Are Homeowners Better Citizens?: Homeownership and Community Participation in the United States

Brian J. McCabe

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Brian J. McCabe, *Georgetown University*

Proponents of homeownership policies often argue that homeowners participate more actively in community life and civic affairs than renters. Although research suggests higher rates of participation among homeowners, the underlying mechanisms driving this relationship are unclear. On one hand, the locally dependent financial investments homeowners make in their communities could lead them to participate as a means of protecting their principal investment. On the other hand, homeownership could stimulate participation by increasing residential stability, enabling households to overcome the institutional barriers and to develop the social networks that drive community participation. The failure to differentiate between these pathways muddies our understanding of how homeownership matters for community life. Drawing on the November supplement of the Current Population Survey, this article investigates whether homeowners are more likely to vote in local elections, participate in neighborhood groups and join civic associations. A falsification strategy compares these outcomes to a set of placebo measures to address concerns that the findings are driven by selection. The research identifies an independent role for residential stability and locally dependent financial investments in explaining why homeowners participate in their communities.

Introduction

Proponents of homeownership policies often argue that homeowners participate more actively in community life and civic affairs than renters. This belief in property ownership as a central component of political citizenship and community engagement has deep roots in American political thought (Keyssar 2001). For more than a century, political leaders ranging from Franklin D. Roosevelt to George W. Bush have emphasized the importance of homeownership to vibrant community life. High levels of community participation, in turn, reinforce the norms of democratic citizenship and contribute to the sense of collective efficacy

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central to vibrant, cohesive neighborhoods (Coleman 1988; Temkin and Rohe 1998; Portes 1998; Putnam 2000; Forrest and Kearns 2001; Knack 2002).

Although the belief in homeownership as a foundational component of active community life has gone largely unchallenged in the United States, the research linking homeownership to community participation is thin. Descriptive evidence confirms that homeowners are more likely to vote, both in local and national elections, and participate in a range of membership organizations. However, research has largely left unexplored the mechanisms that underlie this relationship. On one hand, homeownership could stimulate participation through the locally dependent financial investments homeowners make in their communities. Homeowners may be more responsive to changing community characteristics because these characteristics affect local property values (Fischel 2001).

Alternatively, homeownership could increase community participation by boosting residential stability. Stable households are more likely to overcome the institutional barriers and develop the social networks that drive community participation (Kasarda and Janowitz 1974; Kang and Kwak 2003). A final possibility suggests selection bias in the observed relationship between homeownership and community involvement. It is possible that confounding variables–either observed or unobserved–drive both homeownership and community participation, thereby rendering the observed association spurious. Distinguishing between these competing explanations helps to clarify why homeownership matters for community life in America.

Drawing on new data from the November supplement of the Current Population Survey (CPS), this article tests for a relationship between homeownership and three measures of community participation–voting in local elections, participating in neighborhood groups, and joining civic associations. The supplement includes a unit-level measure of residential stability that helps to separate the effect of increased stability from other mechanisms associated with homeownership, including the financial investments homeowners make in their communities.

After accounting for residential stability, this article offers an innovative approach to evaluating whether the residual correlation between homeownership and community participation results from the locally dependent financial investment homeowners make in their communities, or whether the relationship points to selection bias. Relying on a falsification strategy, the article compares the models for voting in local elections, participating in neighborhood groups and joining civic associations to models for a set of placebo outcomes from the November supplement of the survey. Because these placebo outcomes are likely to be driven by the same unobserved variables, but unrelated to homeownership through homeowners' financial investments, this series of tests helps to evaluate the role of locally dependent financial investments in driving homeowners' participation decisions. If homeowners are more likely to participate in local elections, neighborhood groups and civic associations, but no more likely to participate in the placebo outcomes, then the falsification strategy provides indirect evidence linking homeowners to community life through their financial investments.

The stakes in these findings are high. Public policies since the New Deal have invested vast government subsidies towards promoting homeownership, and often with the explicit goal of engaging citizens in civic activities and promoting community life. Evaluating the effectiveness of homeownership as a tool for crafting more responsible, engaged citizens should serve as a foundation for guiding future discussions of housing policy in the United States.

Linking Homeownership and Community Participation

In 1995, President Clinton introduced the National Homeownership Strategy to boost the homeownership rate among low-income and minority Americans. In laying out his plan, Clinton underscored the civic benefits of homeownership as one of the primary justifications for his efforts: "When we boost the number of homeowners in our country, we strengthen the economy, create jobs, build up the middle class, and build better citizens." (United States Department of Housing and Urban Development 1995) Likewise, President George W. Bush echoed nearly a century of political rhetoric in promoting National Homeownership Month in 2002: "Where homeownership flourishes, neighborhoods are more stable, residents are more civic-minded, schools are better, and crime rates decline" (The White House, Proclamation Archives 2002).

These political statements underscore the widespread belief in the United States that homeownership increases citizen participation and creates stronger communities. Yet little research critically evaluates the mechanisms that drive homeowners to participate in their communities. This section outlines two specific pathways—residential stability and locally dependent financial investments—that lead homeowners to participate in community affairs. Separating these mechanisms provides the foundation for the falsification strategy used in this research.

Financial Investments in Local Communities

In communities throughout America, homeowners concentrate their wealth in a single asset. Because of this concentration, the largest component of the wealth portfolio for the majority of American households is the owner-occupied home. According to a recent analysis of the Survey of Consumer Finance, the average American household holds more than one third of its assets in its principal residence (Wolff 2007).[1] Because renters hold none of their wealth in their principal residence, this figure understates the proportion of wealth the average homeowner holds in his or her home.

The concentration of household wealth in the owner-occupied home is likely to increase the attention homeowners pay to their local communities. Research throughout the social sciences consistently reports that the availability of nearby services and the characteristics of local communities influence local property values (Li and Brown 1980; Black 1999; Fischel 2001; Downes and Zabel 2002). In particular, the quality of local schools is capitalized in the value of American

homes (Haurin and Brasington 1996; Black 1999; Bogart and Cromwell 2000; Downes and Zabel 2002; Clapp, Nanda and Ross 2008). A myriad of local school characteristics, ranging from test scores to teacher composition, influence residential property values. Likewise, the decisions of local governments and neighborhood groups influence the characteristics of local communities and, in turn, the value of property. From land use decisions to changes in the property tax structures, government officials and community actors emerge as key players in the struggle to maintain or improve local property values.

This capitalization of community characteristics in housing prices suggests one reason why homeowners might pay greater attention to local political affairs than renters. According to Fischel (2001), homeownership should increase the responsiveness of households to local policies. "Homeowners are acutely aware that local amenities, public services, and taxes affect … the value of the largest single asset they own. As a result, they pay much closer attention to such policies at the local level than they would at the state or the national level." (Fischel 2001:4) Although Fischel (2001) provides anecdotal evidence outlining the reorientation of local politics towards the demands of homeowners, he does not provide consistent empirical evidence showing systematically higher rates of political participation for homeowners.

