

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Protesting the Contest: Election Boycotts around the World, 1990-2002

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by

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The dissertation of Emily Ann Beaulieu is approved, and it
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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Protesting the Contest: Election Boycotts around the World, 1990-2002

by

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Professor Gary W. Cox, Chair

Why do political parties boycott elections and what do election boycotts mean for democracy in developing countries? To answer these questions, I differentiate between major and minor boycotts to study the causes and consequences of those boycotts most likely to affect democratization. Using an original data set, I find distinct causes for each type of boycott. While major boycotts are motivated by electoral unfairness and a strong opposition, minor boycotts seek to obtain international attention for particularistic

interests, without sacrificing monetary gain. In addition to a distinction between types of boycott, an original dataset, and the most systematic examination of election boycott causes to date, this dissertation also contributes the first study of the effects of election boycotts. I find that major boycotts have consequences both for the elections in which they occur and for democracy in developing countries more generally. With respect to boycotted elections, this study finds a distinction between those types of boycotts that are peaceful and those that engage in violence as part of their boycott campaign. Where the implications for democracy are concerned, I find that major boycotts stimulate political reform and encourage the future involvement of international election observers. These findings suggest that election boycotts do not represent death throes, but rather the birth pangs of democracy.

INTRODUCTION

From 1990 through 2002, opposition political parties in 44 countries boycotted a total of 66 national-level elections.¹ When an election boycott occurred, the parties involved did not merely abstain from electoral competition; rather, they publicly refused to participate in the election in question. With the exception of two elections in Spain, these boycotts took place throughout the developing world: in South, Southeast, and Central Asia; Africa; Latin America; Eastern Europe; and the Middle East.² The number of boycotted elections from 1990-2002 is equivalent to thirteen percent of all elections worldwide, and sixteen percent of elections in the developing world. Despite the prevalence of election boycotts, and some striking recent examples, very few studies of the phenomenon exist. This dissertation investigates both why opposition parties boycott elections and what consequences such boycotts have, when they do occur.

In regard to the causes of election boycotts, my work differs from previous studies in the following ways. First, previous studies have had a regional focus, while mine is worldwide. Second, previous studies have typically focused on a few elections, while mine includes over a decade's worth of boycott activity. Third, previous studies have focused on the domestic determinants of election boycotts, while mine includes—and indeed highlights—international determinants as well. Fourth, previous studies have not achieved a clear consensus on the motivations lying behind opposition boycotts, with scholars noting *both* that boycotts should sometimes be taken at face value—as protests

¹ This figure comes from my own data collection, which is discussed in more detail in chapter three.

² The term “developing” is used to indicate economic development. The developing world includes all countries receiving foreign aid.

against the incumbent regime's unfair rigging of the electoral process—and that boycotts may use rhetoric about unfairness merely as a ruse while pursuing much more particularistic goals. Are opposition boycotters really after reforms that will enhance the quality of electoral democracy or are they after side payments or group-specific benefits of various sorts? My study is the first to state a condition under which boycotts are associated with seeking reform and a condition under which they are seeking more targeted benefits—and I show that the conditions I identify help us understand the variation that exists among types of boycotts.

Finally, to a greater extent than previous works, this study considers election boycotts in the larger context of democratization. Since Huntington identified a third wave of democratization in 1991, elections have received a great deal of attention from academics and policy-makers alike. Huntington noted that elections played a new role in the third wave, not only as a central component of new democracies, but as a means by which democracy was achieved (1991, 174). Henceforth elections have been seen as central to the democratization process and have been emphasized by international promoters of democracy in developing countries. This enthusiasm for the role of elections in democratization has met with mixed reactions among academics. Schedler (2002) argues that many developing countries holding elections should not be considered democracies, but are, instead a new type of autocracy, one that holds elections. Although many acknowledge that elections in developing countries are often fraught with fraud and other complications that may hinder democracy, some believe that even problematic

elections might have positive consequences for democracy.³ This dissertation proceeds in that vein, by investigating whether election boycotts signal the birth pangs or death throes of electoral democracy in developing countries.

In regard to the consequences of election boycotts, the existing literature has focused solely on the boycott's immediate effect on the democratic legitimacy of the boycotted election. I focus on some additional immediate effects of election boycotts—turnout depression, and effects on election related violence—as well as the longer-term effects of boycotts in promoting electoral democracy. After empirically sorting boycotts into those that are reform-seeking and those that are merely side-payment-seeking, I investigate whether reform-seeking boycotts actually promote reforms, actually enhance the probability that international election monitors will be invited to observe future elections, actually improve a country's rating on standard scales measuring the freedom and fairness of its elections, and actually improve the chance that a country will experience alternation in power via electoral defeat of the incumbent. I show not only that election boycotts have observable effects but that these effects have real consequences for democratization in developing countries.

Following the research design developed in each chapter, I use three original sets of data from 1990-2002, which together represent the largest extant data set on election boycotts and their correlates, to pursue my investigation. Interviews and archival research from two country case studies (Jamaica and the Dominican Republic) provide further corroboration for many of the hypotheses developed and tested in chapters three

³ Those who acknowledge the problems with elections in developing countries include Pastor (1999), and Fearon (2005). Marinov (2006) argues, however, that even fraudulent elections may result in democratic

through five. In the remainder of this introduction I first expand on several of the points made above, then sketch out the sequence of chapters to follow.

The Boycott Trend and International Factors

In addition to observing a non-trivial number of election boycotts, the 1990s and early 21st century also witnessed an increase in the frequency of boycotted elections. At the end of the 1980s (1988-89) two election boycotts occurred. This amounted to four percent of elections worldwide, and six percent of elections in developing countries.⁴

Figure 1.1 shows the general trends of election boycotts from 1990-2002, worldwide and, more specifically, in the developing world. While the percentage of elections boycotted has varied (sometimes greatly) from one year to the next, the overall trend has been an increase in boycotts.

In 1990, six percent of all elections worldwide were boycotted, up two percent from the end of the 1980s, and by the end of 2002, 15 percent of all elections were accompanied with a boycott. Similarly, in 1990, election boycotts in the developing world had increased three percent to nine percent of all elections. By the end of 2002 the percentage of boycotted elections in the developing world had doubled. In the first half of the 1990s (1990–1995) the average rate of boycott was 10 percent of elections worldwide and 13 percent of elections in the developing world. From 1996-2002, the

accountability, and Howard and Roessler (2006) show that even electoral autocracies may sometimes produce “liberalizing electoral outcomes.”

⁴ Figures from my own data.

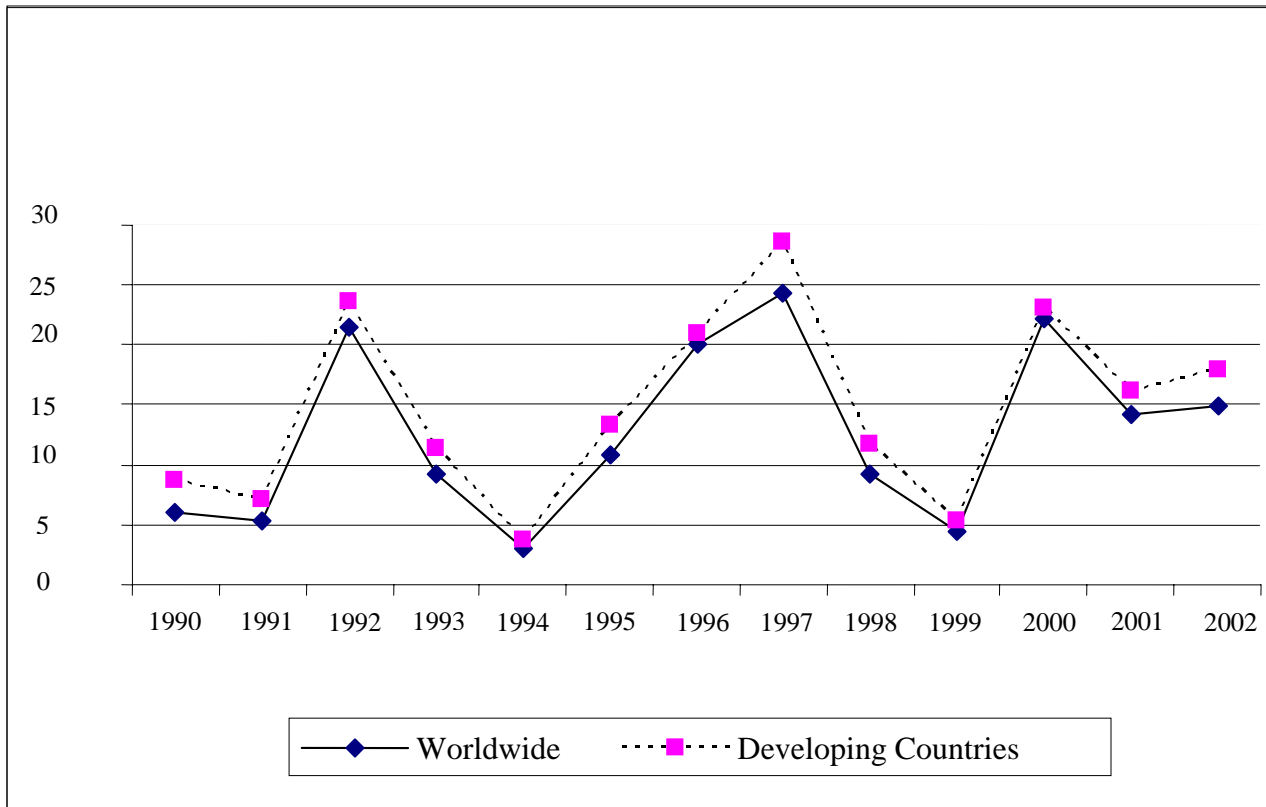


Figure 1.1
Annual Percentage of Boycotted Elections

average rate of boycott reached 16 percent worldwide and 18 percent in the developing world. The difference between the average rate of boycott early in the nineties and the early twentieth century amounts to an average increase in the frequency of election boycotts of five percent over the twelve year period.

Election boycotts have been increasing in the developing world and so too has international involvement in elections there. Hyde (2005) argues international election monitoring has become so common since the end of the cold war that inviting international election observers has essentially become a norm for developing countries wishing to have their elections recognized as democratic. Beaulieu & Hyde (2005) present an explanation for the simultaneously increasing trends of boycotts and international election observers in developing countries. They argue that international pressure to democratize is driving more incumbents to invite international observers, but that these incumbents still wish to retain power. The desire to secure power leads incumbents to engage in what Beaulieu & Hyde call “prudent manipulation”, an attempt to rig the election without being caught by the observers, in other words, a form of fraud. In the face of prudent manipulation, Beaulieu & Hyde find that opposition parties are more likely to boycott when monitors are present—apparently viewing it as a more viable endeavor with a primed international audience of observers.

This dissertation compliments the work begun by Beaulieu & Hyde, by demonstrating the importance of international factors with respect to both the causes and consequences of election boycotts. Not only does an examination of the international context help us to understand why more and more boycotts are occurring, international variables also help us to understand why particular types of boycotts occur and how

boycotts can effect democratic change. Thus, one important contribution of this dissertation is to demonstrate that the causes and consequences of election boycotts do not involve purely domestic processes. The causes of boycotts, and the extent to which they have any future effect, depend on international, as well as domestic, variables.

Reforms or Ruses—reconciling competing explanations of election boycotts

In-depth academic treatment of election boycotts has been quite limited to date.⁵ Nonetheless, two primary explanations have emerged, which are at odds with one another. My work should help to reconcile these competing explanations.

The first explanation is that boycotts occur because the current political system is not fair. The system is unfair because the incumbent ruler is engaging in electoral fraud or otherwise manipulating political institutions in order to maintain an advantage beyond their support in the electorate. In such explanations, boycotters are cast as protesting to achieve the public good of increased fairness (Bratton (1998), Lindberg (2004)).

The second explanation for election boycotts portrays opposition parties in a far less generous light: Boycotts occur because political parties know they are weak and want to save face (Pastor (1999), Bratton (1998)). In this explanation, boycotting parties are characterized as driven by narrow self-interest to implement a ruse, in order to preserve their reputation in the face of certain loss. My investigation of election boycotts will reconcile these competing explanations by first drawing an important new distinction between two types of boycott: major and minor. It is important to distinguish between

⁵ Lindberg (2004), and Beaulieu & Hyde (2005) are exceptions.

major and minor boycotts in order to explain both the causes and consequences of election boycotts.

Just as election boycotts occur in a wide range of countries, they are also undertaken by a variety of political parties. Sometimes a single party, or a few small parties representing a particular ethnic, religious, or ideological minority, will undertake a boycott. In Lebanon, Christian parties have boycotted in recent years, and Marxist parties in India have also been known to boycott elections. I label these types of boycott minor boycotts; they are usually launched to press for the particularistic interests of the participating group.

In most instances, however, election boycotts have been the work of mass opposition parties, sometimes one major party initiating a boycott on its own, as with the Yemeni Socialist Party boycotting the 1997 election, and sometimes several main parties boycotting as a unified opposition. In Ghana, in 1992, opposition parties joined forces to boycott parliamentary elections following a presidential election that had been dubbed the “stolen verdict”. I call these major election boycotts and I find that such boycotts usually center on claims of electoral unfairness.

I will show that each type of boycott is the result of distinct causes. In particular, I will show that major boycotts are motivated by a desire to increase general electoral fairness, while minor boycotts are motivated by the narrow interests of a particular group. Additional distinctions can be made among types of boycotts that will help to further refine our understanding of the causes and consequences of election boycotts.

Gandhian and Fearonian Boycotts

Beyond distinguishing between major and minor boycotts, this dissertation will also make an important distinction between boycotts that are primarily peaceful (Gandhian) and those which incorporate violence into their protests (Fearonian). Gandhian boycotts are those launched by an opposition that lacks the capacity to commit violence. Such boycotters are hoping to cast the current regime as illegitimate in the eyes of the domestic electorate and international democracy promoters, in the hopes that support from these audiences might help them to realize their goals. Violence on the part of Gandhian boycotters would detract from their pursuit of the moral highground.

Oppositions that possess some military capacity and decide to boycott are labeled Fearonian. Unlike Gandhian boycotters, Fearonian boycotters are attempting to threaten the government—to demonstrate their strength to imply a threat of future overthrow if their demands are not met. Not only are such boycotters unlikely to encourage non-violence, they may actually actively encourage violence on the part of their boycott supporters.

Thus we will see that the different capacities and goals of the oppositions launching a major boycott will have immediate consequences for how election boycotts unfold. In chapter three we will explore the extent to which boycotting oppositions get voters involved in the boycott and manage to suppress voter turnout. We will also see how election boycotts affect election-related violence, thus helping us to observe further distinctions between types of election boycott.

Election Boycotts as the Birth Pangs of Democracy

Election boycotts are considered detrimental to the democratic process in the short term. For example, Robert Pastor (1999) uses election boycott as one indicator that an election has “failed”. When we think about democracy, we are concerned with both whether or not elections are successful, and also the extent to which they promote representative and accountable government. When an election boycott occurs, it is clear that all of the various interests in a given society are not being brought into competition with one another. Consequently, a boycotted election is not going to produce a truly representative government. The larger the boycott the less representative the process, and hence the resulting government, is likely to be.

Accountability, on the other hand, is still an open question. By examining the long-term effects of election boycotts for democratic accountability, I will demonstrate the important consequences that major election boycotts have for democratization, which may help explain why opposition parties engage in boycotts, even though they do not enjoy immediate success.

With respect to the long-term effects of election boycotts, I begin by examining proximal effects that may improve democracy: political reforms and the involvement of international election monitors in future elections. I then explore the relationship of these potentially democratic changes to two more distal measures of democracy. One measure of democracy is based on Dahl’s (1971) set of guarantees for democracy, and uses third-party assessments of electoral fairness. The other measure of democracy is based on procedural definitions of democracy, specifically following from Przeworski et al. (2000), and focuses on alternation in power as an indication of democracy. The findings

in this chapter lead me to argue that we can think of election boycotts and their consequences as the birth pangs of democracy in developing countries. Given the importance of international factors highlighted previously, I will further argue that election boycotts represent the birth pangs of democracy with an international midwife.

Perhaps the most meaningful contribution of this dissertation is to highlight the importance of elections for democratization within a developing country. My work supports the argument that elections in and of themselves are not sufficient to define democracy (Schedler, 2002), but it also reveals how even imperfect elections can be used by opposition parties to push for further democratization. Even when flawed, multi-party elections provide a point of coordination, and open up a space for some contestation, which is at the heart of the democratic process. In the election boycott, major opposition parties have discovered one particular tool to expose flawed electoral processes and to press for change, with some measurable success.

Outline of Chapters

Chapter two introduces a typology of election boycotts, and also provides a discussion of boycotts as a particular form of protest. The typology will highlight two dimensions along which boycotts can be divided. First, I highlight a distinction between major and minor boycotts. This distinction is essential in order for us to say anything meaningful about why election boycotts occur. The second distinction is between Gandhian and Fearonian boycotts and will help us to understand how different kinds of boycotts are likely to unfold.

Chapter three examines the causes of election boycotts. To explain major boycotts, I use a strategic model that I have modified from Fearon's model of elections as a coordination mechanism for citizens. I replace citizens with opposition to show the various choices open to incumbent and opposition, and to demonstrate when election boycotts are likely to occur. The causes of minor boycotts are also discussed to further highlight the distinct causes of major election boycotts. This chapter contributes the most systematic examination of election boycotts to date. Several hypotheses are tested using an original data set of all elections in developing countries from 1990 through 2002.

Chapter four explores the immediate effects of election boycotts. The focus is on two particular aspects of elections: voter turnout and election-related violence. I argue that all major boycotts are likely to be accompanied by reduced voter turnout, but that the extent to which violence is employed will differ, depending on whether the boycott is Gandhian or Fearonian. Hypotheses are tested using original data from all elections in all countries that experienced at least one major election boycott from 1990-2002.

The fifth chapter investigates the long-term effects of major election boycotts, as they relate to democratization and democracy, with a focus on democratic accountability. Two definitions of democracy are considered: a procedural definition, following Huntington and Przeworski, and a more expansive list of necessary conditions, following Dahl. Democratization is understood as any move toward that procedural definition, or any increase in the number of necessary democratic conditions, with careful attention paid to the role of the strategic interests of the incumbent. The theory in this chapter describes the various paths by which democratic change can occur in a country, and how democratic changes, in turn, affect measures of democracy. Hypotheses generated in this

chapter are tested using data from chapter three and an original data set consisting of all boycotts (major and minor) and a 20 percent random sample of non-boycotted elections.

Chapter six provides a companion two-country case study of elections in Jamaica and the Dominican Republic. The findings from the statistical analysis in chapter three are analyzed in the Jamaica boycott of 1983 and compared to the Dominican elections of 1990 and 1994. The immediate effects of the PNP boycott in Jamaica are explored, and compared to similar measures in the Dominican Republic following the 1990 and 1994 elections. Finally, findings concerning the long-term effects of major boycotts are considered in light of the post-election periods in both Jamaica and the Dominican Republic.

The main findings of the dissertation and their implications are discussed in the conclusion.

A TYPOLOGY OF ELECTION BOYCOTTS

In November 1990, three of the four main opposition parties boycotted Egypt's national elections. Although Egypt is a multi-party system with five non-trivial parties, only two of these parties competed in the election: the ruling NDP and the opposition National Progressive Unionist Alignment Party. The remaining major opposition parties – the New Wafed, the Socialist Labor Party, and the Moslem Brotherhood – all boycotted the poll. Beyond simply abstaining from the electoral contest, the boycotting parties publicly announced that they would not participate in the elections as a protest (*Financial Times* 1990, *Jerusalem Post* 1990). At issue, the boycotting parties claimed, was a history of rigged elections.¹ In addition to this general claim, the boycotting parties requested specific policy changes that they maintained would improve the quality of elections in Egypt. These changes included: improvements in accounting for voters (possibly a registration system involving fingerprints), supervision of elections by judges and candidates (rather than police), and suspension during elections of the martial law that had been in effect in Egypt since 1981. The boycotting parties argued that until these changes were made the electoral system in Egypt would continue to encourage fraud and provide an unfair advantage to the government. Rather than participate in what was expected to be another fraudulent election, the parties decided to stage a boycott.

Pakistan also experienced an election boycott, three years after Egypt. Unlike the Egyptian case, where three major opposition parties boycotted the polls, the Pakistani

¹ The 1990 election was called because of an Egyptian Supreme Court ruling that found the 1987 national elections unconstitutional.

election boycott was undertaken by one small opposition party: Mohajir Qaumi Mahaz (MQM). MQM represents the Urdu-speaking Mohajir population—Muslims who emigrated from India when India and Pakistan split in 1947. Mohajirs claim to have been subjected to discrimination by the Pakistani government since 1958, when Ayub Khan gained control of the country in a military coup. According to the Minorities at Risk database, Mohajirs report that they are excessively taxed relative to their political representation, and that their political organizations have been consistently targeted by the government for repression.² In fact, MQM attributed its 1993 election boycott to military discrimination against its candidates.

The 1990 Egyptian election boycott is an example of a major election boycott. An election boycott is major when a majority of the opposition (weighted by size) publicly refuses to participate in the electoral contest. In the Egyptian case, three of the four main opposition parties boycotted the election. By contrast, the Pakistani case represents a minor election boycott. In a minor election boycott one or several small opposition parties refuse to participate in the election. Typically, these parties represent the interests of a particular minority population.

Both major and minor boycotts suggest, at a minimum, that current elections are not representative of all segments of society. Major boycotts alert us to serious complaints about the current conduct of elections or serious complaints about governance. A nascent literature addresses the potential problems with elections in developing democracies and focuses specifically on questions of fraud and electoral

² <http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/data/pakmohaj.htm>

unfairness (Lehoucq 2003; Simpser 2005; Fearon 2006; Marinov 2006; Howard & Roessler 2006).

Questions about the democratic nature of elections in developing countries are at the heart of this investigation into the causes and consequences of election boycotts. Beginning with a typology of boycotts allows us to isolate those boycotts that relate most closely to questions of fraud and electoral unfairness, and to better understand why such boycotts occur. From this work we will be able to move forward in the chapters that follow and examine the consequences of major election boycotts for democracy. While most of the dissertation will focus on major election boycotts, it is still important to acknowledge minor boycotts, if for no other reason than to stress their differences from major election boycotts.

The distinction between major and minor boycotts is the first important contribution this chapter makes to the study of election boycotts. Previous works have tried to explain election boycotts in general, without distinguishing between major and minor boycotts. Another contribution of this chapter will be a second way to distinguish between types of boycott. This second axis will highlight the different advantages that oppositions can possess, specifically different capacities to commit violence. An opposition's capacity for violence in turn, will affect the path by which particular parties arrive at the decision to boycott, and also the message that those boycotters attempt to convey.

The rest of the chapter proceeds as follows: First, I will examine existing explanations of election boycotts and indicate how my explanation for the causes of election boycotts will differ. Second, I will provide a discussion of boycotts more

generally, focusing both on common characteristics of boycotts and the ways in which boycotts can vary. Finally, I will describe my boycott typology and explain how it will inform the rest of the dissertation.

Previous Explanations of Election Boycotts

Election boycotts have not received systematic treatment in the literature, but some attempts have been made to explain why they occur. One of the earliest discussions of election boycotts attributes their occurrence to a lack of political stability or lack of party system institutionalization. A later and more common theme is that election boycotts are motivated by electoral unfairness. It has also been suggested, however, that election boycotts might occur not because of unfairness, but rather because opposition parties know they are going to lose and wish to save face. The most recent investigation of election boycotts incorporates elements of both unfairness and certain loss, and also emphasizes the importance of international involvement in the election process.

In their study of party system institutionalization in Latin America, Mainwaring and Scully provide one of the first explanations of election boycotts. They characterize boycotts as protests to delegitimize the current regime and as indications that there is not yet consensus on the rules of the political process. In the inchoate party systems that the authors describe, "...rather than directing their efforts toward winning elections, actors question the legitimacy of the electoral process and engage in actions that imply rejecting government legitimacy (1995, 23)." Here opposition parties would rather protest against the government than participate in elections, but it is unclear whether this is because the government is actually unfair, or simply because the system is unstable and opposing

parties believe there is still a chance to redefine democratic rules. In this description, boycotts appear to be a reflexive reaction to an unstable political system, rather than a purposive undertaking by opposition parties.

While Mainwaring and Scully remain agnostic on the question of whether boycotting oppositions intentionally respond to actual unfairness, Michael Bratton's piece on second elections in Africa addresses the issue of electoral unfairness more directly. For Bratton, boycotts in Africa seem to correspond to a flawed electoral process (1998, 19). He observes that, in Africa at least, opposition election boycotts generally occur when elections are not free and fair (24). Here the implication is that boycotts arise as the opposition responds to fraud (real or anticipated) on the part of the government, rather than as a by-product of instability.

Lindberg expands the unfairness argument, and presents a more systematic examination of African elections since 1989. In his paper "When do Opposition Parties Boycott Elections?" Lindberg is primarily concerned with electoral dynamics in what he considers Electoral Authoritarian regimes (2004, 2). The first part of his paper focuses on what caused opposition parties to either participate in or boycott elections in each of 53 African elections. Using news sources to code boycotts, and information from election observers on the freedom and fairness of the election, Lindberg finds opposition participation is highly correlated with judgments of elections as free and fair (9). From this finding he concludes that when elections are not judged to be free and fair, which suggests fraud on the part of the incumbent, parties will be motivated to boycott.

The temporal sequence of election boycotts and assessments of freedom and fairness of the election might leave some wondering if unfairness is, in fact, the cause of

the boycott or one of its effects. Boycotts always happen on election day whereas observer pronouncements of the election as free and fair (or not) do not usually come until after the election is over. It is possible that observer reports reflect the conditions that caused a boycott in the first place, but it is also possible that the boycott itself affected the observers' assessment of the fairness of the election.

Politicians and scholars alike have entertained the notion that true unfairness might not be driving election boycotts. Some are skeptical of the benevolence of opposition parties and suspect that their motives are more particularistic. It has been suggested that rather than boycotting because the system is unfair, opposition parties boycott elections because they know they are going to lose, and want to appear more powerful than they really are. In citing common explanations for why elections fail, Robert Pastor offers, "...the opposition parties boycotted or protested because they were weak and knew they would lose a free election (1999, 1)." The implication here is that opposition parties would rather save face, by boycotting and casting suspicion on the government, than be shown to be weak at the polls. In his work on elections in Africa, Bratton notes that the "quality of boycotted elections can be ambiguous," meaning it is not always clear if a boycotted election was actually unfair (1998, 21). He notes that the possibility of a boycott being a "ruse" must not be discounted (21). As with Pastor's assertions, the term "ruse" here suggests that a boycott may be driven by particularistic interests—in this case to mask the weakness of the boycotting parties—rather than to protest actual unfairness.

When confronted with a boycott, incumbent politicians have often seized upon the possibility that boycotts are not necessarily motivated by unfairness. Pastor reported that

this very argument was offered by the incumbent government during the 1995 Haitian election. Senior government officials explained the major opposition boycott in the following way: “They have no popular support; they boycott because they know they will lose (1998, 160).” A similar rationale was utilized by Chavez during the 2005 major election boycott in Venezuela. He responded to the boycott by saying, “What fraud? [the opposition] should accept the truth that they have no public. It’s an attempt at political sabotage (Toothaker 2005).”

Beaulieu & Hyde (2005) incorporate explanations based on unfairness and certain loss in their examination of the relationship between election boycotts and international election observers. They find that election boycotts are more likely to occur when international election observers are present, and account for this finding with a concept they call “prudent manipulation”. Prudent manipulation refers to incumbent governments inviting election monitors, to create an appearance of electoral fairness, and then finding ways to maintain power that do not require the sorts of overt fraud with which the monitors are primarily concerned (but may involve a variety of tricks such as are employed in “advanced” democracies).

Prudent manipulation creates conditions of electoral unfairness, such as those discussed by Bratton and Lindberg. It also increases the probability that opposition parties will lose the election. When monitors are invited, opposition parties anticipate prudent manipulation and seek to expose it, by boycotting the election. Thus, Beaulieu and Hyde do not dispute that unfairness and/or certain loss may contribute to initiating election boycotts, but show that another factor—increased international attention—also works to encourage election boycotts.

Common to all the explanations discussed here is a focus on the benefits of election boycotts, or factors that might make a boycott attractive to an opposition party. Mainwaring and Scully point to a chance to shape the rules, which could benefit opposition parties. Lindberg suggests that opposition parties have a chance to improve the fairness of the system by protesting current unfairness. With respect to the “certain loser” argument, it has been pointed out that weak opposition parties stand to maintain, or even improve, their reputation with a boycott, rather than competing and being shown to be weak. Finally, in the presence of international election observers, opposition parties have a chance to expose cheating incumbents to the international aid community, which has the potential to hurt incumbent regimes.

My Explanation of Election Boycotts

My explanation will differ from those offered thus far in the following two respects. First, as previously mentioned, I will draw a distinction between different types of election boycott. Rather than trying to use the same factors to account for all boycotts, I will distinguish between factors that might be important in a major boycott and factors that might contribute to a minor boycott. Second, in addition to examining the potential benefits of a boycott, I will also take into consideration potential costs both of boycotting and participating in the election.

In keeping with previous explanations, I will consider the effects of electoral unfairness, weakness, and self-interest on decisions to boycott. Also, following Beaulieu & Hyde, I will consider international factors among the causes of election boycotts.

Before elaborating my explanation, however, I will discuss certain features of boycotts in general, and then will offer my typology of election boycotts.

Characteristics of Boycotts

In this section I digress to consider boycotts more generally. The aim is to illustrate that other kinds of boycotts (typically economic in nature) share several important features with election boycotts: they are typically launched by weak groups, they invoke mass participation, and they tend to be nonviolent. Some exceptions to these general commonalities are also noted. The reader who accepts these observations can feel free to move to the next sub-section entitled: A Typology of Election Boycotts.

Before “boycott” was a description of a particular type of protest, it was a name. The name belonged to Charles C. Boycott and was borrowed to describe the protest tactic, not so much by virtue of his own actions, but as a result of actions visited upon him. Captain Boycott was a British estate agent in Ireland during the late 1800s, when Irish nationalists were protesting British occupation, and calling for land reforms. Because Boycott did not yield to demands to reduce rents and cease evictions, members of the Irish Land League saw to it that his family was denied domestic and farm labor, mail service, and service in stores.

In the case of the original boycott, the term suggested an isolation of an individual, and a denial of basic services. An early study of the practice of boycotts in conjunction with labor disputes offered the following, slightly more general definition. “...an organized effort to withdraw and induce others to withdraw from social or business

relations with another (Laidler 1913, 27).” The central feature of any boycott, then, is its organized non-participation.

Of course, non-participation and isolation were in use before the term was coined and have been used often as tools of protest in situations of power inequity: consumers and labor against big business, farmers against landlords, nations against oppressive or imposed political regimes. In 1883, Indologist Monier Monier-Williams reported that examples of boycott could be found in India dating back many centuries (Kelly 2005, 16). In biblical times, the Pharisees shunned the publicans for abusing their tax-collecting powers (Mark 2:16). After the Stamp Act of 1765, American colonists protested a British tax increase by refusing to purchase British goods. More recently, Scott (1985) found South Asian peasant farmers in isolated villages engaging in boycotts, among other forms of resistance, against local elites.

Contemporary examples of boycotts abound. In modern India, boycotts came to be very closely associated with the anti-colonial struggles spearheaded by Mohandas Gandhi in the early 20th century. At various points in time Gandhi encouraged Indians to boycott British educational and legal institutions as well as British products. Gandhi sparked a movement for a return to traditional Indian cloth-making, as part of a boycott of British textiles. In one of his most celebrated instances of protest, Gandhi walked some 240 miles to the coastal village of Dandi to make salt as part of a symbolic gesture to encourage a boycott of British salt.

In 1955—in what could be construed as a similar type of anti-colonial protest—Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. organized a boycott of the bus system in Montgomery, Alabama, after Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus and was arrested.

African-Americans all walked to work or carpooled rather than ride the bus, to protest the bus company's policy of segregated public transportation.

