Routing around Organizations:
Self-Directed Political Consumption*

September 7, 2016

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Forthcoming in *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*

* This material is based, in part, on work supported by the National Science Foundation under Cooperative Agreement Nos. 0531184 and 0938099. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation. We wish to thank the Earl Lab Writing Group as well as commenters from Department of Communication Studies at Northwestern University and the UCLA Organizations and Social Movements Group for their feedback on draft versions of this manuscript.

Abstract

Recent research on activism in the context of digital media has argued that organizing can happen outside of organizations and even without SMOs. This work has been focused primarily on what Klandermans has referred to as the "supply side" of participation. In this article, we expand this line of work by focusing on the "demand side." We examine the distinction between self-directed and organizationally-directed activism from the perspective of the individual, finding that shifts toward movement societies, the rise of lifestyle politics, and, to a lesser extent, changing citizenship norms explain citizen preferences for self-directed versus organizationally-directed political consumption. We also analyze the relationship between political interest, different kinds of digital media use, and preferences for self-directed activism. We use original data from a survey in the U.S. on political consumption.

Entrepreneurial actors, aided by the rising use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), have shown a growing capacity to route around standard gatekeepers and the infrastructures that have long been central to social action. For instance, traditional news media are no longer the only way to reach and cultivate large audiences, and banks and traditional investors exist alongside crowdsourced funding.

Protest and social movements are not immune to these trends. While iconic social movement organizations (SMOs) such as the NAACP and Greenpeace have been synonymous with protest for decades, clever uses of ICTs facilitate activism organized outside of organizations (Shirky 2008). It is common for individuals or informal networks to organize protests or larger campaigns without relying on SMOs (Earl and Kimport 2011). The extent of these trends is hard to ignore. Between 2006 and 2010, loose networks, individuals, or other small, informal groups created just over half of online protest opportunities, with only a minority of online protest opportunities offered through SMOs (Earl 2013). In the case of street protest, digitally-linked, informal networks are now essential (Castells 2012) and ad-hoc networks have used digital tools to create successful street protests outside of organizations (Bennett and Segerberg 2013).

Scholarship on "organizing outside of organizations," as Karpf (2012) has called it, has made considerable progress in understanding the dimensions of these changes from the perspective of organizers, but far less is known about potential participants' preferences for engaging in collective action within versus outside of organizations. That is, while much of the work on organizing outside of organizations has examined how opportunities to participate outside of organizations are produced (e.g., Earl and Kimport 2011), or how organizations react to these changes (e.g., Bimber, Flanagin, and Stohl 2012; Karpf 2012), inattention to demand, or desire, for participating outside of organizations is striking. Even a literature ostensibly examining how people route around SMOs in the production of protest opportunities remains largely focused on SMOs!

We address this lacunae by examining what Klandermans refers to as the "demand side" of social movement participation (Klandermans 2004).[1] While some or many participants may prefer to participate in *organizationally-directed activism*, which occurs when individuals engage in collective campaigns at the behest of organizations, in this paper we argue that some individuals may prefer an alternative: to engage in activism outside of established SMOs and/or not at the behest of SMOs, which we refer to as *self-directed activism*. We examine factors that may shape preferences for each form, drawing on work related to three major social changes that we hypothesize should generate demand for self-directed political activity (i.e., the rise of so-called "movement societies" and "lifestyle politics," as well as changing conceptions of citizenship), in addition to the digital media environment. We then test these factors using survey data on political consumption (i.e., boycotting and *buycotting*[2]) from roughly 2,000 Americans; we argue that political consumption is a particularly useful case for examining these questions because it's widely available, actively engaged in, and implicated in a number of the social changes we discuss.

Routing Around Organizations

Research on "organizing outside of organizations" has documented the existence of protests, campaigns, and even larger social movements organized without SMOs playing a pivotal role, or in some cases any role at all (see Earl, Hunt, Garrett, and Dal 2015 for a review

of work in this area). Notably, Earl (2013) showed that across 20 different social movement areas, over half of all online social movement activity was created and maintained by individuals, informal networks, and/or small groups, not by formal organizations. Bennett and Segerberg (2013) posit a spectrum of structural arrangements, from traditional organizational brokering and mobilizing, through modified organizational facilitation of personalized action, to entirely ad-hoc action in which organizations play no important role. Over time, the amount of scholarship supporting the possibility of organizing without organizations has grown substantially (e.g., Bennett and Segerberg 2011; Bimber, Flanagin, and Stohl 2012; Earl and Kimport 2011), making this arguably one of the most important infrastructural changes in social movements in the digital age (Earl, Hunt, and Garrett 2014).

Much of this work, though, focuses on the production side of protest (i.e., the creation of opportunities for engagement), or what Klandermans refers to as the "supply side." The demand side, according to Klandermans, is about participants' motivation and ability to participate, which has been traditionally studied as "micro-mobilization." Klandermans argues that mobilization occurs from the nexus of supply and demand. That is, potential participants have to be matched to potential protest opportunities for activism to occur, requiring that potential participants know about (or can create on their own) opportunities to engage, feel motivated to participate, and have the ability to participate.[3]

Traditionally understood, both supply and demand are expected to be organizationally-managed: SMOs strategically develop and offer opportunities for social movement engagement (i.e., "supply"). SMOs are then expected to mobilize participants by inviting participation (which is the most significant predictor of participation, e.g., Schussman and Soule 2005), motivating potential participants (e.g., through framing activities), and helping potential participants overcome free-riding and/or other barriers to participation. But, the preferences of potential participants are key because it is the nexus of supply and demand that Klandermans argues results in mobilization; mismatches between supplied and desired opportunities, for example, could lead to lower mobilization levels than could otherwise be possible.

We seek to bring balance to work on social movement engagement outside of organizations by attending to participants' preferences for organizationally-directed versus self-directed activism and to acknowledge that a host of factors, in addition to factors related to digital technologies, might be influencing "demand"-side preferences. Specifically, in the following sub-sections, we introduce literatures on three distinct macro-social changes that we argue are combining to produce substantial desire for self-directed versus organizationally-directed activism, and we translate each of these broad social trends into micro-level predictors of individual preferences. We then revisit the role of digital media in explaining participant preferences and discuss the advantages of using boycotts and *buycotts*—prominent forms of political consumption—for analysis.

Movement Societies

Social movement scholars have documented the development of so-called "movement societies" over the past several decades (Meyer and Tarrow 1998). Movement society theory argues that social movements are so embedded in contemporary society that movements, and the tactics they use, are commonplace and institutionalized. More specifically, protest in movement societies moves from being sporadic to perpetual (Caren, Ghoshal, and Ribas 2011; Meyer and Tarrow 1998; Soule and Earl 2005), making protest more common (Meyer and Tarrow 1998). Protest in movement societies also involves more diverse participants (Caren, Ghoshal, and

Ribas 2011; Meyer and Tarrow 1998; Soule and Earl 2005), addresses a wide variety of claims (Earl and Kimport 2009; Meyer and Tarrow 1998; Soule and Earl 2005), uses less confrontational tactics (sometimes called "insider" tactics), and tends to avoid property damage and violence (Soule and Earl 2005).

Cast into the language of Klandermans (2004), movement society theory predicts greater supply *and* demand for protest, particularly for forms of protest that can be embedded in everyday life, such as political consumption. The "perpetual mobilization strand" of movement society theory argues that this supply and demand will be organizationally-moored (Earl and Kimport 2009), as SMO-driven protest has been embedded in everyday political life since the 1960s (Caren, Ghoshal, and Ribas 2011; Meyer and Tarrow 1998; Rucht and Neidhart 2002). Meyer and Tarrow (1998) argue that the increasing professionalization of SMOs and movements in general is part and parcel of, if not driving, the overall institutionalization process that movement society represents. While this professionalization creates ever more evident distinctions between organizers and participants, distancing professional organizers from average participants (Earl 2013), it nonetheless makes SMO-centered activism more popular over time.

