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**COMPARING BONDING AND BRIDGING TIES FOR DEMOCRATIC
ENGAGEMENT:
EVERYDAY USE OF COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES WITHIN SOCIAL
NETWORKS FOR CIVIC AND CIVIL BEHAVIORS**

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Abstract

The structure of people's social networks predicts democratic engagement. However, the relative contribution of different types of social ties to civic and civil behaviors is unclear. This paper explores the role of core networks – bonding social capital – to the role of overall network diversity – bridging social capital – for participation in formal civic institutions and informal civil behaviors. Emphasis is placed on the possible role of heterogeneity within core networks – political disagreement and the presence of nonkin ties – and on frequency of interaction, in-person and mediated: mobile phone and the Internet. This study finds that overall network diversity is a more consistent and substantive predictor of civic and civil behaviors than the size or heterogeneity of the small number of ties that make up the core network of most people. The two dominant new media used to interact with core network members – email and mobile phones – are unrelated to any of the behaviors measured. Some other information and communication technologies have an inconsistent and modest relationship to civic and civil behaviors. Findings lead to speculation that political disagreement within core networks, typically associated with lower levels of political participation, has a spillover effect that results in other forms of democratic engagement. There is evidence of glocalization; contact with core ties using new media supports local civil and civic behaviors. Internet use largely supports democratic engagement through interaction with bridging but not bonding ties.

Keywords: cross-cutting, political participation, deliberation, neighborhood, social networks.

Word count: 6,929

Comparing Bonding and Bridging Ties for Democratic Engagement: Everyday Use of Communication Technologies within Core Networks for Civic and Civil Behaviors

Introduction

The structure of people's social networks predicts democratic engagement (La Due Lake & Huckfeldt, 1998). That is, something about the "bonding" and "bridging" qualities of people's networks predicts political, civic, and civil behaviors (Putnam, 2000). The results of these behaviors include the selection of elected representatives and also an awareness of common interests, rationales for oppositional viewpoints, social tolerance, and an ability to act on collective goals (Dewey, 1927; Nunn, Crockett, & Williams, 1978). Individuals and societies with higher levels of democratic engagement tend to have greater well-being (Helliwell & Putnam, 2004). Yet, it is not clear which social ties matter most for predicting engagement. There is a schism between those who argue that democratic engagement is driven primarily through interaction with a small number of core discussion confidants (Bennett, Flickinger, & Rhine, 2000; Huckfeldt, 2007; Mutz, 2006), and those who argue that engagement is driven by ties who tend to be less central within people's networks (Bekkers, Volker, Van der Gaag, & Flap, 2008; Magee, 2008; Tindall & Cormier, 2008). This tension between the influences of bonding vs. bridging ties is further complicated by new opportunities for mediated interaction using the Internet and the mobile phone. Existing research has found conflicting evidence to support the possibility that new media either increase or decrease engagement (Boulianne, 2009).

This paper argues that a focus on core ties and political participation, considered as the dominant mode of democratic engagement, and a lack of empirical tools to measure diversity at the scale of people's full social network have lead to a general underestimation of the importance

of bridging ties in predicting democratic engagement. I argue that the number and heterogeneity of core ties (discussion confidants and other people who are especially significant within people's social networks) and frequency of interaction within core networks, mediated and unmediated, have a relatively unsubstantive relationship to civic and civil forms of democratic engagement when compared with a measure of overall network diversity.

Democratic engagement

Political behaviors, such as voting, are perhaps the most prominently studied aspect of democratic engagement. Whereas the act of political deliberation (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004) and participation in the political process are clearly vital for democracy (Mutz, 2006), they are a small subset of the behaviors and attitudes that contribute to democratic engagement. The focus of this paper is not directly on the polity but rather on civic and civil participation. This focus assumes that participation in a democracy involves more than the occasional selection of representatives, but that citizens and society benefit from individual and collective action to address issues of public concern through activities outside of elections and government (Delli Carpini & Keeter, 1996). Civic behaviors include involvement in charitable and community groups or institutions with an aim to address public issues or concerns, such as a neighborhood watch or providing food or shelter for the poor (Putnam, 2000). Civil behaviors tend to be less formal; support mechanisms and the commitment to provide services that are independent of government and formal institutions; such as helping a neighbor in an emergency (Klinenberg, 2002). The existence of civic and civil behaviors benefits society through the provision of services that are generally considered to be in the public good. In addition, it is assumed that these behaviors contribute indirectly to political knowledge. They provide opportunities for social mixing, cross-cutting exposure, and formal and informal discussion that increases

awareness of oppositional views (Manin, 1987), the salience of common interests, and, possibly, direct political participation.