The 1960s in the United States marked an era when both labor and consumers challenged food production and distribution companies via consumer economic boycotts. In the fall of 1966, homemakers in Denver, Colorado, boycotted supermarkets to protest high prices, and shopped instead at small local markets. In 1967 Cesar Chavez, leader of the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee of California, organized a consumer boycott of table grapes to improve the rights of migrant farm workers. The boycott targeted 10 major US cities where approximately one half of all table grapes were sold. By 1969 a 1/3 drop in table grape sales was reported in major markets (Friedman 1999, 47).

Boycotts have been employed around the globe for political reasons in recent decades. The United States led a number of countries, including Canada, Japan, China and West Germany, and media such as NBC in a boycott of the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow to protest the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December, 1979. Indo-Fijians, who comprise approximately 47% of the Fiji's population, have routinely employed economic and political boycotts to push for peace in Fiji (Kelly 2005). In 2000, Indo-Fijian political parties boycotted a constitutional commission following a coup by indigenous Fijians in 2000, which also involved the taking hostage of parliamentarians for 55 days. This boycott was launched with the hope that the absence of Indo-Fijians from the process would cripple the constitutional commission and discredit the political process that followed from the coup.

The preceding examples have shown that although the particular circumstances surrounding a boycott can vary widely, all boycotts retain certain core characteristics noted earlier. First, boycotts are generally undertaken by groups who are weak relative to the object of their protest, and they appear to be undertaken with moral objectives in mind. Indo-Fijians launch boycotts to protest for peace in Fiji, as Ghandi before them encouraged boycotts to protest colonial rule by the British. US labor and consumers groups have employed boycotts to protest injustices perpetrated by powerful capitalists, and African-Americans in the US boycotted in the name of civil rights and equality. Speaking to a group of northern reporters during the bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama, Martin Luther King explained that the boycott was "...part of something that is happening all over the world. The oppressed peoples of the world are against colonialism, imperialism, and other systems of oppression (*Montgomery Advertiser*, 1956b)."

Although there is some perception of boycotters as engaged in a high-minded fight for justice, they can also be cast as avaricious combatants, who ultimately do more harm than good because of their selfish aims. How the motivations of a given boycott are understood can vary based on the perceptions of those observing the boycott. In the late 18th and early 19th century in the US, consumer and labor boycotts were often seen as unjustified and detrimental to the market, and were declared illegal under many circumstances (Laidler 1913). During civil rights boycotts, the same questions of legality came into play (*Montgomery Advertiser*, 1956c). While the Montgomery bus boycott is portrayed in America today as an important step in the fight for civil rights, it was perceived at that time to be an attempt on the part of "negros" at "the destruction of our

social fabric (*Montgomery Advertiser*, 1956a).” Here then, blacks were not seen as freedom fighters but as narrowly focused on self-serving goals at the expense of society as a whole.

Another general characteristic of boycotts is that they involve the broadest possible (non)participation. Kelly describes the Indo-Fijian boycotts as being motivated by a “collective quest” (15). He further notes that they require “much broader popularity to be effective”, when compared to other types of protest and political action (17). The boycott of Denver supermarkets in 1966 was effective because enough housewives refrained from shopping at the largest supermarkets, to cause the superstores to lose money. Similarly, the US-led boycott of the 1980 Olympics is noteworthy precisely because it received the support of a number of countries and prominent media. It would not have had the same impact had only one country, or a handful of athletes decided not to participate.

The final common characteristic of boycotts is that they are typically peaceful. The peaceful nature of most boycotts may simply be evidence of the power inequities that exist between boycotter and boycotted, however, the perception of boycotts as non-violent has been furthered by the fact that the most famous examples of boycott from the 20th century were launched by Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., two activists known for promoting a philosophy of nonviolence. Kelly notes that although boycotts can take on a coercive quality, they tend more often to be an expression of a “collective, cooperative will (17).” He further describes the style of protest as “passive-aggression” that is “deliberately nonviolent (20).” Again, referring to the example of the US-led Olympic boycott, this action was an extremely peaceful demonstration when compared to

the military response that followed US disapproval of another invasion, that of Iraq into Kuwait a decade later.

Although boycotts are typically understood to be peaceful, they can be accompanied by violence. An 17th and 18th century practice of boycotting landlords in Picardy, France turned violent on occasion. Local farmers had agreed amongst themselves to boycott any landlord who evicted one of them. Other farmers would refuse to rent the vacant land (or those that did rent the land would also become a target of boycott) and the landlord would be denied local labor. Sometimes, however, violence would ensue. The landlord could find his crops and tools damaged, livestock disfigured, his house burned, and, on occasion, himself under physical attack (Laidler 1913, 28).

In the US, around the turn of the 20th century, boycotts occasionally turned violent as well. Anti-Chinese boycotts (in which businesses that employed Chinese labor were boycotted) were often accompanied by violence in the western United States. In Washington State, in particular, anti-Chinese boycotts often produced angry mobs and resulted in several Chinese deaths (Laidler 1913, 75). On the other side of the country, in 1902, mobs of angry women stormed the Lower East Side of New York, to publicize a boycott of meat. One depiction of this protest against high meat prices described the protesters, “breaking into butcher shops, flinging meat into the street, and declaring a boycott (Friedman 1999, 71).” Riots and confrontations with police continued for several days and boycotted butchers were faced not only with a loss of customers, but also with broken shop windows and burned-up meat.

Later in the 20th century, African-Americans in the US south launched boycotts against white-owned businesses in their communities, to protest their political

disenfranchisement at the local level. One such boycott, for example, was sparked in Mariana, Arkansas, in 1971, when a young black woman was arrested for “talking back” to a white employee at a local restaurant (Friedman 1999, 119). In response, local African- American leaders organized the picketing of several large white-owned stores to discourage other blacks from shopping there. Some of these boycotts precipitated confrontations between blacks and whites. These led to intervention by state troopers in the Mariana boycott and riots between the Ku Klux Klan and members of civil rights organizations in a similar boycott of white-owned retailers in Tupelo, Mississippi, in 1978 (Friedman 1999, 120).

The preceding discussion of boycotts shows how many famous instances of boycott share certain core characteristics, and has also highlighted the variation that can exist among different boycotts. While they are generally peaceful and undertaken for principled purposes, they can also turn violent on occasion. Finally, while many boycotts are launched with broad moral appeals, they can also be characterized as having more narrow self-serving goals at their core. The typology of election boycotts that follows will reveal that election boycotts share the same pattern of characteristics.

A Typology of Election Boycotts

There are two main ways to conceptualize the variation in election boycotts. The first distinction between major and minor boycotts which has been highlighted thus far, pertains to variations in the size and motivations of the boycotting opposition. The second variation among types of boycott relates to the manner by which boycotters envision achieving their goals. Any boycott, then, can be described in terms of these two

primary distinctions and placed accordingly on a two-dimensional plane. Figure 2.1 (pg. 31) illustrates this general typology of election boycotts.

The first dimension of the typology distinguishes between major and minor election boycotts. An election boycott will be considered major if it involves a majority of the opposition. One main opposition party boycotting an election may be sufficient to constitute a major boycott, if that party controls a majority of opposition support. In other instances, one main opposition party might join with several smaller parties, or several of the largest opposition parties may join together to boycott. Unified opposition election boycotts are the clearest examples of major boycotts, but these boycotts are also quite rare. Usually, even if all the main opposition parties agree to boycott an election, some smaller parties will continue to participate, often with private support from the incumbent regime.

The main opposition parties involved in a major boycott tend to be fairly heterogeneous “catch-all” parties. If they have any particular religious, ethnic, territorial, or ideological orientations, these orientations do not usually represent a minority population, and the party’s affiliation with such groups is quite loose. In Bangladesh, for example, the two main political parties that compete today each formed as parties representing general opposition to the current regime. The Awami League (which boycotted elections in 1996 as an opposition party) formed, when Bangladesh was still a part of Pakistan, to oppose Pakistani rule. The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), the object of the 1996 election boycott and participant in a 1988 election boycott, formed in the late 1970s out of opposition to a previous Awami League government that had turned

authoritarian.³ Thus, the major boycotts launched in Bangladesh have been undertaken by general opposition parties that do not represent specific religious, ethnic or ideological minorities.

Minor election boycotts, on the other hand, are launched by one or more small parties, which do not amount to a majority of the opposition. Compared to major boycotts, the parties involved in minor boycotts are more homogeneous, with stronger religious, ethnic, territorial, or ideological orientations, usually representing minority populations within the country.

In 1994 South Africa experienced its first election with universal suffrage, and it also experienced a minor election boycott. The Inkatha party and Azanian People's Organization (AZAPO) both boycotted the polls. Both parties represented white South Africans who constitute less than 10% of the population. The National Bolshevik Party (NBP) in Russia provided another example of a minor boycott. In 2000, the NBP boycotted the Russian elections. This party represents an ideological minority of individuals who wish to see the return of a Russian empire. It is considered an anti-system party.⁴

Thus, major boycotts are launched by larger, more general, opposition parties, while minor boycotts are the work of smaller parties that might be considered "single

³ The BNP did not form until after the Awami League government had been overthrown, and the leader of the coup had begun the process of restoring competitive elections, in 1978.

⁴ In 2005 the party was outlawed by the Russian Government.

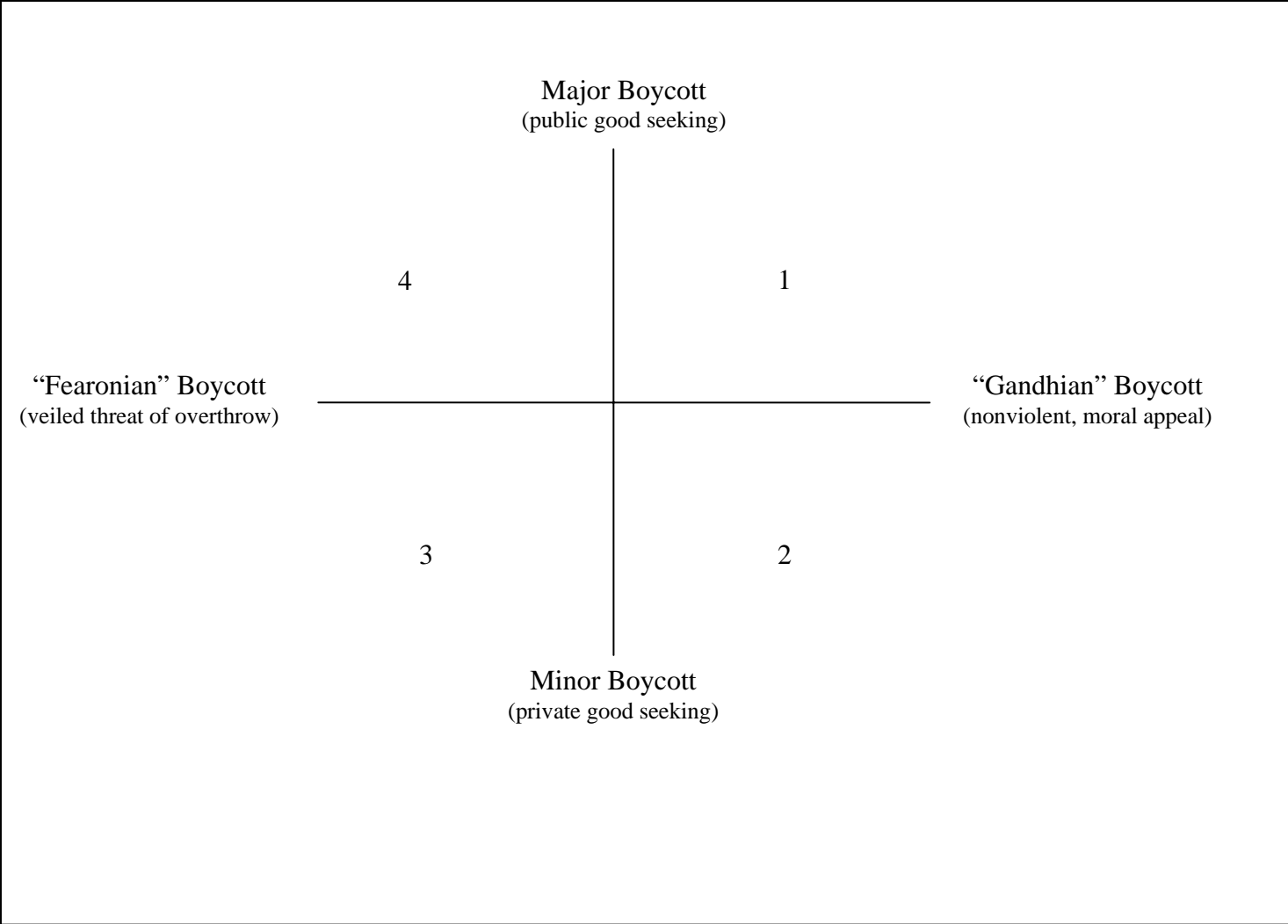


Figure 2.1
A Typology of Election Boycotts

issue” parties. Major boycotters, because they represent a larger segment of the opposition, can pursue goals that more closely approximate public goods, because they are large enough to internalize the benefit. Minor boycotters, by contrast, are going to pursue more particularistic goals due to their limited size and more homogeneous composition.

The next dimension on which boycotts can vary has, at one end, boycotts that attempt to delegitimize the government in power, in the hopes that this loss of legitimacy will attract support for their cause. Such boycotts will also be nonviolent in nature, as the boycotters are hoping to appear sympathetic. Gandhi exemplified this model of boycott in his anti-colonial struggles against the British; accordingly I refer to such types of boycott as “Gandhian”.

Gandhian boycotters lack the means and/or desire to employ violence in conjunction with a boycott. The goal of a Gandhian boycott is to make a moral appeal in the hopes that the boycott will receive the support of audiences who are in a position to exert pressure on the current government. Since Gandhian boycotters are relying on a moral appeal and hoping to cast the current government as illegitimate, they will not choose to weaken their claim to the moral high ground by engaging in violence.

Gandhian boycotters have two potential audiences who might support their peaceful boycott: the domestic electorate and the international democracy promotion community. If Gandhian boycotters can make an impression on the domestic electorate, the incumbent could be faced with either widespread popular protest or with the prospect of losing the next election if some concessions are not made to the opposition. Pressure from the international democracy promotion community could result in various

diplomatic problems for an incumbent regime, with the worst-case scenario being a negative effect on foreign aid receipts.

Another type of boycott that I will label “Fearonian” stands in contrast to Gandhian boycotts. Such boycotts are labeled “Fearonian” as they personify actors in opposition to the government in Fearon’s model of elections (pg. 40). Whereas Gandhian boycotters are interested in casting doubt on the legitimacy of the regime and winning others over to support their cause, Fearonian boycotters are trying to threaten the regime with the possibility of future rebellion.

Although boycotts are generally peaceful, we know that they can turn violent. With respect to election boycotts, the Gandhian and Fearonian categories indicate differences in available resources, and also in the extent to which the boycott will be peaceful. Fearonian boycotters are viewed as having the resources to threaten future rebellion, hence are more likely to commit violence than Gandhian boycotters who have neither the resources nor the will for violence.

Although the actions of their organizations are beyond the scope of this project, it bears mentioning here that election boycotts launched by paramilitary groups could also be considered Fearonian. In Latin America, both Sendero Luminoso in Peru and the FARC in Colombia have announced election boycotts and enforced those boycotts with violence. These examples represent clear instances of an organization using an election boycott as part of a threat to overthrow the government, and some election boycotts by political parties might have a similar character.

Given these two primary distinctions, between major and minor boycotts, and between Gandhian and Fearonian boycotts, we can consider what kinds of election

boycotts various combinations of these features would produce. A major, Gandhian boycott (first quadrant), would correspond most closely to our general understanding of election boycotts. Here a majority of the opposition would engage in a peaceful refusal to participate in the election, in order to alert others to particular problems with the current regime. The Egyptian election described at the beginning of this chapter experienced a major, Gandhian boycott, as did Jamaica's election in 1983, which is considered in more detail in chapter six.

A minor, Gandhian boycott (second quadrant) would differ from the previous example in its size. A single party or group of small parties would undertake a peaceful boycott. The boycott of the Pakistani election in 1993 by MQM is an example of a minor, Gandhian boycott. Beyond the difference in size, we might also see a difference in the stated aims of this boycott as opposed to a major, Gandhian boycott. Although there would probably be accompanying rhetoric about universal moral claims such as justice or equality, it is more likely that the demands of the group would be specific to the group itself.

If that minor boycott were not peaceful, we would place it in the third quadrant and describe it as a minor, Fearonian boycott. Here the boycotting party would still be protesting to achieve certain goals for its particular group, but the protest would be accompanied by some measure of violence. For example, the militant leftist JVP of Sri Lanka accompanied their boycott of the 1988 presidential elections with a campaign of violence. The JVP was a small party that had not held seats in the legislature since 1965, when it had one seat. During its 1988 boycott, the small leftist party "mounted a

systematic assault on civil servants, the security forces and supporters of [other political parties] (Brown 1988).”

The final possible combination is a major boycott that involves violence, a major, Fearonian boycott. In the Cote d’Ivoire in 1995, for example, a major boycott occurred in which violent clashes were reported between government forces and opposition supporters, after the leader of the opposition had given “orders for maximum disruption (*The Guardian* 1995).” The Indonesian election boycott of 1997 provides another example of a major, Fearonian boycott, where opposition supporters rioted—storming shopping malls, government campaign offices, and homes of the wealthy—and engaged in looting, arson, and murder (Aditjondro 1997).

The remainder of the dissertation will draw on the typology constructed in this chapter in the following ways. Chapter three will focus on the distinction between major and minor boycotts and will use the distinction to explain the causes of major boycotts. The remainder of the dissertation will focus almost exclusively on major boycotts. In chapter four the distinction between Gandhian and Fearonian boycotts will be highlighted to investigate the immediate effects of major boycotts in the elections in which they occur. Chapter five will revisit the causes of major boycotts and introduce questions of democratization to investigate the long-term consequences of major boycotts for democracy in developing countries.

THE CAUSES OF ELECTION BOYCOTTS

The previous chapter reviewed current explanations for election boycotts and established a general framework for thinking about different types of boycott. This chapter makes three major contributions to the project as a whole. First, the explanation for why major and minor boycotts occur leads to another important contribution of this dissertation, because it will allow us to reconcile explanations of election boycotts that are currently competing in the literature. Second, a better understanding of the causes of different types of election boycotts will begin to demonstrate the importance of international factors, by showing how they affect the causes of election boycotts. This chapter's third contribution is an original data set of election boycotts in developing countries worldwide from 1990-2002.

Although the existing explanations reviewed in chapter two provide some general insight into why election boycotts occur, they also highlight current confusion in the literature. With my explanation, we will be able to reconcile the competing claims made about why major boycotts occur. My explanation (1) provides a more systematic survey of factors that could potentially affect an election boycott, along with (2) an examination of the differential effects of these factors, depending on whether the boycott is major or minor.

The chapter proceeds as follows: First, I will explain why major election boycotts occur, drawing on Fearon's model of elections as a coordination mechanism. Next, I will discuss the causes of minor election boycotts and will highlight the ways in which their

causes differ from major boycotts. Hypotheses will then be generated from the models and tested, using original data, in the fourth and final section of this chapter.

Major Election Boycotts

Fearon (2006) constructs a model of elections to explain how they work to insure democratic accountability. He argues that elections actually enforce democracy by providing clear points of coordination for citizens, which allow them to credibly threaten rebellion if the ruler does not act in their best interests. This idea of coordination around an election, to threaten a ruler, in order to extract compliance also provides a useful framework to understand why certain large segments of the opposition might undertake election boycotts, and it can be modified to explain all major election boycotts.

According to Fearon, the difficulty of enforcing a ruler's accountability arises because most of the information citizens receive about the performance of the ruler is private, or public but unclear or "noisy", which may hinder individuals' abilities to coordinate. This coordination problem, in turn, weakens the threat of rebellion, which lessens the incentive for the ruler to act in the public interest. Elections solve the coordination problem by providing two clear public signals around which the public can potentially coordinate to overthrow the ruler, hence furnishing a credible threat of rebellion.

Fearon models elections as an interaction between a ruler and "a population of citizens (2006, 9)."¹ Figure 3.1 (pg.40) depicts the sequence of exchanges between the

¹ He acknowledges that this distinction could refer to specific subsets of the population (such as an opposition party) but the subset must achieve a minimum size (k) in order to be able to undertake a

two players. In this model the first point at which citizens might choose to overthrow the ruler comes immediately, when the ruler decides whether or not to hold an election. If the ruler does not hold an election when she is expected to, the people can choose to overthrow her, in which case she is replaced. Alternatively, they can choose to accept the lack of election and live in a dictatorship. Note that any time the people attempt to overthrow the ruler, it results in success.

If the ruler decides to hold an election, the people vote. The votes that the ruler receives provide additional public information about the performance of the ruler. It is how the ruler chooses to respond to this information, however, which provides the next opportunity for overthrow. If the ruler does not win the election, she is expected to step down. If she chooses to step down, the outcome can be considered democratic, as the unpopular leader has been replaced via election. If she chooses not to accept the results, however, the people are provided with their second opportunity to overthrow her.

Fearon's model is predicated on the idea that elections are free and fair, and he acknowledges that fraud presents a problem for successful coordination. If a ruler commits sufficient fraud that goes undetected by the citizens, she can successfully distort the results of the election so she will be declared the winner. In such a circumstance, once the results of the election are declared, and the ruler has won, there will be no question as to whether she should step down—as retaining a position when re-elected is normally considered a democratic outcome.

successful overthrow. This is because, in Fearon's model, individuals never attempt overthrow of the ruler unless it will be successful.

Thus, the second opportunity to overthrow has been removed, and the people live in a dictatorial setting that Schedler (2002) describes as an electoral autocracy. Of course, the fraud should not be terribly overt, or it may provide a new point of coordination for the people to marshal an overthrow. It does not need to be entirely secret however, as even some public acknowledgement of fraud may simply introduce additional noise and leave the people too confused about the true outcome of the election to coordinate an overthrow.

It has been suggested by Marinov (2006) that even fraudulent elections might produce some opportunities to hold the ruler accountable to the people. According to Marinov, this happens when fraud can be publicized, thus providing a new point of coordination with which to threaten rebellion. Marinov suggests two possible outcomes: First, as public revelations of fraud become easier, rulers will likely use less of it. This can restore the second opportunity for individuals to coordinate and threaten overthrow based on real election results and the ruler's subsequent behavior. The second possible outcome is that if the ruler commits fraud and opposition can sufficiently publicize fraud after the election, it may be able to restore the second opportunity to overthrow.

Thus Marinov presents one way in which the opposition might try to overcome the coordination deficiencies of fraudulent elections. By participating in the elections and providing a clear signal that they were, essentially, robbed at the polls, opposition parties may be able to coordinate an attempted overthrow, or at least enough of a threat to extract compliance from the ruler. A recent example of this is the Orange Revolution following the 2004 elections in Ukraine. After the opposition and Ukrainian media

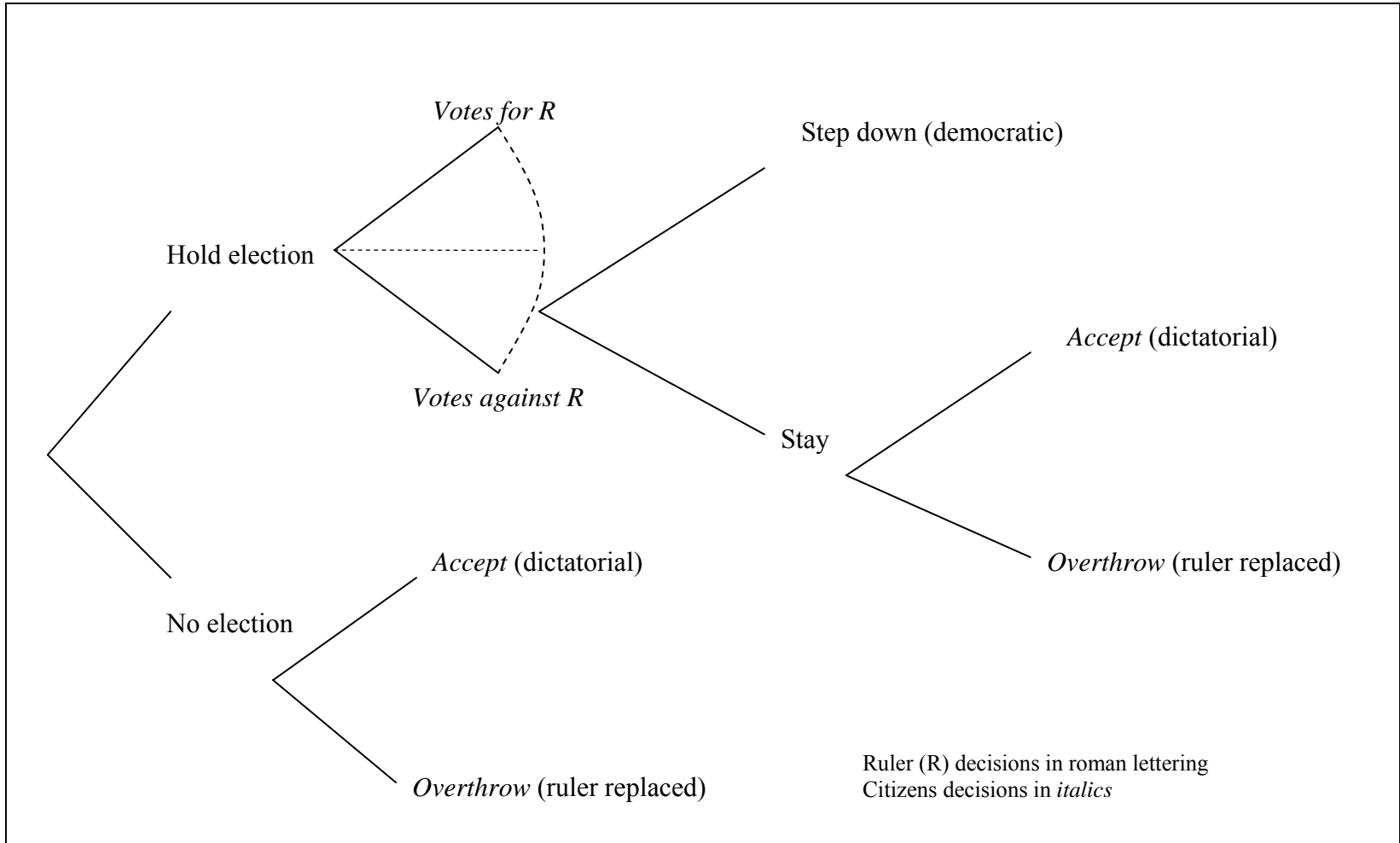


Figure 3.1
Fearon's Model of Elections as a Coordination Mechanism

declared that the results from the second round of the presidential election had been rigged to favor the candidate for the incumbent party, citizens engaged in street protests for over a week. This agitation finally forced the government to hold fresh elections, which the opposition won.²

Election boycotts present a different way in which the opposition can attempt to overcome the coordination deficiencies introduced by electoral fraud. These boycotts endeavor to reestablish a point of coordination, but it is attempted before the election takes place, not after. Before we examine how this might occur, I will first establish why only parties representing a majority of the opposition (either on their own or in conjunction with other parties) would want to attempt such an undertaking.

Major boycotts and Election Fraud

It is clear that the electorate benefits from free and fair elections, because it receives accurate information about the popularity of its ruler, and is able to credibly threaten rebellion, which should increase the ruler's accountability. Thus, the electorate stands to benefit if the opposition chooses to publicize fraud on the part of the ruler, and restores the credibility of a threat of rebellion, in order to reduce fraud. However, any opposition willing to do so must also perceive some benefit from undertaking this action.

Major boycotts comprise a portion of the opposition that is large enough to internalize the benefits of increased fairness in a way that small parties can not. Any increase in electoral fairness should benefit a majority of the opposition, but will not

² Though not a part of Marinov's explanation, it should be mentioned that the US and other European countries also exerted pressure for new elections.

necessarily benefit a small party. In fact, some large oppositions may feel that fraud is the only factor keeping them from winning an election. For this reason, we would expect major boycotts to come about in response to fraud, but not minor boycotts.

Boycotts in Azerbaijan (in 1998 and 2000) provide examples of major boycotts in response to high levels of electoral unfairness. Besides being rated as generally unfair by Freedom House in these years, there were particular issues of fairness at stake in each of these elections. In Azerbaijan, both in 1998 and 2000, the same piece of electoral legislation was thought to confer a serious advantage to the incumbent. Moreover, in 2000, the government also attempted to obtain control of the electoral oversight body (a body whose independence is considered very important for electoral fairness in developing countries).³

Oppositions large enough to engage in a major boycott can be formed in one of two ways. If majority of the opposition is found in a single party, this party may constitute what Olson (1965) refers to as privileged group. If the opposition is concentrated in a few large parties, these parties together may form a Schelling (1978) k-group. Both groups will have the incentive to provide the public good.

According to Olson, a privileged group is one that has enough incentive to provide the public good that it is willing to bear the full burden of provision (1965, 50). For example, If the largest opposition party in a country controls a majority of opposition support, it may act as a privileged group and boycott on its own. Such a party stands to

³ For more on the importance of independent election administration in developing countries see Hartlyn 1994, Lehoucq 1996, Pastor 1999 , and Schedler 2004.

benefit the most from an increase in electoral fairness and will be able to effect a major boycott on its own, by virtue of its size.

Shelling's k -group is similar to a privileged group, but is more directly applicable to a major boycott in which multiple parties participate. A k -group is a coalition in which k represents the minimum size required for group members to benefit from a boycott, even if no one else participates (1978, 221). A single large opposition party, or coalition of opposition parties, could reap the benefits of increased fairness, even if no other opposition parties participated in the boycott.

Thus, opposition parties representing a majority of the opposition may boycott an election in an attempt to restore the point of coordination that is lost by fraud. It is possible that such an undertaking is done to restore a threat of rebellion. This possibility follows logically from Fearon's model, and describes what I have previously labeled a Fearonian boycott. With a Fearonian boycott, the opposition hopes to effect change by convincing the ruler that it could organize an overthrow in the future.

Besides threatening the ruler into behaving, the typology presented in chapter two highlights a different way that opposition might use a major boycott: to call the legitimacy of the regime in to question. Major boycotters engaged in a Gandhian type of boycott may not wish to threaten the regime with potential overthrow, but rather may wish to delegitimize the regime in order to garner future support for the opposition and the goals of the boycott. There are two different audiences that Gandhian boycotters might be targeting when they attempt to publicly question the legitimacy of the regime: the domestic citizenry or the international democracy promoting community.

Because they lack means (or willingness) to use violence, major boycotters involved in a Gandhian boycott will need some audience to recognize the ruler's loss of legitimacy, if the boycott is to be effective. One possibility is that major boycotters have a more realistic chance of support from domestic electorate than minor boycotters. In order to gain the support of the electorate, most major boycotters engage in a campaign for their boycott that is remarkably similar to an election campaign.⁴ The support of domestic citizens for the boycott may lead a ruler to behave better in the future for fear that no amount of fraud will allow her to overcome the loss of support among the electorate. Another potential source of support for Gandhian boycotts comes from the international democracy promotion community.

Since the cold war, international donors have become increasingly concerned with levels of democracy in aid recipient countries. In many cases, donors will apply pressure, or even reduce aid, if they feel that minimal democratic standards are not being met.⁵ This means that the stakes have been raised for elections in countries that are heavily dependent on foreign aid. Incumbents are under more pressure to produce a democratic election, because donors are watching. At the same time incumbents are under more pressure to demonstrate democracy, opposition parties have a wider audience before whom to cast doubt on the democratic legitimacy of the regime.

The chance to delegitimize the regime in the eyes of international democracy promoters and to garner potential support in the form of diplomatic intervention, sanction, or punishment of the government in terms of aid, will be attractive to Gandhian

⁴ See chapter six for an example of a boycott campaign in the case of Jamaica, 1983.

