

‘The Scars of Others should Teach us Caution’. The Long-Term Effects of Job ‘Displacement’ on Civic Participation over the Lifecourse: a Cross-national Comparative study between the GB and US

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Executive Summary:

This paper explores the effects of job ‘displacement’ (that is ‘involuntary job loss’ through ‘lays-offs’ and ‘redundancies’) on rates of civic participation across the lifecourse, in Great Britain and United States. Using cohort data, our analysis finds that in both countries experiences of displacement significantly reduce long-term rates of civic participation, leaving a scar on participation that persists long after an individual returns to employment. Furthermore, a single displacement event is just as detrimental as two or more events, over an individual’s life. Further tests reveal that it is not ‘job loss’ nor experiences of ‘unemployment’ generally that account for displacement’s effect; instead there is something peculiar about ‘job loss’ and ‘unemployment’ that results from displacement in particular that matters. We also demonstrate that displacement earlier in one’s lifecourse matters more for participation than later experiences. Possible explanations of lower SES, familial breakdown, or lower psychological well-being fail to account for post-displacement differences in participation. Instead, the evidence suggests that experiencing displacement during the key period of ‘joining’ (between one’s early-20s and mid-40s) sets individuals on to a different “participation career” path. Lower rates of participation across the lifecourse are thus not a result of ‘dropping out’ of participation *per se*. Instead, displacement stagnates and truncates one’s typical participation lifecycle leading to the emergence of significant differences in future participation that emerge over time. We find consistent effects amongst men in both GB and the US, although some differences exist between GB and US women.

Introduction

“[D]iscontent has always had less to do with material well-being than with expectations and anxiety...you read that 40,000 people are laid off... and a shiver goes down your back that says, “That could be me”...what we are reacting against is the end of a predictable kind of life” (David Herbert Donald)

Civic participation is often considered a measure of ‘social integration’ into society (Wilson and Musick, 1997). Indeed, Putnam (2000) believes such participation is a gauge of the health of civil society as a whole, where membership of formal organizations can represent attachments to the social structure (Elwell and Maltbie-Crannel, 1981). There is much research into what stimulates or impedes participation and societal integration. This paper focuses on one aspect in particular: the

relationship between employment experiences and civic participation. Employment is perceived to be a key pathway through which individuals are integrated into wider civic-society. Thus we see that those “with the most tenuous ties to the economic order - from men squeezed out of the labor market...to “unemployables” who seldom get in...are most isolated in community and society” (Wilensky, 1961a: 322; Stubbings and Humble, 1984). Changes in employment structure over time, such as longer working hours, greater job insecurity, the growth of low-wage temporary employment, and the routinization of roles, may weaken ties between individuals and the economic order. These long-term trends, spanning decades, have often been cited as reasons for declining social and civic participation over time (Putnam, 2000; Bellah et al., 1985; Jahoda et al., 1933; Bielski, 1999). However, what about short, sharp shocks to an economic system? Can these have long-term effects on civic participation? Can an event like a recession leave a scar on participation long after it has receded?

This chapter concerns itself with one of the key features of recessions: spiking rates of job ‘displacement’ (that is ‘involuntary job loss’ through ‘lays-offs’ and ‘redundancies’). Over the ‘Great Recession’ in the UK, the rate of redundancies rose from, on average, around 5 per 1,000 employees in 2007 up to a peak of 12 per 1,000 in 2008 (with a similar peaking in the US). Research suggests that “stable employment and an orderly career... (i.e., the absence of job displacements and downward socioeconomic mobility)” are vital pathways for social integration and civic participation (Brand and Burgard, 2008: 212). For the most part, research into the relationship between employment and participation has tended to focus on the more immediate effects of, for example, losing a job or being unemployed (Strauss, 2008). However, most individuals who lose a job return to work relatively quickly. Similarly, peaks in rates of ‘redundancies’ and ‘unemployment’ over recessions tend to subside within a few years. What we are interested in is whether there is any ‘scarring’ of ‘job loss’, particularly ‘job loss’ as a result of displacement, on levels of participation long after re-employment has occurred. The aim of this paper is therefore to explore the long-term effects of experiencing ‘job displacement’ (a perceptibly ‘unfair’ and ‘uncontrollable’ form of ‘job loss’) on rates of participation *over an individual’s lifecourse*. To gain greater purchase on the mechanisms connecting displacement to participation we perform a cross-national comparison using two cohort studies in two different institutional settings: Great Britain (GB) and the US.

Theoretical Foundations

Employment, ‘Displacement’ and Participation

Why do we believe ‘job loss’ from displacement may undermine social/civic participation over the course of an individual’s life? There is a long history of interest in the role of work in cultivating patterns of social and civic participation (Wilson and Musick, 1997). Durkheim (1933) believed that employment and the workplace would foster pro-social attitudes, in turn, integrating people into the mainstream of social life. Employment is thus perceived to be a key means of building civic skills and integrating individuals into wider civic life; as such, those with the weakest ties to the economic order (e.g. the workless, home persons) tend to be found participating the least (Stubbings and Humble, 1984; Wilson, 2000; Wilensky, 1961a). The *type* of work people do is also believed to affect

participation. The ‘spill over’ thesis suggests that roles which encourage the use of thought, independent judgement and initiative (and are not routinized, highly supervised and passive) cultivate the resources, skills and predispositions necessary for participation (Wilson and Musick, 1997; Meissner, 1971; Hagedom and Labovitz, 1968). This chapter, however, is specifically interested in whether *disruptions* to employment, particularly resulting from ‘displacement’, affect participation *over one’s lifecourse*.

A key theory in the relationship between employment and participation is that an individual’s “vitality of social participation...and the strength of attachment to community...are in part a function of [their] *cumulative* experience in the economic system” (Wilensky, 1961a: 523; *emphasis our own*). Across an individual’s life “orderly careers (i.e., a succession of jobs related in function with elevations in status, free of unexpected periods of unemployment and disorderly shifts)” are believed to act as a crucial foundation for participation in wider forms of social life (Brand and Burgard, 2008: 216; Wilensky, 1961a; Wilensky, 1961b; Roloto and Wilson, 2003). In Wilensky’s view (1961a: 222):

“[p]articipation in community life is a natural extension of participation in the labor market; orderly and pleasant experiences in the latter provide motive and opportunity for the former...cultivating the resources and psychological predispositions that induce people to reach out into the community”.

Therefore, if an individual’s career “is punctuated by unexpected periods of unemployment, disorderly shifts among jobs, occupations, and industries, then...ties to community and society [will be] uncertain” (Wilensky, 1961a: 523). Accordingly, a number of papers have found that greater career ‘disorder’ tends, on average, to be associated with weaker participation (Wilensky, 1961a; Roloto and Wilson, 2003). To understand the relationship between employment and participation it is therefore vital to explore its effects *over the lifecourse*. However, we are interested in a specific form of career ‘disorder’: that of experiencing ‘displacement’. ‘Displacement’ is a particular form of involuntary job loss¹ occurring as a result of ‘redundancy’, ‘firms/factories closing down or relocating’, ‘company takeovers/internal restructuring’, etc.; as such, it is most likely “the result of economic and business conditions that are largely beyond the control of the individual worker” (Brand and Burgard, 2008: 212-13). Why, then, do we believe employment/career ‘disorder’ as a result of ‘displacement’ in particular, may impede long-term rates of civic participation?

One possibility is that experiences of ‘displacement’ can set in motion a series of social, economic or psychological processes, the effects of which can be observed years after the event occurred. Firstly, individuals who experience ‘displacement’ are likely to experience a greater incidence of unemployment over their lives compared to ‘non-displaced’ groups (Kletzer, 1998; Ruhm, 1991; Farber, 1993; Fallick, 1996). Experiences of unemployment have been found to undermine rates of participation, in part, it is suggested, because severing work-based social ties restricts opportunities and motives for participation (Wilensky, 1961a; Strauss, 2008). Therefore, considering individuals

¹ Although individuals can be offered ‘voluntary redundancy’

who experience 'displacement' are also more likely to experience 'joblessness' throughout their lives, 'displacement' may undermine participation through generating fewer (or weaker) work-place ties. The process of 'displacement' (i.e. the "sequence of stressful events from anticipation of job loss through the loss itself, to a spell of unemployment, to job search and training, to reemployment at reduced wages and status") can also result in significant psychological distress over an individual's life (Brand and Burgard, 2008: 215; Pearlin et al., 1981; Dowling et al., 1987; Hartley and Cooper, 1976). Periods of unemployment in particular have been associated with long-term scars on an individual's wellbeing, even after returning to employment, which may in turn scar rates of participation (Clark et al., 2001). Similar relationships have been found for physical health as well (Strully, 2009).