Much of the literature on networks and civil society focuses on social capital – the resources that are accessible through social networks – as an outcome of participation in civic organizations (Hampton, Lee, & Her, in press). Most famously, Robert Putnam (2000) documented the decline, since the 1960s, of participation in voluntary organizations as well as more routine interactions that may result in civil behaviors, such as having dinner with neighbors. Yet, the relationship between civic and civil behaviors and networks is a virtuous cycle. This study is concerned primarily with the other and arguably less explored aspect of this cycle: networks that are high in social capital also predict democratic engagement.¹

Bonding or bridging?

Putnam (2000) and others point to two key characteristics of networks that are important for social capital: bonding and bridging. Bonding social ties are a very small subset of a person's total social network; it is the core network (Hampton, Sessions, & Ja Her, 2011; Lin, Cook, & Burt, 2001; Marin & Hampton, 2007). For most people, core ties are the primary source of interpersonal contact. They are people's core confidants, and, as such, are a source of deliberation and discussion of topics that range from politics to the obscure (Bearman & Parigi, 2004). Core confidants tend to be those who are especially significant in a person's life (Straits, 2000) and with whom one discusses important matters (Marsden, 1987; McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Brashears, 2006), including politics (Klofstad, McClurg, & Rolfe, 2009). Given the direct relationship to political deliberation, much emphasis has been placed on the relationship between core ties and political participation, with considerable focus on identifying political heterogeneity. In general, the more heterogeneity within a core network, the greater the potential

for cross-cutting political discussion within the core (Huckfeldt, 2007). Although there is agreement that heterogeneity within core networks increases the chances for cross-cutting political discussion, such conversation may not result in higher levels of political participation. Political disagreement within core networks may support one aspect of democratic engagement – deliberation – while simultaneously reducing another – participation (Mutz, 2006).

However, the focus on the presence or absence of cross-cutting political opinions within core networks ignores the otherwise high level of homophily that exists between core ties across a range of socioeconomic factors, personal characteristics, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). Core ties, by the nature of the intimacy they provide, tend to be high in closure, trust, and shared norms (Burt, 2001). If social capital is defined as the resources that are accessible through social networks, core ties are very low in unique resources and information in comparison to other network ties (Burt, 2001; Granovetter, 1973; Lin, 2001). Most diversity within social networks, including cross-cutting political ideologies, does not come from the core; it comes from the periphery.

Bridging ties (network members who provide access to unique resources and information) may include some core network members, but bridging is more likely to come from weak ties outside of the core (Burt, 1987; Granovetter, 1973). Weak ties are far more likely to be cross-cutting, in terms of politics and other dimensions, than are core ties (McPherson, et al., 2001). However, weak ties are not likely to be those with whom people discuss politics (Mutz, 2006). People tend to have fewer opportunities to explore specific opinions with weak ties. They assume more similarity with weak ties than is actually present and are less likely to discuss and be aware of political preference (Baldassarri & Berman, 2007; Goel, Mason, & Watts, 2010;

Wyatt, Katz, & Kim, 2000). Thus, in the study of political discussion, the emphasis has been placed on relatively homophilous, bonding ties rather than on bridging, weak ties.