⁵ For more on aid conditionality see Beaulieu & Hyde (2005); Boulding & Hyde (2005)

boycotters engaged in either major or minor boycotts. Since major boycotters enjoy the support of a larger segment of the electorate, relative to minor boycotters, they might reasonably hope to gain enough support among domestic citizens to further their cause. For minor boycotters, who may never enjoy enough widespread support in the electorate to bring pressure to bear on the ruler, delegitimizing the regime in the eyes of the international democracy promotion community may be very important.

My Model

Having established why large portions of the opposition might wish to threaten or delegitimize the government when it commits fraud, we can return to the matter of adapting Fearon's model of elections to fit opposition parties. My model looks at the sub-game that begins when the incumbent chooses to hold an election. Three modifications will need to be made to Fearon's model in order to reflect more closely the interaction between ruler and opposition.

First, fraud will be introduced into the model explicitly. We will assume that the ruler intends to engage in some level of fraud (f) from zero to one where zero represents no fraud and one represents fraud in a quantity and manner that is clear and unambiguous. This fraud (f) will be imperfectly observed by the opposition. It is important to include fraud in the model explicitly, since it represents such an attractive option for the ruler, and a clear concern for large oppositions. And while this means that the actual results of the election (in terms of votes for and against the ruler) no longer affect the calculus of the second actor, this adjustment seems realistic since election results will never be considered reliable or accurate as long as fraud is a concern.

The second and third adjustments follow from the fact that our second actor has changed. Fearon's second actor is a population of citizens who are capable of successful overthrow if they coordinate. In my model the actor is not the entire population, but rather one or more opposition parties who constitute a majority of the opposition. Note that a majority of the opposition may or may not correspond to a majority of the population, depending on the popularity of the ruler. To properly model the choices available to opposition parties the following adjustments are made to Fearon's model.

For the second modification to the model, the opposition will be allowed more choice than the citizens in Fearon's model are currently allowed. In figure 3.1, when the ruler decides to call an election the response of citizens is automatic; they head to the polls. The choice, then, is to cast a vote for or against the ruler. This makes sense when we think of voters in a free and fair election, but is inadequate to describe the behavior of opposition parties faced with a ruler likely to engage in fraud. When the ruler calls for an election, the opposition must decide whether it is going to participate in the election, in light of the fact that it expects the ruler to commit some amount of fraud.

The third and final modification to Fearon's model concerns the decision to overthrow and its consequences. In Fearon's model, overthrow only occurs when a sufficient number of individuals participate to result in the replacement of the ruler. Put differently, overthrow is always successful. In my model, however, the opposition political parties, may or may not be able to successfully coordinate an overthrow. It is possible that opposition exposure of fraud may not produce a strong enough mechanism to facilitate coordination, in which case an overthrow will not succeed. It is also possible that even if coordination is successful, the number of citizens involved may be

insufficient to guarantee a successful overthrow.⁶ Accordingly, overthrow with guaranteed success will be replaced by an attempted overthrow with some probability of success, as with a war lottery.

Figure 3.2 (pg.48) depicts my modified version of Fearon's original model. This model represents the sub-game that begins with the ruler deciding to hold an election.⁷ Once the ruler has decided to hold an election, the opposition must decide whether it will participate in the election, or boycott. If the opposition chooses to boycott, it receives some payoff (x_0).⁸

If the opposition decides to participate in the election, in next step the ruler determines just how much fraud she will employ during the election.⁹ I assume that the ruler will engage in enough fraud to be declared the winner. At that point, as with the original model, the ruler must decide whether to step down or stay. Since the ruler has engaged in fraud to assure victory, there is little chance that she will choose to step down. Once the ruler has decided to stay, the opposition will then have to decide whether to accept the fraudulent outcome of the election, or whether to attempt an overthrow of the government. Each choice will result in the specified payoffs: (y_0 for accepting the results, z_0 for an attempted overthrow).

⁶ The election boycotts of the 1970s in the Dominican Republic represent these circumstances. Opposition parties knew that Balaguer would do anything necessary to retain power, and they feared that the result of an attempted overthrow would be a subsequent massacre by government military forces. Faced with this possible outcome, they chose to boycott.

⁷ The option not to hold elections remains, and the choices of the opposition are identical to those of the general citizens in Figure 3.1.

⁸ For a more detailed description of the payoffs involved for the opposition, see Appendix 3B.

⁹ A more complicated and realistic variant of this model would allow the ruler to engage in fraud well before, during, and after the election.

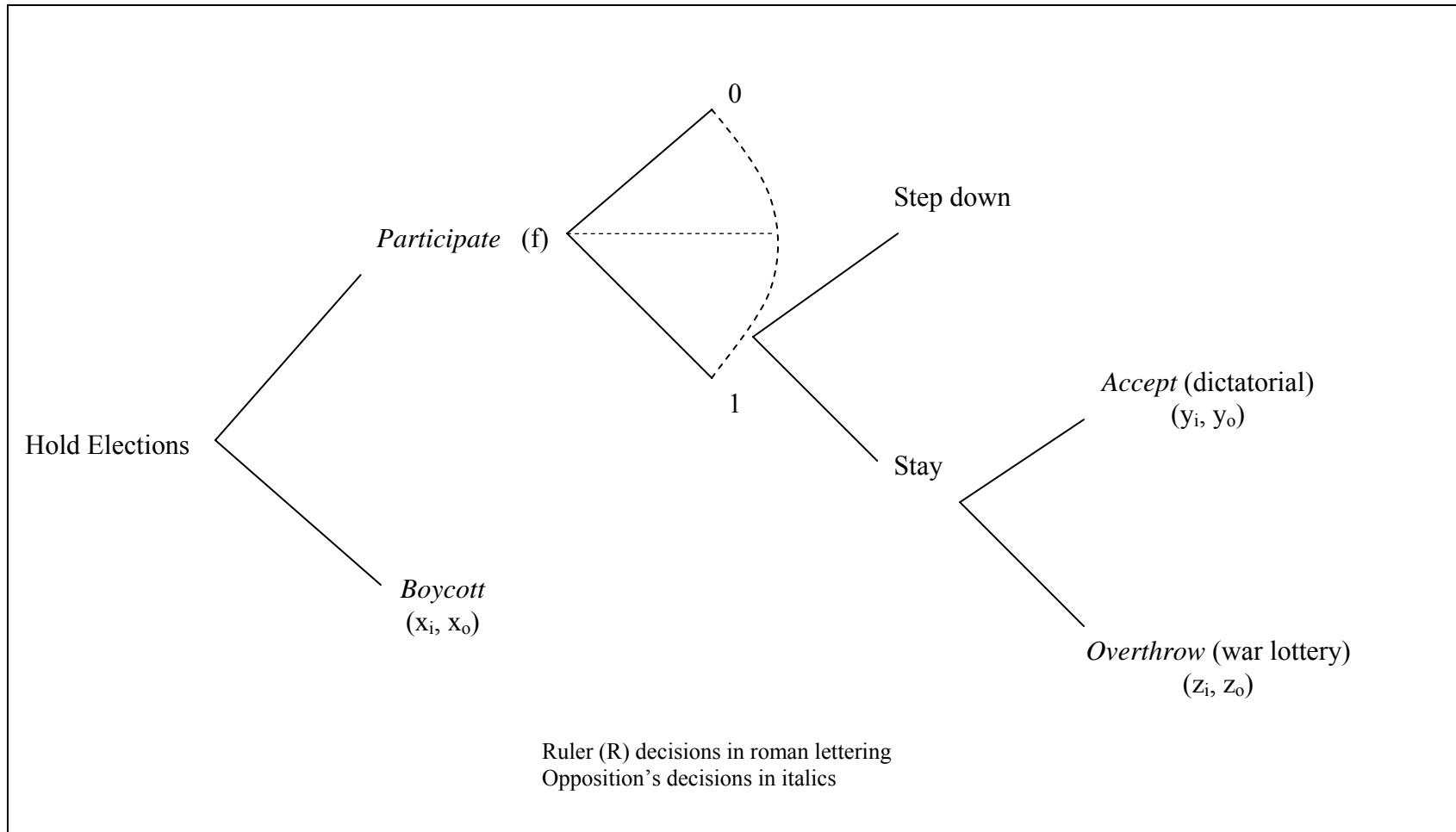


Figure 3.2
Boycott Model: How opposition parties might attempt to re-establish coordination in the face of a fraudulent election.

In this model, when the ruler calls an election, opposition parties must choose among three possible payoffs. An opposition party will choose to boycott when x_0 is more attractive than either participating and accepting the results (y_0), or participating and attempting an overthrow (z_0). The prospect of accepting the results of a fraudulent election and being condemned to “junior partner” status may be particularly unattractive to the opposition; or they may anticipate problems coordinating to overthrow, or foresee low probability of success even if coordination is possible.

Even though the expected payoff from a boycott might be more attractive in some circumstances, situations may also arise where either of the participation options is more attractive than a boycott. There may be some benefits to participating and accepting the results of the election, particularly if the ruler is willing to reward such behavior. Also, as the chance of a successful overthrow increases, the war lottery associated with participating in the election and then attempting overthrow will eventually be superior to a boycott.

I have isolated two factors that I believe should affect the expected payoffs associated with the three outcomes described above: the current level of fraud or electoral unfairness in the political system, and the current strength of the opposition, in terms of support in the electorate.

Electoral Unfairness

More fraud on the part of the ruler should increase the value of a boycott, up to a point. The relationship between major boycotts and unfairness is likely to be curvilinear, however, rather than linear. At extremely high levels of electoral unfairness, election

boycotts are likely to be suppressed with threats, intimidation, and even violence.¹⁰ Such actions on the part of the ruler will reduce the expected payoff of a boycott. Also, at high levels of unfairness, even marginal increases in fairness may still leave too much bias in favor of the ruler to provide any real benefit for the opposition.

At extremely low levels of electoral unfairness, boycotts are less costly, but they are also unnecessary because the opposition already has a fair chance to win the election. If the system is already fair, there is little to be gained by boycotting for increased fairness. Thus, more boycotts should occur at intermediate levels of fairness, where the costs of boycott are not prohibitive, and increases in fairness have real value for the opposition.

Unfairness may also affect adversely the expected utility of participating and accepting the results of the election and so encourage major boycotts. Increased electoral unfairness correlates highly with overall political unfairness, and likely reduces the value of legislative seats, as the ruler will choose to exercise power however she wants. Such general unfairness may also increase the costs associated with supporting a dictatorial regime.

Opposition Strength

Opposition strength refers to the popular support the opposition receives relative to the support the government receives. Types of boycotts are defined based on the size of the opposition involved, relative to the opposition as a whole, but do not depend on the

¹⁰ It should be noted that the effect of extreme unfairness will be somewhat muted in this study, as only multi-party elections are studied here. Clearly, states that hold one-party elections are extremely unfair and, were they included, we would expect there to be few boycotts resulting from these elections.

strength of the opposition relative to the incumbent's strength. If a boycott involves a majority of the opposition, it is a major boycott, whether the opposition enjoys the support of 5% or 55% of the electorate.

Various factors indicate opposition strength in the electorate, including popularity of leadership, and performance in opinion polls. For the purposes of this investigation, however, a proxy based on legislative seat share is the best measure that is currently available. This variable is NOT intended to approximate an opposition's military strength.

The stronger the opposition, the better the chance that a boycott will succeed because enforcing compliance with the boycott will be easier. Increased opposition strength also increases the value of achieving increased fairness because it increases the probability that fairness will translate into attaining power in the future. Although increased opposition strength may also mean a greater immediate loss in terms of seats, it should be remembered that when unfairness is high those are still seats in a dictatorial regime which may lessen their overall value. With respect to the costs of a boycott, however, larger oppositions are in a better position to withstand any negative consequences from not participating in the election. The size of the opposition alone will make it more competitive vis-à-vis the incumbent and this should increase the private funds the opposition is able to raise (Cox 1997, 192).

Considering that opposition strength increases the chances that a boycott will succeed and decreases the costs associated with a boycott, we would expect oppositions to choose to boycott more often when they are stronger. In the Hatian boycott of 1995, the opposition held 46% of seats in the legislature. In Niger, before the 1996 election

boycott, the opposition controlled 36% of the legislature. Togo's opposition controlled 43% of the legislature when it boycotted in 1999. In perhaps the most striking example of legislative strength, Bangladesh experienced a major boycott in 1996, when the opposition controlled 53% of the legislature.

A boycott would not be expected in cases where opposition weakness is extreme. In the early 1990s, Albania, Benin, and Mongolia all held elections that were not boycotted where, prior to the election, the opposition did not hold any seats in the legislature. Uruguay's opposition controlled only five percent of the legislature in 1999, and in the same year the opposition in South Africa controlled a mere six percent of all legislative seats. Neither country experienced a boycott in that year's elections.

The Overthrow Payoff

Having thus far discussed how current levels of electoral fraud and opposition strength would affect decisions to boycott or to participate and accept the results of an election, we can now turn our attention to the final choice facing opposition parties in this model: to participate in the election and then attempt an overthrow. With respect to the current level of unfairness, just as we expect higher levels of unfairness to bring higher costs for boycott, we might expect increased unfairness to increase the cost associated with an attempted overthrow, particularly if the attempt fails. Thus, increased electoral unfairness does not provide much insight as to whether a boycott will be more or less attractive than the choice to participate and attempt an overthrow.

It is possible the increased opposition strength in the electorate might also increase the probability of a successful rebellion, but increased popular participation will

also proportionally increase the potential cost (in terms of lost life) of an overthrow. It seems more realistic to assume that the critical type of strength for a successful overthrow would be militaristic in nature.

Although my current measure of opposition strength does not capture capacity for violence, some opposition parties might have military means. We could think of this as enhancing their strength, so that overthrow might be a possibility. If, however, a boycott remains attractive—which it should under circumstances of high electoral unfairness and strong electorate support for the opposition—then the opposition may choose boycott, but it will likely be a Fearonian boycott, instead of a Gandhian boycott.

Thus, with a theory for when we should expect major election boycotts to occur, and two important causal factors to examine further, I want to turn my attention to minor boycotts before discussing empirical tests of the preceding theory. In addition to explaining minor boycotts more fully, this digression will also yield additional hypotheses to test, providing useful contrast to further our understanding of major boycotts.

Minor Boycotts

Minor boycotters do not have the same goals as major boycotters, and therefore we must modify our theory about major boycotts in order to better understand when minor boycotts are likely to occur. As with major boycotts, minor opposition parties must make a decision about the benefits of boycotting versus participation, but the factors affecting the expected utility for minor boycotters are different. Minor boycotters are not concerned with fraud and electoral unfairness, as their size does not allow them to

internalize the benefits of fairness, the way it does for a majority of the opposition. For this reason, we would not expect fraud to be a particularly important factor to consider when determining the causes of minor boycotts.

For minor boycotters the decision is essentially a choice between boycotting an election or participating and accepting the election results. Minor opposition parties are probably never going to see overthrow as a viable option, if for no other reason than their relatively limited support in the electorate.¹¹ Since even widespread support in the electorate may not be sufficient to encourage an opposition party to attempt overthrow, limited popular support will likely reduce the probability of a successful overthrow. Furthermore, even if the opposition as a whole receives particularly strong support in the electorate, this does not necessarily mean that support will extend to minority groups.

Because of the size and particularistic nature of small opposition parties, there are two factors that should influence minor boycotts: the extent to which a country depends on foreign aid, and the availability of public finance for political parties.

Aid dependence

I previously mentioned that all boycotters might attempt to threaten the ruler with the possibility of foreign aid withdrawal. Even though we do not expect minor election boycotts to reflect fraud or electoral unfairness, necessarily, a minor boycott may still raise concerns for foreign aid donors who care about democracy. A country's level of dependence on foreign aid may provide a benefit for boycotters, to the extent that

¹¹ Which is not to say that Fearonian minor boycotts are not possible, they are, however, less probable. We know that many minority groups engage in violence, but thus far none of my instances of minor election boycotts is associated with opposition-implicated violence (1990-2002).

incumbents fear withdrawal of that aid. Such an increased benefit should increase the probability of boycotts in general.

The potential to threaten aid withdrawal increases the expected benefit of the election boycott, but it also boosts the importance for the ruler to have an election that leaves no doubt about its democratic nature. This incentive for the ruler could, in turn, increase the value of participating and accepting the results, if it leads the ruler to make concessions. And if rulers have an incentive to avoid boycotts as their level of aid dependence increases, then we would actually expect boycotts to decrease as foreign aid dependence increases. Further consideration of the differences between major and minor boycotts will show that we should actually expect different relationships between foreign aid and boycott depending on the type of boycott.

Even though foreign aid dependence should increase the benefit associated with any kind of boycott, we are not likely to see a systematic relationship between major boycotts and foreign aid dependence. If foreign aid dependence encouraged major boycotts, we would expect to see more major boycotts as aid dependence increased. If, however, as I have posited, the increase in foreign aid dependence also increased the incentive of the incumbent to offer concessions to avoid a boycott, and incumbents were able to successfully bargain to avoid a major boycott, then we would expect to see instances of major boycott decrease as aid dependence increased. Although it is likely that major boycotters are more motivated to boycott as aid dependence increases, it is also likely that incumbents will succeed in striking a bargain to avoid those boycotts some of the time.

Incumbents will not succeed in bargaining out of major boycotts all of the time, however, due to the size and heterogeneity of major boycotters. An incumbent is only going to concede an amount equal to the aid he stands to lose. In some instances this amount may not satisfy enough of the opposition to prevent a boycott. Also, cost aside, it may be difficult to arrive at a satisfactory bargain since the only interest that would-be boycotters share is a desire for increased electoral fairness, which could be quite costly to the incumbent. If incumbents sometimes succeed at bargaining to diffuse major boycotts when aid is at stake, but do not always succeed, then we are not likely to observe a systematic relationship between major boycotts and aid dependence.

Unlike major boycotts, minor boycotts should display a systematic relationship to foreign aid dependence. The relationship between aid dependence and minor boycotts should be curvilinear. At very low levels of aid dependence, we do not expect many minor boycotts because there is little aid that the minor boycotters can put at risk. At very high levels of aid dependence, where the most aid is at stake, we would expect incumbents to strike bargains with minor boycotters to avoid an election boycott that might cost incumbents aid.

If an incumbent is truly concerned about the effects of a boycott (as incumbents at high levels of aid dependence are likely to be) then it is relatively easy to avert a minor election boycott with a side-payment or with some targeted policy that will benefit the group directly. This will not prove too costly to the incumbent since the group threatening the boycott is small and homogeneous. Furthermore, a satisfactory bargain for the small opposition party is not likely to threaten the ruler's hold on power as the demands for fairness made by the majority of the opposition might. We would expect

then, to see an increase in minor election boycotts as aid dependence increases, but only to a point. Beyond some level of aid dependence we would expect incumbents to consistently bargain to avoid minor boycotts. Hence, instances of minor boycotts should decrease at very high levels of aid dependence.

Availability of conditional finance for public parties

The provision of public finance for political parties is relatively common in modern democracies. Similarly, many newer democracies make public funds available to parties because these parties generally lack a well-developed organizational structure, and so are limited in their ability to raise private funds (van Biezen 2000, 329). This provision of public funds in developing democracies has generated little controversy, in large part because it builds on the example set by most established democracies. The particularities of provision vary for each country, but Albania, Argentina, Benin, Burkina Faso, Bolivia, Brazil, Cote d'Ivoire, Estonia, Gabon, Guinea, Macedonia, Morocco, Namibia, Paraguay, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe, to name a few, all make public funds available to political parties. In most cases public funds are awarded to help parties with general administration and campaign activities.

There are a number of ways in which a government can allocate party finance. Money can be allotted equally and unconditionally, as in Azerbaijan, or on some conditional basis. The most common conditional bases for party finance depend on electoral participation. Some countries, such as Mozambique and Morocco, base their public finance, in part, on the number of candidates a party puts forth in the elections.

Most other conditions for funding depend on electoral performance, rather than on participation.

In Costa Rica, for example, parties must obtain at least 4 percent of the total votes cast in the election to be eligible for public finance (Tjernstrom, 2003). By contrast, in Bolivia parties receive public funds in proportion to their total vote share in the previous election (Tjernstrom 2003). In Lithuania, parties must hold a seat in the legislature in order to receive public funding, and Israel emphasizes legislative seat share in its provision of public finance to political parties.¹² Many countries employ some combination of these conditions in allocating public finance to parties.

Public party finance that is conditional on electoral performance will not have an effect on major boycotters, but would represent a substantial cost for minor boycotts. As discussed in the previous section on opposition strength, major boycotts are undertaken by large portions of the opposition who tend to have longer time horizons than minor boycotters. By virtue of its size, such a group will not have problems raising private funds (relative to smaller parties), and the longer time horizon should make it easier for the major boycotters to forgo immediate benefit. The public finance forfeited with a boycott is a relatively small cost that major boycotters can mitigate with their size.

Minor boycotters, on the other hand, do not have the advantage of size, and have shorter time horizons as a result. A smaller party, particularly one that represents a specific population, is going to have a more difficult time raising private funds and remaining competitive in the future, which makes the value of immediate public funds much greater. If would-be minor boycotters give up public funds by boycotting, their

¹² http://www.idea.int/parties/finance/db/comparison_view.cfm

party may not be able to survive. Therefore, while we do not predict a systematic relationship between conditional party finance and major boycotts, we do expect the presence of conditional party finance to discourage minor boycotts. Conversely, we would anticipate a lack of conditional party finance where we observe minor boycotts. India, Pakistan, Russia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe all lack conditional party finance and all experienced minor election boycotts between 1990 and 2002.

Although the presence of conditional party finance on its own should reduce the probability of a minor election boycott, we should also expect it to affect the calculus of minor boycotters with respect to foreign aid dependence. Essentially, the presence of easily attainable conditional party finance should make the level of a country's aid dependence all the more important. If would-be minor boycotters know they are going to lose funds in the short term, because there is conditional party finance to forfeit, they should want more assurance that their boycott efforts will yield results. Therefore minor boycotts should be particularly sensitive to aid, when conditional party finance is at stake.

Testing the Theory

The model presented above for major boycotts, and factors enumerated for both major and minor boycotts, can be used to generate a series of testable hypotheses. The variables I have constructed and my statistical methods allow me to examine the first choice the opposition must make in my model—whether to participate in the election, or boycott. At this time I do not have data on whether participating parties chose to accept the results or overthrow. However, the data I have will allow us to answer the following question: When will opposition parties choose to boycott rather than participate? In

chapter four we will be able to infer more about what the outcome of a choice to participate might have looked like for various oppositions that chose to boycott, based on the immediate effects of the boycott. For the time being, however, the question is whether parties chose to boycott or participate.

In order to test the hypotheses that will follow, I have constructed a data set which contains observations for every country holding multi-party elections since 1990, with one observation for each year an election was held.¹³ Since I am specifically interested in the choices of opposition parties, elections that did not allow opposition participation were excluded. Furthermore, because election boycotts happen almost exclusively in developing democracies, I have restricted my sample to developing democracies (those countries receiving foreign aid according to OECD data). After describing my dependent and control variables, I will enumerate the explanatory variables, and after a discussion of each variable, I will note the hypotheses for major and minor boycotts that follow from the model.

The dependent variables are dichotomous. The dependent variable for major boycott is equal to one if a major boycott occurred in a particular election, and zero otherwise. This dependent variable will be used to test all hypotheses pertaining to major boycotts. Similarly, the dependent variable used to test all minor boycott hypotheses is equal to one if a boycott occurred that was not major, and equal to zero otherwise. Both of these variables were constructed after thorough searches of *Keesing's Record of World Events*; world news sources in Lexis Nexis; and the Internet, using Google.

¹³ For more information on how individual variables were constructed, see Appendix 3a.

I use three control variables in my statistical models. One variable is a measure of economic development (per capita GDP), and another variable is a measure of length of democracy (years democratic).¹⁴ These two control variables are included to account both for unmodeled heterogeneity among cases and for the empirical regularities of election boycotts. The two features that distinguish countries where boycotts never occur from those where they do occur are a higher level of economic development and longer experience with democracy. The final control variable is a measure of whether or not international election observers were present, based on the findings of Beaulieu & Hyde (2005).

Electoral Unfairness

The first independent variable of interest is current level of electoral unfairness. This variable was constructed using Freedom House measures of political freedoms and civil liberties for each country/year in the data set.¹⁵ The two measures were multiplied to create a measure of overall electoral fairness, since political freedom and civil liberties serve to reinforce each other and both contribute to the overall freedom and fairness of elections. This creates a measure from 1-49, with 1 representing the most electoral fairness and 49 indicating extreme electoral unfairness. I also include the squared value to capture any curvilinear relationships. Based on the decision model discussed previously, the following two hypotheses can be generated:

¹⁴ The *years democratic* measure records years since the last democratic break.

¹⁵ Note that there are several problems with using the Freedom House measure: first, Freedom House is an advocacy group and not a scientific organization, second, their method for assigning scores is not entirely transparent. Despite these problems, the measure is widely used, and it is currently my best available option, but I am searching for better measures to use in the future.

H_{1a}: *There is a curvilinear relationship between electoral unfairness and major election boycotts.*

H_{1b}: *Electoral unfairness has no systematic effect on minor election boycotts.*

Opposition Strength

Opposition strength, the second variable of interest, is measured using the proportion of legislative seats held by the opposition at the time of the election. As with unfairness, opposition strength should not affect minor boycotters because their support in the electorate is small and more-or-less fixed. But opposition strength does help major boycotters and provides them with greater security for the future. They will sacrifice held seats in the immediate election, knowing their strength will help to mitigate future costs associated with re-registration. A larger percentage of opposition seats would indicate a larger seat share, hence, greater legislative strength. We can use this measure to construct the following two hypotheses:

H_{2a}: *A larger opposition seat share encourages major opposition boycotts.*

H_{2b}: *Opposition seat share has no effect on minor opposition boycotts.*

Foreign Aid Dependence

My measure of a country's dependence on foreign aid was constructed using OECD data on total aid disbursements in a given year (adjusted for inflation). This figure was then divided by the country's GDP, to provide an indication of the size of aid receipts, relative to the country's overall economic strength. The value was also squared to capture any possible curvilinear effects.

Foreign aid dependence should have a curvilinear relationship to minor boycotts, with fewer minor boycotts likely at the extreme levels, and more boycotts in the midrange of aid dependence. Minor boycotters have no incentive to boycott at very low levels of aid dependence, and at very high levels, incumbents will likely be concerned enough to strike a successful bargain and avert the boycott. By contrast, aid dependence should have no systematic effect on major boycotts. Incumbents will likely always attempt to bargain and avoid major boycotts at higher levels of aid dependence. Incumbents will not always be successful in bargaining, however, because the parties undertaking major boycotts are larger and more heterogeneous. For this reason, we would not expect to see a systematic relationship between major boycotts and aid dependence.

H_{3a}: *Dependence on foreign aid has no systematic effect on major election boycotts.*

H_{3b}: *There is a curvilinear relationship between foreign aid dependence and minor election boycotts.*

Conditional Public Finance for Parties

The fourth independent variable to be considered is conditional public finance for political parties. Data on public finance, and the extent to which it is conditional, were collected from information supplied by the International IDEA project. Additional information was collected by the author from the library of electoral laws at IFES in Washington D.C. All available countries were coded based on whether or not they offered public finance, whether or not that finance was conditional on electoral

participation, and what specific conditions were placed on its receipt. Before this information can be used to test the effects of conditional party finance (CPF) on election boycotts, however, greater specificity is needed concerning the actual cost that CPF represents.¹⁶

The ideal measure of cost would be the exact dollar amount of CPF that a party would sacrifice with a boycott. The actual amount of CPF that a boycotting party sacrifices is a function of both the dollar amount the party would obtain, and the probability that the party will be eligible for the money if it participates. Since such information is not available, however, we must consider other ways of measuring the value of conditional party finance. Because different countries attach different conditions to their public finance, we can consider the value of conditional party finance in terms of the ease or difficulty associated with achieving it.¹⁷ Finance that is easier to achieve will be more valuable than finance that is more difficult to achieve—and, hence, less likely to be obtained even if the party does participate.

Conditional party finance typically makes funding contingent on one of the four following criteria: number of candidates entered, percentage of votes won, a percentage threshold of votes, or number of seats won. The preceding criteria are ordered by ease of attainment; number of candidates is the easiest condition to fulfill to receive funds, and winning seats is the most difficult condition. The variable *easycpf* divides observations into those countries that employ the two easiest forms of conditional party finance (*easycpf*=1), and those that impose more difficult conditions or do not offer any

¹⁶ See Appendix 3C for an elaboration on the construction of the easy CPF variable.

¹⁷ In evaluating different types of CPF thus, we hold the dollar amount to be obtained constant.

conditional party finance ($easycpf=0$). Based on the preceding discussion, this variable allows us to make the following two hypotheses:

H_{4a}: *The presence of easily attainable public finance that is conditional on electoral participation will not have a systematic effect on major election boycotts.*

H_{4b}: *The presence of easily attainable public finance that is conditional on electoral participation should deter minor election boycotts.*

Finally, we can consider the interaction of conditional party finance and foreign aid dependence for minor boycotters. Since neither factor is predicted to have an effect on major boycotts, we would not expect the interaction of conditional party finance and foreign aid dependence to have an effect either. Where minor boycotts are concerned, however, we anticipate the presence of conditional party finance will intensify the effects of foreign aid dependence. Minor boycotters will be more concerned with receiving benefit from their boycott in the form of increased attention as a result of dependence on foreign aid, if they have to endure the cost of forfeiting easily attainable conditional party finance. The following two hypotheses follow:

H_{5a}: *The interaction of easily attainable conditional party finance and foreign aid dependence is unrelated to major election boycotts*

H_{5b}: *There is a curvilinear relationship between the interaction of easily attainable conditional party finance, foreign aid dependence, and minor election boycotts.*

Results

In order to determine the appropriate statistical analysis with which to test these hypotheses, we must review the choices that are being made. In one instance, main parties are deciding whether or not to boycott, which will result in either a major boycott

or no major boycott. In the other instance, small parties are deciding whether or not to boycott, which will result in either a minor boycott or no minor boycott. Because the dependent variable in each case is dichotomous, I have employed two separate logit models for statistical analysis.

The output from this model will indicate the relationship of each explanatory variable (x_i) to the probability of a major (or minor) boycott, given all of the other explanatory variables present in the model. Thus, the relationship between dependent and independent variable can be expressed as follows:

1. $P(\text{major boycott} | x_i) = 1/(1+e^{-x_i\beta})$
2. $P(\text{minor boycott} | x_i) = 1/(1+e^{-x_i\beta})$

Where:

$$x_i\beta = \text{Constant} + \beta_1 \text{electoral unfairness} + \beta_2 \text{foreign aid dependence} + \beta_3 \text{legislative strength} + \beta_4 \text{easy conditional party finance} + \beta_5 \text{interaction of aid and cpf} + \text{error term}$$

These models use robust standard errors, which have been clustered by country, to account for the fact that individual observations within a particular country are not likely to be independent of one another.

Major Boycotts

The results of the statistical model for major boycotts in table 3.1 (pg. 67) do not allow us to reject any of hypotheses H_{1a} - H_{5a} concerning major election boycotts. The sign and statistical significance of the *unfair* and *unfair*² coefficients indicate that electoral unfairness does increase the probability of a major boycott, up to a point. As the level of fraud in the system increases, the opposition is more likely to undertake a major

Table 3.1 Logit Regression Results for Major and Minor Election Boycotts

Independent Variables	Major Election Boycotts (robust standard errors)	Minor Election Boycotts (robust standard errors)
Unfair	.2669** (.0976)	.0149 (.1276)
Unfair ²	-.0039* (.0016)	.0014 (.0028)
Opposition Strength	.0275*** (.0078)	-.0079 (.0251)
Easy CPF	.0743 (1.623)	-36.549*** (10.957)
Interaction of CPF and aid	-48.02 (206.4)	51324.04** (17303.51)
Interaction ²	-532.10 (4717.17)	-1.79e+07** (62337)
Foreign Aid Dependence	115.89 (80.442)	2384.68 (1687.28)
Foreign Aid Dependence ²	-1813.77 (1310.6)	-771617.2 (533745.4)
GDP per capita	-.0004 (.0002)	-.0003 (.0003)
Years Democratic	-.0363497* (.0185)	.0397 (.0268)
Monitors Present	.1093895 (.5187)	.4737 (.7497)
Constant	-5.577 (1.982)	-2.766 (2.696)
Log pseudo-likelihood	-50.87	-24.055
Wald Chi ² (10)	77.78	74.83
Prob > Chi ²	.000	.000
Pseudo R ²	.343	.418
Number of Observations	234	234

* p ≤ .05 two-tailed z test

** p ≤ .01 two-tailed z test

*** p ≤ .001 two-tailed z test

Standard errors adjusted for clustering on country.

boycott. At extreme levels of electoral unfairness, however, major boycotts become less likely. Opposition strength, as indicated by the positive and statistically significant coefficient, also increases the probability of a major boycott. These findings show that the idea of opposition parties boycotting because they are weak and hoping to save face does not apply to at least one type of boycott. Major boycotts are more likely when the system is unfair and the opposition is strong. Neither easily attainable conditional party finance, nor aid dependence, has an effect on major boycotts.