However, another strand in movement society theorizing—the "ubiquitous movement practices" strand—anticipates the unmooring of traditional social movement tactics from their historical relations, including the causes they are used to address (Earl and Kimport 2009), and, as we argue, from the web of SMO-created networks that have historically structured activism. Specifically, this strand argues that "the scripts and schemas that underlie social movement practices" have diffused "beyond the boundaries of social movements" (Earl and Kimport 2009: 223) such that the use of traditional protest tactics has become a taken-for-granted part of the political action repertoire (Caren, Ghoshal, and Ribas 2011; Soule and Earl 2005). Tactics come to represent more generalized scripts—essentially more general political problem-solving tools and heuristics—that are untethered to either specific causes or to SMO-sponsorship. We argue this version of movement society theory predicts rising preferences for self-directed activism.

It is possible to measure the strength of these competing theoretical impulses in the aggregate and in terms of their relative influence on individual action. At the macro-level, if the perpetual mobilization strand has a stronger effect, then we should observe greater numbers of participants engaging in organizationally-directed activism, but if the ubiquitous practice strand is more operative, then we should see higher levels self-directed activism.

At the micro-level, the ubiquitous practice strand anticipates fewer connections to traditional social movements—tactics, and participation in them, after all, can be unmoored from larger movements implying that self-directed participation should be explained by factors other than tight connections to existing movements. Perpetual mobilization, though, anticipates significant connections between SMOs and participants, or at least significant connections to existing movements. These connections both reflect and create continuing preferences for organizationally-directed participation.

While it would be ideal to measure participants' histories of SMO and social movement engagement, we lack direct measures of both. Thus we look to whether respondents have participated recently in two other kinds of protest—demonstrations and petition-signing. We suspect that people who participate in more actions and more types of actions are more likely to be connected to larger social movements, and more likely to be connected to SMOs. That connection to the formal social movement sector is consistent with the perpetual mobilization strand, which is associated with organizationally-directed activism. On the other hand, a looser connection to the formal social movement sector is consistent with the relatively unmoored

political activities that ubiquitous practices predicts, which is associated with self-directed activism. More formally:

> *Hypothesis 1: Participation in demonstrations and/or petition-signing will increase the likelihood of engaging in organizationally-directed political consumption more than self-directed political consumption*.

One important caution is worth noting. Because even among attitudinally-predisposed individuals, non-participation/free-riding is so common, it is possible that participation in other forms of protest will have a slight effect on self-directed political consumption too. If people have participated in some activism before, they are not complete free riders and thus may be more likely to participate in some form of activism again, which may include self-directed activism. Thus, our hypothesis suggests a difference in predictive degree, not that participation in demonstrations and/or petition-signing will only increase the likelihood of organizationally-directed action.

Lifestyle Politics

The rise of lifestyle politics is another macro-social change that might drive people's desire to engage in activism outside of SMOs. Lifestyle politics blurs the lines between the public and private, as well as between the personal and the political, providing opportunities for individuals to enact their civic and political values in seemingly apolitical settings (Schudson 2007). Scholars attribute the rise of lifestyle politics to a confluence of changes in the latter half of the twentieth century that decoupled many individuals from established organizations—such as political parties, churches, and labor unions—and encouraged people to use seemingly apolitical settings, such as supermarkets, to express political and moral concerns (Bennett 1998; Dalton 2009; Inglehart 1997). Among others, these changes included globalization, the development of a postindustrial society, and a shift from participation in collective action through traditional, interest-based groups (e.g., civic associations and political parties) to less associative forms of participation, such as signing petitions and boycotting, where co-presence is not required for participation (Dalton 2009; Inglehart 1997; Norris 2002).

At the macro-level, the shift towards lifestyle politics should lead to rising levels of self-directed political activity as people embed their politics in their daily life and do not require organizational cues or recruitment in order to take "the personal is political" into the minutia of their everyday lives. At the micro-level, we argue that lifestyle politics operates by promoting a strong sense of personal, versus collective, responsibility to create change. That personal sense of responsibility embeds political issues in daily life, leading to opportunities for self-directed engagement that unfold in everyday shopping trips without the mobilizing aid of organizations:

> *Hypothesis 2: Respondents' sense of personal responsibility for addressing social problems will be positively associated with self-directed political consumption.*

To be clear, we are not arguing that people who participate at the behest of organizations lack personal responsibility, but that they may be motivated to participate by a wider array of motivations, including affiliative ties to an SMO and/or a strong sense of collective responsibility. But, we expect that a sense of personal responsibility, which drives the embedding of the political into everyday life, will be a strong force shaping self-directed activism.

It is also important to note that the shift toward lifestyle politics may be facilitated by flagging confidence in the ability of governments to address complex social problems (Micheletti

2003), which might have implications for organizationally-directed action more generally. Lifestyle politics posits a symbiotic relationship between trust in political institutions and participation in organizationally-directed activities. As people become increasingly disaffected from the state, they may be less likely to engage in organizationally-directed activity because they no longer view organizations as a venue through which they can affect change. Instead, people become more likely to engage in self-directed forms of political action outside of established political institutions and organizations (Inglehart 1997).

Thus, lifestyle politics predicts a pivot from a strong sense of collective efficacy to a more self-reliant personal efficacy. This, in turn, suggests a changing relationship between participants and SMOs: if people become increasingly displaced from traditional institutions and groups (including SMOs), they should be more likely to take personal responsibility for political problems by engaging in behaviors such as self-directed boycotts and *buycotts*. Thus, in addition to expecting high levels of self-directed participation, we also expect evaluations of the anticipated efficacy of political consumption to influence self-directed political consumption:

> *Hypothesis 3: Respondents' belief in the efficaciousness of political consumption will be positively associated with self-directed political consumption.*

Engaged Citizenship Norms

Some scholars have tied falling levels of interest in public affairs (Lupia and Philpot 2005) and declines in a variety of forms of traditional political participation (Macedo and Alex-Assensoh 2005; Putnam 2000; Teixeira 1992) to declines in associational life. In reaction, many have argued that contemporary understandings of citizenship and civic engagement have been expanding, which has led younger citizens to move away from traditional models of citizenship and political engagement (Bennett 1998; Dalton 2009; Zukin, Keeter, Andolina, Jenkins, and Delli Carpini 2006) and toward new models. These critics argue that instead of a decline, there is simply a shift in citizenship norms and more pessimistic research measures institutional engagement.

For instance, Dalton (2009) differentiates between dutiful and engaged citizenship norms. Whereas dutiful citizens feel an obligation to participate in institutional practices of democracy, such as voting and jury duty, "engaged" citizens seek out more entrepreneurial and non-institutional ways of participating in politics. Engaged citizens have a taste for do-it-yourself engagement and a preference for personal-scale projects tied to expressing one's identity. They engage their communities and peers rather than participating in state-sanctioned and state-centric activities. Even though engaged citizens may not see their personal political engagement as explicitly political—reserving "political" as a marker for state-focused and dutiful activities (Bennett 2012; Dalton 2009; Hooghe and Oser 2015)—they nonetheless use activism, among other forms of civic and political engagement, to better their communities.

We argue that an extension of Dalton's framework suggests that the organizational infrastructure of citizenship should be changing too. That is, at the macro-level, more people should be engaged in self-directed political activity, including self-directed forms of activism, and they may not see those actions as explicitly "political," but rather as acts of personal expression.