Research on the role of bridging ties in democratic engagement has also been hampered by a lack of empirical tools to enumerate a person's full social network (Killworth, Johnsen, Bernard, Shelley, & McCarthy, 1990). This contrasts with core ties, which have a well-established methodology for enumeration and differentiation (Marin & Hampton, 2007). As such, bridging relationships that include weak ties have been less thoroughly explored within the research on democratic engagement. Fortunately, there is a shortcut. Because network size does not necessarily equate with network diversity – not all weak ties are bridging (Granovetter, 1973) – enumeration of weak ties can be replaced by a measure of network composition (Lin & Erickson, 2008). Those who have used measures of network composition focused on overall network diversity have found substantive relationships between diversity and civil and civic behaviors. For example, Magee (2008) found a significant correlation between diversity and voluntary participation and neighborhood social support. Tindall and Cormier (2008) found that network diversity predicted participation in voluntary organizations as well as extent of political ties.

These two approaches to explaining democratic engagement – one emphasizing bonding ties and the other bridging ties – have operated as almost parallel literatures. Studies that attempt to distinguish the relative contributions of each type of network relationship to democratic engagement are rare (Bekkers, et al., 2008; Krahn, Harrison, Haan, & Johnston, 2009). This study attempts to make such a relative distinction. In doing so, I argue that the focus on the handful of ties that comprise the core network – compared with bridging ties that are more likely to lie in the periphery – has been driven by a lack of empirical tools to measure the extent of

bridging across a person's full social network and an uneven emphasis on the importance of political deliberation, relative to other forms of democratic engagement. It is expected that the extent of overall network diversity is more predictive of nonpolitical forms of democratic engagement than the size or heterogeneity of core networks.

However, this hypothesis may be complicated as a result of the relatively recent increase in the number and availability of information and communication technologies (ICTs) that can be used in the maintenance of social networks. It has been argued that these new technologies have the potential to fundamentally change the nature of social interaction and democratic engagement.

Information and communication technologies

Research on the role of ICTs in the process of democratic engagement has tended to focus on new media as an alternative or supplemental information source to traditional mass media (Shah, Cho, Eveland, & Kwak, 2005), or as an intervention or new type of political engagement (Price & Cappella, 2002). In general, this research has found a positive association between exposure to political information online (and offline) and engagement (Shah, et al., 2005), particularly when Internet use is measured as exposure to news content (Boulianne, 2009). Participation in specific, online activities that support deliberation, such as blogging and the use of social networking services, has also been found to contribute to new forms of online political participation (Gil de Zúñiga, Veenstra, Vraga, & Shah, 2010; Rojas & Puig-i-Abril, 2009), however, it is not clear that online engagement overcomes existing socioeconomic inequalities, or directly influences voting behavior (Hargittai & Shaw, 2011). But the focus on ICTs as a supplement to more established information sources, or as an alternative environment

for political participation, ignores the most prominent use of ICTs – routine communication with established social ties (Wellman & Hampton, 1999).

It has been argued here that the structure of people's social networks predicts democratic engagement. If this is so, then we should also look within network structures when testing the relationship between democratic engagement and the use of ICTs. Indeed, existing studies have found a relationship between the use of specific ICTs, such as blogging and sharing photos online, and participation in religious and voluntary institutions (Hampton, et al., in press). In addition, general Internet use and a number of specific ICTs, such as the use of social networking services (e.g., Facebook), are associated with higher levels of overall network diversity (Hampton, et al., in press). This study does not attempt to replicate this prior work, but instead, the focus here is on the relationship between ICT use and bonding ties.

Frequency of interactions is a standard construct within research on political deliberation and participation. Interaction with core discussion confidants about political matters has been found to be associated with higher levels of political engagement (La Due Lake & Huckfeldt, 1998). However, political deliberation is but a small proportion of most discussion that takes place within core networks. Informal conversation about personal and family subjects, generally not perceived to be overtly deliberative and political, but, nonetheless, informal political conversations (e.g., discussions pertaining to crime, education, religion, and entertainment) tend to dominate conversation (Wyatt, et al., 2000). Thus, everyday interaction with core ties cannot easily be separated from political talk (de Tocqueville, 1835; Dewey, 1927). Such everyday conversation is likely to plant latent seeds that are later activated for participation in social movements and other forms of democratic engagement (Gamson, 1992).