If homeowners pay closer attention to local polices than renters as a result of their financial investment in local communities, we would expect homeownership to increase local participation. Homeowners would be more likely to vote in local elections or join local membership groups with the aim of protecting (or improving) local property values. They may become active in local politics to sway decisions in their favor, or advocate for particular land-use policies through neighborhood groups in an effort to influence the characteristics of the surrounding community. Given the strong effect of school quality on property values, homeowners might be particularly ready to join school groups (e.g., PTAs).

Although we expect their financial investment in local communities to increase their exercise of voice at the local level, we would not expect homeowners to participate more actively in state or national politics as a result of their investment in local communities. Homeowners do benefit from a handful of federal policies, including the mortgage interest deduction and the deduction of local property taxes, but these federal benefits are rarely the subject of contentious political debate and unlikely to spur increased participation. Unlike changes in local property taxes or community-level land use decisions, federal decisions are less likely to differentially affect homeowners and renters within particular communities. As a result, this mechanism provides no expectation that homeownership would increase participation in non-local political issues. Likewise, it generates an expectation that homeowners will participate in local groups aimed at improving school or community characteristics, but provides no basis for thinking homeowners will become involved in other types of membership groups.

The possibility that homeownership drives community participation because of the investment homeowners make in their local communities raises the

possibility that the effect of homeownership varies according to the size of the investment. We might expect high-income households, or those with a larger asset to protect, to experience stronger homeownership effects than low-income households. After all, changes in the quality of local institutions that result in a decline in local home values will have a greater absolute effect for high-income households. On the other hand, we might expect the proportion of household wealth invested in a home, rather than the absolute amount, to be the stronger predictor of political involvement. In the United States, low- and middle-class homeowners hold a higher proportion of their wealth in their primary residence than high-income households (Wolff 2007). This might lead us to expect low- and middle-income households to experience stronger effects of homeownership than high-income households.

Residential Stability

While homeownership invests households with a tangible stake in the characteristics of local schools and communities, it also increases their stability within particular neighborhoods (Rohe and Stewart 1996; Dietz and Haurin 2003). Two factors underlie the increased stability of homeowners. On one hand, the decision to purchase a home frequently signals a household's intention to make a long-term commitment to the community. In this case, homeownership is an expression of long-term stability, rather than a cause of it. On the other hand, homeownership increases the transaction costs associated with switching residences. Homeowners typically face an array of fees (e.g., realtors, lawyers) not incurred by renters, and these costs serve as a further barrier to mobility. Because the transaction costs of switching residences are higher for homeowners than for renters, homeownership is also a cause of long-term stability. These stabilizing effects of homeownership are especially strong in the face of negative equity or declining home values, making homeowners substantially less likely to voluntarily switch residences during periods of housing price volatility (Henley 1998).

There are several reasons to anticipate a positive effect of residential stability on participation in neighborhood groups or local politics. Residential stability enables citizens to build social networks and develop interpersonal relationships within their community (Kasarda and Janowitz 1974; Fischer 1982; Sampson 1991; Kang and Kwak 2003). These social bonds are centrally important to the recruitment process into community activities. Individuals often join neighborhood groups or membership organizations because members of their social network invite them to participate (Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995; Lim 2008).

Long-term stability also serves to deepen place-based attachment in local communities. After living in a community for a substantial period of time, residents are more likely to become involved in efforts to improve their community for reasons unrelated to their financial gain. The use value of their community, rather than the exchange value, matters to long-term, stable residents. Stability also provides an opportunity for citizens to seek out neighborhood groups they believe to be effective in resolving local community problems (Rohe and Stegman 1994; Foster-Fishman et al. 2007; Foster-Fishman et al. 2009). And especially

in the more formal realm of voter participation, long-term stability increases the likelihood residents will overcome the administrative obstacles to participation, including registering to vote (Squire, Wolfinger and Glass 1987; Highton 2000).

It is important to capture residential stability at the level of the housing unit, rather than at the level of the community, county or administrative district. Because households often switch residences within their administrative district, community-level measures of residential stability may not capture the unique effect of unit-level stability on civic involvement. Even when households switch residential units within the same county or city, they are likely to face a new set of local political concerns or community issues. Households switching housing units within the same city experience disruptions in their social networks and incur substantial resource burdens likely to affect their participation decisions. Previous research largely lacks measures of unit-level residential stability, rendering it unable to decompose the effect residential stability from other features of homeownership that may drive community participation.

Studying Homeownership and Community Participation

Existing efforts to untangle the relationship between homeownership and community participation reveal a contradictory set of findings. In part, these mixed findings result from the broad set of data sources researchers have brought to bear on this research puzzle. The data overwhelmingly comes from geographically distinct samples representing particular segments of households (e.g., low-income households). These limited samples reduce the generalizability of the findings. The mixed results also reflect the myriad of ways that researchers have defined community participation in survey research.

Early work by Cox (1982) finds that homeowners report higher levels of neighborhood activism, and suggests that this activism results from the higher transaction costs associated with homeownership. However, Cox (1982) utilizes a 5-point neighborhood activism scale that fails to distinguish between types of community involvement. Other studies have looked specifically at participation in membership organizations, often investigating the number of membership organizations to which respondents belong. Typically, these studies report a small, but positive relationship between homeownership and the number of voluntary organization memberships respondents report, although only rarely do they elaborate on the types of membership organizations households join (Blum and Kingston 1984; Rossi and Weber 1996; DiPasquale and Glaeser 1999). Using a sample of low-income households in Baltimore, Rohe and Stegman (1994) find that homeowners belong to more voluntary organizations than renters, and participate more actively in neighborhood groups and block associations. Unfortunately, their reliance on a geographically clustered sample of low-income households limits the generalizability of their findings.

Recent analyses of large-scale survey data find that homeowners report higher levels of political knowledge and engage more frequently in some types of community activities. DiPasquale and Glaeser (1999) report that homeowners are more likely to know their local school board representative and regularly attend

church than renters, both suggestive of higher levels of community interest, although neither directly measuring community participation. From a handful of national surveys, Rossi and Weber (1996) find homeowners report higher incidence of membership in several types of groups, but their limited set of sociodemographic controls raises concerns about the spuriousness of these findings.

Several studies focus specifically on the relationship between homeownership and voting behavior. These findings are decidedly mixed, especially at the local level. In several studies, researchers report a positive association between homeownership and voting in presidential elections (Kingston, Thompson and Eichar 1984; Gilderbloom and Markham 1995). Evidence on voting in local elections is scarcer, reflecting, in part, the paucity of data on local voting behavior. Initial analyses of the American National Election Survey (ANES) report no significant effect of homeownership on voting in local elections (Kingston, Thompson and Eichar 1984), but this zero-effect finding is challenged by an updated analysis of the General Social Survey, which reports a significant effect of homeownership on local voter participation (DiPasquale and Glaeser 1999).