Minor Boycotts

Based on the results of the logit regression for minor boycotts, we are also unable to reject all five hypotheses H_{1b} - H_{5b} concerning minor election boycotts. The significance of the negative coefficient for easily attained CPF (*Easy CPF*) suggests that the presence of easily attainable conditional party finance does, in fact, deter minor boycotts. Furthermore, the sign and significance of the interaction term between easy CPF and foreign aid dependence indicates that when CPF is at stake minor boycotters are more likely to boycott if their country relies heavily on foreign aid, up to a point. Electoral unfairness and opposition strength are unrelated to minor boycotts, which serves to further highlight the relationship that major boycotts have to these particular factors.

Conclusion

It is important to note that none of the causes of major boycotts have an effect on minor boycotts. Similarly, none of the causes associated with minor boycotts have an effect on major boycotts. This observation underscores the point that we cannot clearly

discern the reasons why election boycotts occur without first separating the boycotts into categories of major and minor. Thus, the findings in this chapter help us to reconcile competing explanations of election boycotts in the literature, by showing that some boycotts are protesting fraud and unfairness in the electoral system, while other boycotts are not. The relationship between foreign aid dependence and minor boycotts offers some indication of the importance of international factors where boycotts are concerned, which will be explored further in the chapters to come. Finally, the results in this chapter allow us to begin to say something about the relationship between election boycotts and democracy in the countries where they occur.

The statistical relationships presented in this chapter demonstrate several important differences between major and minor boycotts. Major election boycotts are caused by electoral unfairness and further bolstered by an opposition's legislative strength relative to the incumbent's strength. Minor election boycotts, on the other hand, are motivated by more narrow self-interest. They are initiated when there is not immediate monetary benefit to be lost. Moreover, when there is a monetary benefit to be lost, then minor boycotts are initiated if they are likely to receive increased attention from international audiences.

These distinctions between major and minor boycotts allow us to reconcile the two main competing explanations for election boycotts in the literature. We need not reject explanations based on general unfairness in favor of explanations based on narrow self-interest, or vice versa. The different causes of major and minor boycotts allow us to see that each explanation has merit for a particular type of boycott. Major boycotts are consistent with explanations based on electoral unfairness, while minor boycotts are

motivated by more particularistic goals, and fit with explanations that focus on narrow self-interest.

Although no systematic relationship was found between major election boycotts and foreign aid dependence, the relationship between aid dependence and minor election boycotts provides an initial indication of the link between international influences and election boycotts. The curvilinear relationship between minor boycotts and foreign aid dependence suggests that increased dependence on foreign aid provides a larger incentive to undertake an election boycott. The fact that minor boycotts appear to be discouraged at high levels of aid dependence suggests that incumbents too recognize election boycotts can jeopardize foreign aid flow, and work to avoid such hazard. The lack of relationship between major boycotts and aid dependence does not necessarily indicate a lack of attention to international factors on the part of major boycotters so much as it suggests that incumbents are more concerned about the negative effects of major boycotts on aid and work to avert them at all levels of aid dependence, but probably only succeed some of the time.

Finally, the findings in this chapter allow us to say something about the state of democracy in political systems where major boycotts occur. Major boycotts indicate that fraud is at work in the current electoral system. Fraud is clearly an attractive option for incumbent rulers in developing countries as it allows an incumbent to maintain an appearance of democracy by holding elections while, at the same time, stripping the citizenry of any meaningful power to enforce democratic accountability. Although the presence of election fraud may be disheartening for those interested in promoting democracy in developing countries, the major election boycott can be seen as one way

that opposition parties are attempting to restore coordination around elections, which may ultimately have positive consequences for democracy.

Appendix 3a Description of Data and Variables

The data for this chapter are composed of all national-level elections (either presidential or parliamentary) in the world for a thirteen year period (1990-2002). The observations used for analysis in this chapter are all those in developing countries. Developing countries are here defined as those countries receiving foreign aid from OECD countries. This requirement for aid receipt reduces the total number of possible observations from 530 to 438. The descriptive statistics reported below are for the 438 observations of countries receiving foreign aid.

Variable	Description	N	Mean	St. dev	Min	Max
Major Boycott	=1 if majority of opposition boycotted election	438	.098	.298	0	1
Minor Boycott	=1 if less than majority of opposition boycotted election	438	.039	.193	0	1
Unfair	Scale from 1-49, indicating level of unfairness in the current electoral system – based on scores for civil liberties and political freedoms. Unfairness increases up the scale.	390	15.68	12.61	1	49
Unfair ²	Unfair squared	390	404.59	561.9	1	2401
Opposition Strength	Possible value from 1-100 based on the proportion of legislative seats held by opposition members at the time of the election.	380	32.67	21.60	0	93
Easy CPF	Indication of availability of easily attainable conditional party finance. =1 if value of “sacrifice” is greater than or equal to 3; 0 for values of “sacrifice” less than	401	.3167	.4658	0	1

	3. See Appendix 3C for description of “sacrifice” values					
Interaction of CPF & Aid Dependence	Equals the value of foreign aid dependence when easy CPF is available; equals 0 otherwise.	290	.0021	.0075	-.0010	.0766
Interaction ²	Interaction term squared	290	.00006	.0004	0	.0058
Foreign Aid Dependence	Total annual aid receipts as a proportion of GDP.	313	.0105	.0154	-.0010	.1582
Foreign Aid Dependence ²	Foreign aid dependence squared	313	.0003	.0015	2.45e-10	.0250
GDP per Capita	Gross Domestic Product per capita	312	4627.97	3735	466.84	23386
Years Democratic	Number of years since the last democratic interruption, or since independence	425	17.84	16.21	0	59
Monitors Present	=1 if international observers attended election; 0 otherwise	355	.4845	.5005	0	1

Variable	Source & Construction
Major Boycott	<p>Author’s own collection from <i>Keesing’s Record of World Events</i>. Each country was searched twice for the period 1990-2002, first using <i>boycott</i> and <i>election</i> for terms, and then <i>election</i> alone.</p> <p>Further collection was done in Lexis Nexis, where <i>North American News Sources</i> were searched in <i>World News</i> for the time period 1990-2002 using [country] and <i>election</i>. For each country identified in <i>Keesings</i>. Once individual elections were identified, those specific election years were searched for [country] <i>election</i> and <i>boycott</i>.</p> <p>Finally, a general search using [country] <i>election</i> and <i>boycott</i> was performed for each country in Google.</p> <p>Boycotts were sorted into major and minor after this process of collection</p>
Minor Boycott	See above

Unfair	Freedom House scores for civil liberties and political freedom for each election year, multiplied.
Unfair ²	Above term, squared
Opposition Strength	100 - % legislative seats held by government, as reported in <i>Database of Political Institutions</i> , for each election year
Easy CPF	International IDEA party finance website http://www.idea.int/parties/finance/introduction.cfm Authors own collection from the IFES library in Washington, D.C. It was first determined whether or not each country offered public finance for political parties in the period 1990-2002. Next, it was determined whether this finance was conditional. Finally, the conditions were documented and a “sacrifice” score was assigned – see Appendix 3c. Based on the sacrifice score, observations were given a score for whether or not CPF was easily attainable
Interaction of CPF & Aid Dependence	See Easy CPF and Foreign Aid Dependence info.
Interaction ²	See above
Foreign Aid Dependence	OECD Foreign Aid Statistics for each observation year http://titania.sourceoecd.org/v1=17715008/cl=26/nw=1/rpsv/home.htm
Foreign Aid Dependence ²	See above
GDP per capita	Penn World Tables for each observation year
Years Democratic	Author’s own data collection based on Nohlen election volumes and CIA world factbook. Years since the previous democratic interruption were counted
Monitors Present	Susan Hyde

Appendix 3b Expansion of the Expected Utilities in Figure 3.2

The payoff for boycotting (x_o) can be expressed as follows: $\pi(e)V - c(e) - k_b$, where $\pi(e)$ is the probability of a desired change given boycott effort e , and V is the value of the change sought. The opportunity costs ($c(e)$) are identical for both participating and boycotting. Fixed costs for boycotting (k_b) include seats lost, re-registration requirements, and any public or private finance forfeited as a result of the boycott.

Two aspects of expected utility for boycotting should be noted. First, the probability of change is a compound probability. It is a function of (1) whether or not the boycott produces the desired attention,¹⁸ and (2) whether there is resultant reform from that attention.¹⁹ Second, I am simplifying the value of change by assuming that boycotters seek only one reform. If there are a number of separate reforms, then we need a specific probability and value for each desired reform. We can represent such a combination with $\pi(e)V$.²⁰

If the opposition chooses to accept the results of a fraudulent election the expected utility of this choice can be expressed as $S(e)B - c(e) - k_a$, where $S(e)$ denotes the number of seats the party expects to win given campaign effort e , and B is the intrinsic value of a seat. Opportunity costs are captured in $c(e)$. These are the costs of investing e in political activity as opposed to some other activity, such as earning money working, time with family, sleeping, etc. Finally, k_a indicates the fixed costs associated with

¹⁸ There is some debate as to whether boycotting parties want support from the domestic electorate or the international community. This will be explored further in the next chapter.

¹⁹ Hence, $\pi(e) = \text{Pr}[\text{support of boycott} \mid e] \times \text{Pr}[\text{reform} \mid \text{supported boycott}]$. I assume the probability of reform given an unsupported boycott is zero, meaning that if a party boycotts and no one seems to care, (maybe: "neither electorate nor ruler seems to care") reform is unlikely to result.

²⁰ If there are n separate reforms that a party seeks, then $\pi(e)V = \pi_1(e)V_1 + \pi_2(e)V_2 + \dots + \pi_n(e)V_n$

participating and accepting a loss. As the formula expresses, these costs do not vary with the overall effort expended on campaigning by any party in particular; rather, they are costs that must be borne by all parties who wish to participate in this dictatorial regime. Such costs would include any filing fees and signature requirements for ballot access, as well as any additional costs that are borne by parties for tacitly supporting a dictator.

If the opposition chooses to attempt an overthrow of the ruler instead, the opposition receives the following payoff: $(p)V_o - c_o + (1-p)L$, where (V_o) represents the probability of winning times the probability of a successful overthrow (p) , where $(1-p)$ represents the probability that the ruler will retain power in an attempted overthrow.²¹ Subtracted from this value, however, are costs associated with undertaking the overthrow (c_o) and any costs that will be incurred should the opposition lose the attempted overthrow (L) —which will happen with probability $(1-p)$, the same probability that the ruler retains power.

So an opposition will choose to boycott when the expected utility of boycotting is greater than the expected utility of either overthrowing or accepting fraudulent results. Or, in terms of the specified payoffs, when

$$\pi(e)V_b - c(e) - k_b > S(e)B - c(e) - k_c \geq (1-p)V_o - c_o$$

or

$$\pi(e)V - c(e) - k_b > (1-p)V_o - c_o \geq S(e)B - c(e) - k_c$$

²¹ Note that the probability of a successful overthrow $(1-p)$ may need to be further modified to the extent that a successful overthrow does not guarantee control of the state to all opposition parties involved.

Appendix 3c Evaluating the Cost of Conditional Party Finance

The cost of a boycott, in terms of CPF, will be called SACRIFICE (j,k,t) which equals the real dollar amount (as valued at time t) that party j in country k would sacrifice if it boycotted the election at time t. We can think of SACRIFICE (j,k,t) as a function of the probability that a party will qualify for CPF and the amount of money the party will receive if it does qualify, discounted at some rate (δ), where ($0 < \delta < 1$).

SACRIFICE (j,k,t) = {Pr[j qualifies for CPF if it runs] – Pr[j qualifies for CPF if it boycotts]} {(US received for qualifying)(δ)}.

The first bracketed term describes the probability that a party will qualify for CPF if it campaigns, less the probability of qualifying if it boycotts. Each choice yields a distinct probability of qualifying for CPF, and since the two choices are mutually exclusive, one choice necessarily comes at the expense of the other. Note, however, that party j's probability of qualifying for CPF if it chooses to boycott (Pr [j qualifies for CPF if it boycotts]) is always equal to zero. Thus, the first term is equivalent to the probability party j will qualify for CPF if it runs in the election (Pr[j qualifies for CPF if it runs in the election]).

In constructing hypotheses concerning CPF, then, there are two terms that must be considered: the probability that the party will receive CPF if it runs in the election, and the discounted amount of money a party will receive from CPF. At this point it is difficult to say much about the dollar amounts that parties would receive from CPF. This difficulty is caused by a lack of information about the specific amounts of money countries allocate for CPF, and also by the inherent difficulty of imputing parties' personal discount rates. But even without specific information concerning dollar

amounts, the formula for **Sacrifice** can still provide interesting information about the probability parties will receive CPF, and discount rates in general.

With respect to the first term of interest, the probability parties will receive CPF, we can focus on how various forms of CPF affect the relative sacrifices parties make. Variation in the way CPF is allocated allows us to say something about the relative probability of a party qualifying. By comparing the various forms of CPF we can construct an ordinal ranking that indicates the relative size of the probability of qualifying for a particular form of CPF.

For example, a party will receive CPF if it reaches a 5% threshold of votes, and has a 90% probability of gaining 5% of the vote in the upcoming election, then the expected utility of CPF is equal to $.9(1)$ or $.9$. If a party receives CPF based on the number of candidates it enters in the election, its expected utility of CPF is equal to 1, since the party is sure to receive CPF as long as it fields a candidate. Hence, CPF based on number of candidates yields a higher expected utility (all else being equal) than CPF based on a vote threshold. Given the preceding discussion, the ordinal ranking for conditional party finance appears as follows:

- 4 = CPF based on number of candidates
- 3 = CPF based on vote percentages
- 2 = CPF based on some percentage threshold of votes
- 1 = CPF based on seats in parliament
- 0 = No CPF

This scale (0-4) ranks the relative size of the probability that a party will qualify for CPF under a particular system of allocation. Here zero represents the lowest probability (equivalent to a cardinal zero) and four represents the highest probability of attaining CPF, which is closest to a probability of 1. Countries that do not provide CPF

(No CPF) have the lowest ranking in this scale because the probability of attaining CPF in a system where it is not offered is 0.

At the other end of the scale, CPF based on the number of candidates is the easiest form of CPF to attain. The probability that a party will receive CPF if it competes in the election is effectively 1, since the party simply has to field a candidate in order to receive funds.

Working down the scale, CPF based strictly on vote percentages is the second most easily attained form of CPF. Even very weak parties should expect to receive some votes. And while the amount of votes received may not be enough to control government, or even win a seat in the legislature, in places where CPF is based strictly on the percentage of votes received, even a very small percentage of votes will translate into public funding. CPF based on a vote threshold is somewhat more difficult to achieve. Here, parties do not receive CPF until they meet some minimum requirement of votes. The probability that a party will meet a specific number of votes is less than, or equal to, the probability that they will receive any votes.²²

Meeting a minimum requirement of votes is usually easier, however, than winning a seat; which is why CPF based on seats in parliament is less easily attained than CPF based on a vote threshold. For example, in a race for 1 seat with 2 equally strong candidates the probability that either will win is $p = .5$. Clearly, party strength, number of seats, and number of candidates are all going to affect the specific probability of winning

²² The larger the party, the more likely these two are to be equal.

a seat. Even so, vote thresholds for receiving CPF are generally quite low, and so it seems reasonable to consider a seat more difficult to obtain than a vote threshold.²³

In order to treat the ordinal scale of CPF sacrifice as continuous, we would have to believe that moving from one type of CPF to the next represents an equivalent change across the entire scale. However, the elimination of any threshold seems to reduce a major barrier to attaining CPF, and therefore, between 2 and 3 appears to be a larger change than moving from no finance (0) to seats (1), which may be equally unattainable for some parties. Therefore, it doesn't seem reasonable to assume an equal distance between each value on the scale. To avoid possible inaccuracy of the ordinal scale, I have constructed a dichotomous variable, *easycpf*, which attempts to capture the key differential effects of the various rankings.

The variable *easycpf* splits countries into those with *sacrifice* rankings of three and four (*easycpf*=1) and those with rankings three or lower (*easycpf*=0). This variable suggests that any CPF which requires no threshold to qualify will be markedly easier to attain, and thus presents a greater sacrifice, than CPF based on some threshold of votes or seats. These forms of CPF present a difficulty that makes them more closely related to *sacrifice*=0, where CPF is completely lacking. Thus the two highest ordinal rankings present the greatest sacrifice for would-be boycotters, as they are the easiest to achieve, irrespective of party size.

We can now use this dichotomous variable (*easycpf*) as our value for the first bracketed term in the sacrifice equation. Where there is easily attainable conditional party finance (*easycpf*=1), a party's probability of attaining CPF is essentially equal to 1.

²³ We might think of a seat as a higher threshold.

And where CPF is not easily attainable, the probability of attaining CPF goes to zero. Clearly this is an oversimplification, as some larger parties (and would-be major boycotters) will still be able to attain conditional party finance, even when the conditions make it more difficult. But as we will see, when we examine the second term of interest in the **Sacrifice** equation, the attainability of CPF may not make a difference for major boycotters.

The second bracketed term in the **Sacrifice** equation describes the present dollar value of CPF the party will receive if it does qualify. As with discounted investment values in economics, this value is a function of the actual dollar amount to be received, and the party's discount rate (δ). As in the first term, assigning actual dollar values would not be feasible; but since it is a discounted value, we can say something about relative discount rates with respect to major and minor boycotts. As a party's discount rate increases (indicating a stronger preference for money now as opposed to later) so does the present value of CPF. While the actual discount rate of a particular party would be very difficult to determine, the time horizons of major versus minor boycotters can allow us to make some general claims about their respective discount rates. Longer time horizons are associated with smaller discount rates; but as time horizons shrink, discount rates increase. It has already been established that major boycotters have longer time horizons than minor boycotters, which means the discount rates for major boycotters are much smaller. Smaller discount rates will reduce the overall value of the potential CPF, which means it will be less valuable to major boycotters.

We can now put our information about each bracketed term to use in the original Sacrifice equation and from that equation develop hypotheses concerning CPF.

With no easily attainable CPF:

$$\text{SACRIFICE (j,k,t) = } \{0\} \{(\$US \text{ received for qualifying})(\delta)\} = 0$$

Thus, when easily attainable CPF is not available, there is no sacrifice made with a boycott.

If easy CPF is available, then the question of discount rates must be taken into account. For a minor party with a high discount rate ($\delta \rightarrow 1$):

$$\text{SACRIFICE (j,k,t) = } \{1\} \{(\$US \text{ received for qualifying})(1)\} = \$US \text{ received for qualifying.}$$

For a major party, on the other hand, with a much lower discount rate ($\delta \rightarrow 0$):

$$\text{SACRIFICE (j,k,t) = } \{1\} \{(\$US \text{ received for qualifying})(0)\} = 0$$

Obviously these two examples represent the extreme cases, and there is some possibility for CPF to represent a slightly smaller sacrifice for minor parties, or some small sacrifice for major parties. In general, however, we are able to see that easily attainable conditional party finance will not have a systematic effect on major boycotts, but should work to deter minor boycotts.

THE IMMEDIATE EFFECTS OF MAJOR ELECTION BOYCOTTS

The previous chapter explained why election boycotts occur and highlighted the importance of distinguishing between major and minor election boycotts. With some understanding of why these boycotts occur, we can begin to examine their effect on the political systems in which they are undertaken. Given their motivation and scope, we would expect major boycotts to have the most appreciable impact on the democratic process, and so I will focus on such boycotts for the remainder of the project. The next chapter will address the implications of major boycotts for democracy, but in this chapter we will look at their immediate impact on the elections in which they occur. Whereas the previous chapter focused on the distinction between major and minor boycotts, this chapter will focus on the other important distinction made in our typology, the difference between boycotts that I have called Gandhian and those I have labeled Fearonian.

From the findings in chapter three, we know that major boycotts are more likely when the opposition is stronger. In chapter three I operationalized strength as support in the electorate, and used the opposition's current legislative seat share as an indication of such support. In the preceding chapters I have mentioned another aspect of strength which, if possessed, should alter the type of boycott the opposition launches. Major election boycotts in which the opposition is strong militarily—its ability to commit violence—should be qualitatively different than major boycotts where the opposition is weak in a military sense. I consider major boycotts “Fearonian” if they are launched by an opposition with significant armed strength, who send a signal to the incumbent regime that its grip on power could be loosened by violent means if the opposition so chooses.

By contrast, major boycotts are “Gandhian” if they are launched by a militarily weak opposition that appeals to various audiences on the basis of general norms of fairness, in the hopes of gaining support for their cause.

The military capacity of the opposition will affect how various boycotts unfold, and how voters are mobilized during them, but both Fearonian and Gandhian boycotters should want to lower turnout. Fearonians will wish to “flex their muscles” and can use reduced turnout to signal to the ruler the proportion of the population that would support an attempted overthrow. Gandhians will also find lowered turnout useful to demonstrate the illegitimacy of the regime, and to begin to garner support for their cause among the domestic electorate. Thus, we expect to see turnout decline as a result of the boycotters’ efforts to demobilize voters during a major boycott.

Although both types of boycott should be accompanied by lower turnout, Fearonian and Gandhian boycotters have different preferences regarding election-related violence. Fearonians may tolerate or encourage efforts to disrupt the election with violence, as this demonstrates their powers and underscores their implicit threat. Gandhians will discourage violence by their supporters because this interferes with their focus on moral standards.

In order to examine the immediate impact of major election boycotts in the elections where they occur, the rest of the chapter will proceed as follows. First I will discuss the relationship between major boycotts and voter turnout, and explain why, based on what we know thus far about major boycotts, we would expect boycotts to depress turnout. From this discussion I will generate a testable hypothesis. Second I will turn to the question of major boycotts and election-related violence. Here is where the

distinction between these two types of major election boycott is most evident. First I will briefly discuss election-related violence and the particular types of violence that are relevant to our investigation of the immediate effects of major election boycotts. Next I will discuss why we would expect to see increased election violence with a Fearonian boycott but not with a Gandhian boycott. Finally, a series of hypotheses will be generated concerning major election boycotts and election-related violence. All hypotheses will be tested and the findings will be discussed in the results and conclusion.

Major Election Boycotts and Voter Turnout

If we are to better understand how major election boycotts affect the elections in which they occur, voting—the constitutive activity in any election—is a natural place to begin. An extensive literature on voter mobilization has revealed different ways in which parties can affect voter turnout during election campaigns—from boosting turnout by “getting-out-the-vote” among supporters (Rosenstone & Hansen 1993), to depressing turnout by paying supporters of opponents to stay away from the polls (Cox & Kousser 1981). But what happens when parties are not actually campaigning to win an election? How should a major opposition boycott affect voter turnout? Given the aims of major boycotters, we would expect that wider participation in the election boycott would be better, and so we should expect major election boycotts to depress voter turnout.

Initial participation in an election boycott occurs at the level of the opposition party, and its candidates. When a party boycotts an election, its candidates do not run. One of the reasons that opposition strength is an important predictor of a major boycott is that it takes a strong party to enforce non-participation on all its members, particularly

those members who have a good chance of winning a seat and thus stand to gain individually from running in the election. Indeed, we could imagine that in any potential boycott, some would-be candidates would prefer to participate in the election and might take some additional persuasion from their party to comply with the boycott. In the case of the Jamaican election in 1983, the leader of the People's National Party had to threaten to resign in order to extract compliance with the boycott. There is also the story of one PNP member in a western parish who intended to run in spite of the boycott. It was only after a personal visit from party leadership that the member finally agreed to honor the boycott (Robertson 2005).

The manner in which candidates are actually withdrawn from the election varies depending on the country and the timing of the boycott, relative to election day. In some instances, when the boycott is called early enough, the date for candidate registration will pass and a party's candidates will not appear on the ballot. In other cases, a party will withdraw its candidates from the ballot after having registered. In still other instances, the party's candidates will remain on the ballot, but will be excluded from consideration in the electoral contest as a result of the party's boycott. The recent election boycott in Venezuela is an example of the latter type of candidate withdrawal. In an attempt to underscore the weakness of the opposition boycott, the government declared that although all major opposition parties declared a boycott, only 10% of opposition candidates *actually* withdrew their names from election ballots. What the government did not emphasize, however, was that as soon as the opposition parties declared a boycott of the election, the electoral commission refused to count as valid any vote for members of the boycotting parties (*Latinnews Daily* 2005). This meant that in order to secure

candidate non-participation for the boycott, the parties did not actually need to withdraw their candidates' names from the ballot, but simply needed to declare a boycott.

Having secured the non-participation of its would-be candidates, should we expect a boycotting party to attempt also to demobilize the electorate? Recall that in the case of vote buying in rural New York, parties paid voters to stay away from the polls when they believed such efforts would increase their chances of winning (Cox & Kousser 1981). Analogously, if boycotting parties believe that reduced turnout will further their goals in boycotting, we should expect them to attempt to suppress voter turnout. The value of reduced turnout depends on the type of major boycott that is being undertaken—for Fearonians lower turnout increases the credibility of the threat, for Gandhians lower turnout helps to delegitimize the ruler.

Following Fearon's model, I have argued previously that opposition parties are using a major boycott to overcome the coordination deficiency introduced into elections by electoral fraud and unfairness. For Fearonian boycotters, demonstrating restored coordination with reduced turnout restores a credible threat of rebellion, and may induce greater electoral fairness in the future. But Fearon's model can also apply to Gandhian boycotters, who are also looking to restore a point of coordination and, ultimately, to achieve greater electoral fairness. Rather than using lower turnout to threaten rebellion, however, Gandhian boycotters are hoping to demonstrate to the domestic electorate and the international community that the current regime is not legitimate.

To the electorate itself, decreased voter turnout may reduce the potential ambiguity of the signal sent by a major boycott. When a boycott occurs, some portion of the electorate may be skeptical, suspecting that opposition parties are not actually

protesting unfairness but simply trying to mask their own weakness, as the incumbent government often likes to assert. If, however, the electorate observes a boycott accompanied by low turnout, it may receive a stronger signal of unfairness on the part of the government. In the same way that Fearon asserts that voters accept election results as public information about the performance of the incumbent, so too might voters interpret a boycott with reduced turnout as support for the position of the opposition—be it a Fearonian threat of rebellion, or a Gandhian claim of moral highground.

A Gandhian appeal to norms of fairness may resonate outside the country as well, with international democracy promoters. Lower turnout lends credence to a boycotting opposition's claims about the illegitimacy of the regime and carries a message to international actors who are concerned about democracy and may be in a position to exert pressure on the regime. Reduced turnout suggests not only that the opposition's claims of fraud and unfairness on the part of the government have merit, but also that they are supported by the electorate. Support of a major boycott from the international community may mean diplomatic intervention, sanction, or the potential withdrawal of foreign aid.

Rulers appear to be aware of the impact that reduced turnout can have in conjunction with a major boycott. In the most recent election in Thailand, for example, the incumbent declared that he would take turnout (or the proportion of all possible votes received) as an indication of his mandate from the electorate (*Economist* 2006). Implicit in this declaration is an understanding that a major election boycott accompanied by low voter turnout would not seem to indicate a truly democratic regime.

Despite our expectation that major election boycotts should be accompanied by reduced voter turnout, it is possible that we will not observe such a pattern. If parties encourage voters to spoil their ballots, or leave their ballots blank, rather than encouraging them to stay home, we might not see a relationship between boycotts and turnout. Such a tactic was employed in Argentina in the 1960s and 1970s, when voting was mandatory. During the 1963 presidential elections, when Peron's party was illegal and Peron was living in Spain, he instructed his followers to cast blank ballots. When the votes were counted, more blank ballots had been cast than had been cast for the candidate who finished second (Smith 1980).¹

One recent example of a declared boycott where spoiled ballots were encouraged is the 2006 election in Thailand. In Thailand voting is currently mandatory but the penalty for non-voting is fairly minor—certain electoral rights are withdrawn (Nelson 2001, 270). Because of the country's compulsory voting law, parties included a “no vote” campaign, whereby voters were encouraged to check the “no vote” box on their ballot, as part of the boycott. Even with this “no vote” component to the campaign, however, initial reports suggest that this election also experienced a decline in turnout (*Economist* 2006).

The actions of the incumbent, not just the opposition's also can affect the reported turnout level. If lower turnout from a major election boycott sends a clearer signal of fraud and unfairness on the part of the government, it is probably in the interest of the incumbent to introduce some “noise”. In most countries turnout figures are reported by

¹ Because of the inability of Peron's party to participate legally in the elections at this time, my study would not recognize this particular blank ballot campaign as a boycott.

the government, so there is the chance that incumbents facing a boycott might decide to inflate turnout figures to reduce the impact of the boycott.

Limited anecdotal evidence suggests that opposition parties do attempt to depress turnout as part of their election boycott. During the Jamaican boycott of 1983, the boycotting PNP spent a great deal of time and effort campaigning for the boycott itself. They held town meetings and made statements to the media to explain their position to voters and to encourage them to support the boycott by abstaining from voting.² Similarly, in the 1995 presidential election in Cote d'Ivoire, boycotting opposition parties were reported as having urged their supporters not to vote in the election (*Keesing's* 1995). In a conversation with Michael Bratton on April 2, 2004, he described an example of more aggressive demobilization: the Zambian boycott of 1996. During this boycott, the UNIP and five minor opposition parties who boycotted employed gangs of young thugs to intimidate voters into staying home, and also purchased voter ID cards so that voters would not be able to vote on election day.

When we look at patterns of voter turnout over time, we can see that major election boycotts sometimes appear to reduce voter turnout, but at other times the turnout is either not affected or actually increases. Figure 4.1 (pg.91) shows the percentage of registered voters who turned out for three consecutive elections in Ghana. After declaring that the government had "stolen" a victory from the opposition in the presidential election of November, 1992, the opposition mounted a major election boycott of the next month's parliamentary elections and turnout dropped from 50.2

² See chapter six for more details on the Jamaican boycott.

percent to 23.8 percent of registered voters. In the following election, when the opposition rejoined the electoral process, turnout rebounded to 78 percent.

Figure 4.2 shows a similar decline in the first election of 1996 in Bangladesh. The opposition staged a major boycott of parliamentary elections in February and turnout fell over 34 percent from the previous parliamentary election in 1991. As in Ghana, turnout exceeded pre-boycott levels in the following election.