> *Hypothesis 4:* Self-*directed political consumers will be less likely to frame their actions as a form of political expression than organizationally-directed political consumers.*

Entrepreneurial Engagement and the Role of Digital Media and Political Interest

Thus far, digital media have been in the background, operating indirectly on processes we have discussed: the contemporary media context is important to lifestyle politics, and to a lesser extent, changing citizenship norms, and has been argued to be important to the rise of movement societies represented through ubiquitous practices (Earl and Kimport 2011). Digital media usage and/or changes in cost structures their use allows have also been argued to be directly and pivotally related to routing around organizations on the production side (Bimber, Flanagin, and Stohl 2005; Earl 2015; Earl and Kimport 2011), making it important to examine the potential role of digital media in creating preferences for routing around organizations on the participant side as well.

Specifically, we argue it is important to think about how political interest might operate differently to create preferences for self-directed versus organizationally-directed boycotts and *buycotts*. One important factor that might make the digital media environment quite conducive for self-directed activism is that it allows individuals to access countless opportunities to act entrepreneurially, unbinding the accessible supply of opportunities from organizations and formal providers. By increasing access and choice over exposure to news and public affairs information, highly interested and engaged citizens can exploit the media environment for more information about public affairs and politics (Prior 2007), which may, in turn, feed more political interest and knowledge (Boulianne 2011). Political interest may then feed protest participation (Schussman and Soule 2005). In other words, politically interested individuals who use the Web to search for political news exhibit entrepreneurial political behavior that should also predict self-directed participation preferences:

Hypothesis 5: Greater exposure to online news and information will be positively associated with self-directed political consumption.

Social media usage represents another potentially important force, particularly given social movements' heavy investment in their social media presences. Since connecting with potential participants and explicitly inviting participation is one of the strongest predictors of protest participation (Schussman and Soule 2005), we suspect that social media usage facilitates organizational "asks", which it turn drives organizationally-directed activism:

Hypothesis 6: Greater political use of social media will be positively associated with organizationally-directed political consumption.

Finally, it is important to consider whether political interest itself, without respect to either independent news searches or social media use, is associated with preferences for specific kinds of participation. People with more interest in politics, and who are more attentive to news and public affairs, are also more likely to be politically sophisticated. Their exposure to political information, political interest, and political acumen may facilitate self-directed action, rendering organizational calls unnecessary for the mobilization of the very politically interested. More formally, we would expect:

Hypothesis 7: Greater political interest will be positively associated with self-directed political consumption.

It is worth noting that some digital media and society researchers might disagree with the above hypotheses since a range of factors affect how digital media usage channels political interest (Bimber, Cantijoch Cunill, Copeland, and Gibson 2015). For instance, where Hypothesis

5 is concerned, just as the Web allows expanded independent access to information, the digital media environment also allows expanded opportunities to learn about and connect with SMOs, which may drive organizationally-directed action. Also, the wide array of media choices allow the less politically inclined to avoid news and political information, making organizational ties one of the few remaining certain pathways for learning about activism. Where social media and Hypothesis 6 are concerned, it might also be that social media are used for social purposes or to connect informal networks with common political causes just as often as organizations use social media to drive mobilization. In terms of political interest and Hypothesis 7, organizations typically target citizens that are more active and political sophisticates may be more likely to follow or belong to SMOs and receive mobilization requests through them. Moreover, political interest and attention to public affairs are associated with both education and age, which in turn are positively associated with involvement in organizations as well (Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012); this may drive preferences for organizationally-directed action. Although we argue the hypotheses we forwarded above are more likely than these alternatives, we acknowledge these alternatives and adopt a modeling strategy that can adjudicate between our expectations and these alternatives.

Boycotting, *Buycotting*, and Political Consumption

Boycotts are a common social movement tactic that also have a notable history, including colonists' boycotts of British goods (Breen 2004), the Montgomery bus boycott (McAdam 1982), and the United Farm Workers' grape boycott (Jenkins and Perrow 1977). Boycotts have always differed from many other social movement tactics in that they require individual decisions to participate that happen asynchronously (i.e., distributed across time) and without physical co-presence: whether one was in Montgomery deciding to board a bus in 1955 or in California making a decision about whether to buy Gallo wine in the 1970s, boycott goals are collective and only achievable if others also participate although one's actual participation is disconnected from others' participation.

Buycotting mirrors boycotting except that *buycotts* use incentives based on preferentially purchasing goods to influence targets instead of seeking to punish targets. Like boycotting, *buycotting* is animated by larger shared goals that are only achievable when people act in coordination although participation tends to occur asynchronously and without need for co-presence.[4]

A key advantage to studying these two forms of activism is that unlike tactics that require co-presence, such as protest rallies, sit-ins, or other kinds of demonstrations, it is possible to participate without any other actors, including SMOs, creating an opportunity to participate. One does not have to wait to be asked to boycott or *buycott*.

Another advantage is that boycotting and *buycotting* are exceptionally common. A recent study found that approximately 34% of adults across 20 nations participated in boycotts or *buycotts* in the preceding 12 months, making it far more common than participating in demonstrations (Neilson and Paxton 2010). Cross-national research on seven European countries also found that boycotting was almost as common as petitioning (van Deth 2012), which is another form of participation that one can engage in outside the physical company of others. Similarly, in the U.S., Baek (2010) found that approximately 38% of Americans had engaged in boycotts, about 35% in *buycotts*, roughly 50% in one or the other, and roughly 25% in both. Boycotts and *buycotts* are also the two most common forms of political consumption (Shaw and Newhorn 2002), which has become significantly more common since the 1970s (Stolle, Hooghe,

and Micheletti 2005). Political consumption occurs when peoples' "choice of producers or products [is] based on political or ethical considerations, or both" (Stolle, Hooghe, and Micheletti 2005: 246).

Studying political consumption also provides unique theoretical purchase for our questions because the sheer abundance of organizationally-directed opportunities to engage in political consumption, and the ability to easily politically consume outside of organizational auspices, allow us to assume that individuals who participate in boycotting and/or *buycotting* outside of organizational campaigns do so because they choose to, not because of a lack of SMO-produced opportunities. Put bluntly, political consumption is so widely accessible that one can isolate demand side questions (i.e., what potential participants prefer to do, versus what they *can do* given the supply of available tactics). [5]

Moreover, political consumption should be affected by the macro-trends that informed our hypotheses, suggesting these macro-trends relate to both the rise of political consumption and to preferences for self-directed versus organizational engagement. Where movement society theory is concerned, boycotting is a classic insider tactic (King 2011; Soule and Earl 2005), which is precisely the kind of tactic that any variant of movement society theory argues is becoming endemic in contemporary life.

Likewise, political consumption represents the kind of activity anticipated by lifestyle politics scholars in that lifestyle politics specifically involves an "individual's choice to use his or her private life sphere to take responsibility for the allocation of common values and resources, in other words, for politics" (Micheletti and Stolle 2010). Personal efficacy and political consumption are also related according to prior research: people who believe they can influence society by purchasing goods and services from ethical companies are more likely to engage in boycotts and *buycotts* (Copeland and Smith 2014; Ellen, Wiener, and Cobb-Walgren 1991).

Political consumption is also an archetypal form of engaged citizenship (Gotlieb and Wells 2012; Nelson, Rademacher, and Paek 2007; Schudson 2007). People are not withdrawing from citizenship and public affairs, but rather approaching this engagement in new ways. For many, being a critical consumer is a crucial part of what it now means to be a good citizen (Micheletti, Stolle, and Berlin 2012; Sandovici and Davis 2010; Scammell 2007).