As Brand and Burgard (2008) point out, individuals who experience displacement also tend to experience greater downward social mobility. Displaced workers suffer substantial earnings losses and often find the employment they re-enter is of a lower occupational status, compared to both their previous work and the jobs of their non-displaced counterparts (Brand, 2004; 2006; Farber, 2005; Jacobson et al., 1993; Sullivan 1993). Reductions in social mobility have long been associated with less participation. Furthermore, 'displaced' individuals re-entering employment at a lower level have been found to exhibit persistent anxiety at their status-reduction (Parris and Vickers, 2010). Participation over one's lifecourse has also been linked to familial transitions, where shifts into marriage, or child-rearing, etc. can stimulate participation in the wider-community (Rotolo, 2000). Experiences of 'displacement' (and its associations with reduced resources and psychological strains) may, in turn, stimulate domestic strains, potentially leading to familial-breakdown. Divorce and living apart from one's children may therefore obstruct some of the pathways that the domestic sphere opens into civic participation.

Under these scenarios, displacement may lead to tangible changes in social/economic status or physical/mental well-being which persist over the lifecourse, inhibiting long-term rates of civic participation. Another possibility, however, is that 'orderly' careers are important for cultivating participation over an individual's lifecourse because the status attainment, identity formation and aspiration fulfilment that more 'orderly' careers afford in the economic sphere is believed to spill over into the social sphere, leading to increasing levels of civic participation. Career disruptions, especially those as unplanned and perceptibly unfair as 'displacement' (Guest and Conway, 1999), may retard this relationship, undermining participation.

As discussed, an individual's career is considered a central platform for integration into wider civil society; thus, it is suggested that over an individual's life, "[c]ycles of participation...-*participation careers*"-are linked to cycles of...work" (Wilensky, 1961b: 214; *emphasis our own*). Studies into participation life cycles, on the whole, find a distinct relationship over the lifecourse: participation begins low in one's early 20s; it then steadily rises before plateauing around one's 40s/early 50s; from there, rates of participation have been found to stabilise, begin to decline, or even exhibit a slight increase again from the mid-60s onwards (Babchuck and Booth; 1969; Curtis, et al., 1992; Hodgkinson and Weitzman, 1996; Goss, 1999; Cornwell et al., 2008).

Why do rates of participation appear to rise throughout one's 20s and 30s, before plateauing (or oscillating) from one's late 40s/early 50s onwards? Based on the employment career/participation career link, one explanation has been that the growth and eventual plateauing of participation mirrors how an individual's developing career increasingly integrates them into wider civil society (Hausknecht, 1962)². It is suggested that an important link between 'employment careers' and rates of civic participation is that employment forms a key sphere in which ambition and aspirations for social-status and success can be fulfilled, as 'paid work' forms a vital building block of one's identity (Hausknecht, 1962; Wilensky, 1961a; Strauss, 2008). Between an individual's 20s and 40s aspirations for social status and success are believed to run higher. 'Employment careers' provide a means for these aspirations and ambition to be achieved, in which one's job comes to form a central part of one's identity and take on significant *non-economic* meanings. If these aspirations are pursued in a stable, reciprocal environment of effort-invested-and-rewards-returned, with a pathway for continued-status attainment (i.e. an 'orderly career') then aspirations and ambition are expected to run higher (and for longer) (Wilensky, 1961b). The continued, reciprocal fulfilment of aspirations for status in the economic sphere, crucially when *aspirations are at their highest (20s to 40s)*, is, in turn, believed to spill-over into the social and civic sphere³. In other words, typically increasing rates of 'joining' between an individual's 20s and 40s/50s may be driven by status-fulfilment in the economic sphere, which cultivates pro-social attitudes and increasingly integrates individuals into the 'mainstream of social life' (Rotolo and Wilson, 2003). However, as one enters their middle-to-later years, individuals tend to be at their 'peak earning period' (*regardless of the level of their job*). High, youthful aspirations, "in terms of income, occupational prestige, and power are unrealistic" and, if unfulfilled, are scaled down, whilst "work becomes little more than a source of income" (Wilensky, 1961b: 234). The decline in status-aspirations and the weakening of the role of employment as a means for achieving status is thus believed to manifest itself as plateauing participation during this period.

If the link between employment and participation itself has a distinct lifecycle then we believe the *timing* (i.e. the age) at which an individual experiences a 'disordering' event during their 'employment career' may have different effects on their 'participation career'. If the typical period of 'joining' between one's early 20s and mid-40s/50s reflects a growing integration of individuals into society through one's career and aspiration fulfilment, then experiencing a period of career 'disorder' during this period (especially one as perceptibly 'unfair' as redundancy (Guest and

² An alternative explanation is that rising participation reflects familial transitions, from single to married to having children, with the plateauing or declining rates reflecting children growing-up/leaving home, or divorce/widowing (Menchik and Weisbrod, 1987; Wilson and Musick, 1997; Berger, 1991). Alternatively, it may mirror growing residential stability as younger, more residential mobile individuals begin to settle into a neighbourhood, put down roots, and become more integrated into a community. However, studies which have controlled for marital status and children in the household do not eliminate the rising participation between one's 20s and 40s (Cutler and Hendricks, 2000; Goss, 1999). Furthermore, in our own analysis, we try to limit life cycle effects by dropping forms of participation associated with children (e.g. pta/school associations, youth groups, etc.)

³ Crucially, this also applies to manual and low-skilled occupations (Friedman and Havighurst, 1954). Even amongst steel workers and coal miners, non-economic meanings (e.g. pride) in occupations provide important means of identity

Conway, 1999)) may be more detrimental to participation, than experiencing it later⁴. However, there are other reasons we believe *earlier* experiences of displacement may be worse for civic participation. Research suggests younger individuals (20s to 40s) tend to be more ‘motivated’ to participate by work-related factors such as ‘job obligation’, ‘status striving’, and ‘obtaining job training and skills’, compared to older individuals (Sills, 1957; Gillespie and King, 1985; Janoski and Wilson, 1995). If status- and career-related ‘motives’ predominate amongst younger individuals, it stands to reason they may be more sensitive to ‘disordering’ experiences than older individuals.

In sum, we believe experiencing ‘displacement’, especially earlier in one’s career, may depress rates of participation over an individual’s lifecourse. One possibility is that episodes of ‘displacement’ may ‘disorder’ one’s ‘employment career’ (leading to a constellation of social, psychological and economic repercussions), which in turn may retard the development of their long-term ‘participation career’. However, why do we believe ‘job loss’ through ‘displacement’ in particular (compared to, say, a more general ‘disordering’ event such as a period out of employment) may be especially detrimental to participation? One possibility is that ‘displacement’ represents a violation of the employee-employer psychological contract (i.e. that is the perceptions about what an organization will provide (competitive wages, advancement opportunities, job security) in return for what an individual will provide the organization (a fair day’s work, loyalty)) (Lester et. al., 2002; Dharmawardena, 2002). Such psychological contracts are not formal and are inherently perceptual, with mutual reciprocity built on employee-employer trust (Lester and Kickul, 2001; De Meuse et al., 2001). Importantly, civic participation also “often involves an element of social trust and a sense that things are reciprocal — that you give some support if you get some support, and you benefit from society if society benefits from you” (Brand, 2008). Based on the idea that experiences in the economic sphere may seep into one’s social behaviour, if this ‘trust’, this sense of a reciprocal relationship, of mutual obligation, is broken at work under conditions of such perceived ‘unfairness’ as with ‘displacement’, then individuals may feel as if a tacit ‘social contract’ has been broken, which spills-over into one’s social sphere, leading to a withdrawal from wider civic life.

Displacement and Civic Participation in GB and the US

Theoretically, we may expect some differences in displacement’s effect between GB and the US due to institutional differences between the two countries. One possibility is that the stronger welfare state in GB may cushion some of the more negative economic effects of ‘displacement’ (or concomitant periods of unemployment), potentially limiting downward social mobility or mitigating some of the psychological distress. Alternatively, it may reduce the pressure on immediately finding another job. This could provide greater opportunities to search for work at the same level as one’s previous job (compared to the US), reducing the probability of status reduction that can emerge from re-entering employment at a lower position. However, in alleviating some of the pressure of finding immediate work, ‘displaced’ individuals may remain out of work for longer (through potential

⁴ In a study of upper-working and lower-middle class men, Wilensky (1961a) found that experiencing career ‘disorder’ at an earlier age (below 40 years old) undermined rates of participation, whilst there was little difference in experiencing ‘disorder’ at a later age (between 40 and 55 years of age)

welfare-dependency), or perhaps drop out of the workforce altogether (with the availability of long-term sick/disabled benefits) which may result in withdrawing from wider civic activity. A second possibility is that the stronger, historical culture of civic participation in the US may make individuals more resilient to the effect of 'displacement' (although previous research has demonstrated 'displacement' at least has some effect in the US (Brand and Burgard, 2008)). Regardless, analysing the effect of displacement in two different institutional settings may give us more clues as to what mechanisms lay behind its effect.