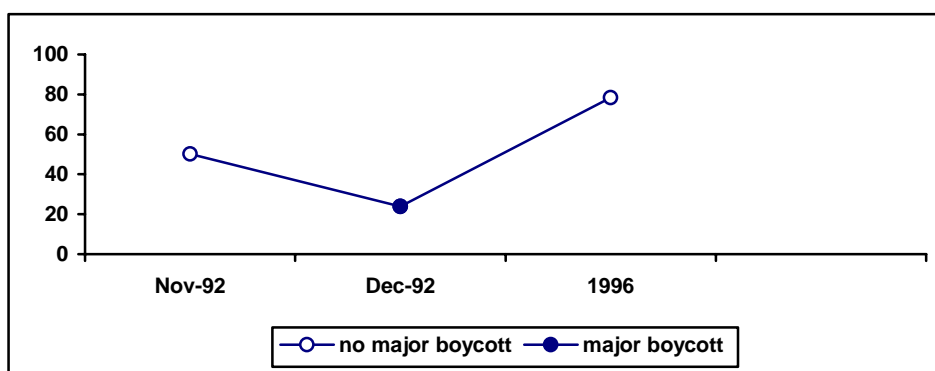


Figure 4.1
Ghana: Registered voter turnout (as a percent)

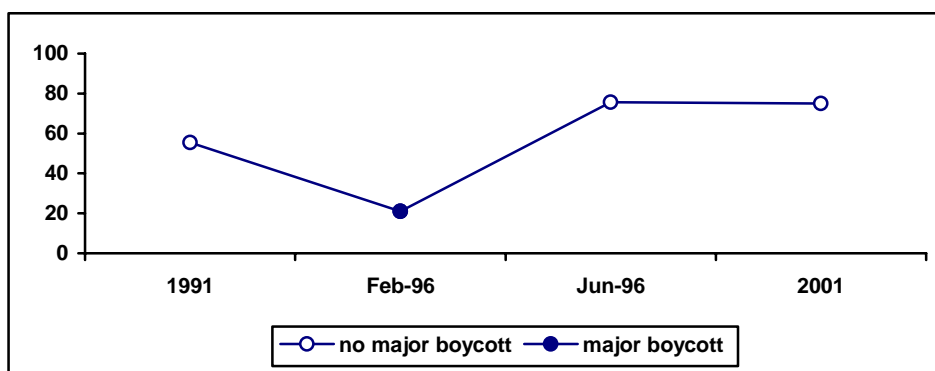


Figure 4.2
Bangladesh: Registered voter turnout (as a percent)

The following figures show examples of major boycotts that were not accompanied by lower turnout. Figure 4.3 (pg.92) shows that the major election boycott

of 2000 in Belarus did not reduce turnout. In fact, turnout increased from 56.4 percent in 1995 to 61.1 percent in 2000. Turnout increased in Cameroon approximately 11 percent in October of 1992 after the boycotted presidential election in March, suggesting that the boycott may have worked to suppress turnout in 1992. In 1997 however, the October major boycott did not succeed in reducing turnout. In fact, turnout actually rose just over 3 percent.

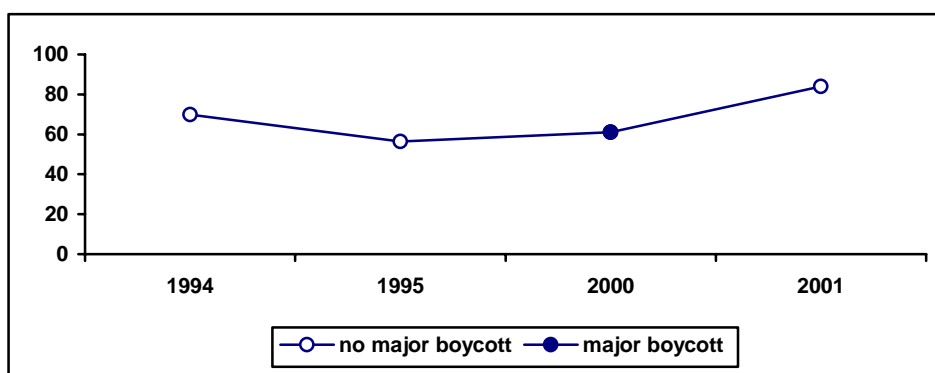


Figure 4.3
Belarus: Registered voter turnout (as a percent)

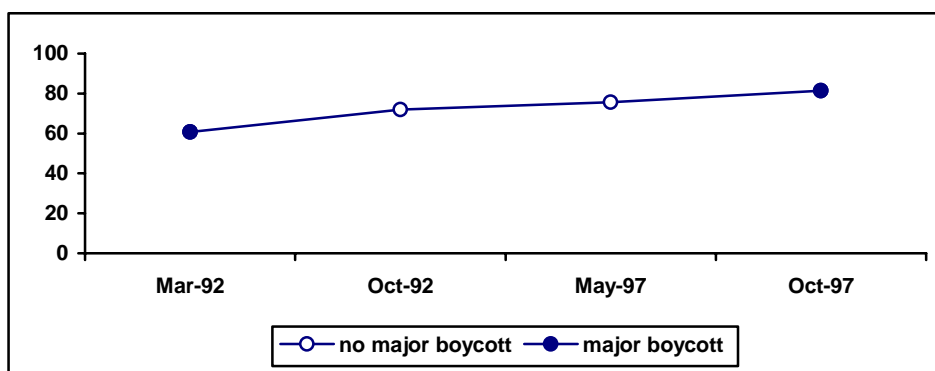


Figure 4.4
Cameroon: Registered voter turnout (as a percent)

In order to determine whether or not major election boycotts have a systematic effect on voter turnout, we can think about starting with individual cases, like the ones in

the figures above. For each case, we can measure turnout levels before the boycott, as a sort of pre-test. Then we can compare the changes we observe in instances of boycott to changes in turnout for elections where no boycott occurred. Although I use an ordinary least squares regression, this is essentially what the analysis accomplishes. I look at turnout for boycotted and non-boycotted elections in each country, and then pool these results to measure the more general effect of major election boycotts on voter turnout.

The data for this analysis are comprised of 134 possible observations over the time period 1990-2002: all elections from all developing countries that experienced at least one major boycott during the period in question (32 countries). These observations include 46 observed major boycotts and 88 elections where no major boycott occurred. Turnout as a percentage of registered voters is the dependent variable. This measure is more appropriate than turnout as a percentage of the voting age population, as it better captures the segment of the electorate who are able to make a clear statement of non-participation – those who are eligible to participate in the first place. Turnout figures are taken from the Nohlen volumes on elections, and supplemented with the International IDEA project database on turnout.³

In addition to the dependent variable of turnout, and our independent variable—which is a dichotomous variable for whether or not a major boycott occurred—two types of controls are included. A measure of turnout in the previous election is included, as a pre-test, to make turnout values comparable across observations. Finally, fixed country effects are included, to control for country-specific variation, as well as additional factors believed to affect turnout, and to most closely approximate the research design described

above. By including fixed effects in the model, I can control for arguments that electoral systems or the decisiveness of the election will affect turnout.⁴

The anticipated relationship between election boycotts and voter turnout can be expressed with the following hypothesis:

H₁: *major election boycotts should reduce voter turnout, compared to elections where no major boycott occurs*

A test of this hypothesis and discussion of the results follows the discussion of election-related violence.

Major Election Boycotts and Election Violence

While all major boycotters should want to reduce voter turnout, Fearonian and Gandhian boycotters will differ in their attitudes toward election-related violence. Recall that in Fearonian boycotts the opposition possesses some destructive strength (in greater measure than other major boycotters). Here the opposition is essentially using the boycott to display its strength, not only in terms of its support in the electorate, which may be demonstrated by reduced turnout, but also its potential to engage in violence. Such a display of strength should render more credible the threat of rebellion.

The other type of major boycott is launched by an opposition with little or no capacity to commit violence. Such Gandhian boycotters hope that reduced turnout will strengthen support for their moral position in the electorate, and it is likely they also hope their protest will attract the attention of international actors. With each audience, the Gandhian boycotters are not interested in demonstrating a future capacity for violence

³ Further sources may be necessary in the future to account for missing data.

(perhaps because they lack one) they are instead hoping to call the legitimacy of the regime into question. With the information I currently possess on the oppositions involved in major boycotts, it is difficult to predict which would launch a Fearonian or a Gandhian type of major boycott. But we may gain further insight into how to differentiate between these two types of boycott by examining the relationship of major election boycotts and election-related violence.

Violence is often considered inimical to free and fair elections. In fact, elections are perceived as a peaceful alternative to violent means of allocating power. Nonetheless, elections are often violent affairs, particularly in developing countries. During the Algerian legislative election of 2002, for example, *Keesing's* reported that an estimated 390 Algerians were killed in the month leading up to the election. Twenty-three of those killed were massacred shortly after the polls opened on election day, three of those victims were burned alive (2002). Election-related bombings were reported in a number of elections including: Peru in 1992, South Africa in 1994, India in 1996, and Haiti in 2000. Other instances of election violence left numerous injuries, such as the 1991 elections in Bangladesh, in which 80 individuals were reported injured on election day following clashes between rival groups at polling stations (Skelton 1991). Deaths, bombings, and riots resulting in injury represent the bulk of reported election-related violence during the 1990s and early 21st century in my sample. Some less rare incidents of attacks on poll workers, damage to voting sites or equipment, and assassinations (both attempted and successful) of candidates were also reported. The second question to

⁴ For more on these arguments, see Cox, 1997.

address in this chapter is whether major election boycotts affect the level of violence associated with the elections in which boycotts occur.

When we consider all major boycotts together, it is not clear whether we should observe more or less election-related violence. If, however, we accept my characterization of different types of major boycott, then violence would be a key indicator of the Fearonian boycott, but not of the Gandhian. But since we do not yet know how many boycotts might be classified as Fearonian or Gandhian, it is still difficult to determine the extent to which major boycotts might intersect with election-related violence.

Major boycotters might increase election violence if they feel it needs to use violence to enforce the boycott among voters. The bands of youth in Zambia, intimidating voters to make them stay away from the polls, provide one example for how an election boycott might be accompanied by increased election violence. For Fearonian boycotters, violence may be seen as additionally beneficial to the boycotters' cause, if it increases the credibility of the threat against the government.

Alternatively, major election boycotts might reduce election-related violence as part of a commitment to nonviolent protest. It may be that assuming a principled stance of nonviolent protest helps to send a clearer signal about the government's unfairness to the domestic electorate or the international community, much in the way that Gandhi utilized non-violence to protest anti-colonialism. Or, it may be that certain opposition parties simply do not have the means to inflict violence, and so choose a nonviolent stance. As with competing claims about the nature of the major boycott, election violence may introduce additional noise into the signal that opposition parties are trying

to send to their intended audiences. Electors who experience violence along with a major boycott may conclude that the boycotters are not serious about wanting to increase electoral fairness. Similarly, if violence accompanies a major boycott, it may not move pro-democracy aid donors to support the opposition and press for fairer electoral conditions.

Among my data I find only one clear instance where non-violence was an explicit component of an election boycott. In the Jamaican election boycott of 1983, the leader of the boycotting PNP, Michael Manley, sent a message to his supporters through the press. “I say to all of you with all the authority of my leadership, you’re to be absolutely disciplined. We seek no confrontation...If they bring problem to us, no man move unless you hear the word from me (*Daily Gleaner* 1983).” In this instance, the PNP made it very clear to its supporters that violence would not be a component of the boycott and, in fact, the 1983 election passed in relative peace.

There is another possible way in which election boycotts might reduce the chances of election-related violence, even without an explicit message of non-violence. Wilkinson’s (2004) work on election violence, links election-related violence to the competitiveness of the election. As elections are more competitive, violence becomes more likely. Although Wilkinson’s work deals specifically with ethnic violence, his general findings may still have relevance where election boycotts are concerned. Since major boycotts reduce the competitiveness of an election, then the violence associated with the election might also be reduced.

Another aspect of Wilkinson’s work highlights how even a peaceful election boycott might turn violent, and underscores the importance of how we think about

election-related violence in relation to major boycotts. Ultimately, for Wilkinson, the extent of the violence depends on the state. The state has the capacity to quell any election violence if it so desires. Implicitly this means that the state also has the power to initiate violence during an election. So even if the initiators of the boycott are explicitly discouraging violence, election violence still may occur at the hands of the state. Thus, we may see a relationship between election-related violence and major boycotts, even when the boycotters are militarily weak and advocating a peaceful protest strategy.

Because of the ambiguities surrounding the question of major election boycotts and election-related violence, it will be important to examine as many aspects of election-related violence as possible. First, at the broadest level, we will ask whether major boycotts are related to election violence in general. This first investigation might reflect the use of violence on the part of the opposition, but it could also be reflecting the use of violence on the part of the ruler. Second, we will ask whether major boycotts are related to opposition participation in election violence. This second question will capture whether boycotts increase the probability that the opposition will participate in election-related violence—either as instigator, or in retaliation. Finally, and most specifically, we will ask whether major boycotts are related to opposition initiation of election-related violence. The last two questions will help to differentiate between Fearonian and Gandhian boycotts, with the final question providing the clearest examples of opposition parties which have some means of perpetrating violence.

My empirical investigation of the question of election boycotts and election violence uses the same set of observations used in the turnout section. For this investigation, a series of key dependent variables were constructed to gradually narrow

the focus from election-related violence in general to election-related violence initiated by the opposition. The first dependent variable is a dummy variable which simply asks: Was violence reported for this election? More specifically, were significant incidents of violence reported during the campaign or on election day, since these cover the time period when election boycotts take place.⁵ Newspaper and archive sources report instances of violence associated with elections. For this particular study I used world news reports in major newspapers from Lexis Nexis, and also archival accounts found in *Keesing's Record of World Events*. A systematic analysis of these reports for each election in question revealed 104 elections in which no violence was reported, and 30 elections where various types of election-related violence was reported during the campaign, or on election day itself.

Reports of violence that were counted include any that referred to bombings, deaths, injuries, riots, and destruction of election-related property or voting sites. At this point no distinctions between type or quantity of violence are made, with one exception. If the election was widely regarded as peaceful, relative to previous elections, with only very low levels of violence reported (scuffles, minor or a small number of injuries) it was not counted as violent.

The second, more refined dependent variable asks whether the opposition was reported as having participated in the election violence. In some cases the opposition participated as perpetrators of violence. For example, in Cote d'Ivoire in 1995, the opposition was reported involved in violent clashes after an opposition leader, Laurent

⁵ Violence after the day of the election is more closely related to other kinds of electoral protest, such as opposition parties refusing to accept the results, and is consequently excluded from this study.

Gbagbo, was quoted as saying that the opposition had given orders for “maximum disruption (*The Guardian* 1995).” Alternatively, the opposition could simply be identified as participants in violence with an unspecified perpetrator. In Egypt, in 2000, for example, opposition supporters were reportedly involved in riots, but there is no mention of whether they initiated the riots or merely joined in once the riots were underway (*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* 2000). With this particular coding, I find 13 instances of election-related violence where the opposition is explicitly implicated. This suggests that the state (or other forces possessing a capacity for violence, such as Muslim rebel groups in Algeria) is responsible for the majority of election-related violence.

The final dependent variable asks most narrowly, whether the opposition was implicated as having initiated election-related violence on or before election day. With this coding, I find only six instances of election-related violence initiated by the opposition. Given the infrequency of election-related violence in which the opposition is either the aggressor or a participant, we should not expect a majority of election boycott to be the Fearonian type. At most, if every instance of opposition-initiated violence corresponded to an instance of election boycott, just under 1/3 of our major boycotts could be classified as Fearonian.

Since the dependent variable is dichotomous—taking on a value of 1 if election violence was reported, 0 otherwise—the data are first analyzed using a series of logit regressions. Country-level fixed effects are included in the first model, which examines the broadest coding of election-related violence. The fixed effects are intended to control for any country-specific tendencies toward election violence, as well as any biases in reporting incidents of election violence from particular countries. In the second

and third models where more refined measures of election-related violence are used, fixed effects are not possible because of the small number of positive observations on the dependent variables. In these instances, I control for previous use of election violence on the part of the opposition as a way to capture the country-specific tendencies toward election violence.

I have posited that some boycotts should be associated with less election violence, and other boycotts with more. And although it would seem opposition-initiated violence could not occur in more than 1/3 of all major boycotts, we still do not know how major boycotts will relate to the most general observations of election violence in this study. For that reason I will simply posit a null hypothesis with respect to major election boycotts and election violence in general.

H₂: *Major election boycotts are unrelated to instances of election violence.*

Although we know that most election boycotts are not accompanied by violence on the part of the opposition, we still do not know how a major boycott affects the probability that the opposition will engage in violence. Because I have argued that a major boycott will increase the probability of violence for certain types of oppositions, I propose the following two hypotheses:

H₃: *Major election boycotts increase the probability that the opposition will engage in election-related violence.*

H₄: *Major election boycotts increase the probability that the opposition will initiate election-related violence.*

Results

In previous sections of this chapter, I developed hypotheses regarding the relationship of major election boycotts to voter turnout and election-related violence.

Table 4.1 The Effect of Major Boycotts on Voter Turnout

Turnout	Estimated Coefficient (Standard Error)	Estimated Coefficient (Standard Error)
Major Boycott	-7.08** (3.29)	-5.78* (3.16)
Previous Turnout	-0.017 (0.259)	-- --
Algeria	8.45 (10.8)	7.70 (10.88)
Azerbaijan	31.1** (15.37)	30.6** (12.95)
Bangladesh	-2.57 (11.4)	-2.2 (11.8)
Belarus	14.23 (11.39)	14.48 (11.24)
Burkina Faso	-11.87 (10.8)	-11.58 (11.21)
Cambodia	45.98** (15.37)	44.7** (15.9)
Cameroon	20.89 (10.8)	20.5* (11.21)
Chad	2.45 (10.83)	2.73 (11.24)
Comoros	10.1 (11.39)	11.00 (11.83)
Congo	(dropped)	40.81** (15.9)
Cote d'Ivoire	-6.20 (11.4)	-1.20 (11.21)
Egypt	-5.59 (12.5)	-5.45 (12.95)
Equatorial Guinea	24.63 (15.35)	21.75* (12.95)
Ethiopia	45.84** (15.37)	44.59** (15.94)
Gabon	(dropped)	33.31** (15.31)

Table 4.1 (cont.)		Estimated Coefficients <i>(Standard Errors)</i>	Estimated Coefficients <i>(Standard Errors)</i>
Gambia		17.4 <i>(11.5)</i>	17.68 <i>(11.93)</i>
Ghana		-2.58 <i>(11.4)</i>	-2.10 <i>(11.83)</i>
Haiti		11.28 <i>(15.36)</i>	10.99 <i>(15.94)</i>
Indonesia		38.02** <i>(11.4)</i>	37.57** <i>(11.83)</i>
Iran		9.37 <i>(12.57)</i>	17.60 <i>(11.93)</i>
Jordan		-.768 <i>(12.47)</i>	-.800 <i>(12.95)</i>
Kuwait		24.8** <i>(10.83)</i>	24.68** <i>(11.24)</i>
Lebanon		-15.21 <i>(11.4)</i>	-14.83 <i>(11.83)</i>
Mali		-26.69** <i>(10.82)</i>	-26.85** <i>(11.24)</i>
Mauritania		3.99 <i>(10.8)</i>	.941 <i>(10.84)</i>
Niger		-19.48 <i>(11.5)</i>	-9.95 <i>(11.24)</i>
Nigeria		-15.44 <i>(12.57)</i>	-14.74 <i>(13.05)</i>
Sudan		(dropped)	14.21 <i>(15.94)</i>
Tajikistan		41.58** <i>(10.81)</i>	40.93*** <i>(11.21)</i>
Togo		-1.16 <i>(12.47)</i>	-1.25 <i>(12.95)</i>
Yemen		18.82 <i>(11.4)</i>	18.23 <i>(11.83)</i>
Constant		56.33*** <i>(9.01)</i>	54.79*** <i>(9.29)</i>
N		80	90
F (30, 49)	F(32, 57)	5.79	5.39
Prob > F		.000	.000
R-Squared		.780	.7515
Root MSE		11.63	12.95

* $p \leq .05$ one-tailed z test** $p \leq .05$ two-tailed z test*** $p \leq .001$ two-tailed z test

Zambia is the reference country.

Table 4.1 (pg.102-3) shows the results of two ordinary least squares regressions where voter turnout is the dependent variable.⁶ Whether or not a major boycott occurred is the variable of interest. Table 4.1 represents a test of the first hypothesis (H₁, pg.94), which suggested that major election boycotts should reduce voter turnout.

Once country-specific effects and turnout in the previous election are controlled for, we see that major election boycotts have a statistically significant relationship to voter turnout, in the expected direction. On average, a major boycott reduces voter turnout by about 7 percent. The second regression shows the results when previous turnout is not controlled for. The relationship between major boycott and turnout retains one-tailed significance, in the expected direction, but the magnitude of the effect of major boycott is reduced by just over 1 percentage point. Instead of being associated with a drop in turnout of 7 percent, on average, when we do not include a control for previous turnout, major boycotts are associated with a drop in turnout of about 5.8 percent.

Table 4.2 shows the results of logit regression where election-related violence (in its most general form) is the dependent variable and major boycotts are once again the variable of interest. As with the model for turnout, country-level fixed effects are controlled for, as well as previous instances of election violence. Here many more countries are dropped due to their perfect correlation with the dependent variable.⁷ These are countries that experienced no election-related violence over the period in question.

Table 4.2 (pg.105) represents two tests of the second hypothesis (H₂, pg. 101) a null

⁶ Country fixed-effects are used in this model because I do not have a general theory of voter turnout and, hence, need to control for unmodeled variation.

⁷ Algeria and Bangladesh dropped because they experienced election-related violence in every election; Belarus, Burkina Faso, Chad, Congo, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Iran, Jordan,

Table 4.2 The Effect of Major Election Boycotts on Election Violence

Independent Variables	Estimated Coefficients (Standard Errors)	Estimated Coefficients (Standard Errors)
Major boycott	-.170 (0.84)	.526 (.648)
Previous violence	-1.18 (1.019)	-- --
Azerbaijan	18.01** (1.86)	17.20** (1.64)
Cameroon	19.5** (1.87)	18.31** (1.54)
Comoros	17.44** (19.49)	17.95** (1.49)
Cote d'Ivoire	20.13 (1.86)	18.78** (1.49)
Ghana	17.90**	17.33** (1.65)
Haiti	17.66** (1.54)	17.33** (1.43)
Indonesia	18.94** (2.01)	17.69** (1.69)
Mali	17.16** (1.78)	16.68** (1.60)
Niger	16.91** (1.70)	16.87** (1.62)
Tajikistan	17.62** (1.79)	17.20**
Constant	-18.26** (1.28)	-18.58** (1.22)
Number of observations	41	62
LR Chi2(12), (13)	8.74	12.49
Prob > Chi2	.7252	.4879
Pseudo R2	.166	.1602
Log Likelihood	-21.953762	-32.74

** p≤.001 two-tailed z test

Zambia is the reference country.

hypothesis regarding the relationship between major election boycotts and election-related violence. In the first model a control is included for previous election-related violence. This control is omitted in the second model.

Kuwait, Lebanon, Mauritania, Nigeria, Sudan, Togo, & Yemen dropped because they experienced no

As we can see from table 4.2, the lack of statistical significance for the major boycott coefficient does not allow us to reject the null hypothesis. From this we can conclude that there is no systematic relationship between major election boycotts and our most general characterization of election-related violence. This finding, however, begs the question of the relationship between major election boycotts and election violence undertaken by the opposition.

Table 4.3 shows the results of a logit regression with a dependent variable that indicates whether the opposition was reported as participating in election-related violence. Country-level fixed effects are not used in this model because, with only 13 observations of opposition involvement in election-related violence, the number of observations with variation on the dependent variable is too small to make fixed effects useful. The omission of fixed effects creates the concern that countries where the opposition is more likely to commit violence might also be countries where the opposition is more likely to undertake a major boycott. In order to reduce the potential

Table 4.3 Major Election Boycotts & Opposition Participation in Election Violence

Independent Variables	Estimated Coefficients	Robust Standard Errors
Major boycott	1.09*	.532
Previous participation	3.01*	1.16
Constant	-3.12**	.474
Number of Observations	101	
Wald Chi2 (2)	14.79	
Prob > Chi2	.001	
Pseudo R2	.248	
Log pseudo-likelihood	-27.7	

*p<.05two-tailed z test

** p<.001 two-tailed z test

Standard errors adjusted for clustering on country.

reported election violence in the period in question.

for mistakenly assigning causality, I have included a control for previous involvement in election-related violence on the part of the opposition. This is intended to control for the fact that in some countries the opposition may be prone to more violence.

Here, in table 4.3, we see that when we control for previous participation in violence on the part of the opposition, major boycotts have a statistically significant relationship to opposition participation in election-related violence. This suggests that a major election boycott increases the probability that the opposition will participate in election-related violence. Whether opposition participation in election-related violence is sufficient to classify a boycott as Fearonian is an open question. We may choose, instead, to think of such boycotts as further along the continuum between Gandhian and Fearonian boycotts, moving away from the Gandhian stance of non-violence, but not quite to the point of overtly threatening the regime by initiating violence.

Table 4.4 highlights the relationship between major election boycotts and our most specific measure of election violence: opposition-initiated election violence. We can think of this variable as representing the least ambiguous incidents of opposition

Table 4.4 Two-Way Comparison: Boycotts & Opposition-Initiated Violence

	Major Boycott	No Major Boycott	Total
Opposition-initiated election violence	5 (11%)	1(1%)	6 (5%)
No opposition-initiated election violence	41 (89%)	86 (99%)	127 (95%)
Total	46 (100%)	87 (100%)	133 (100%)

Pearson Chi2 (1) = 6.5996 Pr = .010

participation in election-related violence. These are not incidents where the opposition was reported as merely participating in violence, but where the opposition was credited with being the perpetrator of the violence. These are the most unambiguously Fearonian boycotters.

The first striking observation about this table is that opposition-initiated election violence appears to be quite rare—only six observations in the entire data set. Here we see also that five major boycotts were accompanied by opposition-initiated election violence. This suggests that Fearonian boycotts are far less common than Gandhian.⁸ It is striking, however, that major election boycotts occurred in all but one of the six observations where opposition initiation of election-related violence was reported. This makes opposition-initiated violence twice as likely when the opposition stages a major boycott as compared to the sample as a whole, and about 10 times more likely when compared to elections where no major boycott occurs.

Table 4.5 Major Election Boycotts and Opposition Initiation of Election Violence

Independent Variables	Estimated Coefficients	Robust Standard Errors
Major boycott	2.34*	.955
Previous participation	2.42*	1.14
Constant	-4.72**	.665
Number of Observations	101	
Wald Chi2 (2)	23.36	
Prob > Chi2	.000	
Pseudo R2	.274	
Log pseudo-likelihood	-16.52	

*p≤.05two-tailed z test

** p≤.001 two-tailed z test

Standard errors adjusted for clustering on country.

⁸ Even if we use the broader characterization of opposition participation in election violence, our number of Fearonian boycotts only rises from five, to seven.

When we control for previous opposition involvement in election violence, the relationship holds. Table 4.5 (pg.108) shows the results of the final logit regression for this chapter. The dependent variable indicates whether the opposition was reported as instigating election-related violence. The fact that only 5 of 45 major election boycotts involved opposition-initiated election violence shows that major boycotts are, generally speaking, not likely to be accompanied by violence on the part of the opposition. The results of table 4.5 show that major boycotts do, however, increase the probability that the opposition will engage in election-related violence.

Conclusion

The observations that come out of our investigation of election-related violence and major boycotts underscore a distinction between two types of major boycott: those in which the boycotting party also possesses some militaristic strength or capacity for violence, and those in which the opposition is weak militarily. As we can see, most major boycotts fall into the category of the latter, and are what we might consider “Gandhian” boycotts. A small portion of boycotts, however, portray a pattern of a “Fearonian” boycott, in which the opposition uses the boycott as an opportunity to demonstrate its strength, not only in terms of support from the electorate, but also in terms of its capacity to commit violence and mount a rebellion at some point in the future.

Now that we are able to identify these two types of boycott, Gandhian and Fearonian, we can refer back to the strategic decisions the opposition parties faced in chapter three (pg.48), and determine more clearly how various oppositions arrive at the

decision to boycott. For the Gandhian boycotters, they know that if they participate in the election, and the incumbent commits fraud, they will likely have to accept the outcome, as they lack the capacity to mount a rebellion. Faced with the prospect of always being intimidated by the incumbent, such a weak opposition might choose to boycott in an attempt to win support either from the electorate or international actors, to press for change. By contrast, the smaller number of Fearonian boycotters believes that if they participate in the election, and the incumbent commits fraud, they can publicize this fraud after the election and attempt an overthrow of the government. In the event that they attempt an overthrow, however, they are facing the payoff of a war lottery, which may not be particularly attractive when compared to a boycott. This type of opposition, then, may choose to boycott rather than face a war lottery, in the hopes that their muscle-flexing during the boycott will produce a credible threat of future rebellion and compel the ruler to change.

Irrespective of the specific type of major boycott, this chapter has also shown that major election boycotts depress voter turnout. It stands to reason that reduced voter turnout would enhance either type of boycott, whether it be to demonstrate the strength in numbers of a Fearonian boycott, or to demonstrate the sympathy of the electorate and illegitimacy of the government for a Gandhian boycott. Although it is clear that both types of major boycott would benefit from reduced voter turnout, it is unclear from this analysis whether the general drop in turnout associated with a major boycott can be attributed to the direct efforts of boycotting oppositions, or to the indirect causes discussed earlier—namely the reduction in competitiveness of the election as a result of the boycott.

One way to establish more definitively whether or not opposition efforts should be credited with reduced voter turnout would be to collect more fine-grained data on each boycott. Local journalistic accounts, and interviews with observers and boycotters, would reveal the extent to which each boycotting opposition attempted to demobilize voters. From such information we could at least refine our variable of interest from the presence or absence of a major boycott, to the presence or absence of a mobilizing or demobilizing effort.

Appendix 4a Description of Data and Variables

The data for chapter four represent a subset of the data from chapter three. Included are all observations from 1990 through 2002 for all countries that experienced at least one major boycott during that time. Additional measures not included in chapter three were collected for each of the 133 observations in this data set.

Variable	Description	N	Mean	St. dev	Min	Max
Major Boycott	=1 if majority of opposition boycotted; 0 otherwise	133	.346	.477	0	1
Turnout	Percentage of registered voters who voted in the election	91	61.15	20.72	21	98.9
Previous Turnout	Percentage of registered voters who voted in the previous election	87	61.2	21.37	21	98.8
Election Violence	=1 if any instances of election violence reported; 0 otherwise	133	.248	.434	0	1
Previous Violence	=1 if any instances of election violence reported in previous election; 0 otherwise	100	.22	.416	0	1
Opposition participation in election violence	=1 if any reports of opposition participating in election violence (including initiating violence); 0 otherwise	133	.098	.298	0	1
Previous Participation	=1 if any reports of opposition participating in violence in previous election; 0 otherwise	101	.099	.30	0	1
Opposition Initiation of election violence	=1 if any reports of opposition initiating election violence; 0 otherwise	133	.045	.208	0	1

Variable	Source
Major Boycott	See Appendix 3a
Turnout	Nohlen Volumes, International IDEA voter turnout website: http://www.idea.int/vt/
Previous Turnout	See Above

Election Violence	<i>Keesing's Record of World Events</i> , and Lexis Nexis using search terms [<i>country</i>] & <i>election & violence</i> or <i>violent</i> for relevant years (In <i>World News, Major Papers</i> , for Lexis Nexis)
Previous Violence	See above
Opposition Participation in election violence	See above
Previous Participation	See above
Opposition Initiation of election violence	See above

THE LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES FOR DEMOCRACY

Previous chapters in this dissertation have established a four-fold typology of election boycotts. Distinctions have been drawn based on the size of the boycott and the capacity for the boycotting opposition to engage in violence. I have explained *why* major boycotts happen, and have shown *how* they can have immediate effects on the elections in which they occur, both in terms of voter participation and election-related violence. The final question that this dissertation seeks to answer is *what*, if any, are the long-term consequences of major election boycotts.

Major boycotts are launched to protest the current regime's use of fraud and electoral unfairness. The same issues concern promoters of democracy in developing countries, who typically emphasize elections as an important part of the process of democratization. This coincidence of interests leads us to ask: what effect do major boycotts have on democracy or the process of democratization?

The easiest answer is that, in the short term, major election boycotts do not appear to have any positive consequences for democracy. They present a fairly obvious challenge for democratic representation, as no significant opposition to the ruler will have a presence in any political institutions. Furthermore, we know from this study that major boycotts lead fewer voters to participate in the process. Additionally, major boycotts increase the probability of some occurrence of election-related violence. All told, it is not surprising that Robert Pastor uses election boycott as an indicator that an election has "failed (1999)."