Several recent studies focus on the behavioral effects of homeownership on political participation for low-income households. Using data from the Community Advantage Program (CAP), Manturuk, Lindblad and Quercia (2009) report the results of a two-stage model estimating mediating effects of neighborhood disadvantage on the likelihood of voter participation for low-income households. Relative to renters, Manturuk et al. (2009) report that low-income homeowners are more likely to participate in local elections, and that the predicted probability of voting increases for homeowners as neighborhood disadvantage increases.[2] In contrast, a study by Engelhardt et al. (2010) using data from the Individual Development Accounts (IDA) experiments in Tulsa, Oklahoma reports no significant effect of homeownership on political behavior, including voting and contacting a political official, for low-income households. These unique data sources enable nuanced evaluations of geographically distinct, low-income populations, but are unable to make broader claims about the population at large.

The current article extends existing findings on homeownership as a catalyst for community participation in several ways. First, it models the effect of homeownership on three distinct types of community participation hypothesized to be related to homeownership. Notably, it uses more reliable estimates of voter participation than previous research efforts.[3] Second, the research draws on a measure of residential stability at the level of the housing unit, rather than at the community level. The unit-level measure offers a more valid measure of residential stability and allows for the decomposition of the effect of homeownership into its constituent parts. Third, the falsification strategy offers a new approach for thinking about the mechanisms linking homeownership to community participation. After accounting for the increased stability of homeowners, the placebo tests help to identify whether the remaining relationship results from the locally dependent investments homeowners make in their communities, or whether it is driven by selection bias. Finally, the project investigates heterogeneity in the effect of homeownership across income groups. By

comparing the effect of homeownership for high-income households with the effect for low-income households, the article intervenes in current debates about the benefits of homeownership for low-income households (Retsinas and Belsky 2002; Manturuk et al. 2009; Engelhardt et al. 2010).

Data and Methods

Data

This research uses the November supplement of the CPS to test for a relationship between homeownership and community participation. The CPS is a monthly survey of households conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics to gather information on the country's labor force characteristics. Households participate in the survey for four consecutive months, and then exit the survey for 8 consecutive months before spending a final 4 consecutive months as part of the sample.

Although the CPS is designed to estimate changes in the employment structure, the survey includes several monthly supplements to gather data on non-employment outcomes. These supplements vary annually and across months, with some supplements asked annually (or biennially) while others are asked just once and then discontinued. To estimate the effect of homeownership on community participation, I utilize the November supplement of the CPS. Since the mid-1960s, the November supplement has biennially asked survey respondents about voter participation. Starting in 2008, the Bureau of Labor Statistics launched a new module as part of the November supplement asking respondents about their involvement in a range of civic activities and membership groups. Although the recent debut of the civic engagement module prohibits an analysis of longitudinal trends in civic engagement, this article is among the first to utilize the supplement to evaluate civic engagement in the United States.

Dependent Variables

Given the substantive interest in local community participation, this research focuses on three participation measures from the November supplement of the CPS. The first is a measure of local voter participation using a pooled sample of cross-sections from the last ten years of the CPS. To create a subsample for local elections, I restrict the data to observations from elections in which no presidential, Senate or gubernatorial campaign was contested.[4] I necessarily exclude all elections held in presidential years (i.e., 2000, 2004 and 2008), as well as all states that hold gubernatorial elections biennially. Ultimately, these observations are limited to 13 state-years in 1998, 2002 and 2006 in which the top race on the ticket was a Congressional race.[5]

The second measure of community participation asks respondents whether they participated in a school, neighborhood or community group (e.g., PTA, neighborhood watch) in the previous 12 months. I refer to this measure as participation in a neighborhood group. The final measure solicits information on participation in civic organizations. It asks respondents whether they participated in a civic or service group, including the American Legion or the Lions

Club, in the previous 12 months. I refer to this measure as participation in a civic group. Both measures of group participation are taken from the November supplement of the 2008 CPS.[6]

For each of the dependent variables, the outcome is a dichotomous indicator coded "1" if the respondent reported community participation. In total, 44 percent of respondents indicate voting in local elections. Fifty-one percent of homeowners report voting in local elections, compared with only 24 percent of renters. While nearly 9 percent of respondents report participating in a civic group, homeowners are more than twice as likely to report civic group membership (10 percent) than renters (4 percent). More than 17 percent of respondents belong to a neighborhood group, again with homeowners nearly twice as likely to report neighborhood group membership (20 percent) than renters (12 percent).

Estimation Strategy

Given the dichotomous nature of each outcome, I estimate the effect of homeownership on the odds of participating in civic affairs using a logistic regression model. All models are weighted using the supplement weights from the CPS to account for nonresponse bias.[7] The analysis is restricted only to respondents who self-report their involvement. In a household-level survey, like the CPS, respondents often answer on behalf of the other members of their household. Proxy respondents may not accurately report or know whether the other members of their household voted in an election or belonged to membership organizations.[8]

The primary independent variable of interest is a dichotomous indicator for homeownership measuring whether the respondent owns the residential unit in which he or she resides. Given limitations of the data, I cannot account for different forms of owner-occupancy (e.g., co-ops, single-family detached homes) that might influence community participation (Glaeser and Sacerdote 2000).

The models include a categorical measure of residential stability that helps to decompose the pathways through which homeownership affects community participation. The inclusion of this indicator for residential stability measured at the level of the housing unit enables me to evaluate whether their increased stability accounts for homeowners' higher rates of community participation. Measuring residential stability at the level of the housing unit offers an improvement over previous studies that measure stability using a respondent's length of tenure in a community, often defined as a political or administrative district (see DiPasquale and Glaeser 1999; Verba et al. 1995). Citizens often switch housing units within the same political district (e.g., move from one neighborhood to another within a city) and encounter different local political issues and neighborhood problems at each residential location. Moreover, the high transaction costs of moving, even within the same administrative district, could divert resources that would otherwise be devoted to civic participation or disrupt the social networks central to community involvement. The regression models include a three-category indicator of residential stability measuring whether the respondent has lived in his or her residential unit for less than 1 year, 1 to 4 years, or 5 years or more.