Within core networks, interaction is still most likely to take place in-person (Boase, 2008; Hampton, Sessions, Her, & Rainie, 2009). The multiplex nature of these ties means that ICTs typically do not replace face-to-face contact, but they supplement existing channels of communication (Hampton & Ling, 2010). Specialization is not the rule. Because of their intimacy, multiple media tend to be used in the maintenance of core, bonding relationships (Haythornthwaite, 2002). As a result, it is not clear why specific ICTs, when used within core networks, would be a more or less likely source for democratic engagement. It is unlikely that unique information associated with democratic engagement flows through any one channel. If everyday conversation within core ties matters for democratic engagement, it is likely to be present regardless of the frequency of interaction using any one specific medium.

The hypothesis is relatively straight forward. Bridging ties trump everything. Core networks – the small number of intimate discussion confidants and especially significant ties within a person’s full social network – have a small and relatively unsubstantial relationship to nonpolitical forms of democratic engagement: regardless of size or core heterogeneity. In addition, the relationship between core ties and democratic engagement is not likely to benefit from contact using any specific medium. Given the unspecialized media environment that is typical of core networks, frequency of interaction using any specific medium will not reliably predict democratic engagement.

Methods

This study is based on data collected in the summer of 2008 in partnership with the Pew Internet & American Life Project: a random-digit, dial survey of 2,512 adults living in households in the continental United States. A combination of landline (2,007 interviews) and mobile phone (505 interviews) samples was used to represent all adults with access to a

telephone. The separate mobile phone sample was included to account for any potential bias that might result from the number of households that have only a mobile phone and no landline (Blumberg & Luke, 2009). A two-stage, weighting procedure was used to weight this dual-frame sample; the first stage was used to account for the inclusion of dual-users (landline and mobile phone) in both sample frames, and the second stage balanced sample demographics to population parameters. The sample was balanced to match national population parameters for sex, age, education, race, Hispanic origin, region, population density, and telephone usage. The response rate was 21% for the landline sample and 22% for the mobile phone sample.

Civic and Civil Behaviors

A series of questions was used to measure nonpolitical forms of civic and civil behaviors. These measures cover a range of behaviors, from involvement in formal civic organizations, to more informal civil behaviors. Participants were asked if they belong or work with a:

- community group or neighborhood association that focuses on issues or problems in their community (16.0%);
- local sports league (16.0%);
- local youth group, such as scouts or the YMCA (15.7%);
- local church, synagogue, mosque, or temple (46.1%);
- local social club or charitable organization (24.4%);
- some other local group not already mentioned (10.8%).

Participants were also asked if, in the past six months, they had helped any of their neighbors in any of the following ways:

- listened to their problems (48.8%);

- helped them with household chores, shopping, repairs, house-sitting, or lending them tools or supplies (41.1%);
- cared for a member of their family - either a child or an adult (21.7%);
- loaned them money (8.7%).

Prior research suggests that some voluntary organizations and neighboring activities are more likely than others to be related to the structure of people's social networks (Magee, 2008). In recognition of that research, measures were not combined into a single index, but each was used as a separate dichotomous variable.

Core Network

Personal network name generators are the most common tool used to measure core networks (Marin & Hampton, 2007). Two name generators that are commonly used in other research on core networks were used to elicit a list of network alters (Hampton, et al., 2011; Klofstad, et al., 2009; Marsden, 1987; McPherson, et al., 2006; Straits, 2000). Participants were asked:

From time to time, most people discuss important matters with other people. Looking back over the last six months, who are the people with whom you discussed matters that are important to you?

And then:

Now let's think about people you know in another way. Looking back over the last six months, who are the people especially significant in your life?

In response to each question, participants could list up to five people (up to ten unique names in total). When the second, name generator was read, participants were reminded that the names

“may be the same people you just mentioned, or they may be other people.” The lists of names were combined and became a measure of network size ($M=3.05$, $SD=1.94$).