Yet some believe that even problematic elections can be positive for democracy. Marinov (2006), following Fearon's model of elections and coordination, says that even fraudulent elections can work to enforce accountability. I have suggested that major election boycotts may be another mechanism to restore accountability, but do they actually succeed? We assume that citizens would like a government that is accountable, and in this chapter we will examine what opposition parties are hoping to accomplish with a boycott. Then we will evaluate whether or not the long-term effects of major boycotts actually have consequences that are positive for democracy.

This chapter picks up at one of the possible end points in my model in chapter three (pg.48), with the choice to engage in a major boycott. In Fearon's version of the election model, citizens are trying to hold the government accountable to get the best possible policies, but free and fair elections are assumed. In my model, recall that fraud is explicitly incorporated and the ruler is interacting with the opposition rather than the citizenry as a whole. The opposition wants free and fair elections because increased electoral fairness should help them to attain power. At the same time, this goal should also have the consequence of providing the citizenry with a democratically elected, accountable government.

Given that major boycotts can take different forms, either Fearonian or Gandhian, and that Gandhian boycotts, in particular, can appeal to different audiences for support, there are many paths by which major boycotts could, potentially affect democracy. For all potential paths to democratization, however, the strategic interests of the ruler are relevant. We can think of the model of democratic change in this chapter as representing

the sub-game that begins when the opposition chooses to undertake a major election boycott.

The paper will proceed as follows: First, I will review the main types of boycott described in chapter two and explain how they relate to the theory which will be presented in this chapter. Second, I will discuss various ways to define and measure democracy. I work with two different definitions of democracy both of which center on elections and focus on democratic accountability. Next I will present and explain my model for democratic change. Finally, hypotheses will be derived from this theory and tested using original data.

Boycott Types Revisited

In chapter two, I identified two axes along which election boycotts can be situated. The first important distinction is between major and minor boycotts; the second, between Gandhian and Fearonian boycotts. Major election boycotts are undertaken by a majority of the opposition, and can involve anywhere from one (depending on its size) to all opposition parties. Minor boycotts, by contrast, usually involve only one or two small parties, and far less than a majority of the opposition. Whereas major boycotts are motivated primarily by the possibility of increased fairness in future elections, minor boycotts have more particularistic motivations.

In Gandhian boycotts, an opposition lacking a meaningful capacity for violence undertakes a peaceful boycott, making a principled appeal to norms of fairness.

Fearonian boycotters, by contrast, have some capacity to commit violence and use a

boycott as an opportunity to threaten future overthrow of the government. In both types of boycott, the electorate is involved, at a minimum, in that voter turnout is suppressed.

The different composition and causes of major and minor boycotts lead us to expect that they will also have different long-term effects on democratic development in a country. When major boycotts occur it is because the initiators of the boycotts have internalized the value of increased fairness and see an opportunity to coordinate support around the issue of fraud, in the hopes of reducing fraud in the future. If this is true, and I have accurately identified major boycotts with my operationalization, then we would expect major boycotts to lead to greater electoral fairness. By contrast, since minor boycotters are not concerned with fraud, we would not expect them to have an effect on democratization.¹

The theory portion of this chapter will elaborate on the possible relationships between major boycotts and democratization, focusing on two specific ways that elections could be made more fair: by political reform, and with the involvement of neutral third parties in the election process. Before that can occur, however, we must determine what we mean when we refer to democracy and democratization. As we will see, the definitions I favor are linked directly to electoral fairness and focus on democratic accountability as a measure of democracy.

Evaluating Democracy & Democratic Change

¹ Minor election boycotts will not be abandoned altogether, however. Empirical tests will be run to test null hypotheses concerning the relationship between minor boycotts and the results will be reported in the results section of this chapter.

Democracy is generally understood as a political system in which individual citizens, as opposed to a monarch or dictator, have some formal say in how the country will be governed. Within such a broad description, however, there is much debate concerning which political arrangements should be considered democratic. Dahl (1971) asserts that perhaps no true democracy exists, which is why he opts to describe those regimes that are the most democratic as “polyarchies.” And although he questions the existence of a true democracy, he does provide a series of guarantees that must be in place for a country to qualify as democratic. These guarantees include: freedom to form and join organizations, freedom of expression, the right to vote, the right of political leaders to compete for support (votes), alternative sources of information, free and fair elections, and institutions for making government policies depend on votes and other expressions of preference (3). For Dahl, these guarantees are essentially additive. A country that possesses all of them can be considered a democracy, and the more of these guarantees that a country possesses, the closer it is to a democracy. Dahl’s approach to the question of democracy, then, focuses on the inputs necessary to create a democracy.

By contrast, more recent definitions of democracy focus on just one of Dahl’s guarantees: free and fair elections, and their associated outputs. Definitions of democracy based on the procedures for constituting a government (also called procedural or operational definitions) place central emphasis on the holding of free and fair elections as a means of achieving democratic accountability. For example, Przeworski et al. (2000) define democracy as “a regime in which those who govern are selected through contested elections (15).” The point made by Schedler (2002) – that many autocracies also hold elections – should serve to underscore the importance of honest contestation, or

fairness, in evaluating democracies on the basis of elections. It is not sufficient for a country to hold elections to qualify as a democracy; those elections must also be free and fair.

Both these definitions of democracy share an implicit emphasis on the importance of democratic accountability, that a government should act in the best interest of its citizens and is responsible to them should it fail to do so. Dahl's list of conditions for a democracy basically provides mechanisms by which to hold government accountable to its citizens. The clearest indicator of democratic accountability, for Przeworski et al., is alternation in power (2000, 16). If elections are truly free and fair, then the incumbent should not win every election. In this way, narrow procedural definitions of democracy focus on accountability as evidenced by outputs, rather than the inputs enumerated by Dahl.

Even with the careful stipulation of electoral fairness, and the rigorous requirement of alternation in office, procedural definitions are not without problems. In particular, they may be overly minimal. Przeworski points out merely requiring free and fair elections does not constrain the extent of equality, the degree of "accountability" or "responsiveness", the quality of civil liberties or participation, or the nature of civil-military relations (2000, 33). And although Przeworski offers persuasive justifications for these omissions, Huntington acknowledges two additional misspecification problems that might arise from a procedural definition of democracy: It may be that a country has free and fair elections for leaders who do not actually control government. Furthermore, free and fair elections may not provide an indication of the overall stability of the political system (1991, 10).

Although these hypothetical examples point to conceptual problems with a procedural definition of democracy, they appear to be exceptions rather than the rule. Empirically, most countries in which elected leaders are not actually in charge, and/or the system is unstable, also have problems meeting the basic democratic standard of free and fair elections. Iran provides one such example. Here the president and legislature have minimal control over the country, as most decisions are made by a council of Muslim clerics. Elections in Iran, however, are also neither free nor fair. Candidate selection and media access are both tightly controlled by the government, which has resulted in several election boycotts. Haiti provides a good example of the correlation between electoral unfairness and political instability. Haiti has been plagued with political unrest and coups for the past fifteen years. This instability is also reflected in electoral practices. Since 1990, Haiti has not managed to hold free and fair elections. Fraud in some elections has led to major boycotts in others. Based on empirical regularity, then, the procedural definition of democracy, in spite of being minimal, appears adequate to correctly classify most countries.

Besides identifying a key component of democracy, a procedural definition lends itself nicely to systematic, empirical comparison. Huntington notes that definitions which focus on aspects of democracy other than procedure, such as the source of authority or purposes of government, are confronted with serious problems of ambiguity if applied to empirical analysis (1991, 6). Furthermore, Przeworski points out those more complete definitions of democracy, which speak to issues of accountability, equality, participation, and the like, run the risk of excluding all democracies in the end (2000, 14). An emphasis on the extent to which elections are free and fair, on the other hand,

provides a relatively straightforward, comparable set of measures that should allow us, at a minimum, to evaluate some very important aspects of the democratic process.

For the sake of systematic observation, I will consider both the procedural definition of democracy, and Dahl's broader list of democratic guarantees. This will give us a sense of how boycotts relate to both the inputs and outputs associated with electoral democracy and democratic accountability. While neither of these definitions are necessarily ideal, given all the richer descriptions of democracy that exist, they lend themselves nicely to empirical comparison. Free and fair elections are a necessary, if not sufficient, condition for democracy. They capture the concept of democratic accountability, and they can be measured more accurately than other "deeper" democratic concepts. Dahl's other measures such as alternative sources of information are also fairly easy to measure, when compared to concepts such as representation or equality. (I look forward to being able to explore if and how election boycotts affect representation or equality once I have developed satisfactory ways to measure such concepts. Presently there is no way to expand these particular definitions without encountering serious specification problems.)

A Theory of Democratic Change

There are multiple causal pathways to achieving democracy (or a more democratic government). All these paths to democratic change, however, pass through at least one of the following two changes: changes to existing laws, or increased compliance with existing laws, and neither type of change can occur without the

participation of the incumbent.² Accordingly, the theory of democratic change presented here will focus on the various ways that opposition boycotts might increase the pressure on incumbents either to change laws, or to increase conformity to existing laws; how incumbents will respond; and what effects this process will have on democracy. The relationship between major election boycotts and democratic change occurs in a straightforward manner, which can be described in three stages, as depicted in figure 5.1 (pg.124).

In the first stage, major boycotts bring pressure to bear on the incumbent. In the case of a Fearonian boycott, the opposition essentially threatens the ruler with potential overthrow in the future. In the case of a Gandhian boycott, the opposition wins the support of one (or both) of two audiences: the international democracy promotion community and/or the domestic electorate.

In the second stage, the fear of rebellion, or repercussions from either of the suggested audiences, may then motivate the incumbent:

- 1) to change the laws; or
- 2) to better adhere to existing laws; or
- 3) to do both.

We must be able to measure the two types of democratic change described above. Enactment of political reform is a clear indicator of changes to the law, and appears to be the most straightforward measure of this particular path to democracy. When a government enacts political reforms they are, by definition, changing existing laws. For

² Pastor (1999) notes that most studies of democracy after the fall of the Soviet Empire have focused on the strategies involved in democratic transitions. Scholars, such as Boix (1999) and Colomer, have been able to demonstrate interesting patterns of democratization with an emphasis on elite strategy.

example, when the Armenian government instituted political reform in 1998, new election laws were put in place that changed how candidates were elected in certain constituencies (*Keesing's* 1998).

Compliance with existing laws is slightly more difficult to measure, but the invitation of international election observers (to the next election) seems to be a reasonable signal that existing laws will be followed more closely. Observers are neutral third parties whose presence at an election is not intended to help the government write new electoral law but whose purpose is simply to observe the extent to which the existing law is upheld. Furthermore, observation tends to motivate politicians to behave legally (at least where the observers are watching).³

It is in this second step of the process where some type of democratic change can occur. Depending on the extent to which the pressure exerted by the boycott has been successful, the incumbent may enact reform or invite monitors to the next election, or both, or neither. Both actions on the part of the incumbent: enacting political reform or inviting monitors, would be seen as proximal improvements in the inputs to democracy and, thus, are consonant with Dahl's definition of democracy. We should note, however, that if the incumbent chooses to respond to the demands that arise in stage one, he may likely do so while also attempting to maintain power, which may dilute the more distal effects of major boycotts.

In the third and final stage, the actions of the incumbent with respect to reform

³ For more on this see the findings of Hyde (2006)

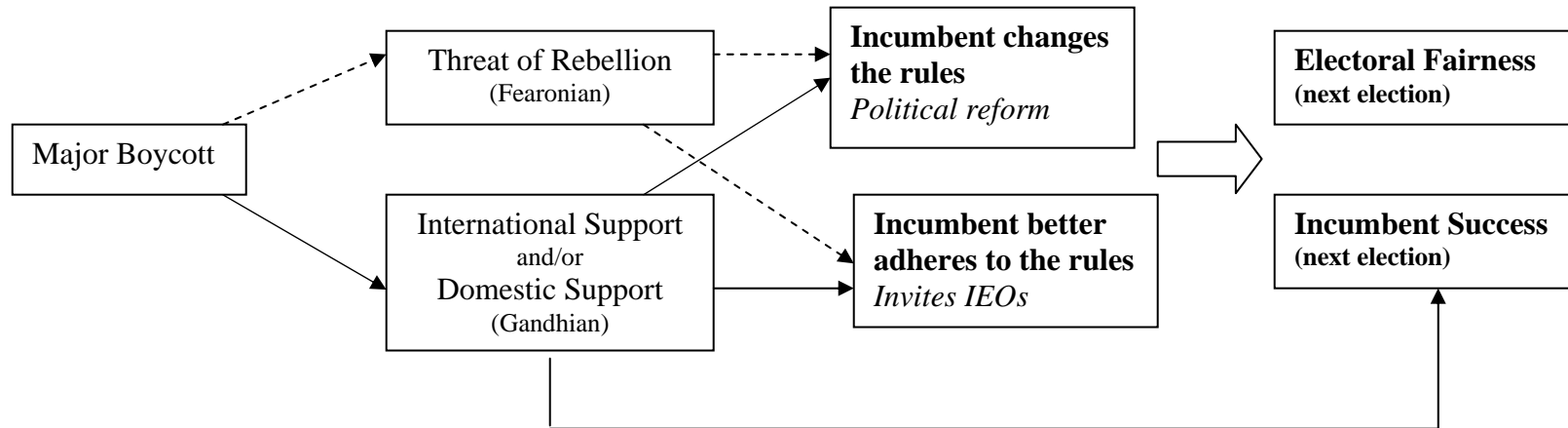


Figure 5.1
Major Election Boycotts and their Consequences for Democracy

and invitation of monitors may have more distal consequences for democracy, both in terms of objective evaluations of fairness, and in terms of incumbent performance. Also at this time, any changes brought about by domestic support of the boycott could have consequences for incumbent performance, but not for objective evaluations of fairness.

If a major boycott changes the opinion of the domestic electorate, this may have an effect on the incumbent's probability of reelection, independent of the effect that the boycott has on the domestic or international audience pushing for reform or monitor invitation. Changes in the incumbent's popularity among the domestic electorate, however, are not likely to affect objective evaluations of electoral fairness, since incumbent popularity is not factored in to outside evaluations such as those provided by Freedom House.

Improvements to future evaluations of fairness are also consonant with a Dahlian approach to democracy, while the incumbent's success at the next election speaks directly to the narrow procedural definition of democracy based on outputs. Observing alternation in office in the following election would lead proceduralists to conclude that elections were free and fair, and that the government was being held accountable.

This three-stage theoretical framework should begin to clarify why the introduction describes boycotts as the birth pangs of democracy *with an international midwife*. The international community has the potential to play a key role in each of the three major steps I have outlined above. As we will see, international democracy can pressure incumbent regimes for change, and may be particularly motivating if they can use foreign aid as an incentive. One way that incumbents can respond to pressure for increased electoral fairness is by inviting international election observers to oversee

future elections. And finally, outside experts provide overall assessments of a country's future levels of electoral fairness. These various opportunities for the "international midwife" to help developing countries through the birth pangs of democracy will be discussed further in the elaboration of the theory.

Pressure from Major Boycotts

The first step in figure 5.1 requires a major boycott to generate some kind of pressure on the incumbent. Major boycotters with the appropriate means, may be able to pressure the incumbent ruler with a credible threat of future rebellion. Alternatively, major boycotters may hope for the support of certain audiences who can, in turn, apply pressure to the ruler. International democracy promoters and aid donors learn about election boycotts through major news sources, and sometimes through reports from international election monitors.⁴ Domestic audiences will also be made aware of the boycott, through the campaign and demobilization efforts of the boycotting parties.

Recall that when the PNP boycotted Jamaican elections in 1983, the party took great care to make the public aware of its decision to boycott. It ran advertisements on national television describing the elections as a sham, and held numerous public meetings to explain the reasons for the boycott. These public meetings continued after the election as a way for PNP members to continue to mobilize their supporters and maintain a political presence, even though they had no seats in parliament. The pressure that major boycotts bring to bear, depending on the emphasis and its success, may result in one or

⁴ Election boycotts took place in Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Haiti, Togo, Peru, Niger, Mali, Yemen, Ghana, Comoros, and Cameroon while international monitors were present and could observe them firsthand.

both kinds of democratic change: political reform or invitation of international election monitors.

Pressure for Reform

Major boycotts may result in political reform, if the pressure on the incumbent rulers has this emphasis. Even though they differ in the extent to which they are willing to engage in violence, there is no reason to suspect that either Gandhian or Fearonian boycotters would be more focused on, or more successful in achieving political reform. The Indonesian election boycott in 1997, for example, which was accompanied by widespread violence, led to the resignation of long-time dictator Suharto and the implementation of numerous democratic reforms.

One potential source of pressure for Gandhian boycotters is the international democracy promotion community. Since the end of the cold war, more democratic governance and higher human rights standards have become increasingly important to international donors.⁵ In many instances, donors expect recipient governments to be working toward minimal standards of democracy. If donors feel that an election boycott reflects a democratic deficiency, they can apply pressure for political reform. For example, *Keesing's Record of World Events* reports that the lifting of the ban on opposition political parties in Azerbaijan, during the 2000 election, was a response to U.S. pressure. U.S. criticism of the exclusion of prominent opposition parties from the electoral contest came during the boycott of 2000, and after an election boycott in 1998 (2000). As another example, the OAS became directly involved in political reform after

the 2000 boycott in Haiti. The organization worked with the government and opposition parties to establish an independent electoral management body.

There are times, however, when international donors may not be particularly concerned with democratic standards in recipient countries. Donors may be willing to overlook undemocratic practices when there are conditions of extreme poverty or when strategic interests dominate. In such instances a Gandhian boycott may not succeed in bringing pressure to bear from the international community. Fortunately, Gandhian boycotters have another alternative to support their cause: the domestic electorate.

Domestic audiences may also apply pressure for political reform. In Azerbaijan, for example, the removal of the ban on opposition parties was not the only political reform related to the 2000 boycott. Further reforms may have been encouraged by the eruption of domestic protests following the election. Fifteen thousand protested the election results in the capital, and several smaller protests were held in provincial towns and the western city of Sheki (*Reuters* 2000).

Although there are clear instances of domestic populations desiring reform, there are also circumstances under which the domestic audience may not be interested in reform.⁶ If a population is largely rural, with low levels of education, it may not feel particularly connected to the political process nor perceive any benefit from political reform. In countries that are heavily clientelistic, even if individuals see the benefits of reform, they may fear that reform will jeopardize their current access to patronage.

⁵ See Hyde & Beaulieu (2005), Hyde (2006)

⁶ See Bratton and van de Walle (1992) for a discussion of protests for reform in Africa.

Table 5.1 presents a comparison of instances of major boycott and reform. From this table, we can see that political reform is not particularly common. Only 11 percent of observations in the entire sample experienced political reform between elections. However, the table reveals a substantial difference between instances of reform following boycotted elections, as compared to instances of reform after elections with no boycott. Whereas reforms occurred in only 4 percent of cases following an election with no major boycott, 27 percent of cases experiencing a major boycott underwent political reform before the next election. In this sample, political reforms were almost seven times more likely after a boycott, compared to non-boycotted elections. This comparison does not

Table 5.1 Two-way comparison of Major Boycotts and Political Reforms

Political Reform before Next Election?	No Reform	Some Reform	Total
Major Boycott?			
No Boycott	90 (96%)	4 (4%)	94 (100%)
Major Boycott	30 (73%)	11 (27%)	41 (100%)
Total	120 (89%)	15 (11%)	135 (100%)

Pearson chi2(1) = 14.7295 Pr = 0.000

show the extent to which either type of major boycott, Fearonian or Gandhian enjoys greater success in motivating reforms. What is clear from table 5.1, however, is that major boycotts appear to encourage political reform, by some means, be it via threatened rebellion, or with international or domestic pressure.

Pressure for International Election Observers

Pressure for invitation of election monitors at future elections can also result from a major election boycott. Although it is ultimately the incumbents' choice to invite monitors, they often do so in response to demands from others for monitor presence. Gandhian boycotters might target the attention of international democracy promoters concerned about a country's electoral proceedings and hope that their protest will lead the international community to demand international election monitors be present at the next election, in order to provide a more objective analysis of the freedom and fairness of the election. Fearonian boycotters may also be interested in the presence of international election observers, if they feel that the government cannot be trusted.

Many international donors have stressed the importance of promoting democracy in developing countries as a condition for aid. In their declarations of the importance of democracy, most donors cite free and fair elections as an essential component of democracy, and also note the importance of international observers in determining whether or not elections are free and fair. After Togo's 1999 election was boycotted, for example, foreign donors insisted on a rerun of the election, as a precondition to future foreign aid (*Deutsche Presse Agentur* 2002). Given their support for elections, and the involvement of international observers in the democracy-promotion community, it would stand to reason that donors would want some assurance of fairness, through the presence of monitors, to accompany this rerun. In fact, Togo did have two international observer groups (ECOWAS and the African Union) present at its next elections in 2002.⁷

⁷ Togo also invited the EU to observe the 2002 elections, but not with enough advance warning, so the EU declined the invitation.

The European Union's *Resolution of the Council and of Member States meeting in the Council on Human Rights, Democracy, and Development* places a high priority on funding development projects that encourage democracy, particularly those that support the holding of elections and promote the role of non-governmental organizations. This same document suggests that support could be suspended for any "serious interruption of the democratic process (1991)." The OSCE also emphasizes the importance of election observation, and international election observation in particular. IEO's are seen to play a "primordial role in the new democracies which have no established tradition of impartial verification of lawfulness of elections (Council of Europe 2002)."

The impartial verification of election processes is clearly important to international donors and it may be important to domestic audiences as well. Although there may be others, I will consider two reasons why domestic audiences might want international election observers to be invited to the election. First, they may feel that the fairness of the election will be improved with the presence of international observers. If the domestic audience is concerned about improving electoral fairness, and they also believe that international observers will be impartial, they may see their presence as forcing the incumbent to play by the rules or, at a minimum, cheat slightly less. Second, domestic groups may themselves be looking for benefit from international donors, and may see international observers as one possible way to reap those benefits. International democracy promoters can provide a great amount of technical assistance and resources for domestic groups who would like to improve the fairness of elections in their own country. International observers can provide training for domestic groups, and international donors can fund domestic monitoring efforts. Invitation of international

election observers is one way that domestic groups might be able to attract support for their own democracy-promotion efforts.

Either Gandhian boycotters or Fearonian boycotters may be able to cultivate desire among the domestic electorate for the presence of international election observers. Gandhian boycotters might be able to appeal to perceptions of international observers as impartial and increasing electoral fairness, as part of their moral claim against fraud. Fearonian boycotters might cast international observers as necessary to mediate future elections so that they do not degenerate into open civil conflict. Bangladesh provides an example of a country that has undergone a Fearonian boycott that resulted in increased international involvement in future elections. In the case of Bangladesh, a lack of trust in the government to administer the election was at the heart of the opposition boycott in 1996, and a particular reform was demanded in which the government would be forced to step down before each election so that a neutral caretaker government could administer the election. For a country where the opposition is so deeply distrustful of the government, the presence of impartial observers to help see that electoral rules are followed would likely be attractive.

Table 5.2 (page 133) provides an uncontrolled comparison of instances of election boycott with instances of monitor invitation in the following election. The table clearly shows that monitors are much more likely to be invited to the next election after a boycott has occurred. In fact, countries that experience a major boycott are three times more likely to have monitors at the next election than they are to hold the next election with no international monitors present. In elections that are not boycotted, the monitors are

invited to observe the next election only about half the time. Without a major boycott, it is almost equally likely that monitors will or will not be invited.

As with political reform, it should be noted that there are instances when the international or domestic audiences may not desire monitor presence at the next election. The domestic electorate may be indifferent to the invitation of international election observers, or may see their presence as intrusive. There may also be times when international donors are not particularly concerned with the quality of elections, and do not demand an international observer presence. The incentive for opposition parties to boycott does not require that both audiences desire both types of democratic change.

Table 5.2 Major boycotts and Monitor Presence at the Following Election

Monitors at next election?	No monitors at next election	Monitors at next election	Total
Major boycott?			
No Boycott	120 (51.95%)	111 (48.05%)	231 (100%)
Major Boycott	6 (25%)	18 (75%)	24 (100%)
Total	126 (49.41%)	129 (50.59%)	255 (100%)

Pearson $\chi^2(1) = 6.3162$ Pr = .012

As long as pressure can be brought to bear on the ruler in some fashion, the opposition still has an incentive to boycott and we may still expect to see democratic change occur. If for example, the domestic electorate is indifferent to reform and monitor invitation but the international donor community cares, militarily weak opposition parties still have an incentive to launch a Gandhian boycott, and reform or monitor invitation may still result. On the other hand, the international community may not be particularly concerned with political reform or a monitor presence at elections, but if the domestic

audience cares about one or the other, then the incentive for a Gandhian boycott may still remain.

For Fearonian boycotters, the probability that pressure will motivate the ruler has more to do with the opposition's capacity to threaten the regime effectively, which may come from use of violence or support among the domestic electorate, or, most likely, some combination of the two. This discussion should serve to underscore that there are many different scenarios by which a major boycott can result in democratic change.

Distal Effects of Major Boycotts

Having seen how democratic change might occur, the next question we will examine is whether or not these democratic changes have further consequences for the state of democracy in developing countries. One aspect of the question is whether or not reforms and monitor invitation lead to improved assessments of electoral fairness in future elections. The second aspect of the question is whether reforms and monitors increase the probability that the incumbent will lose the next election.

Any consideration of the more distal effects of boycotts on democracy, however, will be incomplete without attention to the role of the incumbent. It is important to keep in mind that while opposition election boycotts may increase pressure on incumbent regimes, incumbents are not passive. It is they who make the final decision to implement reforms, and/or invite international election observers. Incumbents employ many practices to deceive international election monitors and this behavior suggests how incumbents view political reform, therefore one might question whether either reforms or international observers will significantly increase the freedom and fairness of elections.

Beaulieu & Hyde (2005) give us some idea of how incumbents behave even when they have invited election monitors. Their work shows that, in most cases, incumbents attempt to bias the election in their favor without being caught by the observers. They employ subtle cheating tactics (prudent manipulation) in order to maintain their electoral advantage while, at the same time, attempting to signal electoral fairness to international aid donors. For this reason, we would not expect the presence of monitors in and of itself to result in the incumbent losing power. But the move from coarser to more refined forms of cheating may improve assessments of the overall freedom and fairness of future elections.

It seems reasonable to assume incumbents will strive to circumvent any reforms they feel pressured to enact, in the same way that they connive to work around international election observers. Reforms can be structured in such a way that they allow the incumbent to exercise an advantage. Some reforms may be blatant in their attempts to favor the incumbent, while others may be more ambiguous. Finally, some reforms might provide benefits to the opposition, but still allow the incumbent room to maneuver and maintain power.

With respect to reforms that favor the incumbent, Togo has instituted several such measures. After election boycotts in 1999 and 2002, the Togolese government enacted reforms that removed term limits from the presidency and extended the length of time that presidential candidates must have lived in Togo, thereby disqualifying one of the main opposition candidates. Although the nature of the reforms was economic and not political, Calvo & Gibson (2000) show how Argentinean governments were able to enact

potentially unpopular reforms by targeting particular regions, so that they maintained adequate support to win reelection.

To be sure, these examples of pronounced favoritism for the incumbent are not typical; there are more instances of reforms which are equivocal and whose effects are less clear. In Algeria, for example, following the 1995 election boycott, a new constitution was introduced that left opposition parties feeling disadvantaged. It is not clear, however, if their complaints resulted from an actual disadvantage or from their not having received as many concessions as they would have liked.⁸ According to CNN, the new constitution limited the presidency to two terms, but also expanded presidential powers. Particularly troubling to opposition parties, however, may have been the ban on political parties based on language or religion (*CNN.com* 2996).

In other cases, reforms genuinely seem to benefit the opposition. Indonesia experienced sweeping reforms to electoral law and presidential powers (not to mention the resignation of a long-time dictator) after the major election boycott of 1997. Haiti gained a new, independent electoral management body after the 2000 boycott. After the 1996 boycott in Bangladesh, an amendment was passed to install a neutral, caretaker government for all future elections. Following a major boycott in Mauritania in 1997, the government enacted a series of reforms: instituting public finance for political parties, moving to a proportional representation electoral system, reducing candidate fees, and redistricting based on population. Even in these cases, however, it is difficult to imagine

⁸ Human Rights Watch reported that political parties had minimal input in the drafting of the new constitution.

that the incumbent party would enact such reforms without some idea of how its own electoral success might be maintained.

The ambiguity of most political reforms, along with the incumbent's ability to adapt to even unambiguous reform, makes it difficult to predict the effect they will have on objective assessments of electoral fairness. The relationship between political reform and alternation is equally complicated, even if we assume only truly democratic reform, because of the effects that reform may have on domestic opinion. If an incumbent does not reform, the rules will favor a return of the incumbent to office, but his popularity may decline if reform was important to the domestic audience. If an incumbent does reform, on the other hand, he may increase his popularity with voters, but his own chances for reelection might have been harmed by the reform. In either case, it is difficult to know whether the outcome of the election will be determined by the effect of reform (or lack thereof), or subsequent changes in voter popularity.

Finally, the more direct effects of major election boycotts on incumbent success in the next election are also unclear. Apart from their effects on reform and monitor invitation, major election boycotts likely have some effect on domestic public opinion. This public opinion (represented by the bottom-most arrow in figure 5.1) will likely have consequences for the incumbent's electoral fortunes in the next election. It is possible that a major opposition boycott may hurt the incumbent's credibility with voters, making him less popular and less likely to be reelected. The incumbent may be able to counter some of this diminished popularity by enacting reforms or inviting monitors.

Recent work by Simpson (2005), however, suggests a different possibility altogether. Simpson's work on electoral fraud suggests that incumbents use fraud to

signal their electoral strength, and that in clientelistic countries (where the electorate is “favor-seeking”) many voters want to support the strongest candidate. If a major election boycott reveals electoral fraud, which signals strength, then the boycott may actually work to bolster support for the incumbent in the next election.

The above discussion outlines the ways in which major election boycotts can motivate democratic change, and how that change (and boycotts themselves) might, in turn, have consequences for democracy. Major boycotts attract the attention of international and domestic audiences. One or both of these audiences, in turn, press for either of the two basic types of democratic change: changes to the law, or enforcement of existing laws. While these changes may have consequences for democracy, my theory has shown how the consequences are likely to be ambiguous. The same can be said for the direct effect of major boycotts on democracy – it is not clear if they will reduce the popularity of the incumbent by revealing corruption, or increase it (as Simpson would predict).

Other Possible Outcomes: Death Throes

Although I have thusfar argued for how major boycotts might effect positive changes for democracy, it was acknowledged at the outset of this chapter that major election boycotts may not, in fact, be positive. First, it is possible that major boycotts may have no discernable effect on democracy. If the process of democratic change breaks down at either of the first two stages outlined above, we might not observe any change associated with a major election boycott.

It is also possible that major election boycotts could be negative for democracy. A major election boycott may signal that the opposition is not merely opting out of the current election, but out of the electoral process altogether. If this is the case, democratic conditions might actually worsen following an election boycott. The notion that a boycott signals opposition to the electoral process rather than specific electoral conditions is not consistent with the explanations major boycotters provide for their actions. But this does not mean it is entirely impossible that a major boycott might have negative consequences for democracy. In the next section, hypotheses will be developed to test the notion that major election boycotts signal the “death throes” of democracy.

Testing the Theory

We can use the theory outlined above to generate a series of hypotheses, concerning the effects of major boycotts, which will be tested using original data. Although they are not stated, I will also generate corresponding null hypotheses for minor boycotts. From the first portion of the theory, I will generate two hypotheses concerning the relationship between major boycotts and democratic changes. Next, from the second major step in the theory, I will generate four hypotheses concerning the effects of these changes on measures of democracy, and finally I will generate two hypotheses concerning the direct effects of major boycotts on changes in domestic opinion and, consequently, levels of democracy.