The models control for a set of sociodemographic characteristics associated with the likelihood of community participation. I include both a measure of the respondent's race, measured as a three-category variable indicating whether the respondent is white, black or another racial category, and a dichotomous indicator measuring whether the respondent self-reports as Hispanic. The set of control variables includes two indicators of socioeconomic status. The first is a five-category education variable indicating the highest level of education completed and the second is a set of income quartiles indicating self-reported household income.[9]

Recognizing that citizens often participate in community affairs when they have time to do so, I include dichotomous indicators for employment status and the presence of children in the household.[10] The models include binary variables measuring marital status and gender. To capture the effect of age on civic participation, I include age as a continuous measure. I also include a series of state fixed effects to control for state-level differences (e.g., voter registration laws, political cultures) that could drive voter participation or community engagement. The models predicting participation in neighborhood groups and civic associations include an indicator of participation in the 2008 presidential election to control for baseline differences in political involvement between homeowners and renters. To ensure a complete case analysis, I impute values for the variables containing missing data.[11]

Table 1 reports descriptive statistics from both the 2008 November supplement used to measure membership in neighborhood groups and civic associations and the pooled November supplements used to measure participation in local elections. In both supplements, nearly three quarters of respondents report owning their home. The modal category of residential stability is long-term stability, with just less than 60 percent of respondents reporting residency in their current homes for more than 5 years. More than four out of five respondents are white in both supplements. Almost two thirds of respondents are employed and more than 55 percent are married.

After estimating the effect of homeownership on civic participation for the entire sample, I run a series of models to test for heterogeneity in the effect of homeownership across income categories. Given the interest in homeownership as a financial investment in local communities, the preferable tests of heterogeneity would examine whether the effect of homeownership varies according to the absolute or relative amount of wealth invested in the owner-occupied home. Unfortunately, these measurements are unavailable in the November supplement. Instead, the model uses a series of variables interacting homeownership with each income quartile to test whether the effect of homeownership is constant across levels of household income.

Falsification Strategy

While the baseline regression analyses estimate the relationship between homeownership and community involvement controlling for residential stability, they cannot explain what accounts for this relationship. On one hand, the remaining

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for the November Supplements of the Current Population Survey

	Local Voting Supplement (Pooled 1998-2006)	Civic Engagement Supplement (2008)
	(1)	(2)
Homeowner	73.24%	73.03%
Residential Stability		
< 1 Year	15.51%	13.66%
1-4 Years	27.86%	28.04%
5+ Years	56.63%	58.31%
Race		
White	87.43%	85.87%
Other	2.65%	5.81%
Black	9.91%	8.94%
Hispanic	2.11%	6.58%
Education		
Less than High School	12.71%	8.97%
High School	34.18%	29.45%
Some College	28.43%	30.58%
College	17.17%	20.29%
More than College	7.51%	10.71%
Married	56.82%	55.38%
Female	61.21%	57.80%
Age (mean)	47.26	48.52
Employed	63.22%	64.44%
Children		28.81%
Number of Observations	9,876	39,308

relationship between homeownership and community engagement could result from the locally dependent financial investments homeowners make in their communities. On the other hand, it could result from unobserved differences between homeowners and renters. Although extensive controls can help purge the homeownership coefficient from bias resulting from key omitted variables, other confounders may still be captured in the regression error term. If these unobserved differences predict both the likelihood of homeownership and the likelihood of community participation, then the residual correlation between homeownership and community involvement points to evidence of selection bias.

To address concerns about selection bias in previous studies, researchers often estimate a two-stage least squares (2SLS) regression instrumenting homeownership in a first-stage model.[12] Researchers have proposed several instruments to address the possibility of omitted variables biasing estimates of homeownership.

These include the annual change in a state's per capita highway stock, the ratio of renting costs to ownership costs, and the median rent-to-property value ratio (Harkness and Newman 2003; Manturuk et al. 2010). The most common variable used as an instrument for homeownership, however, is the state homeownership rate, typically broken down by income groups and racial categories (DiPasquale and Glaeser 1999; Aaronson 2000; Haurin, Parcel and Haurin 2002; Harkness and Newman 2003). Despite the popularity of the state-level homeownership rate as an instrument for homeownership, recent research raises concerns about whether the mean homeownership rate meets the exclusion restriction required for a valid instrument (Engelhardt et al. 2010).

Absent a direct measure of financial investments, this article relies on a falsification strategy to evaluate whether the locally dependent financial investments homeowners make in their communities lead them to vote in local elections, join neighborhood groups and participate in civic associations. Through a series of placebo tests, I compare the models for the main outcomes to a series of models for outcomes likely to be driven by the same confounding variables, but unrelated to homeownership through the financial investments homeowners make in their communities. For the model predicting participation in local elections, I compare the results to a model predicting participation in the 2000 presidential election. For the models predicting participation in neighborhood groups and civic associations, I compare the results to models predicting participation in sports groups, religious groups or other groups. The validity of the falsification tests rests on the assumption that unobserved variables associated with homeownership are not correlated more strongly with the outcomes of interest than with the placebo outcomes.

These comparisons are intended to indirectly identify whether homeowners' financial investments explain the residual correlation between homeownership and community participation. After accounting for their increased stability, I expect homeowners to participate in local elections because of the financial investments they make in their communities. Since local political decisions affect community characteristics and, in turn, affect property values, homeownership should increase participation in local elections. However, since national political decisions do not, by and large, affect local property values, I do not expect homeownership to emerge as a strong predictor of national political participation.

Similarly, I expect homeowners to be more involved in neighborhood groups and civic associations as a means of protecting their financial investments. On account of the locally dependent investments homeowners make in their communities, homeownership should increase the odds of neighborhood group or civic association membership but be unrelated to participation in religious groups, sports groups and other groups. Comparing group participation models provides a means of indirectly testing this financial investment hypothesis. A positive coefficient for homeownership in the models predicting participation in religious groups, sports groups or other groups would raise doubts about locally dependent investments as the mechanism linking homeownership to community participation.

Results

Consistent with previous research, I report that residential stability is a significant predictor of electoral participation. However, residential stability is unrelated to joining membership groups, including neighborhood groups and civic organizations. After accounting for residential stability, homeownership remains a significant predictor of participation in both local and national elections, although the effect is significantly stronger for local electoral participation. I also report that homeownership is positively associated with participation in neighborhood groups and civic groups but unrelated to other types of group membership. These findings provide indirect support for the hypothesis that homeowners participate in neighborhood groups, civic associations and local elections because of the financial investments they make in their communities.

In Table 2, I report the logistic regression results for voting in local and national elections. Without controlling for residential stability, the first set of models reports that homeowners are nearly twice as likely to participate in local elections and one and a half times as likely to vote in national elections. The second set of models includes controls for residential stability, confirming the role of stability in helping individuals overcome the obstacles to electoral participation, including registering to vote, becoming familiar with political candidates and locating polling places. In both local and national elections, residential stability plays a significant role in explaining the observed relationship between homeownership and political involvement, as long-term residential stability more than doubles the odds of participation. Accounting for their increased stability, column 2 reports that homeowners are 1.62 times more likely to vote in local elections than renters.[13] The relationship between homeownership and participation in national elections is substantially smaller. Column 4 reports that homeowners are 1.26 times more likely to vote in national elections than renters.

