truly believes our individual consumer choices can have a collective impact altering business practices and bettering the lives of workers, I strove to understand if, and how, others shared a similar vision. While this study provides a surface understanding of ethical consumerism in the United States, I find the results hopeful. Consumers want to "do the right thing" and that bodes well for both existing and future consumer-driven social change. As consumer awareness continues to rise, I have no doubt that business practices will have no choice but to change—the consumers will demand it. "The only revolution that might work is a consumer revolution. We stop buying products produced by slave labor and stop working for companies that enslave us"-Anonymous.

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Appendix A Code Book

I. Dependent Variables

Political Consumerism

Now I am going to read you a quick list of things people have done to express their views. For each one, please tell me whether or not you have done it—(G) NOT bought a good or service because of the conditions under which the product is made, or because you dislike the conduct of the company? (H) Bought a product or service because you like the social or political values of the company that produces or provides it.

0-No

1-Yes

Boycotting

Earlier you said that during the past 12 months, you had not bought something because of the conditions under which the product was made, or because you dislike the conduct of the company that produces it. How often do you choose not to buy a product for these reasons...would you say you do this every week, about once a month, a few times a year, or less often than that?

1-Less often/few times a year

2-Every week/about once a month

Over the course of the past 12 months, how many different TYPES of goods and services have you not bought for these reasons?

1-1-2 products, a few

2-3-10 products, some

3-10 or more, al lot

Buycotting

Earlier you said that during the past 12 months, you had bought something because of the conditions under which the product was made, or because you dislike the conduct of the company that produces it. How often do you choose to buy a product for these reasons...would you say you do this every week, about once a month, a few times a year, or less often than that?

1-Less often/few times a year

2-Every week/about once a month

Over the course of the past 12 months, how many different TYPES of goods and services have you bought for these reasons?"

1-1-2 products, a few

2-3-10 products, some

3-10 or more, al lot

II. Independent Variables

Race

Constructed race and ethnicity

0-Not Hispanic, White

1- African American, Black, Hispanic, Other

Sex

0-Male

1-Female

Income

Recode of annual family income

So that we can group all answers, what is your total family income before taxes?

1-Under \$ 20,000

2-\$20,000 to \$40,000

3-\$40,000 to \$65,000

4-\$65,000 to \$100,000

5-over \$100,000

Education

Recode of years of education

What was the last grade or class that you completed in school?

1-Some high school

2-High school graduate

3-Some college

4-College graduate and beyond

Age

Recode of age

What was your age on your last birthday?

1-18-24 years

2-25-34 years

3-35-44 years

4-45-54 years

5-55-64 years

6-65 + years

Political Affiliation

Recode of political affiliation

In general would you describe your political views as...(read options 1 through 5)

1-Conservative

2-Moderate

3-Liberal

Voting

Recode of voting

Did you vote in the 2002 general election on November 5th, or did something prevent you from voting?

0-Did not vote

1-Voted

Strength of Political Affiliation

Recode of strength of affiliation

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

0-No

1-Yes