Research Goals

Based on our discussion above we will set out our key research questions. Firstly, does displacement depress rates of civic participation over an individual's *lifecourse* (even after returning to employment)? Secondly, are multiple periods of displacement worse for participation than a single event i.e. does greater amounts of 'disorder' lead to even less participation? Thirdly, do *earlier* experiences of displacement do more harm than *later* experiences? Fourthly, is it the actual experience of 'job loss' from 'displacement' in particular, 'job loss' generally, or associated patterns of 'unemployment', that accounts for the effect of displacement? Fifthly, does post-displacement socio-economic status, psychological well-being, or family-status account for displacement's effect; and if not, how might 'displacement' undermine long-term rates of civic/social participation?

Data and Methodology

Methodology

To investigate these questions we apply two-wave panel data modelling techniques to two sets of cohort data in GB and the US. Simply put, two-wave cohort survey data follows the same group of individuals through their lives between two time points (from t-1 to t1). Using such data we can try and establish whether displacement actually has a *causal* effect on participation by thinking of such data as similar to the causal inference obtained from a classic pre-test/post-test experimental design. Our sample of individuals can be split into two groups: the control group (who, between our two time points, will not experience displacement) and a treatment group (who do experience displacement). If displacement does have an effect on civic participation then those individuals who *do* experience displacement between t-1 and t1 should exhibit a significantly greater change in the outcome between t-1 and t1 than those who do not. However, in real life, individuals are not assigned randomly to the 'treatment' and 'control' groups. For example, our 'treatment' groups (that is individuals who will go on to experience displacement) may be less educated, and less educated individuals may already be less likely to participate. Therefore, we need to also control for these initial 'differences' between the 'treatment' and 'control' groups (Johnson, 2005; Heise, 1970)⁵.

⁵ In this paper we apply the lagged-dependent variable (LDV) method in which past participation is included among the explanatory variables "in order to control for the initial level of the outcome" (Norström, 2008: 938):

Data

To explore our aims comparatively in Great Britain and the US we use two sets of cohort data: in GB we use the ‘National Child Development Study’ (NCDS), and in the US we use the ‘Wisconsin Longitudinal Study’ (WLS). As mentioned, cohort studies follow a single group of individuals (approximately the same age) over their lives. These are useful as our aim is to explore whether displacement exerts a long-term effect on levels of participation across an individual’s lifecourse.

The NCDS takes as its core sample *all* individuals ($n=17,416$) born in a single week in March, 1958, and returned to gather data from this group at various points in their lives. For the purposes of this study, we focus our attention (for the most part) on 3-key waves of the NCDS: in 1991 (when they were 33 years old), in 1999/00 (when they were 42), and in 2008 (when they were 50). On the US side, the WLS is based on a one-third random sample ($n=10,317$) of Wisconsin high school graduates who were thus born mainly in 1939/40. For the purposes of our study we will focus on 3-key WLS waves: in 1975 (when they were 35 years old), in the early 1990s (when they were approximately 53), and in mid-2000s (when they were around 64). Both sets of cohort data provide an excellent opportunity to tackle our core questions, providing, as they do, participation data and detailed employment histories (spanning 17 and 30 years of their lives in GB and the US, respectively). This includes periods in- and out- of the labour force, and reasons why employment spells ended, including whether they were ‘displaced’. There are some differences between the two cohort data, although we believe the strengths of these datasets for our stated aims out-weighs potential issues of comparability^{6, 7 8}.

$$Y_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_t + \beta_2 Y_{t-1} + \varepsilon_t$$

The strongest argument for the use of LDV methods relates to an assumption that our outcome at T-1 has a *causal* effect on our outcome at T1 (Finkel, 1995; Johnson, 2005) e.g. participating at T-1 may *cause* individuals to participate at T1 due to obligations, force of habit, social connections they’ve made through their participating, etc. If the present value of participation (or change in participation) (at T1) is determined by the *past* value (at T-1) then the “inclusion of the lagged dependent variable in these situations is necessary to specify the model properly” (Finkel, 1995: 8).

⁶ Firstly, rates of attrition were slightly higher in the NCDS. From the original sample of $n=17,416$ to when the cohort member (CM) was 16 (in 1974: $n=13,917$ (this is only those ‘born in Britain’ and ‘still alive/not permanently emigrated’)) the sample lost 20% of its members. If we were to take the n at age 16 as the baseline, between the ages of 16 and 50 ($n=9,408$) the sample lost 32% of its members. In the WLS, between the ages of 16/17 ($n=10,317$) and approximately age 53 (telephone interview: $n=8,475$; mail return: $n=7,793$), the sample lost between 19-24% of its members

⁷ Secondly, the WLS is a random sample of one-third of Wisconsin high school graduates. This means that all respondents are high school graduates, the vast majority of whom are White men and women who live in Wisconsin (this cohort of individuals were born into what Putnam (2000) calls the ‘cohort of joiners’, and live in a state with particularly high levels of social participation). The NCDS, however, sampled an entire cohort of individuals born in one week across the UK, providing a more representative sample of the UK as a whole.

⁸ Thirdly, the two cohorts straddle two different generations. In the US (born in 1939/40), they only slightly pre-date the US baby boomer generation (1946-1954) by a couple of years. In the UK (born in 1958), they were born in the post-war economic boom period (of 1953-1964). However, that both cohorts tend to have been born in relatively economic ‘good times’ (albeit with an 18 year gap) make them interesting comparisons for our study

Key variables

Core Measure of Social/Civic Participation

Our core measure of social/civic participation in GB is: ‘are you currently a member of a social/civic group?’ The NCDS recorded whether an individual was a member of various types of social/civic groups at age 33, 42 and 50. Our core measure is composed of membership to 4 different types of group: a charity/volunteer group (specifically environmental); a charity/volunteer group (except environmental); a women’s group (including women’s groups, townswomen’s guild, and women’s institute)⁹; or a tenants/residents association¹⁰. These groups were aggregated to form a single binary measure of ‘member of a social/civic organisation or not’.

In the US, our core measure of participation is: ‘are you involved in a civic/social group or not’. The WLS recorded an individual’s level of involvement in a range of civic/social groups at ages 35, 53 and 64¹¹. Our core US measure therefore captures whether an individual was ‘involved’ or ‘not involved’ in five types of social/civic organisation: fraternal groups/lodges; business or civic groups; professional groups; neighbour improvement groups; community centre; or charity or welfare groups¹².

How comparable are these two measures? Firstly, they contain slightly different types of social/civic groups; however, if we limit our analysis to the most closely comparable groups (tenants/residents associations and charity/volunteer groups in GB, and neighbour improvement groups and charity or welfare groups in the US) we find broadly comparable results. Secondly, our GB measure asks about ‘membership’ to social/civic organisations; our US measure asks about level of ‘involvement’ in them. ‘Membership’ might be picking up a more specific form of participation to ‘involvement’. For example, an individual may be a member of a group and yet not be involved (or at least only very rarely be involved). Alternatively, just because an individual is not a member of a group does not necessarily mean they will not engage in civic/social participation i.e. an individual may volunteer for an organisation and yet not class themselves as a member.

A third issue is the relative proportions of individuals who engage using our respective measures of social/civic participation. In GB, at age 50, only 10% of individuals were ‘members’ of at least one

⁹ Although only women can be members of these groups, excluding them from our core measure does not alter our core findings (especially considering only a very small number of women are actually members: in 1991 (at age 33), only $n=166$ women (out of $n=3597$) were members of these groups)

¹⁰ The NCDS also asked whether an individual was a member of a ‘PTA/School Association’. Although we control for whether a respondent has children or not, we decided to exclude this group from our final measure as it is likely to be highly related to one’s life course, be much more prevalent amongst women (in 1991, 13% of women were members compared to 3% of men), and be related to whether an individual has children or not. However, whether we include it or not does not affect our substantive results

¹¹ In 1975, there were three response options: none, some, and very much involvement. In 1992 and 2004, there were five: not involved, very little, some, quite a bit, and a great deal of involvement. For these analyses we combined some and very much in 1975; and some, quite a bit, and a great deal in 1992 and 2004, to form our measures of ‘involved’ (we experimented with different ways of grouping the options in 1992 and 2004 to form our measure of ‘involved’). We also experimented with using a factor score of our measures of participation without recoding. Different ways of creating this measure only led to very minor differences and consistency was the main takeaway in the findings)

¹² The WLS also asked whether an individual was involved in a ‘PTA group’ or ‘Youth group’. However, as with NCDS, we excluded these groups from the final measure of social/civic participation

social/civic organisation. In the US, at age 53, we find at least 40% of individuals were ‘involved’ in at least one social/civic organisation. Obviously our US core measure has a greater number of organisations in it; however, even when looking at the most closely comparable organisations we see, at age 50/53, respondents in the US participate more¹³. Why the substantial difference? One explanation is that the WLS is taken from a cohort of White, high-school educated joiners from a state with particularly high levels of participation (Putnam, 2000). Alternatively, the differences may represent actual differences in levels of participation between the GB and US more generally. Using two cross-national comparable sample years of the World Values Survey (1990) we can see that 47% of UK individuals reported ‘not belonging to any type of social/civic/political voluntary organisation’; in the US only 30% replied the same. Therefore, substantial differences do exist between the two countries (at least in 1990) which may account for the gap between the UK and US¹⁴. A third possibility is that the respective social/civic participation measures in the US and GB do pick up different forms of participation e.g. just because someone is not a member of a group in GB does not necessarily mean they are not ‘involved’ in a social/civic group. Equally, however, an individual may be a member of a group and yet not be actively ‘involved’ in it, which is common among national advocacy groups such as the Sierra Club. The NCDS also contains an alternative, broader measure of social/civic participation: ‘have you engaged in any unpaid volunteering in the past 12 months’? In GB, compared to the 10% of individuals who were ‘members’ of civic/social groups at age 50, 26% reported having done ‘unpaid volunteering in the past 12 months’. This is closer to the gap seen in the WVS in 1990.