There are two potential interpretations to explain the homeownership coefficients for local and national electoral participation in Table 2. On one hand, the coefficient could identify a true effect that results from the locally dependent investment homeowners make in their communities. The larger coefficient in the local voting model is consistent with the idea that homeownership drives community participation by increasing the interest households take in local property values and political decisions. If we assume that locally dependent financial investments slightly increase participation in national elections and the findings are not driven by selection, then the estimate for local elections represents an upper bounds estimate. On the other hand, we could assume that the coefficient on homeownership in the national elections model is driven entirely by selection. While homeowners benefit from some federal policies (e.g., the mortgage interest deduction), their locally dependent investments are unlikely to drive participation in national elections. In this case, we would expect the coefficient on homeownership in the local elections model to be partly driven by selection, as well. Still, this interpretation suggests that the investments homeowners make in their communities explain part of the relationship between homeownership and participation in local elections. Even if unobserved differences between

Table 2. Logistic Regression of Voting in Local and National Elections

	Vote in Local Election		Vote in National Election	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Homeownership	0.679***	0.480***	0.410***	0.233***
	(0.071)	(0.074)	(0.033)	(0.035)
Residential Stability: 1-4 Years		0.527***		0.319***
		(0.095)		(0.041)
Residential Stability: 5+ Years		0.855***		0.700***
		(0.094)		(0.043)
Race: Other	-0.763***	-0.736***	-0.649***	-0.684***
	(0.198)	(0.201)	(0.084)	(0.085)
Race: Black	0.558***	0.547***	0.648***	0.631***
	(0.090)	(0.090)	(0.047)	(0.047)
Hispanic	-0.275	-0.268	-0.072	-0.099
	(0.199)	(0.199)	(0.056)	(0.056)
Education: High school	0.720***	0.710***	0.701***	0.705***
	(0.092)	(0.092)	(0.042)	(0.042)
Education: Some college	1.336***	1.346***	1.378***	1.398***
	(0.097)	(0.098)	(0.046)	(0.046)
Education: College	1.656***	1.703***	2.088***	2.148***
	(0.110)	(0.110)	(0.057)	(0.058)
Education: More than college	1.738***	1.813***	2.313***	2.364***
	(0.130)	(0.132)	(0.078)	(0.078)
Married	0.326***	0.306***	0.387***	0.370***
	(0.060)	(0.060)	(0.030)	(0.030)
Female	-0.035	-0.042	0.158***	0.149***
	(0.054)	(0.055)	(0.028)	(0.028)
Age	0.048***	0.043***	0.039***	0.033***
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Employed	0.107	0.070	0.112***	0.096**
	(0.064)	(0.064)	(0.033)	(0.033)
Income: 2nd Quartile	0.270***	0.264***	0.258***	0.243***
	(0.073)	(0.074)	(0.035)	(0.035)
Income: 3rd Quartile	0.282**	0.276**	0.430***	0.408***
	(0.089)	(0.090)	(0.045)	(0.046)
Income: Top Quartile	0.364***	0.352***	0.587***	0.574***
	(0.095)	(0.096)	(0.050)	(0.050)

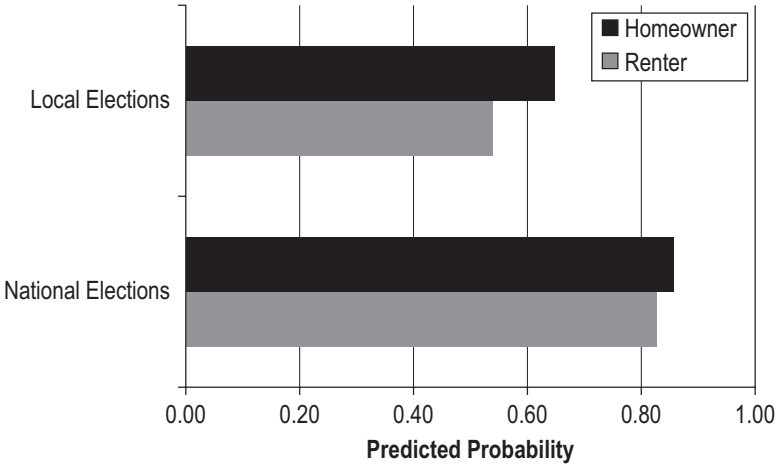
Continued

Table 2. ***continued***

	Vote in Local Election		Vote in National Election	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Constant	-4.615***	-4.848***	-2.448***	-2.502***
	(0.182)	(0.193)	(0.138)	(0.141)
Number of Observations	9,876	9,876	41,690	41,690
Pseudo R-squared	0.167	0.177	0.165	0.172

* < 0.05 ** < 0.01 *** < 0.001
Note: Models include state fixed effects. Standard errors in parentheses.

Figure 1. Predicted Probability of Voting in Local and National Elections, by Homeownership Status



homeowners and renters explain the entire coefficient for national participation, the comparison of models suggests that unobserved differences do not explain the entire effect observed in local elections.

In Figure 1, I graph the predicted probability of voting in local and national elections for homeowners and renters.[14] The figure compares the predicted probabilities for homeowners and renters who report living in their community for 5 or more years. Homeowners have a significantly higher probability of voting in local elections (0.65) than renters (0.54). Although the effect of homeownership remains statistically significant for national electoral participation, the difference between homeowners (0.86) and renters (0.83) is substantially smaller. These visual comparisons underscore the substantive importance of homeownership in predicting participation in local elections.

The next set of models reports the results from a series of logistic regressions predicting participation in neighborhood groups, civic groups and the remaining group types. For each outcome, the first model controls only for homeownership, while the second model includes controls for residential stability. As reported in Table 3, long-term residential stability is unrelated to the likelihood