Finally, the information needed to participate in political consumption is digitally available, whether through SMOs' online campaigns or entrepreneurial Internet users' searches for news, product information, and other information that could inform political consumption choices.

Despite these advantages, it is important to consider one potential criticism, which argues that boycott or *buycott* participation is so inherently individualized that participation in them is not actually activism (e.g., van Deth 2012). Critics may grow louder still if formal SMO sponsorship, which tethers some political consumption to the infrastructure of larger social movements, is viewed as optional.

This is an important concern because it questions whether self-directed activism, such as the self-directed participation we study, is relevant to social movement scholarship. We argue that it is for several reasons. First, we argue that political consumption is as much a protest tactic today as it was, for instance, when farm worker supporters used it in the 1970s (recall, that people were both boycotting some wine and *buycotting* others, even though the term "*buycotting*" did not exist in the 1970s). Social movement tactics are not suddenly wholly different kinds of activities when not administered by organizations. Second, critics are

implicitly assuming that a collective cause cannot exist without either an SMO or co-presence tying actions together, but this concern has been questioned by existing work on online protest (Earl and Kimport 2011), which shows that while understandings of collectivity may be different, collectivity still exists and it's quite possible for organizing to happen without organizations. Third, this criticism conflates the definition of protest with potential predictors, such as organizations, as if protest that does not unfold in iconic ways should be defined away as non-protest. This risks defining away useful variation that can help social movement scholars understand when people prefer to act collectively in looser, more self-directed ways, as we describe here, versus in more associative, collective manners, as in iconic and historical protest.

But, even if a reader considers political consumption too individualized to be constitute activism, we argue that this style of political participation can still be seen as a consequence, or result, of the development of movement societies. Thus, even if one disagrees that political consumption represents a form of activism, it is still of interest to social movement scholars since its popularity is potentially a product of movement societies, among other influences. Moreover, as we discuss in the conclusion, preferences for more self-directed political engagement generally may have important implications for social movements and SMOs.

Data and Methods

To test our hypotheses, we use original survey data collected in the U.S. between December 7 and 21, 2011 by YouGov. The data contain a representative sample of 1,300 U.S. adults and an oversample of 900 political consumers. To create a representative sample, YouGov drew a random draw of respondents from the 2007 American Community Study. Next, they matched this sample based on gender, age, race, education, party identification, ideology, and news interest to members of their online panel. YouGov also sampled an additional 900 U.S. political consumers based on gender, age, race, education, party identification, ideology, and news interest to reflect as closely as possible population parameters determined in previous studies of political consumers in the U.S. (The Economist/YouGov Poll, 9/17/2011 and 12/10/2011).[6] In total, the survey achieved a response rate of 42%.[7] The final sample size was 2,200. Compared to U.S. census data, the sample has more women and is slightly better educated, but is comparable to surveys that use random digital dialing, such as those conducted by the Pew Research Center (Pew Research Center for the People and the Press 2012). This paper uses weights to adjust for the oversample of political consumers in all analyses.

Dependent Variables

We analyzed boycotting and *buycotting* separately because previous work suggests that the predictors of each might differ somewhat, making separate analyses the most conservative modeling approach (Baek 2010; Copeland 2014; Neilson 2010). This research also suggests that people are more likely to engage in boycotts at the behest of organizations, while people who engage in *buycotts* are more likely to do so outside of established SMOs, making it important to model these forms separately. To measure boycotting, we asked respondents: "During the past 12 months, did you boycott a product, service, brand, or company for ethical or political reasons?" To measure *buycotting*, we asked respondents: "In the past 12 months, did you purchase one product or brand over another for ethical or political reasons?"[8]

Even once adjusted for the over-sample, our survey reveals levels of political consumption that are consistent with other studies. Approximately 39% of people boycotted at least once in the prior year for political, ethical, or environmental reasons, while 36% of people

engaged in *buycotts* for similar reasons. These frequencies are consistent with other studies of political consumerism in the U.S., which have shown that approximately 38% of Americans had engaged in boycotts, and about 35% of Americans had engaged in *buycotts* (Baek 2010). We also validated the measure using data from an open-ended survey question in which we asked respondents to name a specific product or company they boycotted; approximately 87% of respondents named a specific product or company and cited a political reason for doing so. This suggests that there is little likelihood that respondents were over-reporting their participation.

Next, we asked respondents who had participated in a boycott in the last 12 months: "When you boycotted products, services, or companies for ethical, political, and/or environmental reasons, did you do it as part of an organized campaign, or did you do it on your own?" Answer choices included "Organized campaign;" "On my own;" and "Did some on my own and some as part of an organized campaign(s)." We used these response categories to create a categorical boycotting variable that can take on four values: "no-cotter" for respondents who did not engage in boycotting; "organizationally-directed boycotter" for respondents who participated as part of an organized campaign; "self-directed boycotter" for respondents who participated on their own in the absence of an organized campaign; and "hybrid" for respondents who participated both as part of an organized effort and on their own. Similarly, people who had engaged in *buycotting* were asked an identical question: "In the past 12 months when you made purchasing decisions based on ethical, political, and/or environmental concerns, did you do it as part of an organized campaign, or did you do it on your own?" Based on this question, we constructed a matching four-category dependent variable for *buycotters*.

Independent Variables

There are four main sets of independent variables. To examine Hypothesis 1, which is derived from movement society approaches and is meant to measure the connection each respondent has to SMOs or larger social movements via their protest participation histories, we use a frequency-based measure of protest participation. Specifically, respondents were asked how frequently they signed petitions and/or participated in demonstrations. For each, we created a three-point continuous scale coded "0" for never participate, "1" for participate infrequently, and "2" for participate frequently. We model each type of activity as a separate independent variable.[9]

To examine Hypotheses 2 and 3, derived from research on lifestyle politics, we use questions about respondents' evaluations of their personal responsibility for solving social problems (Hypothesis 2) and their perception of the efficacy of political consumption (Hypothesis 3). Specifically, we asked respondents to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with the following statements: "It is the personal responsibility of each citizen to purchase products and services from ethical companies;" and "Citizens can influence society by purchasing goods and services from ethical companies." For both items, we created a four-point scale coded "0" for disagree or disagree strongly, "1" for disagree somewhat, "2" for agree somewhat, and "3" for agree or agree strongly.[10]

To evaluate Hypothesis 4, which is derived from work on engaged citizenship norms, and is meant to measure the extent to which political consumption is seen as a form of personal versus political expression, we used a question that asked respondents the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the following statement: "Deciding which products to buy or boycott for ethical, political and/or environmental reasons are NOT forms of political expression." Like the above two questions we created a four-point scale using the same categories, but we reverse

coded this item so that higher scores indicate more disagreement (i.e., a positive relationship indicates that people believe their activity is a form of political expression).[11]

To evaluate hypotheses about the political use of digital media (Hypotheses 5 and 6), we created two scales. The first scale, which is on Internet use to seek or obtain information about current events and consumer products, measures the information seeking represented in Hypothesis 5. It includes two question sets that we combined into a single Likert-type scale ranging from 0 to 4.75, with higher scores indicating greater frequency of digital media use for information seeking (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.75$). The first question set asked respondents to indicate how frequently they engaged in the following activities (based on a six-point Likert-type scale ranging from "Never" to "About every month") using social media and/or the Internet: "Watch video online about a political candidate or election;" "Get information about political issues;" and "Look for information about consumer products." The second question set asked respondents to indicate how frequently they obtained news from the following media (based on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from "Never" to "Daily"): "Website of a national or local newspaper;" "Portal website that gathers news from many different sources;" and "Email."