Our ‘membership’ and ‘involvement’ measures in GB and the US may therefore be picking up slightly different forms of participation. However, using this broader measure of ‘unpaid volunteering’ in the NCDS alongside our ‘membership’ measure, we can explore whether discrepancies exist in the effects of displacement on our ‘membership’ and ‘unpaid volunteering’ measures.

Secondary Measures of Participation

We will also explore displacement’s effect on a wider range of measures of social/civic participation to garner as much evidence we can of its effect. As discussed, the NCDS also captures data on whether an individual did ‘unpaid volunteering in the past 12 months’¹⁵. Unlike our core measure of participation (measured at age 33, 42 and 50), ‘unpaid volunteering’ is only available at age 23 and 50¹⁶. In the US we can also explore the effect of displacement on involvement in sports/leisure

¹³ For example, at age 50, 5% of individuals are ‘members’ of tenants/residents associations in the UK; in the US, 29% are ‘involved’ in neighbour improvement groups at age 53

¹⁴ The much larger proportions of people who reply being a member of a group in the UK WVS sample compared to the NCDS is likely a reflection of the greater range of voluntary organisations offered in the WVS, and that the NCDS is a single of group of 50 year olds (who may already have declining participation)

¹⁵ One issue is that the questions were not identical in 1981 and 2008. In 1981, the question was: ‘have you engaged in any unpaid volunteering in the past 12 months?’; in 2008, the question was: ‘how frequently do you do unpaid voluntary work (‘never/almost never’, ‘once a year’, ‘several times a year’, ‘at least once a month’, or ‘at least once a year’)’. We therefore create two binary measures: in 1981 it is ‘engaged in volunteering in the past 12 months’; in 2008 it is ‘engage in unpaid volunteering at least once a year’

¹⁶ At the same time, we only have data available on whether an individual experienced ‘displacement’ between 33 and 50. We will therefore be exploring the effect of displacement between 33 and 50 on rates of ‘volunteering’ and ‘socialising’ at age 50, after controlling for SES and levels of pre-displacement ‘volunteering’ and ‘socialising’ at age 23. This only really becomes an issue if an individual is coded as having *not* experienced ‘displacement’ between 33 and 50 but who actually did experience ‘displacement’ between 23 and 33. This

groups at age 35 and age 53. Alongside our behavioural measures of social/civic participation we examine the effect of displacement on ‘generalised trust’ in GB (‘generally speaking, do you think most people can be trusted’ or ‘you can’t be too careful when dealing with people’)¹⁷. Unfortunately we do not have a comparable measure in the US.

Finally, we want to compare the effects of displacement on social/civic participation with its effects on political participation as previous studies suggest the determinants and correlates of civic and political activities may be distinct (e.g. Zukin et al., 2006). In GB we have two measures of political participation: whether, at age 33, 42 and 50, the respondent was a ‘member of a political party’. We also have a measure of more informal political participation at age 33 and 50 (attending rallies, lawful demos, political meetings or public meetings)¹⁸. In the US we have a measure of whether a respondent was involved or not in ‘political groups’ at age 35 and 53.

Pre-Displacement Controls

To control for pre-displacement differences in likelihoods of participation between those who do, and those who do not, go on to experience displacement, we include a range of socio-demographic variables in our models at age 33 in GB and age 35 in the US. These include: marital status, employment status, public/private sector worker, region, education, IQ at 16-18, gender, manual/non-manual worker, occupational income (average income of respondent's occupation), children in the household, parental SES (in the US) and parental education (in GB), union membership (GB only), pension scheme (GB only), ethnicity (GB only), housing tenancy (GB only), industry (manufacturing) (US only), and household income (in the US) and salary (in GB). Lastly, individuals who go on to experience displacement between their 30s and 50s may, already, be less likely to participate *before they experience displacement*. Therefore, we also include a pre-displacement measure of their level of participation at age 33/35.

Post-Displacement Mediators

We previously set out a number of theories as to why we believe displacement will undermine participation, including: lower psychological well-being, lower socio-economic status, and family

group *should* be classed as having experienced displacement but won't be. However, if anything, this will *underestimate* the negative effects of displacement (if displacement's effect doesn't differ in direction between 23-33 and 33-50). We do experiment with controlling for SES and *social/civic membership* at age 33 (instead of SES and ‘unpaid volunteering’ at age 23) and explore the effect of displacement between 33 and 50 on ‘unpaid volunteering’ at age 50. However, we find no substantial differences between our models (although ‘social/civic membership’ at 33 is actually a *stronger* predictor of ‘unpaid volunteering’ at 50, compared to ‘unpaid volunteering at 23’)

¹⁷ In the 2008 wave, the ‘generalised trust’ question had a third option: ‘other/depends’. We experimented with preserving the option and running ordered logistic regression models, merging it into ‘can be trusted’ and merging it into ‘can’t be too careful’. However, the results did not substantially differ. We report the findings from merging it into ‘can’t be too careful’

¹⁸ At age 50 this is whether, in the past 12 months, a respondent ‘attended a public demonstration/protest/public meeting/rally’. At age 33 this is whether, in the past 10 years, they attended ‘any kind of political meeting’, and whether they ‘have ever attended a lawful demonstration’. We combine the two questions at age 33 into a single measure of ‘attended any kind of political meeting/lawful demonstration’. Unfortunately our pre-displacement measure of informal political participation (at age 33) is not ‘have you attended in the past 12 months’. At age 33, it is either ‘have you ever attended’ or ‘have you attended *in the past 10 years*’. This may be problematic; however, it is unavoidable

stress/break-down as a result of employment disruption. For each theory we have a range of post-displacement mediating variables at age 50/53. To measure post-displacement levels of psychological well-being in GB we have a 9-question 'malaise inventory' of psychological distress or depression (Rutter et al, 1970). We also have two measures of life satisfaction: an 11-point scale of 'satisfaction with the way life has turned out so far' and an 11-point scale of 'predicted life satisfaction in 10 years' to capture optimism for the future. In the US, we measure well-being at 53 using three sets of questions on: psychological distress, sense of reciprocity, and sense of acceptance. To capture whether post-displacement socio-economic status mediates the effect of displacement we include income and employment status at age 50/53 and "occupational income" (i.e. the average income of the occupation respondents held) at age 50/53. We also include marital status and whether there are children in the household at age 50/53 to capture whether family breakdown may account for displacement's effect.

Results

Does Displacement Undermine Participation?

Our first key question is: do individuals who experience 'job loss' as a result of displacement¹⁹ between 33 and 50 in GB, and 35 and 53 in the US, report lower participation at 50 in GB and 53 in the US, after controlling for pre-displacement socio-economic status and participation at 33/35.

Table 1 shows the results of this question.

This sample is limited to individuals who experienced at least one period of employment lasting 6 months or longer between 33/35 and 50/53. On the whole, we find that in both countries individuals displaced between their 30s and 50s report less social/civic participation in their 50s, compared to non-displaced individuals. Crucially, this includes our core measures of social/civic participation in both the US and GB, as well as generalised trust, political participation (i.e. protests/public meetings), and unpaid volunteering in GB, and sports/leisure group involvement in the US. However, in neither country does displacement have a significant negative effect on more formal types of political participation (including party membership or political group involvement). We also tested whether the number of displacement experiences matter; however, we found one experience of displacement was just as bad for participation as two or more.