Table 3. Logistic Regression of Joining Membership Groups

	Neighborhood Group		Civic Group		Sports Group		Religious Group		Other Group	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Homeownership	0.274***	0.251***	0.281***	0.276***	0.035	0.014	0.076	0.082	-0.022	-0.039
	(0.048)	(0.050)	(0.066)	(0.068)	(0.052)	(0.054)	(0.044)	(0.046)	(0.065)	(0.069)
Residential stability: 1-4 Years		-0.039		-0.080		-0.160*		-0.106		0.011
		(0.059)		(0.085)		(0.064)		(0.056)		(0.084)
Residential stability: 5+ Years		0.062		-0.013		0.027		-0.053		0.057
		(0.060)		(0.082)		(0.065)		(0.057)		(0.086)
Race: Other	-0.301***	-0.300***	-0.174	-0.173	-0.469***	-0.467***	-0.344***	-0.342***	-0.222	-0.223
	(0.086)	(0.086)	(0.117)	(0.117)	(0.100)	(0.100)	(0.085)	(0.085)	(0.119)	(0.119)
Race: Black	0.107	0.108	-0.465***	-0.464***	-0.472***	-0.470***	0.357***	0.357***	-0.532***	-0.532***
	(0.059)	(0.059)	(0.096)	(0.096)	(0.082)	(0.082)	(0.055)	(0.055)	(0.109)	(0.109)
Hispanic	-0.209**	-0.210**	-0.577***	-0.577***	-0.311***	-0.311***	-0.126	-0.123	-0.347**	-0.349**
	(0.071)	(0.071)	(0.127)	(0.127)	(0.084)	(0.084)	(0.069)	(0.069)	(0.114)	(0.114)
Education: High school	0.137	0.137	0.377***	0.377***	0.347**	0.348**	0.132	0.131	0.623***	0.624***
	(0.083)	(0.083)	(0.113)	(0.113)	(0.115)	(0.115)	(0.070)	(0.070)	(0.150)	(0.150)
Education: Some college	0.597***	0.600***	0.734***	0.735***	0.824***	0.830***	0.592***	0.592***	1.122***	1.124***
	(0.083)	(0.083)	(0.114)	(0.114)	(0.114)	(0.114)	(0.070)	(0.070)	(0.148)	(0.148)
Education: College	1.071***	1.078***	0.861***	0.864***	1.133***	1.146***	0.869***	0.871***	1.460***	1.464***
	(0.087)	(0.087)	(0.119)	(0.119)	(0.118)	(0.117)	(0.074)	(0.074)	(0.152)	(0.152)
Education: More than college	1.330***	1.339***	1.092***	1.096***	1.171***	1.187***	1.025***	1.026***	1.900***	1.905***
	(0.092)	(0.092)	(0.124)	(0.124)	(0.122)	(0.122)	(0.079)	(0.079)	(0.154)	(0.154)

Married	0.094*	0.091*	0.021	0.019	-0.010	-0.010	0.480***	0.480***	-0.081	-0.083
	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.050)	(0.050)	(0.045)	(0.045)	(0.037)	(0.037)	(0.054)	(0.054)
Female	-0.281***	-0.283***	0.324***	0.324***	0.119**	0.118*				
	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.038)	(0.038)	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.046)	(0.046)
Age	0.005**	0.004*	0.021***	0.021***	-0.013***	-0.015***	0.015***	0.015***	0.012***	0.011***
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Employed	-0.040	-0.044	-0.013	-0.014	0.006	0.003	0.005	0.006	0.030	0.027
	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.053)	(0.053)	(0.046)	(0.046)	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.055)	(0.055)
Children	1.198***	1.197***	0.058	0.059	0.864***	0.866***	0.381***	0.384***	-0.056	-0.057
	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.057)	(0.057)	(0.043)	(0.043)	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.059)	(0.059)
Income: 2nd quartile	-0.126*	-0.126*	0.109	0.110	0.234***	0.236***	-0.045	-0.044	0.133	0.132
	(0.055)	(0.055)	(0.073)	(0.072)	(0.070)	(0.070)	(0.049)	(0.048)	(0.079)	(0.079)
Income: 3rd quartile	-0.049	-0.049	0.117	0.117	0.397***	0.398***	-0.017	-0.016	0.263**	0.262**
	(0.060)	(0.060)	(0.080)	(0.080)	(0.074)	(0.074)	(0.054)	(0.054)	(0.085)	(0.085)
Income: 4th quartile	0.131*	0.129*	0.256**	0.257**	0.673***	0.672***	-0.029	-0.027	0.242**	0.241**
	(0.061)	(0.061)	(0.083)	(0.082)	(0.074)	(0.074)	(0.056)	(0.056)	(0.087)	(0.087)
Voted in 2008 election	0.577***	0.573***	0.710***	0.710***	0.499***	0.496***	0.588***	0.590***	0.677***	0.674***
	(0.050)	(0.050)	(0.073)	(0.073)	(0.057)	(0.057)	(0.047)	(0.047)	(0.077)	(0.077)
Constant	-3.733***	-3.689***	-5.004***	-4.954***	-3.552***	-3.449***	-3.634***	-3.581***	-5.943***	-5.933***
	(0.177)	(0.180)	(0.262)	(0.264)	(0.256)	(0.257)	(0.173)	(0.176)	(0.367)	(0.370)
Number of Observations	39,308	39,308	39,308	39,308	39,308	39,308	39,308	39,308	39,308	39,308
Pseudo R-squared	0.120	0.120	0.071	0.071	0.103	0.104	0.073	0.073	0.074	0.074

* < 0.05 ** < 0.01 *** < 0.001

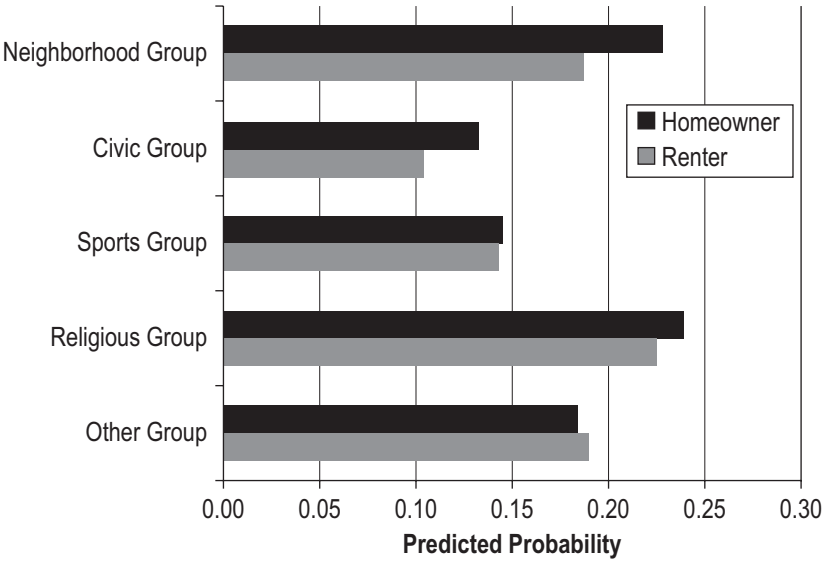
Note: Models include state fixed effects. Standard errors in parentheses.

of participation in each of the five organization types, including neighborhood groups and civic associations. However, the findings reveal a significant role for homeownership in predicting group membership. Columns 2 and 4 of Table 3 report that homeowners are 1.28 times more likely to join neighborhood groups than renters and 1.32 times more likely to belong to civic associations. Homeowners are no more likely than renters to participate in sports group, religious groups or other types of membership groups.