The second scale focuses on social media usage (see Hypothesis 6): respondents were asked to assess their level of agreement with two questions (along an identical six-point scale): "It [social media] gives me a space to talk about politics" and "It [social media] helps me take part in activist causes." The two items were combined into a single scale ranging from 0 to 5, with higher scores indicating more agreement (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.84$).

To measure political interest for Hypotheses 7, we used a standard measure: a single question asked respondents how often they paid attention to the news and public affairs.

Control Variables

Based on prior research on political consumption (e.g., Stolle, Hooghe, and Micheletti 2005), we controlled for five variables: age, highest level of education completed, household income, gender, and political trust. Political trust was measured using two items as an additive scale ranging from 0 to 18, with higher scores indicating more trust. The questions asked on a scale of 1 to 10, how often respondents can trust the government in Washington to do what is right and the extent to which they think public officials are corrupt. The mean and standard deviation for each measure are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variables by Percentage of Sample

Boycotted in last 12 Months:	39%	***Buycotted* in last 12 Months:**	36%
Self-directed	72%	Self-directed	77%
Organizationally-directed	8%	Organizationally-directed	4%
Hybrid	20%	Hybrid	20%

Independent Variables

	Mean	*SE*	Min.	Max.
Movement Society				
Demonstrate	0.34	0.53	0	2
Sign petitions	1.09	0.63	0	2
Lifestyle Politics				
Personal responsibility	1.95	1.06	0	3

Efficacy	2.29	0.92	0	3
Engaged Citizenship				
Political expression	2.12	1.07	0	3
Digital Media Use and Interest				
Information seeking	2.67	1.24	0	4.75
Social Media and Politics	1.91	1.53	0	5
Political interest	2.21	0.94	0	3
Control Variables				
Age	46.16	15.88	18	90
Education	3.14	1.45	1	6
Income	7.06	3.61	1	14
Male	0.49	0.50	0	1
Political trust	6.07	3.61	0	18

Notes: All data are weighted to reflect general population parameters.

Modeling

Using these data, we estimated two sets of multinomial logistic regressions (see Tables 2 and 4). For each set of multinomial logistic regressions, we estimated two models: one for boycotting and one for *buycotting*. In the first set of models, we model the determinants of engaging in self-directed and/or organizationally-directed consumption versus not participating in any political consumption (i.e., non-political consumers serve as the base group). We run a second set of models on only those respondents who engaged in political consumption to serve as a secondary check on our models and interpretations. These models include questions about the sources of information that political consumers used to inform their political consumption that are not available for respondents who did not politically consume at all. In this set of models, self-directed political consumers serve as the base group (see Table 4).

For both sets of models, we also estimated predicted probabilities based on our regression results using Clarify (King, Tomz, and Wittenberg 2000). To estimate predicted probabilities, we began by generating a base probability for both boycotting and *buycotting*, which was determined by computing a regression containing only significant predictors and then computing probabilities for each outcome assuming all continuous variables were set at their mean (there were no dummy variables in this final reduced model since gender was non-significant). We then computed comparison probabilities, shown in Tables 3 and 5, that vary each predictor individually by moving that variable to its maximum value and leaving all other variables at their mean. By comparing this probability to the base probability, we can identify the net effect of each variable. All analyses were weighted to adjust for the oversample of political consumers in all analyses, and were conducted using Stata 14.

Results

Before we evaluate specific hypotheses, it is important to note that we find substantial demand for self-directed political consumption. This suggests strong support for the ubiquitous practice approach to movement societies, which anticipates substantial demand for participation outside of organizations. Among people who boycotted, approximately 72% were strictly self-directed, only 8% were strictly organizationally-directed, and roughly 20% of people engaged in

both self-directed and organizationally-directed campaigns. Similarly, among those who engaged in *buycotts*, roughly 77% of people participated in self-directed *buycotts*, only about 4% were organizationally-directed, and approximately 20% participated in both self-directed and organizationally-directed campaigns. These results are striking because they suggest that about three quarters of the time, political consumption is entirely self-directed, and in about a quarter of cases, people are at least partially or fully organizationally-directed. While these numbers may seem surprising, they are consistent with figures from Zukin et al.'s (2006) study of youth political consumption.

Social Movement Involvement

Based on movement society theory, our first hypothesis anticipates that people who participate in social movements more frequently are more likely to choose organizationally-directed political consumption. However, people who occasionally participate in social movement activities are demonstrating that they don't always free ride, making at least a limited relationship between wider social movement participation and all forms of political consumption likely.

Findings confirm a positive and significant relationship between social movement involvement and all forms of boycotting and *buycotting* (except for petitions on organizationally-directed *buycotts*), as indicated by the positive and significant coefficients for demonstration participation and petition signing in both models in Table 2. As expected, the magnitude of these effects is larger for organizationally-directed political consumption than for self-directed political consumption, as shown by the differences in coefficient magnitudes (except, again, for petitions on organizationally-directed *buycotts*).

Table 2. Multinomial Logistic Regression Models Predicting Organizationally-Directed, Self-Directed, and Hybrid Boycotts and *Buycotts* Compared to Non-Political Consumers

	Boycotts (Base Category = Non-Political Consumers)			***Buycotts* (Base Category = Non-Political Consumers)**		
	SMO-Directed	**Self-Directed**	**Hybrid**	**SMO-Directed**	**Self-Directed**	**Hybrid**
Movement Society						
Demonstrate	**0.94*** **	**0.64*** **	**1.18*** **	**1.47*** **	**0.40** **	**0.88*** **
	(0.27)	(0.14)	(0.20)	(0.40)	(0.13)	(0.21)
Sign petitions	**0.92** **	**0.51*** **	**1.32*** **	-0.12	**0.37** **	**1.42*** **
	(0.30)	(0.13)	(0.22)	(0.45)	(0.13)	(0.24)
Lifestyle Politics						
Personal responsibility	0.36	**0.48*** **	**0.57*** **	0.29	**0.40*** **	**0.42** **
	(0.20)	(0.09)	(0.15)	(0.30)	(0.08)	(0.16)
Efficacy	-0.02	**0.26* **	0.17	0.50	**0.60*** **	**0.45* **
	(0.24)	(0.11)	(0.19)	(0.42)	(0.12)	(0.23)
Engaged Citizenship						
Political expression	-0.06	0.02	**0.31** **	-0.08	0.03	**0.36** **
	(0.14)	(0.06)	(0.12)	(0.20)	(0.06)	(0.13)
Digital Media Use and Political Interest						
Information Search	0.10	**0.26** **	**0.36* **	0.35	**0.35*** **	**0.42** **

	(0.19)	(0.08)	(0.14)	(0.31)	(0.08)	(0.16)
Social Media and Politics	**0.23***	0.02	**0.18***	0.23	-0.01	**0.21***
	(0.12)	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.18)	(0.05)	(0.09)
Political interest	0.23	0.18	**0.47***	0.29	0.10	0.44
	(0.24)	(0.10)	(0.20)	(0.42)	(0.10)	(0.23)
Control Variables						
Age	0.00	-0.00	-0.00	-0.00	-0.00	0.01
	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.00)	(0.01)
Education	0.22	**0.25*****	**0.21****	**0.49****	**0.29*****	**0.27****
	(0.11)	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.17)	(0.05)	(0.08)
Income	-0.02	**0.05***	0.04	-0.03	0.02	-0.01
	(0.05)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.07)	(0.02)	(0.03)
Male	0.20	0.00	-0.31	0.24	-0.08	-0.20
	(0.33)	(0.15)	(0.22)	(0.48)	(0.14)	(0.24)
Political trust	-0.00	**-0.09*****	**-0.09****	0.02	**-0.05***	-0.04
	(0.04)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.06)	(0.02)	(0.03)
Constant	**-7.11*****	**-4.89*****	**-9.59*****	**-10.16*****	**-5.56*****	**-11.38*****
	(0.98)	(0.43)	(0.85)	(1.68)	(0.45)	(1.00)
LR χ^2 (39)	633.57***			603.08***		
Pseudo r^2	0.21			0.22		
Observations	1,481	1,481	1,481	1,476	1,476	1,476

Notes: Data are weighted to general population parameters. Standard errors in parentheses. Statistically significant coefficients in bold typeface. *** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05

To get a sense of the difference in magnitudes, we can turn to the predicted probabilities, which are shown in Table 3. For instance, moving from the mean value for demonstrating to the maximum more than doubles the probability of participating in an organizationally-directed boycott and raises the probability of participating in an organizationally-directed *buycott* by a factor of six. Probabilities for self-directed action also increase, but the changes are not nearly as staggering in relative terms as the changes for organizationally-directed boycotts (although they do increase the raw probabilities by larger amounts, reflecting the much larger base probability for self-directed participation).