Participants were also asked a series of questions about each name, including an open-ended question to describe how each network alter was connected to the participant. The information was used to develop a measure of the proportion of core network members who are nonkin ($M=0.29$, $SD=0.34$); 52.4% of participants had nonkin in their core network. This operationalization of core heterogeneity is based on the understanding that core networks tend to be highly homophilous, but that kin are likely to be more similar across a range of measures that pertain to interests, affiliations, beliefs and opinions, than are nonkin (McPherson, et al., 2001 2001). Participants were also asked about their personal political preference (Republican, Democrat, other party, no preference) and what they believed was the political preference of each of their core network members. This information was used to develop a measure of core network heterogeneity, the proportion of perceived political disagreement within the core ($M=0.16$, $SD=0.28$); 33% of participants had some political disagreement within their core network.

Participants were asked how often they interacted with each core network member through a variety of media. This information was coded into a measure of mean number of days per month of interaction by medium: in-person ($M=16.0$, $SD=9.95$); using a mobile phone ($M=12.18$, $SD=11.03$); a landline phone ($M=7.96$, $SD=9.25$); by postal mail ($M=0.57$, $SD=2.02$); email ($M=4.13$, $SD=7.00$); text messaging ($M=4.46$, $SD=8.34$); instant messaging ($M=1.36$, $SD=4.68$); and using social networking services (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace) ($M=0.80$, $SD=3.36$).

Network Diversity

The diversity of a person's full social network was measured using a position generator. The position generator methodology is based on the understanding that people in different social locations in society can provide different types of resources, information, and support. Occupation is a good measure of difference. Occupations vary in prestige, and people in high prestige occupations tend to have special resources tied to income, education, and authority. However, even people in middle and lower prestige occupations have special skills and can offer unique opportunities. The number of different occupations that can be accessed through social ties serves as a measure of the diversity of information and resources – social capital – that can be accessed within a personal network. A number of studies show that the position generator is a valid and reliable measure of overall network diversity (Lin, et al., 2001; Lin & Erickson, 2008).

Participants were read a list of twenty-two occupations that ranged in occupational prestige.² They were asked if they personally knew anyone in the occupation: nurse, farmer, lawyer, middle-school teacher, full-time babysitter, janitor, personnel manager, hair dresser, bookkeeper, production manager, operator in a factory, computer programmer, taxi driver, professor, policeman, chief executive officer of a large company, writer, administrative assistant in a large company, security guard, receptionist, Congressman, or hotel bell boy. Network diversity was operationalized by summing the response to these twenty-two items as an index ($M = 9.25$, $SD = 5.30$).

Analysis Procedure

A series of logistic regressions were conducted to model the relationship between the size and heterogeneity of core networks, frequency of communication, overall network diversity, and a series of demographic control variables. Controls included a number of standard measures that

are known to predict participation in voluntary organizations and neighborhood interaction (Lin & Erickson, 2008; McPherson, et al., 2006; Putnam, 2000). These include age ($M=46.29$, $SD=17.55$), sex (51.8% female), education ($M=13.37$ years, $SD=2.91$), race (78.3% White, 12.9% Black, 9.3% other), ethnicity (11.5% Hispanic), marital status (56.0% married or living with partner), employment status (48.9% full-time, 12.3% part-time, 15.7% not employed for pay, 23.1% other), type of housing (15.6% apartment), length of residence ($M=11.08$ years, $SD=9.39$), and living with children who are less than 18 years old (37.9%).

Findings

As hypothesized, a measure of network composition that focused on the diversity of a person's full personal network was consistently and positively associated with civic and civil behaviors. As documented in Table 1, those who have more diverse networks are more likely to participate in all forms of democratic engagement. Controlling for other variables, compared to someone with a social network of average diversity, someone who is one standard deviation in diversity above the mean, the odds of participating are:

- 97% larger for community groups,
- 103% larger for charitable organizations,
- 109% larger for sports groups,
- 72% larger for youth groups,
- 79% larger for religious institutions,
- 80% larger for other voluntary organizations.

In addition, they are also 77% more likely to listen to a neighbor's problems, 56% more likely to help a neighbor with household chores, 49% more likely to care for a neighbor's family, and 55% more likely to loan a neighbor money.