¹⁹ An individual is classed as having experienced 'displacement' in the UK if they have ended a period of employment and gave, as a reason for the termination, that they were 'made redundant', 'laid off', that 'the firm closed down', or that 'the company was taken over/internal restructuring'. In the US, respondents are classed as 'displaced' if they ended an employment spell as a consequence of 'downsizing or restructuring', the 'business closing or re-locating', or if they were 'laid-off'

Table 1 – The Effect of Displacement on Primary and Secondary Measures of Participation

Type of Participation: GB	Social/Civic Membership	Generalised Trust	Political Participation	Unpaid Volunteering	Political Membership
Age of Controls:	33	33	33	23	33
Displaced: 33-50	-0.194** (0.0937)	-0.189*** (0.0641)	-0.402**** (0.118)	-0.267** (0.114)	-0.0895 (0.301)
N	6900	6392	6900	5495	6900

Notes: *Standard errors in parentheses*; **** p<0.001; *** p<0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.1

Type of Participation: (US)	Social/Civic groups	Sports/ leisure groups	Political groups
Displaced: 35-53	-0.336**** (0.080)	-0.384**** (0.093)	-0.127 (0.156)
N	4,815	4,955	4,980

Notes: *Standard errors in parentheses*; **** p<0.001; *** p<0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.1

These results therefore demonstrate that experiencing displacement depresses rates of civic/social participation over an individual's life course. Crucially, these effects linger long after an individual moves back into employment (which nearly all individuals in our 'displaced' group do). We also tested whether 'two or more' experiences of displacement had a significantly greater negative effect compared to a single experience, but found experiencing 'displacement' once was just as detrimental to future participation.

Is it experiencing displacement or experiencing being 'not in employment'?

In the proceeding section we will explore whether it is experiencing 'job loss' as a result of displacement that undermines participation, or whether displaced individuals report less participation because they are more likely to have experienced being 'out of employment'? In other words, is it simply being unemployed/out of the labour force, for example, that is detrimental to participation, or is there something peculiar about 'job loss' *as a result of 'displacement' itself?*

Ideally, we would compare the effects of experiencing displacement with the effects of experiencing 'unemployment' (i.e. not working but actively looking for employment) or experiencing 'dropping out of the labour force' (i.e. not even looking for work) separately. However, our US data only provides information on whether an individual was in employment or not, and does not allow us to disaggregate 'being not in employment' into 'unemployment' or 'being out of labour force'. This is problematic because there can be many reasons why an individual is 'not in employment'. It could be that they are unemployed or that they have given up looking for work and become 'discouraged workers'. Alternatively, an individual may be 'out of employment' because they are 'looking after the home/family', they may have 'returned to education/training', or they may be 'short-term or long-term sick/disabled', etc. Whilst there are clear theoretical reasons why we believe experiencing unemployment (or becoming a 'discouraged worker') may undermine participation, it is less clear

whether becoming a ‘home person’, ‘returning to education’, or ‘becoming sick/disabled’ could lead to more or less participation. To circumvent this issue we can increase the chances that the reason someone is ‘not in employment’ is because they are ‘unemployed’ or perhaps a ‘discouraged worker’ by dividing our analysis by gender. For men, simply knowing they are of working age and out of the labour market is probably a good guide that they are either unemployed or not formally looking for work (i.e. ‘discouraged workers’)²⁰.

Before we try and answer these questions we need to make two points. Firstly, just because an individual experienced ‘displacement’ does not necessarily mean they experienced being ‘not in employment’. In both the NCDS and WLS many individuals who report losing a job due to displacement actually report that their next ‘activity’ was employment²¹. The second key point is that just because an individual experienced being ‘out of work’ does not mean they experienced displacement. People end periods of employment, become unemployed, or drop out of the labour force completely, for a variety of reasons e.g. a short-term/temporary contract ends, leaving a job to look after the home/children, early retirement, becoming ill, going back into education, etc. Based on these points and the limitations of our data, we will create a typology of labour market experiences a respondent may have undergone between their 30s and 50s (**Table 2**):

1. *Fully-Employed/One job throughout period* (baseline): this includes individuals who, between their 30s and 50s, experienced full employment and did not experience displacement. This covers both individuals who remained in the same job for the entire period; and individuals who had more than one job *but* who never ended a period of employment due to displacement *and* were never ‘not in employment’ for one month or more²²
2. *Experienced NIE/No experience of displacement*: this includes individuals who experienced a period of being ‘not in employment’ (NIE) for one month or more but who never experienced displacement
3. *Fully-Employed/Experienced displacement*: this is individuals who remained in full employment between their 30s and 50s (i.e. never experienced being ‘not in employment’ (NIE) for one month or more) but who did, at some point, end a period of employment due to being displaced (but were re-employed within a month)
4. *Experienced NIE and Displacement*: this includes individuals who experienced *both* a period ‘not in employment’ and who experienced displacement. The majority of this group actually experienced being ‘not in employment’ *as a result of being displaced from their job*²³

²⁰ The GB data does allow us to disaggregate our ‘not in employment’ category by *why* they are out of work

²¹ One reason may be that these individuals went straight into another job after being displaced from their previous job e.g. knowing they would be made redundant, they found a new job to begin the moment their previous job ended. The other reason is that respondents only reported being ‘not in employment’ if it lasted 1 month or more. Therefore, some displaced individuals may have found another job in under a month

²² Theoretically, this group may have experienced (in Wilensky’s (1961a) typology) ‘career disorder’. However, in GB, a lower *n* of individuals were in the same job for the entire period of our analysis, making disaggregating this group difficult. Also, within this group, will be individuals who changed jobs for career progression (which is still classed as an ‘orderly’ career transition)

²³ Of the *n*=805 individuals who experienced *both* ‘displacement’ and NIE in GB, *n*=687 (85%) experienced being NIE *as a result* of being ‘displaced’ from their jobs. We did experiment with disaggregating this category; however, the results demonstrated it was those individuals who experienced NIE as a result of being displaced that dominated the effect and the lower *n* of the ‘displacement and (unrelated) NIE’ category makes estimates unreliable

Table 2 – Employment Experience Typology

Labour Market Experience:	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>
	GB (33-50)	US (35-53)
Fully-Employed/One job throughout period/no displacement	3,582	3211
Experienced NIE/no displacement	1,517	546
Fully-Employed/Experienced displacement	996	424
Experienced NIE and Displacement	805	435

Notes: this is based on the 'analytic sample'

Using this typology we can therefore partial out whether it is the actual experience of displacement itself that is driving lower participation or whether it is the fact that displaced individuals are more likely to have spent time 'not in employment'. To model the effect of different labour market experiences we include this typology as a series of dummy variables, excluding 'Fully-Employed/One job throughout period/no experience of displacement' as our baseline category. As discussed, we will run these models on both men (**Table 3**) and women (**Table 4**) separately.

Table 3 – Labour market experiences and Participation (men only)

Type of Participation: MEN (GB)	Social/Civic Membership	Generalised Trust	Political Participation	Unpaid Volunteering	Political Membership
Age of Controls:	33	33	33	23	33
Baseline: 'Fully-employed/one job/not displaced'					
'not in employment'/not displaced	0.204	-0.317**	0.453**	0.377**	0.154
	(0.193)	(0.134)	(0.190)	(0.155)	(0.547)
Fully-employed/displaced	-0.278	-0.202*	-0.172	-0.127	0.263
	(0.173)	(0.108)	(0.188)	(0.137)	(0.454)
'not in employment'/displaced	-0.358**	-0.267*	-0.489**	-0.381**	0.414
	(0.167)	(0.133)	(0.230)	(0.163)	(0.518)
N	3303	3062	3303	2579	3303

Notes: *Standard errors in parentheses*; **** p<0.001; *** p<0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.1

Type of Participation: MEN (US)	Social/Civic groups	Sports/ leisure groups	Political groups
Age of Controls:	35	35	35
Baseline: 'Fully-employed/one job/not displaced'			
'not in employment'/not displaced	-0.095	-0.539***	0.293
	(0.160)	(0.178)	(0.269)
Fully-employed/displaced	-0.189	-0.596****	-0.203
	(0.147)	(0.161)	(0.300)
'not in employment'/displaced	-0.380**	-0.557****	0.205
	(0.153)	(0.168)	(0.278)
N	2,574	2,640	2,648

Notes: *Standard errors in parentheses*; **** p<0.001; *** p<0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.1

Table 3 reveals a relatively consistent picture in both the UK and US, especially on our core social/civic participation measure. On the whole, in both countries, extended periods 'not in employment'²⁴ do not significantly harms social/civic participation in the long-term²⁵. If anything, these can be associated with *more* participation amongst men (informal political participation and unpaid volunteering in GB)²⁶. However, nor is it simply the experience of losing a job through displacement alone as previously thought (i.e. individuals who experienced 'displacement' but returned to employment in under a month). Whilst the effect is negative in both countries, it is not significant. What appears to harm civic/social participation the most is experiencing displacement which is then followed by a period of being 'not in employment' for one month or more. Therefore, it is not simply losing a job that matters for male participation²⁷. What matters is *how* you lose your job and *how* quickly you return to work²⁸. Again, displacement tends not to have a negative effect on more formal types of political participation. We now turn to examining this labour market typology amongst women (**Table 4**).