Table 3. Predicted Probabilities of Engaging in Organizationally-Directed, Self-Directed, or Hybrid Boycotts and *Buycotts*

	Boycotts			***Buycotts***		
	SMO-Directed	Self-Directed	Hybrid	SMO-Directed	Self-Directed	Hybrid
	Coef. (*SE*)	Coef. (*SE*)	Coef. (*SE*)	Coef. (*SE*)	Coef. (*SE*)	Coef. (*SE*)
Base Probability	3%	28%	4%	1%	27%	3%
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Movement Society						
Demonstrate	7%	43%	15%	7%	37%	8%

	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.03)
Sign petitions	5%	34%	11%		31%	9%
	(0.01)	(0.03)	(0.02)		(0.03)	(0.02)
Lifestyle Politics						
Personal responsibility	4%	37%	6%		35%	4%
	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)		(0.02)	(0.01)
Efficacy		31%			35%	3%
		(0.02)			(0.02)	(0.01)
Engaged Citizenship						
Political expression			5%			4%
			(0.01)			(0.01)
Digital Media Use						
Information Search		38%	7%		41%	5%
		(0.04)	(0.02)		(0.04)	(0.02)
Social Media and Politics	6%		7%			5%
	(0.02)		(0.02)			(0.02)
Political interest		30%	6%			4%
		(0.02)	(0.01)			(0.01)
Control Variables						
Education	3%	42%	6%	2%	44%	4%
	(0.01)	(0.03)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.04)	(0.01)
Income		34%	5%			
		(0.03)	(0.01)			
Political trust		12%	2%		18%	
		(0.03)	(0.01)		(0.03)	

Predicted probabilities were calculated by taking 1,000 draws. The base probability is calculated holding all variables at their mean; other probabilities are calculated by raising the variable to its maximum while leaving other variables at their mean. Only significant predictors displayed. Blank cells indicate that a statistically-significant relationship was not found in the multinomial logistic regression. Data are weighted to reflect general population parameters.

Responsibility, Efficacy, and Lifestyle Politics

Based on theories of lifestyle politics, we posit that people who believe it is their personal responsibility to patronize ethical companies will be more likely to engage in political consumption, but that these effects will be stronger for self-directed acts (H2). The results largely confirm our expectations: people who believe it is their responsibility to shop at ethical companies are significantly more likely to engage in all forms of boycotting and *buycotting* (except for organizationally-directed *buycotts*), as indicated by the positive and significant coefficients for personal responsibility in both models (see Table 2). The magnitude of these effects is larger for self-directed acts than it is for organizationally-directed acts, as shown by the differences in coefficient magnitudes (see Table 3). In fact, the predicted probabilities show that moving from the mean personal responsibility value to the maximum value increases the probability of participating in a self-directed boycott by nine percentage points and in a self-directed *buycott* by eight percentage points (see Table 3). Conversely, moving from the mean personal responsibility value to the maximum value only increases the probability of

participating in an organizationally-directed boycott by one percentage point. These analyses support our argument that a sense of personal, moral responsibility drives more entrepreneurial political consumers.

For individual efficacy, we anticipate a positive relationship with self-directed political consumption (H3) and the results largely confirm this. The coefficients are positive and significant for self-directed boycotts and *buycotts*, but not for organizationally-directed acts. People who believe their purchasing behavior can influence society are about three percentage points more likely to engage in self-directed boycotts, and about eight percentage points more likely to engage in self-directed *buycotts*.

Dutiful versus Engaged Citizenship and Political versus Personal Expression

Based on work on changing citizenship norms, we expect organizationally-directed political consumers to view their actions as a form of political expression (H4). By contrast, more entrepreneurial and engaged citizens should view political consumption as a form of personal expression. Here, the results are surprising. The coefficients for organized- and self-directed behavior are not significant (see Table 2). Instead, people who participate *both* as part of organized efforts *and* on their own (i.e., hybrid political consumers) are significantly more likely to perceive their behavior as a form of political expression, although the magnitude of this effect is not substantively large. This finding may suggest that when people *only* engage in political consumption at the behest of organizations, they are less concerned about the meaning of political consumption because they are responding to organizational cues, not an evaluation of the tactic. Likewise, our expectation that actors who prefer self-directed activism are less likely to think of political consumption as explicitly political is compatible with our finding. But, people who engage in political consumption both on their own and in response to organizational demands view their participation through a political lens. Nonetheless, the effect is small and suggests that these changing views of citizenship are not structuring demand heavily.

Political Interest and Digital Media

Our final three hypotheses examine the relationship between political interest, digital media usage, and political consumerism. The results show that use of digital media for news and political information search is predictive of self-directed participation and hybrid participation, but not organizationally-directed participation (see Table 2), which supports Hypothesis 5. Predicted probabilities show that moving from the mean to the maximum for online information seeking increases the probability of engaging in self-directed boycotts and *buycotts* by 10 percentage points and 14 percentage points, respectively (see Table 3).

Our measure for political uses of social media taps into a different online expression of political interest to evaluate Hypothesis 6. The coefficients are positive and significant for organizationally-directed boycotts, but not for organizationally-directed *buycotts* (see Table 2), and are also positive and significant for hybrid acts. The predicted probabilities show that moving political use of social media from its mean to its maximum value doubles the probability of engaging in organizationally-directed boycotts from 3% to 6%, which supports Hypothesis 6, although results are not significant for *buycotts*.

The above effects are net of our general measure of political interest, which Hypothesis 7 addresses. We find no relationship between general political interest and organizationally-directed boycotts or *buycotts* (as expected), but political interest positively and significantly increases self-directed boycotts (but not *buycotts*, which is unexpected) and hybrid participation

in boycotts and *buycotts* (which is also unexpected).[12] These unexpected findings support other work showing that the role of political interest in the digital media environment is subtle and contingent, leaving Hypothesis 7 with only weak support.

Information Sources for Boycotters and Buycotters

A skeptical reader may question the extent to which organizations lurk in the background of self-directed participation. That is, skeptics may wonder whether self-directed consumers are as self-directed as they believe themselves to be, or is the hand of organizations simply more invisible to them than anticipated? One check against the possibility that alleged self-directed participation is actually a manifestation of organizational mobilization is to examine the extent to which people's perception of self-directed action maps onto mobilization realities. To address this, we conducted a supplementary analysis that examined whether people received essential information on boycotting, *buycotting*, or both (depending on what they had engaged in) from: friend(s) or family member(s); product labeling information; news media; email; the Internet generally; social networking site(s); government regulatory agencies or commissions; not-for-profit group or organizations; advertising or public relations campaigns; and/or endorsements by public figures or celebrities.