Figure 2 graphs the predicted probability of participating in each type of membership group for homeowners and renters.[15] Again, the models are evaluated for homeowners and renters who have lived in their residential unit for 5 or more years. After controlling for other characteristics, the predicted probability of participating in civic groups is higher for homeowners (0.13) than for renters (0.10). The predicted probability of belonging to a neighborhood group is also higher for homeowners (0.23) than for renters (0.19). The marginal differences between homeowners and renters for participation in sports groups, religious groups or other membership groups in Figure 2 are not statistically significant.

The comparisons in Figure 2 suggest that homeownership increases group participation by investing households with a stake in their local communities. The placebo strategy assumes that unobserved variables biasing estimates of homeownership in the models predicting civic or neighborhood group participation would similarly bias the estimates of homeownership in the other models. The finding that homeowners are no more likely to become involved in religious, sports and other groups mitigates concerns about unobserved selection. By comparison, evidence that homeowners are more likely to become involved in membership groups that affect local neighborhoods and schools provides indirect evidence in support of the financial investment argument.

Figure 2. Predicted Probability of Joining Membership Groups, by Homeownership Status



In the next set of models, I investigate whether the relationship between homeownership and community participation varies across levels of household income. The preferred analysis would explore heterogeneity according to the absolute investment (e.g., housing value, monthly mortgage payments) or the relative investment (e.g., housing value as a proportion of total wealth, monthly mortgage payments as a proportion of monthly income) homeowners make in their community. These measures would provide more conclusive evidence to evaluate whether homeowners' participation decisions depend on the proportion of their aggregate wealth invested in the home, or whether the absolute level of their investment matters. Unfortunately, the November supplement of the CPS does not include data on housing values, mortgage status or household wealth that would enable a direct test of these mechanisms.

Instead, this analysis uses a series of interaction terms to focus on variation in the effect of homeownership across discrete levels of income. The analysis in Table A.1 in the Appendix reports that the effect of homeownership on participation in civic groups and voting in local elections does not vary by household income. However, homeownership is a stronger predictor of participation in neighborhood groups for high-income households than for low-income households. While this analysis explores variation in the effect of homeownership for high- and low-income households, the results provide only preliminary evidence to understand how homeowners' investments influence their participation decisions.

Discussion

The promotion of homeownership has anchored federal housing policy since the New Deal. Across the ideological spectrum, political elites often underscore the importance of homeownership for building stronger communities and increasing citizen participation in the democratic process. Up until now, however, research has produced conflicting evidence and limited support for the claim that homeowners are better citizens.

This research begins by clarifying the potential mechanisms linking homeownership to participation in civic affairs and community life. In particular, it identifies two pathways–residential stability and financial investments in local communities–to explain higher rates of participation in local elections, neighborhood groups and civic associations among homeowners. It asks whether higher levels of participation observed for homeowners result from their increased residential stability, or whether the financial investments homeowners make in local communities drive their participation.

The research finds that residential stability increases the likelihood of electoral participation but is unrelated to participation in membership groups. By stabilizing households within communities, homeownership can help individuals overcome institutional barriers or develop social networks that lead them to participate in the formal political process. After accounting for their increased stability, this article reports that homeowners remain more likely to participate in local elections, civic groups and neighborhood organizations than renters.

While the falsification tests provide indirect evidence that homeowners' financial investments drive their participation decisions, research should continue to build on these findings. To further understand how locally dependent financial investments lead homeowners to become involved in their communities, future research should investigate whether the absolute or the relative level of homeowners' investments affect their participation decisions. In other words, are homeowners more likely to participate when they have invested a substantial proportion of their wealth in their homes or when the absolute size of their investment is large? Directly testing these mechanisms would provide clearer evidence that homeowners' financial investments underlie their involvement in local communities.

Although this research suggests that the locally dependent financial investments homeowners make increase the odds of voting in local elections, participating in neighborhood groups and joining civic associations, we should interpret these findings critically, especially in light of the vast public resources spent to subsidize homeownership in the United States. The Joint Committee on Taxation estimated that the United States Treasury forewent $90 billion in 2010 to subsidize homeownership through the mortgage interest deduction, one of the country's costliest tax expenditures. By 2014, the Joint Committee on Taxation expects the cost of the deduction to rise well above $100 billion (Joint Committee on Taxation 2010). Government efforts to subsidize and promote homeownership are often justified by the civic returns to individuals and the benefits that accrue to communities. While the financial costs are enormous, the total effect of homeownership on community participation appears modest, especially in comparison to some of the other coefficients in the model. In particular, the models confirm that education remains the single most important driver of political participation and group membership in the United States (Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995). The findings presented in this research should help guide policymakers and citizens concerned about balancing the costs and benefits of government efforts to promote homeownership and increase participation in residential communities.

Over the last two decades, policymakers have sought to close the gap in the American homeownership rate by targeting subsidies towards low-income citizens. While proponents of these efforts argue that low-income households gain substantially from these programs, with some evidence suggesting that the children of low-income homeowners perform better in school and homeownership provides low-income households an opportunity to build their wealth portfolio, critics have challenged the wisdom and effectiveness of these efforts (Retsinas and Belsky 2002; Shlay 2006). They question whether low-income homeowners benefit disproportionately from the transition to homeownership. Preliminary analyses reported in this article suggest that low-income households do not experience disproportionately strong civic returns from homeownership. These findings raise a cautionary flag about the effectiveness of homeownership as a tool for spurring community participation for low-income households.

Beyond concerns about federal homeownership policy, the findings presented in this research do not easily lend themselves to normative conclusions about homeownership, civic participation and community life. Recognizing the importance of their financial investments, it is possible–even likely–that homeowners participate more actively to secure a set of benefits narrowly beneficial to their self-interest, rather than beneficial to the broader community. We should be particularly concerned if citizen participation occurs primarily through homeowners' organizations or other groups narrowly interested in the concerns of property owners (McKenzie 1994). This type of civic activism could generate a form of NIMBYism (Not In My Back Yard) that creates communities that are less inclusive and more segregated (Verba and Nie 1972: Chapter 18; Fiorina 1999; Fischel 2001). Given data limitations about the types of neighborhood groups or civic associations homeowners join, we must tread cautiously in uncritically celebrating the civic benefits of homeownership. Although homeownership contributes to higher levels of community involvement, it may shape communities in ways antithetical to normative ideas of vibrant, democratic community life.

This research article comes at an important moment for American housing policy. Since the New Deal, homeownership has been celebrated as the apex of the American Dream, and the possibilities for expanding homeownership appeared limitless. Following several decades of growth, the homeownership rate recently peaked at 69 percent before falling in recent years. This sudden decline sparked a reevaluation of the place of homeownership in American society. This research contributes to that reevaluation by theorizing the mechanisms through which homeownership increases civic engagement and decomposing the effect to account for both residential stability and locally dependent financial investments. In doing so, it offers new empirical evidence about the role of homeownership as a catalyst for community participation.