[Table 1]

The relationship between the size and heterogeneity of core networks and democratic engagement is less consistent and less pronounced than the relationship for full network diversity. Core network size is related to only select civil and civic behaviors. Compared to those with a core network of mean size (3 core ties), the odds of participating in a community group are 24% larger for those with core networks that are one standard deviation above average (5 core ties). Core network size is otherwise unrelated to voluntary participation. However, someone with a core network that is one standard deviation above average is 13% more likely to listen to a neighbor's problems and 20% more likely to help a neighbor with household chores.

Core network heterogeneity has a similarly select relationship to civic and civil behaviors. No evidence was found that the presence or absence of nonkin within core ties was related to engagement. However, perceived political disagreement within the core did predict engagement, but not in the direction that would be predicted based on the literature on political participation: higher levels of disagreement predict greater likelihood of participation. Compared to those with a mean level of political disagreement within their core network (16% of ties do not agree), those who are one standard deviation higher in disagreement (44% do not agree) are 17% more likely to belong to a local sports league and 11% more likely to listen to their neighbor's problems. In the most extreme example, when comparing those with agreeable networks (100% agreement) to those with polarized networks (100% do not agree), results reveal truly substantive relationships: those who are in polarized networks are 75% more likely to belong to a local sports league and 43% more likely to listen to a neighbor's problems.

Frequency of interaction with core network ties, regardless of medium, is mostly not predictive of civic and civil behaviors. Few media are relevant, and those that are, are

inconsistently relevant for democratic engagement. Controlling for other factors, compared to those with a mean level of face-to-face contact with core ties (face-to-face contact on 16 days/month), those who are one standard deviation above the mean (face-to-face on 26 days/month) are about 13% more likely to help neighbors with chores and 15% more likely to care for a member of a neighbor's family. There is also a positive relationship between frequency of contact by postal mail and the likelihood of caring for a neighbor, as well as lending money to a neighbor. In interpreting this finding, it is important to recognize that the average rate of contact by postal mail between core ties is approximately one letter/card every two months. Someone who is one standard deviation above average – i.e., they sends two pieces of postal mail to each core tie per month – is about 11% more likely than the average person to care for a neighbor and 12% more likely to lend a neighbor money.

There is very modest support for the possibility that the use of ICTs within core networks substantively contributes to democratic engagement, but only in limited contexts with a limited segment of new media. On the flip side, there is also no evidence that ICT use does any harm. Mobile phones (used by 74.2% of people to interact with core ties) and email (used by 54.4% to interact with core ties) – the two most pervasive forms of mediated contact within core networks – have no relationship to the civic and civil behaviors that were measured. Texting (used by 36.5% to interact with core ties) was found to have a positive relationship to participation in a sports league. Compared with someone who does not use text messaging, the average person who does text (contact with each core tie 12 days/month) is 58% more likely to participate in a sports league. Similarly, compared to those who do not use instant messaging (IM) to maintain core ties, an average person who does use IM with core ties (used by 17.7% of people to interact with core ties a mean of 8 days/month) is 28% more likely to help a neighbor with chores and

33% more likely to loan them money. Compared to those who use social networking services to contact core ties (used by 14.8% of people on a mean of 5 days/month), someone who does not use social networking services is 23% less likely to belong to a community organization.

However, it should be stressed that texting, IM, and social networking services are not used extensively within core networks. The above examples are the exception - the limited number of individuals who use these ICTs for maintaining core ties - and not the rule. Only a small proportion of American adults use these technologies to maintain core ties, and when they do, they use them relatively infrequently.

Discussion

It is clear that those who have networks that are higher in overall network diversity are consistently more likely to engage in civic and civil behaviors. The size and heterogeneity – specifically political disagreement – of core networks matter, but the relationship is far less consistent and less substantive. Even when we consider frequency of interaction, most media – including face-to-face contact – are not related to most civic and civil behaviors, as predicted. The two dominant ICTs used to interact with core network members – email and mobile phones – are unrelated to any of the behaviors measured. When they are used within core networks, less ubiquitous technologies – texting, IM, and social networking services – have a more substantive relationship, but again, to a limited number of behaviors. When use of any medium is significantly related to engagement, it is mostly for civil behaviors at the neighborhood level. However, even in these limited contexts, as hypothesized, the combined influences of network size, political disagreement within the core, and interaction are generally less substantive than a single measure of overall network diversity. Bridging ties consistently trump bonding ties in predicting democratic engagement outside of the polity.