²⁴ We also experimented with testing whether spending *longer* 'out of employment' had a different effect compared to short periods. However, no significant differences emerged

²⁵ One potentially puzzling finding is that whilst individuals who experience a period 'out of employment' can be more likely to civically engage, they are still less like to 'trust' people. However, in other analysis, we find that 'trust' behaves much like a measure of psychological wellbeing (e.g. life satisfaction, happiness, etc.). We find that individuals who do experience a period 'out of employment' are less likely to be satisfied with their lives, be happy, etc. In other words, 'trust' appears to be more a measure of psychological wellbeing than a measure of active participation per se

²⁶ Again, it is important to stress here that 'not in employment' is not only the 'unemployed' or 'discouraged workers' and can, in theory, include 'returning to education' or 'looking after the home', which may stimulate greater participation over one's life course

²⁷ Potentially, even amongst men, one key reason for why being 'not in employment' *as a result of displacement* has a significant negative effect, compared to being 'not in employment' for other reasons, is that those in the former group are more likely to be NIE because they are 'unemployed', whilst men in the latter group may be NIE for other reasons. However, in the UK we can separate out from the NIE category individuals who were NIE because they were 'unemployed'. We find being 'unemployed' *as a result of displacement* has a negative effect whilst simply experiencing 'unemployment' for other reasons does not

²⁸ We tested whether longer periods out of work *as a result of displacement* had stronger negative effects but did not find consistent evidence that it did

Table 4 - Labour market experiences and Participation (women only)

Type of Participation: WOMEN (GB)	Social/Civic Membership	Generalised Trust	Political Participation	Unpaid Volunteering	Political Membership
Age of Controls:	33	33	33	23	33
Baseline: 'Fully-employed/one job/not displaced'					
'not in employment'/not displaced	0.201*	-0.150	-0.123	0.226**	-0.489
	(0.111)	(0.0912)	(0.147)	(0.1000)	(0.411)
Fully-employed/displaced	-0.217	-0.313**	-0.430*	-0.148	-0.886
	(0.185)	(0.130)	(0.253)	(0.157)	(0.809)
'not in employment'/displaced	-0.221	-0.313**	-0.555**	0.0836	-0.864
	(0.169)	(0.133)	(0.266)	(0.151)	(0.806)
N	3597	3330	3597	2916	3597

Notes: *Standard errors in parentheses*; **** p<0.001; *** p<0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.1

Type of Participation: WOMEN (US)	Social/Civic groups	Sports/ leisure groups	Political groups
Age of Controls:	35	35	35
Baseline: 'Fully-employed/one job/not displaced'			
'not in employment'/not displaced	0.065	0.050	0.223
	(0.129)	(0.160)	(0.221)
Fully-employed/displaced	-0.450***	0.037	-0.066
	(0.172)	(0.207)	(0.316)
'not in employment'/displaced	-0.431***	-0.308	-0.261
	(0.162)	(0.213)	(0.349)
N	2,042	2,106	2,122

Notes: *Standard errors in parentheses*; **** p<0.001; *** p<0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.1

For women in the US, experiencing displacement, regardless of whether this leads to being 'not in employment' for one month or more, harms social/civic participation. In GB, however, experiencing displacement does not undermine our core measure of social/civic membership (although the effect is negative and not small). However, in GB, experiencing displacement, regardless of whether this leads to being 'not in employment' for one month or more, does undermine 'generalised trust' and 'political participation'. Therefore, the picture for women is one of consistency and difference. Amongst women in the US, displacement itself harms core levels of social/civic participation whilst it has no significant effect in GB (although it is negative). However, where displacement does have an effect in both countries, it is displacement itself (regardless of whether an individual is NIE for one month or more) that harms participation. We will discuss later possible explanations for these differences.

Why does displacement undermine participation?

We now want to ask *why* displacement harms civic/social participation and why it appears to leave a ‘scar’ over an individual’s life. Above we set out a number of possible explanations for why we believe displacement may harm participation. Firstly, displacement may result in downward socio-economic mobility i.e. individuals will possess a lower socio-economic status than they would have done had they not experienced displacement. Secondly, the experience of displacement may damage an individual’s psychological well-being which depresses long-term rates of participation. Thirdly, displacement may lead to family strains and breakdown which in turn undermines an individual’s civic/social participation.

In the models below we explore how much these explanations can account for the differences in participation between the displaced and non-displaced at age 50/53. To do this we recreate our baseline models of the effect of displacement (i.e. comparing rates of participation between displaced and non-displaced individuals; see **Table 1**). However, we now add into these models a series of post-displacement mediators: that is our measures of post-displacement socio-economic status, psychological well-being, and relationship/family status at age 50/53 (**Table 5**)²⁹.

Table 5 – Post-Displacement Mediating Effects

Type of Participation: GB	Social/Civic Membership	Generalised Trust	Political Participation	Unpaid Volunteering	Political Membership
Age of Controls:	33	33	33	23	33
Displaced: 33-50	-0.171** (0.0805)	-0.191*** (0.0659)	-0.300** (0.121)	-0.173** (0.0808)	-0.0462 (0.305)
N	6873	6369	6873	5477	6748

Notes: *Standard errors in parentheses*; **** p<0.001; *** p<0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.1

Type of Participation: US	Social/Civic groups	Sports/leisure groups	Political groups
Age of Controls:	35	35	35
displaced: 35-55	-0.252** (0.082)	-0.285** (0.105)	-0.066 (0.158)
Observations	4,814	3,884	4,979

Notes: *Standard errors in parentheses*; **** p<0.001; *** p<0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.1

This analysis demonstrates that only part of displacement’s negative effect can be accounted for by post-displacement differences in socio-economic status, psychological well-being or family status. For our core measures of social/civic participation, this is slightly greater in the US (31%) than in GB (13%). However, in both countries the effect of displacement remains significant. Interestingly, further analysis (not shown here) suggests that what is important for psychological wellbeing is experiencing ‘being out work’ (i.e. being unemployed or not in the labour force) regardless of whether the reason someone is ‘out of work’ is because they were ‘displaced’; in other words, the

²⁹ Conducting this analysis on men and women separately (i.e. using **Table 3** and **4**) yields similar results

particular experience of ‘displacement’ (divorced from concomitant periods of being ‘out of work’), whilst harmful to long-term rates of participation matters far less for psychological wellbeing.

We are therefore left with a lingering puzzle: *why* does experiencing displacement leave a long-term ‘scar’ on rates of civic/social participation? It is crucial to remember that we are looking at the effects of displacement over 20 years, and many individuals will have been displaced in their early 30s but still report less participation in their 50s. Another explanation based on the theory of ‘career disorderliness’ is that displacement undermines participation in the long-term because it breaks the career-participation link believed to be a vital pathway for continued participation through one’s life. Therefore, experiencing ‘disorder’, especially at a younger age (as discussed above) may set individuals on to a more truncated “participation career” path³⁰. To try and gain greater purchase on this idea we will take a more detailed look at how rates of participation change over the lives of displaced and non-displaced individuals.

Our analysis thus far has focused on looking at the effect of experiencing displacement between one’s 30s and 50s on rates of participation in an individual’s 50s. However, as discussed at the outset, we also have two additional ages at which rates of our core civic/social participation variables are measured: in GB, at ages 33, 42, and 50; in the US, at ages 35, 53 and 64. Using these 3 data points we can essentially follow a single group of displaced and non-displaced individuals over their lives to see how their rates of participation differ. In GB, we will follow those who do and do not experience displacement between the ages of ‘33 to 42’, observing their participation: first, *before* they were displaced at age 33; secondly, in the shorter-term at age 42; and thirdly in the longer-term at age 50. In the US, we will similarly follow a group of individuals who experience ‘displacement between 35 to 53’ and observe their participation at: age 35, age 53 and age 64.

To explore the different “participation careers” we will begin by modelling the effect of *earlier* experiences of displacement (between 33-42 in the UK and 35-53 in the US) on both: (1) participation in the shorter-term (at age 42 in GB and 53 in the US); and (2) participation in the longer-term (age 50 in GB and 64 in the US). We will also model the effects of *later* experiences of displacement (between 42-50 in GB and 53-64 in the US) on participation in the longer-term (age 50 in GB and 64 in the US) (**Table 6**).