Notes

1. This research utilizes the 2004 Survey of Consumer Finance. As a result, it doesn't consider how the recent housing and foreclosure crisis shifted the wealth portfolio of American households.
2. Notably, Manturuk, Lindblad and Quercia (2009) report no mediating effect of neighborhood disadvantage on the likelihood of voting for renters.
3. Self-reported estimates of voter participation are subject to substantial overreporting, as voter participation is viewed as a socially desirable behavior (Clausen 1968; Traugott and Katosh 1979). Because the CPS asks respondents about participation in the same month in which an election is held, it offers more reliable estimates of voter participation than the General Social Survey (GSS) or the American National Election Survey (ANES). It is not subject to recall bias endemic to the GSS, or concerns that the survey itself stimulates participation, as with the ANES (Burden 2000; Himmelweit, Biberian and Stockdale 1978; Weir 1975).
4. The 13 state years in which voters faced no presidential, Senate or gubernatorial elections are as follows: DE-98, MS-98, MT-98, NJ-98, VA-98, WV-98, IN-02, ND-02, UT-02, WA-02, KY-06, LA-06, NC-06.

5. While the preferred measure of local elections would focus on elections contested within communities (e.g., mayor, school board, city council), these data are unavailable in the CPS. Still, the construction of the local elections variable reflects two key features of House elections that illustrate the heightened role of local issues in driving participation. First, members of the House of Representative typically advocate for district-level resources and projects likely to benefit local constituencies. These locally targeted resources affect electoral outcomes in Congressional districts, rendering much of the work done by members of the House of Representative distinctly local (Stein and Bickers 1994; Alvarez and Saving 1997). These "pork" projects are likely to provide differential benefits to homeowners and nonhomeowners. Second, Congressional elections have become increasingly less competitive over the last couple decades (Hirsch 2003; Abramowitz, Alexander and Gunning 2006). As a result of this decline in electoral competitiveness, local races and issues may be driving electoral turnout in off-year elections.
6. The question on voter participation reads: "In any election, some people are not able to vote because they are sick or busy or have some other reason, and others do not want to vote. Did you vote in the election held Tuesday, November X?" The questions on group membership read: "Please tell me whether or not you participated in any of these groups during the last 12 months, that is between November 2007 and now: A school group, neighborhood, or community association such as PTA or neighborhood watch groups? A service or civic organization such as American Legions or Lions Club?"
7. To account for high nonresponse rates in the 2008 Civic Engagement supplement, the models for group membership are weighted using the supplement nonresponse variable (pwnrwgt). These results are robust to an alternative weighting using the CPS final weight variable (pwsswgt). The voter participation models are run with the final weight variable.
8. Limiting the analysis to respondents who self-report their participation significantly decreases the sample size, as nearly one third of observations are not self-reported. However, the results are robust to specifications that include the entire universe of respondents.
9. The income quartiles are recoded from a 16-category ordinal variable in the CPS.
10. Because the 1998 supplement does not include an indicator for the presence of children in the household, I do not include this measure in the analysis of voter participation.
11. I impute missing data using an ordered logistic regression for two categorical variables in the analysis that contain missing data—income and residential stability. The results reported throughout are robust to an alternative missing data specification in which missing data is recoded as an additional discrete category.
12. For additional information on using instrumental variables to estimate causal effects, see Angrist, Imbens and Rubin (1996).
13. I calculate the change in the odds by exponentiating the coefficients from Table 2 (e.g., $\exp(.480) = 1.62$)
14. The predicted probabilities are calculated for a 46-year-old white, married, non-Hispanic female. The hypothetical respondent has some college education and an income in the third income quartile. She is currently employed.
15. The predicted probabilities are calculated for a 49-year-old white, married, non-Hispanic female. The hypothetical respondent has a college education and an income in the third income quartile. She is currently employed and reported voting in the last election.

Appendix Table A.1. Logistic Regression of Community Participation with Interaction Terms

	Vote in Local Elections	Neighborhood Group	Civic Group
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Homeownership	0.450***	0.140	0.309**
	(0.108)	(0.084)	(0.116)
Residential Stability: 1-4 years	0.527***	-0.040	-0.075
	(0.095)	(0.059)	(0.085)
Residential Stability: 5+ years	0.856***	0.064	-0.005
	(0.095)	(0.060)	(0.082)
Homeownership * 2nd income quartile	0.007	0.133	0.106
	(0.152)	(0.110)	(0.155)
Homeownership * 3rd income quartile	0.107	0.051	-0.237
	(0.211)	(0.126)	(0.176)
Homeownership * 4th income quartile	0.148	0.320*	-0.119
	(0.270)	(0.133)	(0.179)
Race: Other	-0.734***	-0.288***	-0.180
	(0.201)	(0.085)	(0.117)
Race: Black	0.546***	0.111	-0.443***
	(0.090)	(0.059)	(0.096)
Hispanic	-0.271	-0.206**	-0.579***
	(0.199)	(0.071)	(0.127)
Education: High school	0.709***	0.138	0.378***
	(0.092)	(0.083)	(0.114)
Education: Some college	1.344***	0.606***	0.739***
	(0.098)	(0.083)	(0.114)
Education: College	1.703***	1.080***	0.875***
	(0.111)	(0.087)	(0.119)
Education: More than college	1.811***	1.340***	1.101***
	(0.132)	(0.092)	(0.124)
Married	0.304***	0.090*	0.022
	(0.060)	(0.040)	(0.050)
Female	-0.043	0.470***	-0.291***
	(0.055)	(0.035)	(0.042)
Age	0.043***	0.004*	0.021***
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)

Continued

Appendix Table A.1. ***continued***

	Vote in Local Elections	Neighborhood Group	Civic Group
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Employed	0.070	-0.042	-0.013
	(0.064)	(0.040)	(0.053)
Children		1.195***	0.057
		(0.040)	(0.057)
Income: 2nd quartile	0.264*	-0.190*	0.020
	(0.130)	(0.087)	(0.133)
Income: 3rd quartile	0.193	-0.047	0.309*
	(0.193)	(0.108)	(0.157)
Income: 4th quartile	0.225	-0.113	0.361*
	(0.261)	(0.121)	(0.168)
Voted in 2008 election		0.574***	0.705***
		(0.050)	(0.072)
Constant	-4.831***	-3.640***	-4.990***
	(0.197)	(0.180)	(0.272)
Number of Observations	9,867	39,387	39,387
Pseudo R-squared	0.177	0.121	0.071

* < 0.05 ** < 0.01 *** < 0.001
Note: Models include state fixed effects. Standard errors in parentheses.

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