Based on pressure from domestic and international sources, we can construct the following two hypotheses:

H₁: *Major election boycotts should increase the probability of political reform.*

H₂: *Major election boycotts should increase the probability that international election monitors are present at the next election.*

If major boycotts do, in fact lead to the above democratic changes, then the next step is to assess whether or not these changes have further consequences for democracy. If monitor presence and political reforms actually work to increase the probability of a free and fair election, then we should expect to see assessments of freedom and fairness improve. To that end, we will test the following hypotheses:

H₃: *Political reforms should decrease levels of electoral unfairness in the next election.*

H₄: *Invitation of international election observers should decrease the levels of electoral unfairness in the next election.*

Since the relationship between reform and/or observers and alternation at the next election is so ambiguous, we will simply test the null hypothesis for both cases:

H₅: *No relationship exists between political reforms and the incumbent party's probability of being returned to office in the following election.*

H₆: *No relationship exists between invitation of international election observers and the incumbent party's probability of being returned to office in the following election.*

Similar ambiguity exists with respect to changes in public opinion caused by a major boycott and alternation at the next election. No relationship is expected between changes in public opinion resulting from a boycott and evaluations of electoral unfairness at the following election. Accordingly, the null hypothesis will be tested for both these cases.

H₇: *There is no relationship between public opinion following a major boycott and levels of electoral unfairness in the following election.*

H₈: *There is no relationship between public opinion following a major boycott and the incumbent party's probability of being returned to office in the following election.*

Finally, to test competing arguments that major boycotts are actually bad for democracy, we will examine whether or not major election boycotts are followed by a deterioration of democracy.

H₉: *Major election boycotts increase the probability of a democratic crisis or interruption.*

Data and Operationalization

The data used to test these hypotheses come from two original sets. Hypothesis two will be tested using the same data set from chapter three (here referred to as the “large” data set). These data consist of all elections in developing countries from 1990 through 2002.⁹ The remaining eight hypotheses will be tested using a new data set (the “small” data set). This second data set consists of 134 observations on elections in developing countries. Developing countries are defined as those countries that receive foreign aid. The observations contain all sixty-four instances of election boycott, as well as a 20 percent random sample of non-boycotted elections. The variables have been operationalized in the following fashion.

Both independent variables are dichotomous, as they were when they were dependent variables in chapter three. Major boycott equals one if a plurality or more of the opposition and at least one main opposition party boycotted, zero otherwise. Minor boycott equals one if a boycott occurred that was not major, and zero otherwise. These

⁹ The total number of observations is 533 elections (433 in developing countries).

two independent variables will each be used in four separate tests to examine the following four dependent variables.

The measure of political reform to be used to test hypotheses one, three, and five, has been constructed from an exhaustive search of *Keesing's Record of World Events*, and major news sources in Lexis Nexis. For each of the 140 elections, I searched for evidence of reform up until the following election (or January 2005).¹⁰ Only enacted reforms were counted. Rhetoric or meetings on the topic of reform did not qualify unless actual legislation was passed. Thus, the variable for reform is dichotomous, equal to one if reform occurred before the next election, and zero otherwise.

Operationalizations of monitor invitation and electoral unfairness come directly from the chapter three data set. Monitor presence at the next election is simply the lagged variable for monitor invitation. It is still a dichotomous variable, equal to one if monitors are present at the next election, and equal to zero otherwise. This measure will be used to test hypotheses two, four, and six. Freedom house measures for the next election year are used to create future measures of electoral unfairness, and a control of current level of unfairness is included, to see if evaluations generally improve or not. The measure of electoral unfairness will be used to test hypotheses three, four, and eight.

For changes in domestic opinion, I use the proxy of whether or not a major boycott occurred. This is an imperfect measure as it does not provide any actual information about domestic opinion, but my assertion is that major boycotts should have an effect on public opinion independent of the effect they have on reform or monitor

¹⁰ Some elections held in 2001 or 2002 have not yet held another election, so January 2005 was the cut-off date for reform implementation.

invitation. Accordingly, when we control for political reforms and monitor invitation (as I will when testing the two hypotheses that concern changes in public opinion) any residual effect of major boycotts should reflect the impact they have on public opinion. The proxy of major boycott will be included to test hypotheses seven and eight.

The variable for future incumbent success was compiled based on information from *Keesing's Record of World Events*, as well as the data handbooks *Elections in Africa* and *Elections in Asia & the Pacific*. The dependent variable is dichotomous and equals one if the incumbent party is returned to power, zero otherwise. In presidential systems, stating that the incumbent party is returned to power means the incumbent party retains the presidency; in parliamentary systems it means that the incumbent party retains control of government. If the system is mixed, presidential and parliamentary, then the incumbent retains, or increases, whatever power it had in the previous election. Notice that the measure here is based on incumbent party, rather than individuals. This avoids any complications that might have arisen from term limits on candidates in presidential systems. This emphasis on party over individual is defensible because it reflects the reality of presidential systems in developing countries. Often, when individuals cede the presidency, they continue to exert influence over the office because another member of their party, frequently hand-picked by the outgoing president, has taken control. This measure is used to test hypotheses five, six, and seven.

Finally, democratic crisis or interruption was coded based on accounts from *Keesing's Record of World Events* and newspaper reports in Lexis Nexis. A dichotomous variable was constructed and equaled one if the country experienced some inerruption of

democracy—including a coup, suspension of the constitution, civil war, or a halt to government activity due to conflict—before the next election.

Results

Results from the series of statistical tests performed in this chapter are grouped and reported by their corresponding hypotheses. In some cases, as with table 5.3, a particular statistical analysis addresses only one hypothesis. In other cases, such as tables 5.5 and 5.6, one regression can be used to address several hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: Reform before next election

Table 5.3 presents the regression results testing hypothesis 1, that major boycotts increase the probability of reform before the next election. Included in this regression are controls for regional fixed effects and for previous levels of unfairness. The positive sign

Table 5.3 Probability of Reform Before the Next Election

Independent Variables	Estimated Coefficients	Robust Standard Errors
Constant	-2.900**	.6687
Major Boycott	1.722*	.7578
Unfairness	.0417	.0265
Africa	-1.753	1.061
Middle East	-1.090	1.181
Asia	-1.050	1.168
Latin America	.6442	.8704
Number of Observations	109	
Wald Chi2 (6)	23.47	
Prob > Chi2	0.0007	
Log pseudo-likelihood	-36.095	
Pseudo R2	0.17	

Small data set (134 possible observations)

* = $p > .05$, two-tailed z test

** = $p > .01$, two-tailed z test

Europe used as the reference category for regional effects.
Standard Errors adjusted for clustering on country.

and statistical significance of the coefficient for major boycott suggest that major boycotts are associated with an increased probability of political reform, controlling for any region-specific influences on reform, and for the fact that countries with higher levels of unfairness are probably more likely to undertake reform. These findings corroborate the uncontrolled relationship demonstrated in table 5.2, and do not allow us to reject hypothesis one.¹¹

Hypothesis 2: Monitors at next election

Although table 5.1 (pg.129) showed an uncontrolled comparison of major boycotts and international election observer presence at the following election, table 5.4 provides a logit regression that controls for monitor presence at the previous election.¹² It seems reasonable to expect that countries who have invited monitors in the past will be

Table 5.4 Probability of Monitors Invited to the Next Election

Independent Variables	Estimated Coefficients	Robust Standard Errors
Constant	-1.203	.2292
Major Boycott	1.375*	.6279
Monitors at current election	2.839***	.3739
Number of Observations	250	
Wald Chi2 (1)	57.91	
Prob > Chi2	0.00	
Log pseudo-likelihood	-123.93	
Pseudo R2	0.285	

Large data set (433 possible observations) Standard Errors adjusted for clustering on country.

* = p > .05, two-tailed z test

** = p > .01, two-tailed z test

*** = p > .001, two-tailed z test

¹¹ A separate test was done in which Gandhian and Fearonian Boycotts were distinguished. Both types of boycott increased the probability of political reform – Gandhian with one-tailed statistical significance, and Fearonian with two-tailed significance.

¹² The difference between number of observations and possible observations is due to missing data on international observation at the next election.

more likely to do so for future elections. When previous invitation of monitors is controlled for, however, we still find the relationship between major boycotts and monitor invites to the next election, as predicted by hypothesis two. The positive, significant coefficient for major boycotts suggests that, controlling for previous monitor presence, a major boycott increases the probability that international election observers will be invited to the next election. On the basis of these findings, we are not able to reject hypothesis two.¹³

Hypotheses 3, 4, & 7: Objective measures of unfairness at next election

Table 5.5 shows a linear regression of measures of electoral unfairness at the next election, taking in to account political reform, monitor invitation, and a major boycott in

Independent Variables	Estimated Coefficients	Robust Standard Errors
Constant	2.404	1.029
Political Reform	-2.801	2.254
Monitors Invited	-1.113	1.288
Previous Major Boycott	.2929	1.6916
Unfairness	.8763797***	.04439
Number of Observations	74	
F(4, 49)	114.46	
Prob > F	0.000	
R-squared	0.083	
Root MSE	5.498	
Number of country clusters	50	

Small Data set (134 possible observations)

Standard Errors adjusted for clustering on country.

* = $p > .05$, two-tailed z test

** = $p > .01$, two-tailed z test

*** = $p > .001$, two-tailed z test

¹³ Once again, when separated, both Gandhian and Fearonian boycotts increase the probability that monitors will be invited to the next election.

the previous election.¹⁴ Here major boycott is used as a proxy to capture changes in public opinion that do not result from political reform or the invitation of international election observers. I also control for the measure of electoral unfairness at the previous election. This measure of previous unfairness appears to have the only statistically significant relationship to future measures of electoral unfairness.

While political reforms and monitor invitation both have negative coefficients, which indicate that they decrease electoral unfairness as hypotheses three and four suggest, neither of these coefficients is statistically significant.¹⁵ The lack of a statistically significant relationship between major boycotts and electoral unfairness reflects the prediction of hypothesis seven, that changes in public opinion would not be related to objective assessments of electoral unfairness at the next election. Based on these findings we must reject hypotheses three and four, but we are unable to reject hypothesis seven.

Hypotheses 5, 6 & 8: Incumbent performance at next election

Table 5.6 (pg.148) presents a test of the three remaining hypotheses, concerning the effects of public opinion and democratic changes on alternation in office.¹⁶ Here I used a logit regression to test the probability that the incumbent party would be returned to office given political reforms, invitation of monitors and any changes in public opinion

¹⁴ The difference between number of observations and possible observations is due to missing data on measures of unfairness. Some of this is due to missing data in Freedom House, but the main reason is that Freedom House does not have observations beyond 2000 at the time these data were collected.

¹⁵ A joint test of political reform and monitor invitation also does not reveal a statistically significant difference from zero.

resulting from a major boycott. Once again we find no statistically significant relationship between reform or monitor invitation and the incumbent's chances for reelection. The negative values of the coefficients associated with each of these variables, however, suggest that political reforms and monitor invitation decrease the chances of the incumbent party being reelected (albeit, to an insignificant degree).¹⁷

These findings do not allow us to reject hypotheses five and six, both of which posited a null relationship.

Table 5.6 Probability Incumbent Party is returned to Office in Next Election

Independent Variables	Estimated Coefficients	Robust Standard Errors
Constant	.2522	.3225
Political Reform	-.9815	.7537
Monitors Invited	-.0934	.4737
Previous Major Boycott	1.5036**	.5559
Number of Observations	102	
Wald Chi2 (3)	7.59	
Prob > Chi2	.0553	
Log pseudo-likelihood	-61.707	
Pseudo R2	.0763	

Small Data Set (134 possible observations)

Standard Errors adjusted for clustering on country.

* = p > .05, two-tailed z test

** = p > .01, two-tailed z test

*** = p > .001, two-tailed z test

The positive, significant coefficient associated with major boycotts provides support for Simpser's assertions concerning fraud as a signal of strength, and the electorate's desire to support a winner. This finding suggests that apart from its influence on political reforms or election monitor invitation, a major boycott exposes corruption, which provides the electorate with an indication of the incumbent's strength. Since

¹⁶ The difference between possible and actual observations here is due to missing data concerning the performance of the incumbent party in the next election. In all but two cases, this data is missing because the observation is late in the time period, and the country has not had a subsequent election.

favor-seeking electorates want to support the strongest candidate, a boycott actually causes the incumbent to garner more support in the electorate. Here then we must reject hypothesis eight, which posited a null relationship between the effect of a major boycott on public opinion and the incumbent's chances of reelection. The findings here indicate that, independent of its effect on political reforms or monitor invitation, a major boycott actually increases the probability that the incumbent party will be returned to office.

Hypothesis 9: Death Throes of Democracy

Having tested a series of hypotheses related to the various potentially positive effects of major election boycotts, the final hypothesis to be tested investigates the possibility that major election boycotts will have negative consequences for democracy.

Table 5.7 Probability that Election is Followed by Democratic Breakdown

Variable	Estimated Coefficients	Robust Standard Errors
Major Boycott	.1674	.6547
Years democratic (since 1900)	-.0059	.0157
GDP per capita	-.0002	.0001
Africa	.4206	1.034
Mideast	-.8928	1.339
Asia-Pacific	.5158	1.244
Americas	.3432	1.249
Constant	-.5614	1.216
N	88	
Wald Chi2 (7)	10.42	
Prob > Chi2	.1657	
Pseudo R2	.1237	
Log pseudo-likelihood	-41.331	

Standard errors adjusted for clustering on country.
Europe is the reference category for regional effects.

¹⁷ Again, a joint test of political reform and monitor invitation does not reflect a statistically significant difference from zero.

Table 5.7 shows the results of a logit regression where the dependent variable is whether or not a democratic crisis or interruption occurs before the next election. Here we see that when we control for years democratic, GDP per capita, and regional effects, major boycotts have a slightly positive, but insignificant effect on democratic breakdown.

Fearonian vs. Gandhian Boycotts

As mentioned in previous footnotes, separate tests found that distinguishing between Gandhian and Fearonian boycotts did not change the substantive effects of major boycotts on political reform or invitation of international election observers to the next election. This finding is not entirely surprising, given that both types of major boycotters are interested in improving fairness in future elections. Thus, we would not expect their ultimate aims to differ, even if their means of achieving those aims do take divergent paths. The evidence in the chapter suggests that while the distinction between Fearonian and Gandhian boycotts is certainly useful for understanding how different oppositions arrive at the decision to boycott, and how those boycotts affect the elections in which they occur, it does not help us understand how major election boycotts ultimately affect democracy. As a final note, the distinction between Gandhian and Fearonian boycotts also has no bearing on democratic interruptions, as both types of boycott are unrelated to future democratic breakdown.

Minor Boycotts Revisited

The same set of regressions was run, substituting minor boycotts for major. No significant relationships were uncovered. Minor boycotts are not related to instances of political reform or monitor invitation, and they do not appear to have an effect on public opinion that matters for either objective evaluations of electoral unfairness or future incumbent success. Finally, minor boycotts are also unrelated to future democratic interruption.

Death Throes of Democracy

The preceding tests show that major boycotts have some real consequences for democracy in the countries where they occur and they also suggest that those consequences are largely positive. The rejection of hypothesis 9, which suggested that major boycotts would increase the probability of democratic breakdown, further strengthens the argument that major election boycotts do not have negative long-term consequences for democracy. Thus, major boycotts are probably not most accurately viewed as the death throes of democracy.

Conclusion

Election boycotts appear to have some positive results for democracy, at least where inputs to democracy are concerned. They increase the involvement of the international democracy promotion community; and they increase the probability for political reform. Yet, boycotts do not produce alternation in power, which is the most stringent indicator of free and fair elections. Nor do they appear to affect objective

assessments of future levels of electoral unfairness. Are the monitors dupes and the reforms shams? Not necessarily.

First, international monitors focus on gross violations of electoral democracy, such as bribery and intimidation. This leaves open a wide field of more sophisticated techniques, such as malapportionment and gerrymandering, by which incumbents can entrench themselves in power (Beaulieu and Hyde 2005). Although malapportionment and gerrymandering are far from electoral democracy's finest hour, they are a step up from winning elections through outright bribery or physical violence. Furthermore, international election observers are continuously improving their observation techniques. This means that their presence should continue to discourage cheating, or at least require consistently more sophisticated forms of it.

Second, one might suppose that the reforms too focus on the grossest violations of electoral democracy. Even if they are effective in ensuring, say, that votes are counted fairly, they may still leave a government-dominated press, a pattern of district magnitudes designed to divide the opposition, or electoral thresholds designed to reduce minority representation—to take just three examples of tactics used in “developed” electoral democracies.

Finally, the aggregate measure of electoral unfairness may be too coarse to reflect democratic improvements according to Dahl. In some instances, political reform or monitor invitation can increase the number of democratic guarantees in a given country, which would also increase the extent to which they are democratic, in Dahl's terms. If the invitation of international election monitors, as the result of a major boycott, leads to more free expression, or political leaders competing for votes, where these guarantees

were previously absent, then the country could be considered more democratic, even if our two distal measures of democracy are not affected. Similarly, if political reforms lead to alternative sources of information, or allow for the formation of organizations, even if such changes do not result in a change in government after the next election, then the country would still be more democratic according to the criteria set forth by Dahl. Therefore, while countries may not demonstrate free and fair elections by the strict criterion of alternation in power, they may still be more democratic as a result of major election boycotts.

Furthermore, this chapter has shown that deleterious effects do not appear to follow from major election boycotts. Although it is true that opposition parties are temporarily opting out of the democratic process, they do not appear to be abandoning democracy altogether. Major boycotts are not the death throes of democracy.

Thus, major boycotts, and the monitors and reforms they appear to stimulate, can be viewed as the birth pangs that electoral democracies must endure as they work at better approximating, albeit still imperfectly, the ideal of free and fair elections. From this perspective, one does not expect immediate effects on the probability of alternation from either monitors or reforms (since the current incumbents must agree to either). But monitors and reforms may still raise the bar slightly, so that the next round of political contestation will require more subtle forms of electoral trickery.

The results concerning the direct relationship between election boycotts and the future electoral success of incumbents seem to underscore the importance of the international aid community. The fact that major boycotts appear to increase an incumbent's chances of reelection, controlling for any reforms that may have been

enacted or monitors that may have been invited, suggests that domestic audiences are not regularly responding to boycotts by pressing incumbents for change. Instead, it appears that developing countries are being guided through these birth pangs of democracy by international midwives, who push for multiparty elections, push for those elections to be fairer, and offer their own observations and assessments of the process.

Although these views might certainly be overly optimistic for any given case, one should recall that virtually all established democracies have had a long history of dirty tricks at election time, with meaningful movement toward the free and fair ideal often coming in increments, rather than all at once. Thus, despite a lack of alternation, or overall improvements in fairness, the fact that boycotts are stimulating reform and attracting international attention should be seen as positive moves toward democracy, irrespective of the country's starting point.

Elections do not a democracy make, but they do open up a space for contestation and strategic interaction between opposition and incumbent. In established democracies, this strategy and contestation takes place within the context of electoral competition. In other countries that are either not, or not fully, democratic this strategy and contestation manifests in other forms, like the opposition election boycott. Strategic moves such as the election boycott are clearly painful for developing countries to endure, but I have shown here that they do not herald in the death throes of democracy. Instead, election boycotts appear to stimulate positive, if modest, changes, which may ultimately result in the birth of full-fledged democracy.

Appendix 5a**Description of Data and Variables**

The data for tables 5.3, 5.5, 5.6 & 5.7 in chapter five are comprised of a subset of the data from chapter three. They consist of all observations in which a major or minor election boycott occurred, as well as a 20 percent random sample of non-boycotted observations. Additional measures were collected for each of the 130 observation in this data set. The data from chapter three are used for table 5.4 which examines how major boycotts affect the probability that monitors will be invited to the next election.

Variable	Description	N	Mean	St. dev	Min	Max
Major Boycott	=1 if major boycott occurred; 0 otherwise	130	.338	.475	0	1
Previous Major Boycott	=1 if major boycott occurred in previous election; 0 otherwise	119	.176	.383	0	1
Political Reform	=1 if political reform reported enacted before the next election (or 2005); 0 otherwise	130	.107	.311	0	1
Monitors invited	=1 if monitors known invited to next election; 0 otherwise	339	.386	.488	0	1
Previous Invitation of Monitors	=1 if monitors invited to current election; 0 otherwise	443	.395	.489	0	1
Incumbent Reelected	=1 if incumbent party returned to power; 0 otherwise	101	.634	.484	0	1
Unfairness at Next Election	Value 1-49 representing level of unfairness at the next election	74	17.61	13.50	1	49
Unfairness	Value 1-49 representing level of unfairness at current election	107	18.93	13.92	1	49

Variable	Source
Major Boycott	See Appendix 3a
Previous Major Boycott	See above
Political Reform	Author's own collection in <i>Keesing's Record of World Events</i> , and Lexis Nexis, using search terms [<i>country</i>] & <i>reform</i> (in <i>World News, Major Papers</i> for Lexis Nexis) for period between elections or up until 2005.
Monitors invited	Susan Hyde
Previous Invitation of Monitors	See Above
Incumbent Reelected	Nohlen Volumes, <i>Keesing's Record of World Events</i> for relevant election years in each country
Unfairness at Next Election	Freedom House scores used as they were to construct the original unfairness variable (see Appendix 3a)
Unfairness	See Appendix 3a

JAMAICA AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

This chapter puts to use the theories and findings of the previous chapters to analyze two country cases: Jamaica and the Dominican Republic. An investigation of elections in both of these countries will enable comparisons between the two cases, as well as comparisons with the broader framework and statistical analyses established in previous chapters. My two cases were chosen in the style of a most similar case design, so as to control for several key variables naturally. Jamaica and the Dominican Republic are both island nations in the Caribbean, which controls for regional differences. They both have a colonial history and similar levels of democratization. Although their democratic institutions are formally different—Jamaica is a parliamentary system, the Dominican Republic is presidential—in practical terms, they function in very similar fashions, with the party that wins the chief executive position able to exercise virtually unchecked power in the country. Finally, both countries had experienced periods of democratic alternation of power immediately before the elections in question .

During the Jamaican election of 1983, the main opposition party staged a major boycott. In the winter and spring of 2005, I conducted field work in Jamaica, interviewing politicians and collecting data from archives, to explain why the boycott happened and also to document its immediate and long-term effects.

In 1990 and 1994, the Dominican Republic held national elections that were fraught with controversy, yet no election boycotts occurred. I conducted fieldwork to explain why no boycotts occurred in the Dominican Republic during this time period, even though circumstances were such that they might have been expected. I also

examined the aftermath of these Dominican elections, to compare their outcomes to Jamaica's, and to my broader findings on the effects of boycotts.

Before turning my attention to the details of each particular case, I would like to establish a framework that will guide the accounts contained in this chapter. Three crucial aspects of each case will be emphasized, to parallel the three main points of inquiry detailed in this dissertation. First, I will examine the causes for boycott (or lack of boycott), and determine the extent to which the key causal factors posited in chapter three were present in Jamaica, and absent in the Dominican Republic. Examining why election boycotts did not occur in the Dominican Republic in the early 1990s will also serve to highlight the different paths of participation that parties might choose, when faced with the decision to boycott or participate in the election.

The second aspect of each case to be analyzed concerns how the major boycott in Jamaica affected the election during which it occurred. I will compare the Jamaican case to my findings in chapter four. Here the Dominican case will work to control for the possibility that we might observe similar patterns even in elections where no boycott occurred. This portion of the investigation will show the Jamaican boycott to be Gandhian.

Finally, the long-term effects of each case will be analyzed. I will assess the extent to which the Jamaican boycott had an effect on democratization in that country, and describe Dominican democratization in the absence of election boycotts.

In Jamaica, we would expect to find a strong opposition and electoral unfairness in the lead-up to the 1983 election. With respect to the immediate effects of boycott discussed in chapter four, if the Jamaican boycott follows more general patterns for major

Gandhian election boycotts, we will expect a peaceful boycott accompanied by a decline in voter turnout. Finally, where the long-term effects of boycotts are concerned, if the 1983 election boycott in Jamaica had positive consequences for democratization in the country, we would expect to see evidence of reform and/or invitation of monitors to subsequent elections, greater electoral fairness in the future, and alternation in office in subsequent elections.

In the case of Dominican elections in 1990 and 1994, where no boycotts occurred, our expectations are reversed. If my theory regarding the causes of major and minor boycotts is correct, I would expect to find an absence of those conditions that cause major boycotts (and conditions that cause minor boycotts as well). To that end, if I find the elections were very unfair and the opposition was also very strong, my theory concerning why major boycotts occur will be impugned. Similarly, if I find no provisions for party finance and a strong dependence on foreign aid, then the lack of minor boycotts in the Dominican elections of 1990 and 1994 should cause us to question my explanation for why minor boycotts occur. As far as the immediate and long-term effects of boycotts are concerned, the Dominican elections will serve as a kind of control case. By examining the same immediate and long-term aspects as I do in the Jamaica case, we will discover the extent to which the same observations might be possible even without a boycott. Put differently, an examination of features of the Dominican elections such as voter turnout or subsequent political reform will help us to control for the possibility that something other than a boycott could generate the same effects in the same region.

Jamaica

Jamaica held its first independent election in 1962. Since independence, the country's government has been modeled after Britain's Westminster parliamentary system, where two main parties compete for control of government in legislative elections. The People's National Party (PNP), founded in 1938, is the left-of-center party, while the Jamaica Labor Party (JLP), founded in 1943, represents more conservative interests. Over the course of the country's independence each party has controlled government. Prior to the 1983 election, for example, the PNP government had been defeated in 1980 by the JLP.

Although elections did not need to be called until 1985, Edward Seaga, then prime minister of Jamaica and leader of the ruling JLP, decided to call early elections in 1983. Political observers cite several key factors motivating the decision to call early elections.

First, because of pressure from the IMF, the JLP needed to implement a series of economic austerity measures that would undoubtedly be unpopular with voters. Rather than enact such measures and hope to recover in time for elections in 1985, the JLP preferred to have a fresh 5 year term in which to make the adjustments.

Second, the JLP's domestic popularity was waning. The PNP was regaining some of the popularity it had lost around the time of the 1980 elections, and it appeared a PNP victory might be all but guaranteed in two years time. Thus, early elections offered a better chance at reelection for the JLP and another five years in office.

Finally, geo-political events had caused a temporary upswing in support for the government, upon which the JLP sought to capitalize. In October of 1983, hard-line Marxists in the military assassinated Maurice Bishop, leader of Grenada's leftist government since 1979. Hard liners were unhappy with Bishop's recent decisions to soften his stance toward the US. His assassination sparked a crisis, and groups within Grenada, as well as neighboring countries, asked the US, Jamaica and Barbados to intervene. Jamaica sent troops and the country stood behind Seaga and the JLP in this decision. Anti-communist sentiment was high, which did not bode well for the PNP with its long-standing ties to Cuba. Seaga called elections, in part, to capitalize on the anti-communist/pro-government sentiments that the Grenada crisis had created.

Three days after the elections were announced, the People's National Party, led by Michael Manley, declared it would not be participating in the upcoming elections. In calling early elections, the PNP argued, Seaga was violating an agreement that had been struck between the two parties regarding the conditions under which the next election would be carried out. Although the election was legal from a constitutional standpoint, it was not legitimate—according to the PNP—because its timing did not allow for the previous agreement between the parties to be honored. It was this alleged illegitimacy that led the PNP to label the election “bogus” and to stage a boycott.

The agreement cited by the boycotting PNP stipulates three conditions that should be met before the next election was held. First, voter rolls were to be updated each year. Second, “integrity equipment” was to be introduced to minimize the possibility of

individuals voting more than once.¹ And finally, a system of voter identification including an identity card with photograph was to be implemented (Manley 1984).

This agreement had been reached prior to the 1980 elections, when the PNP still controlled government, as a set of unanimous decisions promulgated by the newly created independent electoral committee. The committee was established at the end of 1978 with the understanding that because representatives from both parties sat—along with independent members—on the committee, any unanimous decisions made by the committee would become binding to both parties (Robertson 2005).

The 1980 elections were held without the third criterion (photo IDs) in place, after the opposition had agreed to contest the election. However, the electoral committee decided that no future elections should be held until all three conditions were met. According to an editorial published by Manley in early 1984, he feared in 1982 that the JLP was planning to disregard the 1980 agreement, and sought to challenge the Prime minister on the matter directly. During parliamentary deliberations on the 1983 budget, Manley, then opposition leader, raised the issue of the government completing the agreed-upon electoral reforms.

The government sought to assuage Manley's fears, first by responding directly to his budget speech while in parliament. Later the government responded with a formal statement. "On 1 May, 1983 Mr. Seaga issued a statement solemnly repeating that the government was absolutely committed to keep its pledge and that the photographing and ID card system would be in place for 'the next election (Manley 1984, 32).'" Ultimately,

¹ Manley describes this equipment as "a lamp and special ink", presumably a black light and iridescent paint that would be used to identify voters so that they could not vote more than once.

however, elections were called before the conditions of the agreement were met. The PNP argued that the JLP's willingness to hold elections before photo ids were in place was unethical, because it breached their existing agreement.

In addition to the issue of photo identification, another, arguably more important, aspect of the original agreement had been neglected. The voter rolls had not been updated since the 1980 election. The Election report for the 1983 election states, in fact, that the official list of electors used for the October 30, 1983 election was prepared from October 10th-13th, 1980 (Director of Elections 1985, 1). The JLP had called elections and planned to use this same registered voter list with which they won in 1980. According to Manley, this meant that at least 150,000 voters were being disenfranchised, and that the list contained another 100,000 names of people who had either died or migrated, presenting obvious opportunities for fraud (Manley 1984, 32). The fact that voter rolls were out of date made the elections unfair and the use of them a sign of fraud on the part of the JLP, in the eyes of the PNP.

The Decision to Boycott

The decision to boycott was reached at an emergency meeting of the PNP executive council on November 27, 1983. At the meeting, the question of boycott was put to a vote after a spirited debate of the issue. There were those who wanted to contest the elections, and those who believed a boycott was the appropriate action to take. But after Michael Manley announced that he would not continue to lead the party unless a boycott was undertaken, the results of a secret ballot came out 128-14 in favor of the boycott.

As the vote revealed, not everyone in the party was in favor of the boycott. Some believed that the PNP should participate in the election out of a commitment to democracy. Said Horace Clark, one of the nine PNP Members of Parliament at the time, “We offered ourselves to represent the people. And I don’t see any reason why we shouldn’t [participate in the election] (2005).” John Junor, a long-time PNP member and currently the Minister of Health, echoed this sentiment, arguing that it was important to preserve the democratic process, no matter how flawed. But Minister Junor had a second reason for not favoring a boycott in 1983—he thought that the PNP could win the election (2005).

Junor was not alone in his belief that the PNP could win the election. Recent polls showed the popularity of the PNP growing and that of the JLP waning. Terrence Gillette, another of the nine MPs for the PNP at the time, also wanted to contest the election. Not only because he felt he could retain his own seat, but because he thought the PNP was in a position to take government. According to Gillette, polls showed PNP popularity on the rise and indicated that Michael Manley was the most popular leader in the country (2005). Even Dr. Peter Phillips, Minister of National Security and long-time PNP member, who was in favor of the boycott at the time, admits now that there was a possibility the PNP could have won the election in 1983 (2005).

Possibilities of winning notwithstanding, Phillips argued that Manley and the majority of the PNP executive committee supported the boycott because it involved a matter of principle. There were concerns about future interaction between government and opposition, if the government were allowed to renege on an agreement. The position was also supported by PJ Patterson, the country’s current prime minister and a close

friend of Michael Manley in 1983, and echoed by Dr. Paul Robertson, who was the general secretary of the party at the time of the boycott. As did Manley, Dr. Robertson cited the specific problems with breaching the agreement (namely the out-of-date voter rolls) but also added, “If we yielded at that stage...there is no telling what they would do next (2005).”