Specifically, we estimated multinomial logit models comparing organizationally-directed and hybrid acts to self-directed political consumption, controlling for age, education, income, gender, political interest, and political trust (see Table 4). As before, we estimated predicted probabilities from these results using Clarify (King, Tomz, and Wittenberg 2000). Because these questions were only asked of respondents who engaged in at least one form of political consumption in the last 12 months, respondents who did not participate were omitted from the analysis.[13]

Table 4. Multinomial Logistic Regression Model Comparing Information Sources for Organizationally-Directed and Hybrid Acts to Self-Directed Acts about Political Consumption

	Boycott		***Buycotters***	
	SMO-Directed	**Hybrid**	**SMO-Directed**	**Hybrid**
Source of Information				
Friends or family	0.143	**0.427****	**0.724***	**0.427****
	(0.266)	(0.179)	(0.378)	(0.179)
Product labeling	**-1.610*****	-0.087	**-1.432*****	-0.087
	(0.448)	(0.198)	(0.528)	(0.198)
News media	**-1.531*****	-0.292	**-0.943****	-0.292
	(0.297)	(0.188)	(0.385)	(0.188)
Email	**1.570*****	**0.967*****	**1.142*****	**0.967*****
	(0.272)	(0.189)	(0.399)	(0.189)
Internet	**-0.570****	-0.017	-0.357	-0.017
	(0.287)	(0.201)	(0.423)	(0.201)
Social Media	**1.138*****	**1.145*****	**0.876****	**1.145*****
	(0.300)	(0.189)	(0.410)	(0.189)

Government agency	-0.123	**0.557****	-0.878	**0.557****
	(0.527)	(0.245)	(0.928)	(0.245)
Non-profit organization	**1.062*****	**1.176*****	**0.651***	**1.176*****
	(0.282)	(0.184)	(0.394)	(0.184)
PR campaign	**0.807****	-0.341	0.280	-0.341
	(0.408)	(0.274)	(0.584)	(0.274)
Celebrity endorsements	-0.251	0.314	-0.156	0.314
	(0.573)	(0.300)	(0.697)	(0.300)
Control Variables				
Age	-0.001	-0.003	**-0.021***	-0.003
	(0.009)	(0.006)	-0.013	(0.006)
Education	-0.043	-0.043	0.049	-0.043
	(0.092)	(0.061)	(0.133)	(0.061)
Income	-0.049	0.011	-0.006	0.011
	(0.038)	(0.026)	(0.053)	(0.026)
Gender	0.197	**-0.355****	0.344	**-0.355****
	(0.263)	(0.176)	(0.376)	(0.176)
Political interest	0.025	**0.432*****	0.344	**0.432*****
	(0.185)	(0.151)	(0.321)	(0.151)
Political trust	**0.110*****	0.008	**0.102****	0.008
	(0.036)	(0.025)	(0.049)	(0.025)
Constant	**-2.547*****	**-3.178*****	**-3.823*****	**-3.178*****
N	1105		799	
LR χ^2 (32)	320.35***		196.39***	
Pseudo r^2	0.19		0.171	

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses. All data are weighted to reflect general population parameters. Significance levels: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Results support a pairing between organizationally-produced campaigns and organizationally-directed participation. Compared to self-directed boycotters, organizationally-directed boycotters are more likely to obtain information from non-profit organizations and public relations campaigns, and they are less likely to rely on product labeling information, the news media, and the Internet. Compared to self-directed *buycotters*, organizationally-directed *buycotters* are more likely to receive information through non-profit organizations, and they are less likely to obtain information from product labeling schemes and the news media. These differences reflect the much higher role of organizational cues for organizationally-directed political consumers, as well as the heightened political sociability of organizationally-directed political consumers.

By contrast, the entrepreneurial use of product labeling schemes, the news media, and the Internet are important resources for self-directed acts, which is consistent with our arguments about self-directed political consumption. Self-directed political consumers are information seekers who find out about products and companies based on their own initiative and through informal networks—they read product information, they search the Web for political

information, and they ponder what to do about political and cultural issues raised in the news media.

Table 5. Predicted Probability of Key Predictors of Information Sources for Organized, Self-Directed, and Hybrid Boycotts and *Buycotts* (Less Control Variables)

	Boycott			Buycott		
	SMO-Directed Coef. (*SE*)	Self-Directed Coef. (*SE*)	Hybrid Coef. (*SE*)	SMO-Directed Coef. (*SE*)	Self-Directed Coef. (*SE*)	Hybrid Coef. (*SE*)
Base Probability	8%	84%	8%	2%	49%	5%
	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.03)	(0.01)
Source of Information						
Friends or family		79%	11%	5%	50%	6%
		(0.06)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.04)	(0.02)
Product labeling	2%	90%		1%	77%	
	(0.01)	(0.02)		(0.01)	(0.04)	
News media	2%	92%		1%	49%	
	(0.01)	(0.02)		(0.01)	(0.02)	
Email	28%	59%	14%	5%	34%	9%
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.05)	(0.02)
Internet	5%	87%			60%	
	(0.01)	(0.04)			(0.04)	
Social media	19%	63%	18%	4%	35%	10%
	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.04)	(0.02)	(0.05)	(0.02)
Government agency		79%	13%		43%	9%
		(0.05)	(0.03)		(0.07)	(0.02)
Non-profit organization	18%	62%	18%	5%	49%	14%
	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.04)	(0.02)	(0.05)	(0.03)
PR campaign	17%	77%			52%	
	(0.07)	(0.07)			(0.07)	
Celebrity endorsement		67%			60%	
		(0.04)			(0.08)	

Predicted probabilities were calculated by taking 1,000 draws. The base probability is calculated holding all variables at their mean; other probabilities are calculated by raising the variable to its maximum while leaving other variables at their mean. Blank cells for organized and hybrid acts indicate that there was not a statistically significant difference between these acts and self-directed acts in the multinomial logistic regression. Only significant predictors displayed. The full model included all variables, including control variables. Data are weighted to reflect general population parameters.

Discussion and Conclusion

The move to "organizing outside of organizations" (Karpf 2012), which is well-documented in research on online protest, has been understood primarily from the perspective of organizations. This means that even in a line of research focused on the declining influence of SMOs, most of the research attention has nonetheless been on SMOs! A primary contribution of this article is to expand significantly the terms of this debate to question whether potential protest participants have a taste or desire for "participating outside of organizations." Our findings show that there is, in fact, substantial demand for participating outside of organizations, with about three-quarters of political consumers engaging in self-directed efforts. Moreover, far less than one in ten political consumers is doing so solely because of organizational requests.

This is an important finding when coupled with research on organizing outside of organizations as it suggests that on both the supply and demand side, an increasingly amount of activism is happening outside of SMOs. While we studied political consumption because the ubiquity of organizational and self-directed opportunities to politically consume makes it easier to assume that action is expressing a demand for different styles, we urge future research to study preferences for participating outside of organizations with other types of activism as well.

A second major contribution is to examine what attributes at the individual level might explain preferences for participating within or outside of organizations. If one thinks of the changing digital media context as providing an expanded set of opportunities and reduced constraints on behavior, the next step is examining the forces that shape how people respond. We identified three macro-social phenomena theoretically capable of driving a preference for self-directed political action, in addition to developments directly related to digital media.