Although the role of bonding ties in predicting democratic engagement was found to be relatively unsubstantial, two findings related to core ties stand out: the relationship between political disagreement and some civil and civic behaviors, and the relationship between interaction and some civic and civil behaviors. Both findings were consistently positive in their direction but inconsistently significant across the range of behaviors measured. Disagreement within the core was found to be associated with a higher likelihood of participation in sports leagues and listening to a neighbor's problems. However, this is entirely the opposite of what is predicted by research on political participation – which suggests a negative relationship between disagreement and engagement (Mutz, 2006). Although a range of civic and civil behaviors was modeled for this analysis, they represent only a small subset of all possible nonpolitical forms of democratic engagement. But, what if these findings are part of a larger pattern pertaining to civic and civil behaviors?

Although political disagreement within core networks may have negative consequences for political participation, the effect on democratic participation may be a net gain. The value of political vs. civic vs. civil behaviors is highly subjective, and each realm of engagement likely feeds the others. Political disagreement among core ties may lead to a tradeoff whereby political participation is sacrificed to the benefit of civic and civil behaviors. Hearing the other side (Mutz, 2006) may increase tolerance and the salience of common interests such that it leads to the expression of more civil behaviors. People may also seek opportunities for participation in civic organizations as a substitute for political engagement. When social comparison within core networks on political matters fails to result in attitudinal congruence (Erickson, 1988), activities, such as joining voluntary associations and interacting with neighbors, may be used in an attempt to validate opinions or redefine the core (tie replacement) through interactions with more diverse

groups. Over time, replacement of core ties with more similar others, found through civil organizations and civil behaviors, may even result in higher levels of political agreement within the core and direct political participation.

There may also be spillover in the use of ICTs with core ties. A small subset of ICTs is related to an increase in the likelihood of engaging in some civic and civil behaviors. These behaviors are mostly at the neighborhood level. This is surprising, given that less than 30% of all core ties live in the same neighborhood (and most of these, 22%, live in the same household). Whereas most core ties outside of the household are nonlocal, contact with core ties, mediated and unmediated, appears to support civil and civic behaviors that are relatively local. The finding that use of new ICTs in the maintenance of core networks has a spillover effect that results in higher levels of local civil and civic behaviors is consistent with this *glocalization* hypothesis: ICTs afford both geographically dispersed and very local behaviors (Hampton, 2010; Hampton, et al., in press; Hampton & Wellman, 2003). Frequent interaction with core ties makes a modest contribution to civic behaviors in local social settings, such as the neighborhood. This runs counter to other theories about ICTs, which suggest that these technologies promote increased privatism and home centeredness and a withdrawal from local engagement (McPherson, et al., 2006; Putnam, 2000).

Does this mean that ICTs have little influence on democratic engagement? Not at all. With the exception of the modest spillover effect, the frequency of routine interactions using ICTs with core ties is largely unrelated to most civil and civic behaviors. However, the focus of this study was limited to interactions with core ties. Bridging ties are most relevant for democratic engagement. This study did not explore the relationship between ICT use and overall network diversity, but other studies have explored this relationship (Hampton, et al., in press).

The use of ICTs supports bridging social ties, both directly and mediated through higher rates of participation in traditional social settings such as public spaces (Hampton, et al., in press), the use of which is also associated with higher levels of democratic engagement (Hampton, Livio, & Goulet, 2010). Compared to the overall diversity of people's social networks, core ties are less substantively and consistently related to democratic engagement. Similarly, ICTs predominantly support democratic engagement through interaction with bridging, rather than bonding ties.

¹ There is a parallel vicious cycle in which those in a context low in social capital have fewer opportunities to participate in civic and civil behavior, and this, in turn, traps individuals and communities in a context of disadvantage (Hampton, 2010; Putnam, 1993; Sampson, 2006).