³⁰ Potentially, changes in socio-economic status (SES) or psychological well-being may set people on to these different “participation careers” in the short-term. However, differences in SES or well-being between displaced and non-displaced individuals in the future may not account for the eventual differences in participation between the two groups. For example, measures of well-being, such as life satisfaction, are known (after harmful experiences) to reset themselves to a ‘set point’ over time (Fujita and Diener, 2005). Therefore, whilst an initial drop in life satisfaction at the time of displacement could lead to long-term differences in participation these differences in life satisfaction may have disappeared by the time we measure life satisfaction at age 50/53

Table 6 – The Effects of *Earlier* and *Later* Experiences of Displacement on Participation in the Shorter- and Longer-Term

	Model 1	Model 2
Type of Participation: GB	Social/Civic Membership @ age 42	Social/Civic Membership @ age 50
Age of Controls	33	42
Displaced (33-42)	-0.089 (0.119)	-0.375** (0.144)
Displaced (42-50)		0.0646 (0.124)
N	6900	6900

	Model 1	Model 2
Type of Participation: US	Social/Civic Membership @ age 53	Social/Civic Membership @ age 64
Age of Controls	35	53
displaced (35-53)	-0.323*** (0.096)	-0.105 (0.103)
displaced (53-65)		-0.016 (0.111)
Observations	3,383	3,383

Notes: *Standard errors in parentheses*; **** p<0.001; *** p<0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.1

Notes: *Standard errors in parentheses*; **** p<0.001; *** p<0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.1

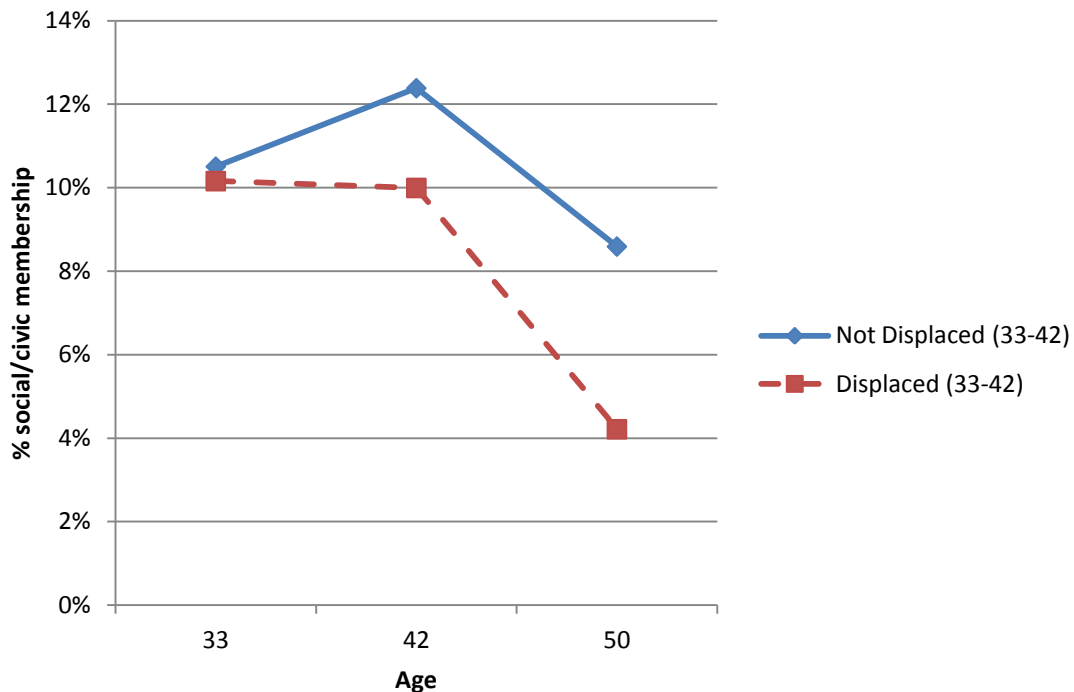
In GB, we see that it is *earlier* experiences of displacement (33 to 42) that undermine participation. However, crucially, such displacement does not open up significant differences in participation in the short-term (at age 42). Instead, the effect of being displaced between 33 and 42 leads individuals to report significantly less participation in the longer-term (*at age 50*). Thus, the “effect” appears to emerge slowly over time throughout one’s life course *rather than showing up immediately*. Experiencing displacement between the ages of 42 and 50, however, does not undermine rates of participation at age 50. In the US, we see that experiences of displacement between 35 and 53 (i.e. the shorter-term) undermine participation at age 53³¹. However, experiencing displacement between 53 and 64 (i.e. the longer-term) has no effect on participation at age 64.

To put these findings in some sort of context we will now plot the “participation careers” of displaced and non-displaced individuals over their lifecourse: at ages 33, 42 and 50 in GB and ages 35, 53 and 64 in the US (**Figure 1** and **Figure 2**). These levels of participation are based on predicted scores controlling for pre-displacement differences in SES, at age 33/35. In **Figures 1** and **2** the solid lines represent our control groups: that is individuals who experienced *no displacement*. This is essentially the “participation careers” of individuals who experience no career ‘disorder’ as a result

³¹ We did test whether, in the US, experiencing displacement between 35 and 42 had a worse effect than between 42 and 53. However, on the whole, experiencing displacement at any time between 35 and 53 undermined social/civic participation at 53 in the US

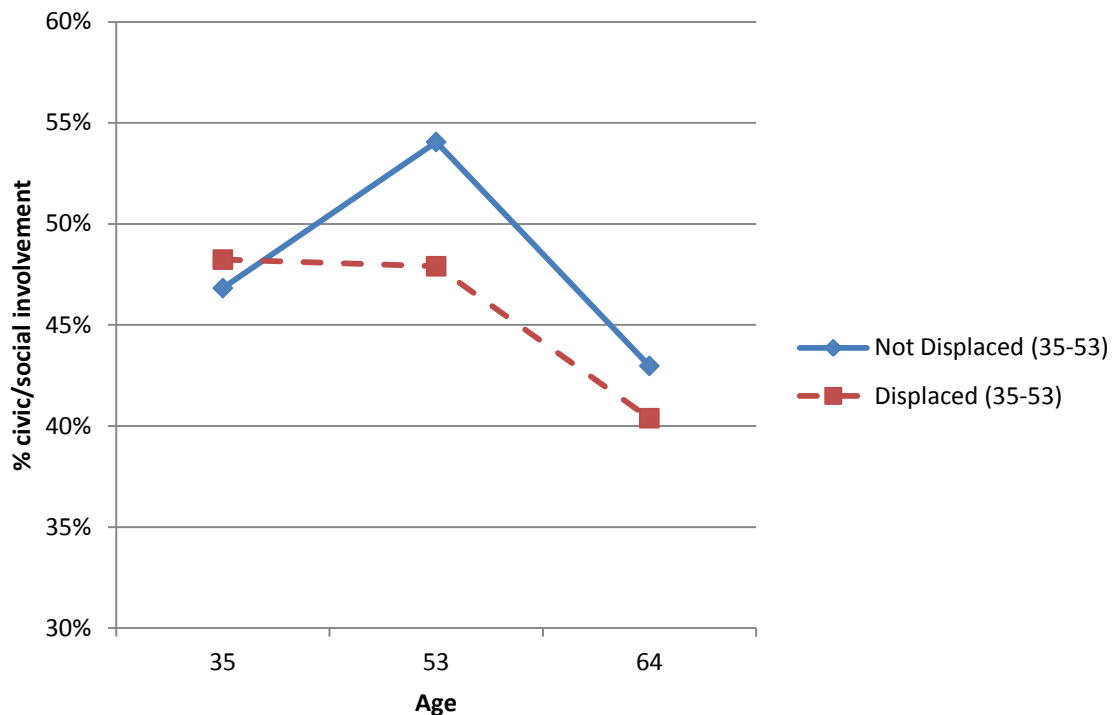
of displacement. The dashed lines represent our treatment group: the “participation careers” of individuals who did experience displacement. We will begin by looking at GB (**Figure 1**).

Figure 1 – “Participation Careers” of displaced and non-displaced individuals between the ages of 33 and 42 in GB



There are a number of key take-aways from **Figure 1**. Firstly, individuals who experience displacement (33-42) do not simply ‘drop out’ of participation by age 42 relative to their pre-displacement participation. Instead, it appears as if displacement sets individuals on to a different lifecourse trajectory: firstly, stalling the rates of ‘joining’ between 33 and 42 evinced amongst non-displaced individuals; and secondly, between 42 and 50, it leads to a faster rate of ‘dropping out’ relative to the rate of decline amongst non-displaced individuals. Crucially, therefore, it takes over at least 10 years (but likely more) for significant differences to emerge in participation. The eventual result of this different ‘trajectory’ is that, compared to age 33, displaced individuals are around 50% less likely to participate at age 50. We will now turn to look at the US (**Figure 2**).

Figure 2 - “Participation Careers” of displaced and non-displaced individuals between the ages of 35 and 52 in the US



In the US, we also see that experiencing displacement doesn't simply lead to 'dropping out': individuals displaced between 35 and 53 have very similar levels of participation at age 53 as they did at age 35. Instead, as in the UK, it appears to stall the 'joining' that non-displaced individuals undergo between 35 and 53. It is by stunting this period of 'joining' (which continues for longer in the US³²) that we see the significant gap in rates of participation between the displaced and non-displaced emerge at age 53.