First, the rise of movement societies as understood by the ubiquitous practices strand of that theory suggests that movement practices have become unmoored from specific movements and diffused to become more general social heuristics for claims-making. If this is true, one would expect to see people use traditional protest tactics to deal with a wide range of issues in their lives and to do so not at the behest of organizations but in more entrepreneurial ways. Findings support Hypothesis 1, showing that people who have more connections to social movements, and potentially to SMOs, based on their participation in other social movement activities are more likely to engage in political consumption at the behest of organizations. However, social movement participation also helps to discriminate between free riders and political consumers more broadly, as evidenced by a smaller but still significant effect on self-directed political consumption.

Second, the growth of lifestyle politics has meant that political problem solving is increasingly happening in people's daily lives as they lose trust in the ability of government to address grand challenges. It is possible that this loss of trust extends to other organizational actors, spurring people to address challenges not only in their everyday lives, but also on their own, and not in response to organizational calls. Hypotheses 2 and 3 applied these insights to argue that people who feel greater personal responsibility to affect change and see political consumption as more efficacious would be more likely to be self-directed political consumers. Our findings confirm both expectations.

Third, the switch from dutiful to engaged citizenship norms entails a shift in how politics and civic engagement are understood and enacted; today, engaged citizens are much more entrepreneurial and less likely to work through traditional gatekeepers. We suggest that this

might not only move citizens toward protest tactics such as boycotts and *buycotts,* but might also push them to undertake these efforts on their own initiative instead of in response to organizational calls. Hypothesis 4 was motivated by this research and anticipated that more dutiful citizens would be more likely to see political consumption in clearly political terms and more likely to desire to participate through organizational avenues. Surprisingly, we found that people who see their engagement as explicitly political are more likely to engage in *both* organizationally-directed and self-directed political consumption.

Our last three hypotheses explored the role of political interest in the contemporary digital media environment. Contrary to the view that expanded choice in the digital media context means that more interested citizens participate more while less interested citizens participate less, we found a complex picture. General political interest predicted self-directed boycott participation, but neither organizationally-directed boycotting nor either type of *buycotting*, leaving only part of Hypothesis 7 intact. But, consistent with Hypothesis 5, political information-seeking online predicts self-directed boycotting and *buycotting* but not organizationally-directed political consumerism of either form. Likewise, political use of social media predicts organizationally-directed boycotts, consistent with Hypothesis 6.

Taken together, our findings suggest two profiles of political consumers. One profile is more organizationally-directed: given a history of frequent social movement engagement, these political consumers are likely adding political consumption into a larger portfolio of traditional social movement participation; they employ social media to engage online political communities and are more likely to be found boycotting than *buycotting*, although they may engage in both. The other profile is of self-directed political consumers, who draw on a sense of efficacy and responsibility and employ digital media to learn about civic affairs in order to strike out entrepreneurially and make political choices part of their everyday buying. This type of political consumer is engaged in both forms of political consumption, but is more likely to *buycott* and is more responsive to product labeling than to organizational mobilization calls. Both of these kinds of political consumers live in a media-rich environment, but they operate within that environment somewhat differently.

Our findings show that the latter profile is by far more common. We urge future research to investigate whether these two profiles appear to be robust, both in research on political consumption and activism more broadly. Depending on the extent to which future research confirms these two kinds of participant profiles, it will be important to understand how these kinds of actors react to new political opportunities, threats of repression, and/or changing political environments more generally.

Finally, we close by acknowledging that even if individuals are not responding to specific organizational mobilization calls, that does not mean that SMOs have ceased to matter to social movements. For instance, in some cases SMOs may be integral to raising the profile of particular companies as targets by earning media coverage or doing outreach. SMOs may have produced, or influenced, some of the material that the entrepreneurial political consumers searched for and read online without participants' knowledge. We are not attempting to suggest that movements overall are unaffected by SMOs and their actions. Rather, we are raising the possibility that while SMOs were once integral because of both indirect influences (such as earning media coverage about issues and targets) and direct influences (through direct calls for mobilization), the relative weight of SMO action may be shifting toward indirect influences for many people, while a notable committed core of activists (including a small core of political consumers) remain responsive to organizational mobilization calls. We urge future research to unpack how

SMOs may be indirectly influencing apparently entrepreneurial activism as well as study other factors that may influence such activism. Also, researchers should recall that some forms of activism are difficult to undertake without some nominal organizing entity (e.g., a March on Washington would be very difficult without substantial SMO involvement), and thus research should seek to determine what forms of activism are more and less affected by demand for self-directed activities.

NOTES

[1] As discussed more below, Klandermans (2004) argued that social movement participation results from the nexus of supply side dynamics (i.e., the creation of opportunities to participate) and demand side dynamics (i.e., individual interest in participation).

[2] We italicize the word "*buycott*" to distinguish it from the visually similar word "boycott."

[3] Klandermans argues this is generally true of all social movement participation; he does not suggest situations under which being invited to engage, feeling motivated to engage, having the ability to engage, and/or knowing about potential engagement opportunities would be unnecessary.

[4] At the same time, SMOs can also organize so-called flashmobs or "carrotmobs" to target a store that has made a commitment to socially responsible behavior.

[5] While one may suspect that political consumption is only available to people with greater purchasing power, evidence on this point is mixed in the U.S. (Becker and Copeland 2016), Western Europe (Ferrer-Fons and Fraile 2014), and Latin America (Echegaray 2015).

[6] To qualify as a political consumer, respondents must have boycotted a product and/or selected an item to *buycott* in the past 12 months for political, ethical, or environmental reasons.

[7] The response rate is based on the American Association of Public Opinion Research's (AAPOR) RR3 formula (AAPOR 2011). The formula for RR3 is (complete interviews) / [complete interviews + incomplete interviews + refusals + (eligibility rate * nonresponse)].

[8] Admittedly, these questions have potential limitations. First, they do not ask respondents to indicate how often they engaged in political consumerism. Second, the phrase "for ethical or political reasons" is subject to interpretation. However, both questions have been used and validated in other studies of political consumerism (Newman and Bartels 2011; Stolle, Hooghe, and Micheletti 2005; Strømsnes 2009).

[9] For each item, respondents could indicate how frequently they participated in the past year by selecting one of the following categories: Never; I have done this, but not in the last year; Once

in the last year; About every 6 months; About every 3 months; and About every month. In the original model specification, we treated each response category as a dummy variable and omitted one dummy as a reference category in modeling. However, results suggested that some categories could be combined. Thus, for parsimony we coded the response, "never," as never participate (0); "once in the last year," and "about every 6 months" as participate infrequently (1); and "about every 3 months" and "about every month" as participate frequently (3).

[10] These questions are equally useful for modeling boycotting and *buycotting* because often times, boycotting and *buycotting* are two sides of the same coin. When people choose to purchase fair-trade coffee, for instance, they necessarily boycott coffee that is not fair trade. In addition, these measures tap into deeper sentiments about the extent to which political considerations influence people's purchasing behavior, and whether they believe this behavior can have important implications.

[11] For each statement, respondents could indicate that they strongly disagree to strongly agree on a Likert-type scale. In the original model specification, we treated each response category as a dummy variable, minus an omitted reference category. However, the results suggested that some categories could be combined. For parsimony, we coded the responses for the first and third items as "0" for disagree or disagree strongly, "1" for disagree somewhat, "2" for agree somewhat, and "3" for agree or agree strongly.

[12] Our results for control variables are consistent with the literature. Well-educated respondents are more likely to engage in boycotts and *buycotts*. Wealthier respondents are more likely to engage in self-directed boycotts. Political trust significantly decreases the likelihood of engaging in self-directed boycotts, hybrid boycotts, and self-directed *buycotts*. There are no statistically significant effects for age or gender.

[13] The model for boycotting includes 1105 respondents, and the model for *buycotting* includes 799 respondents.

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