² This list of occupations is based on the work of Nan Lin, Yang-chih Fu, and Chih-jou Jay Chen, at the Institute of Sociology, Academia Sinica.

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Table 1. Predicting civil and civic behaviors - logistic regression, odds ratio (N=2,128)

	Voluntary Organizations						Neighborhood Interaction			
	Comm	Charity	Sports	Youth	Church	Other	Listen	Chores	Care	Lend
Whole Network Properties										
Network diversity (0-22)	1.137***	1.143***	1.149***	1.108***	1.115***	1.117***	1.114***	1.088***	1.078***	1.086***
Core Network Properties										
Network size (0-10)	1.116***	1.050	1.042	1.065	1.045	1.056	1.063*	1.097***	0.986	1.027
Nonkin (proportion)	0.829	1.191	0.868	0.762	0.869	0.814	1.011	1.165	0.820	1.148
Disagreement (proportion)	1.150	1.351	1.745*	1.515	1.224	1.593	1.430*	1.169	0.965	1.003
Core Network Communication										
In-person (days/month)	1.009	0.998	0.998	1.011	1.002	0.987	1.006	1.012*	1.015*	1.012
Mobile phone (days/month)	0.990	0.999	1.012	1.003	1.008	0.986	0.997	1.007	0.990	1.004
Landline phone (days/month)	1.003	0.997	1.005	0.991	1.003	0.994	1.006	0.997	1.003	0.992
Postal mail (days/month)	0.960	0.994	1.013	0.988	1.028	1.026	1.019	1.030	1.052*	1.060*
Email (days/month)	1.017	1.001	1.009	1.013	0.992	1.008	1.008	1.010	1.010	0.992
Texting (days/month)	0.995	0.999	1.039***	1.014	1.008	1.007	1.001	1.002	1.014	1.013
IM (days/month)	1.003	0.992	0.989	0.994	0.984	0.993	1.008	1.031**	1.004	1.036**
SNS ¹ (days/month)	1.043*	1.005	0.983	1.023	1.020	1.039	1.002	1.015	1.010	1.011
Demographics										
Female	1.394*	1.258*	0.612***	0.981	1.421***	1.234	1.392***	0.566***	0.992	0.934
Age (years)	1.018**	1.009	0.984**	0.996	1.033***	1.000	1.005	0.996	0.991	0.988
Education (years)	1.200***	1.117***	1.124***	1.185***	1.052**	1.164***	1.025	0.992	0.976	0.893***
Married	1.037	1.122	1.045	0.992	1.286*	1.322	1.111	1.340**	0.953	0.808
Children at home	0.927	0.989	2.088***	1.687***	1.475***	0.877	1.114	1.347**	2.640***	1.042
Black ²	1.721**	0.706	0.575**	0.967	1.205	0.622	0.793	0.690**	0.850	1.992***
Other race ²	1.243	0.944	0.574*	1.041	0.750	1.027	0.695*	0.845	0.878	1.373
Hispanic	0.774	0.708	0.489**	0.555*	0.718*	0.502*	0.550***	0.775	0.751	0.786
Apartment building	0.856	0.883	0.703	0.963	0.937	1.117	0.793	0.664**	0.837	1.647*
Residency (years)	0.992	0.980**	1.014	1.012	1.012*	1.010	1.003	1.010	1.025***	1.025**
Fulltime employment ³	0.651*	0.659**	0.756	0.583**	0.833	0.784	0.677**	0.614**	0.585***	0.897
Part-time employment ³	0.848	1.044	1.316	1.133	1.545*	1.423	0.777	0.793	0.659*	0.897
Other employment status ³	0.920	0.894	1.187	1.140	0.846	1.860*	1.013	0.759	0.953	1.498
Constant	0.001***	0.015***	0.010***	0.004***	0.016***	0.004***	0.146***	0.297***	0.181***	0.139***
R-squared (Nagelkerke)	0.206***	0.179***	0.241***	0.165***	0.215***	0.161***	0.162***	0.159***	0.129***	0.116***

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

¹ Social networking services. ² Reference group is White. ³ Reference group is not employed for pay.

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