These figures reveal some key similarities and differences between the trajectories of displaced and non-displaced individuals in the US and GB. Firstly, the trajectory of our control groups is very similar in both countries, albeit over a longer period in the US. Both control groups evince a period of 'joining' (33-42 in GB and 35-53 in the US), which likely began back in their 20s. This is followed by a period of 'dropping out' (42-50 in GB and 53-64 in the US). This corresponds to the lifecycle effects of age on participation discussed above, where 20s to mid-40s/50s is a period of 'joining' whilst mid-40s/50s onwards is a period of stable or declining participation³³. Secondly, the trajectory of our treatment groups is also very similar. Whilst non-displaced individuals are 'joining', rates of participation amongst displaced individuals remain stable. This is then followed by a period of

³² In theory, US rates of participation could peak in their early 40s as well and have thus declined to their current level at age 53. However, regardless participation at 53 in the US is higher than at age 35. In the UK, participation at age 50 is *lower* than at age 33

³³ Why is the 'joining' period longer in the US, peaking into the 50s and not mid-40s as in the UK? Potentially, this may reflect national differences in the participation lifecycle. The WLS is also taken from a sample of predominantly White, high school graduates from a state with particularly high rates of civic engagement, from Putnam's (2000) cohort of 'joiners', which may mean their participation lifecycle was much longer than the norm

‘dropping out’, also seen amongst our treatment group as well (although, in GB, displaced individuals drop out at a faster rate than non-displaced individuals, compared to the US). From **Table 6** we also learned that in GB it is experiencing *earlier* displacement (33-42) that is bad for participation at age 50 (whilst experiencing displacement between 42-50 has no significant effect at age 50). In the US, it is displacement between 35 and 53 that is bad for participation at 53 (whilst displacement between 53 and 64 has no effect on participation at 64). Taken together, we see that, in both countries, the age range at which individuals appear to be ‘susceptible’ to the effects of displacement corresponds to the periods of ‘joining’ in both countries. At the same time, experiencing ‘displacement’ during the period where people are ‘dropping out’ anyway tends to have no effect.

Essentially, these results appear to suggest that experiencing displacement during a period when people are normally ‘joining’ sets individuals on to a different life trajectory, or “participation career”. Crucially, this doesn’t mean that individuals simply ‘drop out’ of participation; instead, they do not evince the same period of ‘joining’ of non-displaced individuals. This leads to differences in participation *emerging over the long-term*. Why does displacement appear to set individuals on to a different social/civic participation trajectory? Why is it that individuals appear more susceptible to the effects of displacement during these periods of ‘joining’? We will discuss possible explanations for these questions in our concluding section.

Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to explore whether recessions may exert any *long-term* ‘scarring’ effects on rates of civic participation, particularly from spiking rates of ‘involuntary job loss’. We will now briefly summarise our core findings.

We find that experiencing displacement between one’s 30s and 50s has a negative effect on rates of participation in one’s 50s. Crucially, even a single ‘displacement’ event leaves a long-term ‘scar’ on rates of participation which remains long after an individual has returned to employment. One explanation is that it is not experiencing displacement *per se* that is harmful to participation but instead that displaced individuals are more likely to have experienced being ‘out of employment’ (especially being ‘unemployed’ or a ‘discouraged worker’). Amongst men in both GB and the US, we find this is partially true. It is not simply being displaced that is harmful to participation; however, neither is it simply being out of work. It is actually being displaced *into* a period ‘not in employment’ for a month or more³⁴. Amongst women, however, as results show some key similarities and differences.

Firstly, where displacement does have an effect, it is displacement itself which appears to be harmful for participation (regardless of whether it results in being NIE) in both countries. Potentially, this difference may be spurious as displacement (without being NIE) has a negative (albeit weaker) effect amongst men in both countries as well (although it is not statistically significant). Alternatively, certain groups of men may be more likely to expect redundancy as part of life and, if they find another job relatively quickly after displacement, may eschew greater resilience to its effects.

³⁴ As discussed, in GB we found being ‘unemployed’ *as a result of displacement* (not simply NIE) had a long-term negative effect on participation whilst being ‘unemployed’ for other reasons did not

Secondly, displacement only significantly undermines our core measure of social/civic participation amongst women in the US. Again, this may be spurious (as the effect is also negative amongst women in GB). Another explanation is that women in the UK are more likely to work part-time (in 2004, 40% of all working women were in part-time employment compared to around 20% in the US). Part-time work may be associated with weaker employment-civic participation links; thus, displacement may have a weaker effect on women in the UK. Alternatively, employment may be less salient for identity amongst women in the UK (especially for forming their role in civic/social participation). Thus, displacement may have a weaker effect. However, these suggestions are conjecture and further testing is required to unpick these differences.

On the whole, however, it is not 'job loss', nor 'being out of employment' generally, that appears to harm rates of participation in the long-term, but 'job loss' and 'being out of employment' that results from displacement in particular. Experiencing 'Unemployment' or being 'NIE' may, *in the short-term*, undermine participation (as we cannot accurately test this); however, they don't, in and of themselves, appear to leave the same long-term scar unless they result from displacement. The next question therefore is why it is the experience of displacement that matters.

Firstly, differences in socio-economic status, familial status, or psychological well-being, do not appear to account for much of the difference in rates of post-displacement participation. Secondly, the fact it is not simply being 'out of employment' or 'unemployed' (as tested in GB) suggests this long-term effect may not necessarily be a structural change caused by losing a job e.g. it is not simply that being out of employment is associated with fewer (or weaker) workplace ties which may be important for maintaining long-term participation. The fact that it hinges on *how* you lose your job (and persists long after returning to employment) suggests it may be a more psychological/value-based shift amongst the displaced. This idea draws further evidence from the fact that the experience of displacement alone (*without a prolonged period of NIE*) also has a negative effect (and a significant one amongst US women) on social/civic participation. Furthermore, the consistency of displacement's effect between the UK and US (at least amongst men), given their different institutional settings (especially the more supportive welfare-system in the UK), also suggests its effect may be less structural.

We therefore offer an alternative explanation for these findings. We believe that experiencing displacement may lead to *long-term differences* in participation by essentially setting individuals on to a different life trajectory - a different "participation career" path - which widens differences in participation over their lives. Firstly, we see that the 'non-displaced' (control group) evince a more 'typical' "participation career", with 'joining' which peaks in the mid-40s/50s. Displaced individuals on the other hand evince a more truncated and stagnated "participation career". Secondly, individuals tend to be more 'susceptible' to displacement's effects during the period when others are normally 'joining'; displacement after this period has little effect. This corresponds to Wilensky's (1961a; 1961b) formulation that participation typically increases into one's mid-40s when aspirations for social status and economic rewards are higher, and when 'occupation' plays a more important role in one's identity. Therefore, as Wilensky (1961a) predicts, rates of participation amongst those not displaced appear to run higher and remain higher for longer. However, comparatively, participation amongst the displaced flat-lines, and, at least in GB, begins to drop off at a higher rate than the non-displaced. Thirdly, at least in GB, we find that *earlier* experiences of displacement (33-42) do not open up significant differences in participation in the short-term (at age

42). The fact that displacement does not simply lead to an immediate 'dropping out' in the short-term, and instead it is the gradual widening of rates of participation over time that leads to significant differences at age 50, adds further evidence that displacement's effect creates more truncated "participation careers".

In sum, the effect of 'displacement' conforms more closely to the idea of a 'disordering' event. If ('orderly' and 'pleasant') experiences of status-striving and fulfilment in the economic sphere is reflected in one's participation career, then experiencing displacement, especially during the period in which work forms a more central part of an individual's identity (ostensibly, between one's 20s and 40s), can undermine this link. However, contrary to expectations, we found that experiencing 'displacement' once was as bad as experiencing it two or three times. Furthermore, we did not find that other periods of 'disruption' (e.g. being 'not in employment') alone had the same significant, negative effect on participation. Why might *one* experience of '*displacement*' in particular be what retards the development of one's 'participation career' over the lifecourse?

As discussed at the outset, we tentatively suggest that civic engagement tends to involve a sense of reciprocity: "that you give some support if you get some support, and you benefit from society if society benefits from you" i.e. a civic 'social contract' (Brand, 2008). Similarly, in the workplace, a system of mutual reciprocity, built on employee-employer 'trust', means that time, loyalty, effort are all given in return for competitive wages, advancement opportunities, and job security i.e. an economic 'social contract' (Lester et. al., 2002; Dharmawardena, 2002; Lester and Kickul, 2001; De Meuse et al., 2001). If, as is suggested in the literature, one's *cumulative* experience in the economic sphere is mirrored in one's participation in the civic sphere, then experiencing a broken 'psychological contract' in the economic sphere, especially through means as perceptibly 'unfair' as from redundancy, may lead individuals to feel as if this tacit 'social contract', based on reciprocity of effort put in and rewards returned, has been broken. This, in turn, stunts the normal development of their social integration. Unfortunately, neither the NCDS nor WLS allows us to directly test this idea.

In conclusion, events like the current 'Great Recession' therefore run the risk of creating a generation of 'civically handicapped' individuals, especially as rates of job displacement are much higher amongst younger groups (in the UK, at the peak of the recession, 15.5 per 1,000 16-34 year olds were being made redundant compared to 10 per 1,000 50+ years olds). Whilst we may not immediately see individuals 'dropping out' of participation in the short-term, at the same time, our result suggest these individuals may now never achieve the same civic potential in their lives.

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