In addition to matters of principle and unfairness considered by Manley and his close associates, it is clear that many PNP members supported the boycott because it was what Manley wanted to do. Once Manley announced that he would not lead the party, if they chose to contest the elections, it was evident that the boycott would proceed. According to Horace Clark, “The difference before he spoke and after he spoke, you could feel it (2005).” Once Manley spoke, the majority of those present were convinced that they needed to follow him, as Clark’s account of the final vote shows. “It came out definitively on the side of boycott and I think the people were swayed by the statement of the leader because at that time, nobody was going to care about changing the leader, or finding another to do it (2005).” Terrence Gillette expressed a similar sentiment, “With a leader like Michael Manley you hardly needed a vote. Once he said, something was (2005).”

Once the decision to boycott was made, every PNP member supported it. No one left the party. No one ran as an independent. Paul Robertson recalls one PNP member in the west who expressed a desire to stand in the election (not to run for reelection, as this person was not presently an MP) but decided not to do so after a visit from Michael Manley and Dr. Robertson (2005). Seymour Mullings was another of the nine PNP MPs

at the time of the boycott (an MP from 1969 to 2000) and he said that he had no problem accepting the boycott once the decision was made (2005).

Causes of the Boycott

In chapter three, I showed that major boycotts occur when electoral unfairness is high, and that boycotts are also more likely when an opposition is strong. The 1983 PNP boycott in Jamaica exemplifies the findings as both contributed strongly to the PNP's decision: the unfairness of the election, and the party's own electoral strength.

Unfairness

The unfairness to which the PNP was reacting in 1983 had two main components: the breach of a previous agreement, and the use of out-dated electoral lists that likely favored the incumbent. The JLP broke a previous agreement in such a way that the PNP would likely be disadvantaged in the upcoming election. Part of the concern for the PNP was the breach of the agreement, which did not bode well for the ability of government and opposition to reach binding agreements in the future. The specific implications of the broken agreement, namely that the electoral lists for the election would be those that the JLP used to win in 1980, also contributed to the overall unfairness of this election from the standpoint of the PNP.

Opposition Strength

As with unfairness, two factors stand out when the strength of the PNP is examined: its increasing popularity in the electorate, and the strength of its leadership.

Chapter three uses, as a proxy for how a party will perform in the next election, the number of seats held in the legislature. By this measure, the PNP would not appear particularly strong in 1983, after suffering such a sound defeat in 1980, but there are other indicators to suggest that by 1983 the PNP was, in fact, quite strong. First, national polls indicated that the PNP was gaining support in the electorate and was in a position to rival the JLP. Public opinion indicated that Michael Manley was the most popular political figure in the country. Finally, the PNP leadership at this time was very strong, and contributed to the overall cohesion and direction of the party. The decision to boycott shows quite clearly that Michael Manley was a strong leader capable of instilling confidence in the rank and file of his party. This strength of leadership not only steered the party toward a boycott, but enabled the party to see a future beyond the current election, which is the crucial element in the relationship between party strength and boycott.

Before turning to the boycott itself and its effects, I will examine one final, competing explanation for why the People's National Party chose to boycott the 1983 elections in Jamaica. Was it because they knew they would lose the election if they contested? The increasing support for the party in the electorate, and the popularity of Michael Manley do not seem to indicate that the PNP was sure it would lose. At the same time, however, the use of the same electoral list by which the JLP had won in 1980 may have led the PNP to believe it could not win. My interviews do not provide conclusive evidence to support the hypothesis that the PNP boycotted because they thought they would lose the election if they contested, however, they do not seem to falsify it.

Certain Loss: a competing explanation

I have four interviews that contain conjectures about how the party would have done had it contested the 1983 elections. Three of the four interviewees believed the PNP could have won, and one thought they would have lost. Three of these individuals opposed the boycott (but not the same three) and one supported it. Finally, two of the subjects were members of parliament at the time of the boycott. Although both MPs opposed the boycott—probably, at least in part, because they wished to retain their seat—they differ on their prognostications for how the PNP would have fared in the election.

Table 6.1. Four Interview Subjects: whether or not they were an MP in 1983; whether they opposed the boycott; whether they thought the PNP could win the election.

Interview subject	MP in 1983	Opposed Boycott	Thought PNP would win if contested
Junor		x	x
Gillette	x	x	x
Phillips			x
Clarke	x	x	

As table 6.1 shows, the first two subjects who opposed the boycott and believed the PNP could win the election. We could surmise they might support the argument that the PNP boycotted because they believed they would lose the election – if, in fact, it turned out that there was a correlation between opposing the boycott and belief about winning in the PNP as a whole. From that, we could conclude that since a majority supported the boycott, a majority also must have believed the PNP would lose the election if it contested. But the other two subjects, Phillips and Clarke, suggest that beliefs about winning and opposition to the boycott may not be correlated. Phillips

believed the PNP could have won the 1983 elections saying, “It would have been a close election to and from. But I think we would have been able to put the candidates together (2005).” At the same time, Phillips also supported the boycott, believing that it was an appropriate course of action. Horace Clarke, on the other hand was not in favor of the boycott, and also believed the race would be close, but that ultimately the JLP would prevail. In the end, this sample of four interviews is simply not large enough to infer whether or not the PNP boycotted because it believed it would lose the election. And while my findings do not necessarily falsify that hypothesis, they do cast doubt on the correlation of support for the boycott and beliefs about winning.

How the Boycott Unfolded: A Gandhian Boycott

When the PNP voted to boycott the election, they did not merely refrain from participating in the electoral contest. A great deal of effort was expended both during the election, and in the years that followed, to make sure that the PNP remained active in Jamaican politics. During the course of the boycott, PNP members held meetings to explain the reasons for the boycott to their supporters. They also exploited all available media outlets to get their message to the public.

Through press releases and grass-roots meetings, the PNP was able to dub the 1983 election a “bogus election”. They were allowed time for radio and television commercials on the Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation, even though they were not contesting the election (Robertson 1983). Besides denouncing and refusing to participate in the elections, the PNP also laid out a plan for how it would continue to serve

Jamaicans while it was not in parliament. In these ways, the PNP worked to cast the government as illegitimate and garner support among the electorate for the boycott.

The boycott of the December 15 election was peaceful. At the end of November, Michael Manley publicly emphasized, “that the Party will not be resorting to confrontationalist tactics and will not be conducting opposition in the streets (People’s National Party 1983).” In a meeting at Half Way Tree the following day Manley reiterated this point, saying:

We have not started any trouble nor will we and I say to all of you with all the authority of my leadership, you’re to be absolutely disciplined. We seek no confrontation and what we are going to do is within the law and within the Constitution. If they bring problem to us, no man move unless you hear the word from me (*Daily Gleaner* 1983).

Despite attempts on the part of the JLP to suggest that the PNP was planning violent reprisal, the PNP continued to emphasize its nonviolent stance (in a letter to the Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation, for example). The election came and went without any noteworthy violence. Although mention of at least some election violence is common in all other Jamaican election reports, it is conspicuously absent from the 1983 report.

Immediate Effects of the Boycott

The Jamaican boycott unfolded in a way that may not be typical of all boycotts. Clearly, the party remained very disciplined and focused, both during and after the boycott. But we might wonder if the effects of the boycott reflect the general patterns revealed earlier in chapters four and five. In this section we will turn our attention to the immediate effects of the Jamaican boycott, and examine voter turnout and the level of violence associated with the election.

Turnout

At the national level, voter turnout was notably reduced in the 1983 election as a by-product of the way the election was administrated. No electoral contests were held in constituencies where only a single (JLP) candidate was presented for the seat. Since the PNP and the JLP are the two main parties in Jamaica, this meant that fifty four of the sixty districts in the country did not hold actual elections. Elections were held in the six districts where independent or third-party candidates chose to challenge the JLP. Given these circumstances, national turnout would naturally be lower, as only a fraction of the population was given the opportunity to vote. Accordingly, in 1983 turnout at the national level dropped from 84.5percent in the previous (1980) election, to 28.9 percent in 1983, and rebounded to 77.5 percent in the following election of 1989 (Director of Elections 1993).

Because low turnout at the national level can be attributed to an institutional feature of Jamaican electoral administration, the only way to assess the effect that the boycott had on voter's turnout decisions is to examine those constituencies in which voting occurred. Voter turnout in the six districts that held elections in 1983 can be compared to turnout in those same districts both before and after the boycott. Such an examination reveals that the PNP boycott did, in fact, discourage voter turnout among those voters who had the opportunity to vote.

Although the six districts that held elections in 1983 had an average turnout that is slightly higher than the national average, the drop in turnout for the boycotted election parallels the drop in turnout at the national level.²

Figure 6.1 (pg.173) shows the average turnout in the six districts where elections were held in 1983. From the figure, we see that 87 percent of registered voters turned out to vote in 1980, compared to only 30 percent in 1983. Turnout in those districts climbed back up to 82.5 percent of registered voters in 1989. Within these six districts, however, one might wonder whether turnout varied, depending on levels of support for the PNP in the district.

Figure 6.2 (pg.174) shows both average turnout since 1962 and turnout during the boycott in each of the six districts in question. The districts are organized by previous PNP control of the district. Here control is measured by the number of times the PNP won that district, divided by the number of total elections prior to 1983, and expressed as a decimal point. In terms of PNP control, then, the districts range from Saint James East Central where the PNP had taken the district in approximately 1/3 of all elections (.33), to St. Ann South Eastern where the PNP was historically dominant, winning the district in every election up to 1983 (1.00).

Turnout in 1983 was consistently low across all six districts and did not vary markedly with the extent to which the PNP enjoyed support in the constituency. Turnout was lowest (25 percent) in St. Ann South Eastern, a seat the PNP had always controlled.

² The six districts are: Kingston West Central, St. Andrew West Central, St. Ann South Eastern, St. James East Central, St. Mary Western, Westmoreland Western.

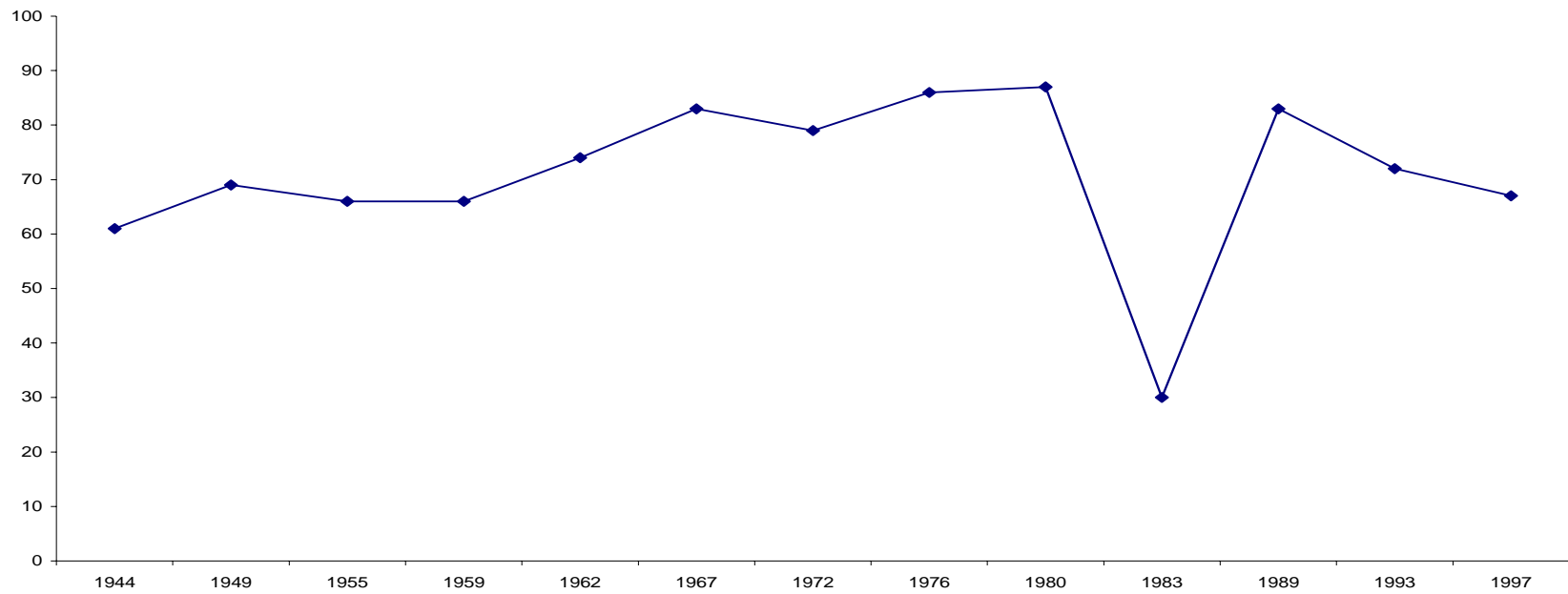


Figure 6.1
Average Voter Turnout in the six Jamaican districts that held elections in 1983

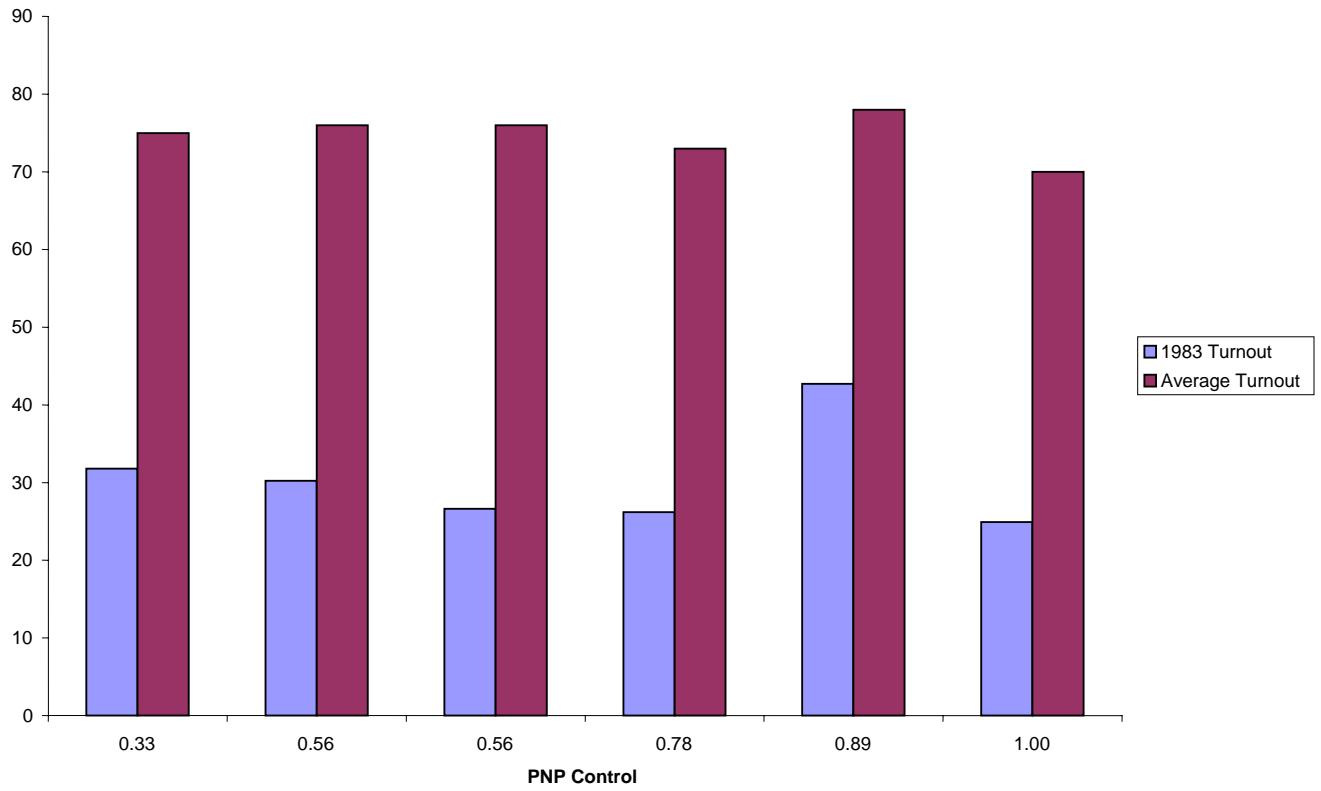


Figure 6.2
1983 Turnout compared to average turnout in six districts, by level of PNP control

At the same time, however, the highest turnout in 1983 (43 percent) came from Kingston West Central, which had also been dominated by the PNP (.89). In sum, no clear pattern linking reduced turnout to PNP support emerges. Although figure 6.2 does not reveal a linear pattern of PNP support and voter turnout, the difference between average and boycott turnouts across the six districts clearly demonstrates that the boycott caused many voters to stay away from the polls in 1983.

Given the lack of correlation between support for PNP candidates and turnout, we cannot simply assume that turnout was reduced in support of the boycott, it is also possible that turnout was lower not because individuals felt moved to support the boycott, but rather because the elimination of PNP candidates effectively guaranteed a victory for JLP candidates. Many scholars have argued that closeness in an election race will stimulate turnout.³ With JLP candidates winning at least 70 percent of the vote in all six districts, the margin of victory further supports the idea that turnout was suppressed because the races were not competitive.

Violence

The absence of elections in most districts, coupled with low turnout and a lack of intense competition in districts where elections were held, no doubt contributed to a conspicuous lack of reported violence in the 1983 election. The general election report for 1983 makes no reference to violence, but violence was a common occurrence in elections both before and after the boycott. Nearly 600 people were reported to have died in the 1980 elections (*Manchester Guardian Weekly* 1983). Government election Reports

for both 1989 and 1993 note incidents of violence. In 1989, “Violence marred polling in certain constituencies (Director of Elections 1989, iii).” The violence in this election included theft of ballot boxes and the mobbing of an election official. The 1993 general election report describes violence both before and on polling day in fourteen constituencies. The worst instance of violence in this election resulted in the shooting death of an election official (Director of Elections 1993, introduction). By contrast with these elections, then, the 1983 election boycott was relatively peaceful.

Thus we can see that the Jamaican boycott followed the pattern of a Gandhian boycott outlined in chapter four. The party engaged in a largely peaceful boycott, meant to cast the government as illegitimate, and these efforts were accompanied by dramatically reduced turnout, even in the particular constituencies where actual contests were held.

After the Election

Following the 1983 election, and the return of the JLP to government, the PNP did its best to continue to perform constituency service, and held monthly meetings that they referred to as the “People’s Forum” or “People’s Parliament”. Though not holding seats in parliament, shadow ministers were assigned to follow and report on the activities of the various ministries in government. These reports were delivered to the people at the monthly meetings.

Regular meetings to address parliamentary business were one way that the PNP worked to mobilize support and stay competitive for the next election. Another approach

³ See Cox & Munger (1989); Crain, Leavens & Abbot (1987); Patterson & Caldera (1983)

was to continue to perform constituency service. When I asked Terrence Gillette how such service was possible without access to resources of the state, he provided the following explanation.

Remember that we would've been, say, an opposition outside of parliament, so there would've been a representative of the constituency on the government side. So what we did was to pressure the individual MP and also because we knew the ministers then we'd pressure the ministers also for whatever we could... Now this, in Jamaica, is a right every individual has, because you don't have to wait on our MP to get a road fixed. You can go straight to the ministry and if, when you go to the technicians and you don't get through, that's when you go to the minister. And when you go to the minister and you don't get through, that's when you go to the prime minister. And we did a lot of that. We did a lot of that. I also went to the prime minister on one occasion, went to the foreign minister on one occasion to help somebody in my constituency (2005).

Seymour Mullings, another MP for the People's National Party in 1980, agreed with Gillette's assessment, saying that he spent more time in his constituency from 1983 to 1989 than at any other time in his career as a politician (2005).

Long-Term Effects of the Boycott

The PNP boycott resulted in several changes before the next election, and appears to have had positive consequences for democracy in Jamaica. With respect to the proximal consequences of the boycott, we see improvements to increase the fairness of elections. Moving beyond to examine more distal consequences, we observe an improvement in objective assessments of Jamaican electoral fairness, and alternation in power.

Proximal Consequences

The 1983 election boycott did not produce any consequences with respect to international election monitoring. Jamaica had not invited election observers prior to the 1983 election, and did not opt to do so in subsequent elections. This non-effect may, in fact, have had little to do with the boycott itself and much more to do with the timing of the Jamaican boycott. In 1983 the cold war was not yet over, and election monitoring had not become common practice. And while there was some international criticism of Jamaica as a result of the boycott, it was fairly muted, and came only from the UK. No formal response on the part of the British government has been located at this time, but British newspapers described the proceedings as an “extraordinary fiasco (*Manchester Guardian Weekly* 1983)”.

Jamaica received no criticism from the United States. Seaga had formed a close relationship with the Reagan administration by emphasizing Jamaica’s opposition to communism (a political ideology that was arguably far more important to the Reagan administration than a commitment to democracy) in exchange for economic support (*The Economist* 1983). In 1983, the United States was probably relieved that the PNP, with its leftist leaning, had decided not to participate in the election, and the JLP played on those sentiments by using the slogan “No Cubans for Christmas” during the 1983 election (James 1983).

Two concrete changes occurred before the 1989 election, which increased electoral fairness for that election. First, an updated voter roll was used in the election. This insured that one party would not secure an unfair advantage by virtue of the distribution of support amongst voters on the old lists. This is a reform that has persisted

in subsequent elections. Following 1983, all elections have been contested on current lists of registered voters. The second change was for the government to take over the printing of their own election ballots, on special paper (Director of Elections 1989, 7). Printing ballots on a particular type of paper, and allowing no one outside of the government see what the ballots looked like, ostensibly reduced opportunities for fraud to occur via ballot duplication.

In addition to these concrete reforms, it was the opinion of several interview subjects that the boycott produced more subtle changes in the electoral process in Jamaica. Peter Phillips was best able to articulate this sentiment, saying that it galvanized the role of the Election Management Committee as an independent source of authority in election proceedings (Phillips 2005).

Distal Consequences

Having shown that the 1983 boycott led to reforms, which had positive consequences for democracy, we can now examine the more distal consequences of the boycott itself, and see if they too indicate positive consequences for democracy. Here we will examine the same measures of democratization that I employ in chapter five: outside assessments of fairness in the future, and alternation in power.

With respect to outside assessments of future fairness in Jamaica, we can examine the same measure that is used in Chapter five—the product of Freedom House scores on civil liberties and political freedoms. As noted earlier, with this measure higher scores indicate greater unfairness. In 1983, Jamaica received a score of six, and by 1989 that score had dropped to four. This drop would suggest an increase in electoral fairness in

the election that followed the boycott. It should be noted, however, that by 1993 Jamaica's measure of unfairness was back up to six and has fluctuated between four and six ever since. So the change from 1983 to 1989 may reflect the effects of the boycott, or it may reflect some other cyclical patterns in fairness, or outside assessments of fairness, in Jamaica.

With respect to alternation in power, however, we see further evidence of the boycott's positive effects for democracy. The PNP won the 1989 election and formed a government. It is difficult to know if the PNP victory was the result of updated electoral lists. It does seem likely, however, that the way in which the PNP conducted the boycott and their efforts at mobilization and constituency service after the election, during this period when they were not represented in Parliament, contributed to their victory in 1989. Had the PNP merely abstained from electoral competition in 1983, rather than mounting such an extensive and well-organized public protest against the government, it is unlikely that they would have been able to take over government in 1989.

Thus, it appears clear that the PNP election boycott functions as part of the birth pangs of democracy in Jamaica, not democracy's death throes. The carefully executed boycott motivated reforms that increased the fairness of elections, and led to alternation in office at the next election. In some respects, though, the Jamaican boycott is not typical of the major boycotts discussed in earlier chapters of this dissertation. The ways in which the Jamaican boycott is atypical, however, are also instructive. Because the boycott happened in 1983, before the end of the cold war, there was markedly less international involvement and pressure placed on the JLP government. This lack of international pressure suggests that domestic demand for democracy was a strong force in

the Jamaican case. While the import of domestic demand is not generally supported in the aggregate analysis of chapter five, the Jamaican case does suggest that sometimes domestic demand for democracy can crystallize around an election boycott.

The Dominican Republic (DR)

While the formal institutional structure and party system of the Dominican Republic are quite different from Jamaica's, Dominican politics function in a similar manner. Rather than a Westminster-style, two party parliamentary system, the Dominican system is presidential with three strong parties. The winner-take-all nature of the Dominican presidency, however, makes the contests for power and their outcomes not unlike a parliamentary race. This means that the stakes in Dominican elections are every bit as high as in Jamaican contests. Also similar to Jamaica, the Dominican Republic has had problems with electoral unfairness. In fact, it is not difficult to make the argument that Dominican elections in the 1990s were decidedly less fair than the 1983 Jamaican election that the PNP boycotted.

The question, that this section of the chapter addresses, then, is why no opposition parties boycotted the Dominican presidential elections of 1990 and 1994. In each election there was the potential for either a major or minor boycott, and I will explore why neither type of boycott came to pass. Before discussing Dominican elections in the early 1990s, however, some historical context is in order.

The First Presidency of Dr. Joaquin Balaguer

The Dominican Republic actually did experience election boycotts in 1970 and 1974. At this time Balaguer was in the middle of the first period of his presidency, which lasted from 1966-1978. This period of rule by Balaguer followed the assassination of long-time dictator Trujillo, a period of civil war, and subsequent American occupation. As Balaguer was a former henchman of Trujillo, his first period of rule was marked by violence and corruption in a style similar to that of his predecessor—the deaths and disappearances of political enemies were not uncommon, for example.

There was only one main opposition party in the Dominican Republic, in 1970, the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD). Juan Bosch founded the PRD in 1939, while in exile, during the Trujillo regime.⁴ He returned to the Dominican Republic after Trujillo's assassination in 1961, and the PRD began contesting elections. Bosch was actually the first elected president of the Dominican Republic, but his presidency lasted only seven months and ended with a coup which sparked the country's civil war.

In 1970, then, the PRD decided to boycott the presidential election. This decision was reached because Balaguer's presidency was so authoritarian that Bosch was becoming increasingly convinced it would be impossible to defeat Balaguer through elections. Bosch felt sure Balaguer would undoubtedly find ways to bias the contest in his favor (Lozano 2005). Furthermore, it was believed by many that even if Bosch was able to defeat Balaguer at the polls, Balaguer would never cede power peacefully (Lozano 2005).

⁴ All told, Bosch spent 24 years in exile during Trujillo's rule.

By 1974 there were two main opposition parties. In 1973 Bosch left the PRD and formed the Dominican Liberation Party (PLD). Because Bosch had become so convinced that it was not possible to defeat Balaguer via elections, his party was formed on an official anti-electoral platform. Therefore it is not surprising that the PLD did not participate in the 1974 presidential election. What is perhaps more interesting, is that at the last minute, the PRD also decided not to participate.

When Bosch left the PRD, José Francisco Peña Gómez assumed control of the party and began to promote the idea that it was possible to beat Balaguer at the polls (Lozano 2005). Peña Gómez thus committed the PRD to future electoral competition. Just days before the 1974 election, however, the Dominican military took a public stand in favor of Balaguer, displaying his Reform Party flags all over its vehicles. Here again, as with 1970, the indication was clear that a loss by Balaguer would result in bloodshed for the country, and so the PRD decided to boycott the contest three days before election day (Lozano 2005).

Thus the Dominican Republic experienced two election boycotts in the 1970s in response to extremely unfair electoral conditions. It is likely that the historical timing of these two elections also helps to explain why these two major boycotts occurred. In the early 1970s Balaguer was under no pressure to institute real democracy in the Dominican Republic. He had come to power during US occupation of the Dominican Republic, and was largely viewed as friend of the United States (Diaz 2005b). In the early 1970s Carter had not yet become president in the US, and so anti-communism, and not human rights, was still the top priority for the United States. Thus, Balaguer had no incentive to make

concessions to the opposition to avoid election boycotts, and in fact, probably was relieved that he did not have to take overt military action to remain in power.

Balaguer's Second Presidency

Dr. Joaquin Balaguer became president of the Dominican Republic for the second time in 1986. When he reemerged as the presidential candidate of the Christian Reform Party (PRSC) in 1986, however, his approach to politics had changed to fit the times. Political corruption was still a part of the formula, to be sure, but close ties to business and industry leaders had supplanted ruthless violence as Balaguer's secret to success. It was during this second presidency of Balaguer, in an atmosphere of pervasive corruption, that the elections of 1990 and 1994 took place.

In both 1990 and 1994 Balaguer and the ruling PRSC faced competition from both the PRD and the PLD. Soon after the 1974 boycott Bosch revised the anti-electoralist stance of the PLD. Electoral support for the PLD has grown to make it one of the three main parties in the Dominican system today.⁵ With Bosch as its leader, the PLD became so popular that by the 1990 election Bosch, the PLD presidential candidate, was Balaguer's main rival.

The PRD, on the other hand, had lost strength by 1990. The PRD's 1986 presidential candidate Jacobo Majluta and Peña Gómez were vying for control of the party, and the end result was a split. Peña Gómez was given control of the PRD by the central electoral commission, and Majluta formed the Independent Revolutionary Party (PRI) taking approximately 7 percent of the PRD's electoral support with him.

Given Balaguer's behavior during his first presidency, there was good reason to suspect he would use any means at his disposal to secure electoral victory in 1990. When asked if the parties suspected fraud before the 1990 election, political sociologist Wilfredo Lozano replied, "Yes, of course. In all the electoral processes there were declarations that fraud will be committed (2005)."

Since his return to office, Balaguer was already showing signs of taking an advantage whenever possible. In the PRD dispute that preceded the 1990 election, for example, it was up to the central electoral board to decide who should get to run under the PRD banner: Peña Gómez or Majluta. In the end, the Balaguer-controlled board ruled in favor of Peña Gómez, whose support would siphon more votes away from Bosch and the PLD than would a PRD controlled by Majluta (Diaz 2005a). Even with good reason to suspect that Balaguer would engage in fraud in the 1990 presidential election, neither the PRD nor PLD chose to boycott. Balaguer won the 1990 election by a narrow margin, amidst accusations of fraud (leveled by both the incumbent and the opposition), but the opposition parties ultimately accepted the results.

Certain analysts note that Balaguer's vote share and the vote share received by Juan Bosch were both within the margin of error associated with pre-election polls, making it difficult to prove fraud by the reported vote shares alone (Lozano 2005; Holguin 2005). Nonetheless, Juan Bolivar Diaz, who was covering the election as director of the TV network for the Central Electoral Board, claims to have observed vote tabulation that showed Bosch to be the winner, and subsequent manipulation to make the final tallies favor Balaguer (2005b).

⁵ Since the end of Balaguer's second presidency a PLD candidate has twice been elected president.

Despite the accusations and suspicions of fraud in 1990s, both parties again chose to participate in the 1994 election, but the election differed from the 1990 contest in two principal ways. First, by 1994 the PRD, and not the PLD, was the frontrunner for the opposition. Second, after observing Balaguer's performance in the 1990 election, it was now certain that he would indeed engage in electoral fraud to secure victory

Thus the Dominican Republic saw two extremely unfair presidential elections in 1990 and 1994, in which no boycotts, of any kind, occurred. Although one important cause of election boycott, unfairness, was clearly present, we must investigate other key variables in the Dominican context in order to better understand why election boycotts did not occur. The rest of this chapter will continue by reviewing key variables related to the causes of election boycotts in chapter three as a means of explaining why opposition parties did not boycott the Dominican presidential elections of 1990 and 1994. Following this investigation into the lack of boycott in the Dominican Republic, the immediate and long-term consequences of these elections will be described. The chapter will conclude with a review of the main findings presented here and their relationship to the broader findings of the dissertation.

Opposition Strength

The analysis presented in chapter three demonstrated that, in addition to electoral unfairness, a strong opposition is important for a major boycott to occur. In the case of the Dominican elections of 1990 and 1994, each election found one opposition party that was extremely strong, and one party severely weakened. In 1990 the PLD was the strong opposition party, and the PRD was weak; however, in 1994 the tables were turned: PRD

was the strong contender and the PLD was considerably weaker. The strength of the PLD and the PRD in 1990 and 1994 respectively suggests that they might have been likely to boycott. In fact, it appears they were so strong they believed they might win despite Balaguer's attempts at fraud.

Two observers of Dominican politics expressed the confidence that the opposition parties had in each election. Political sociologist Ramon Tejada Holguin:

The problem was that they would believe that they could win. There is fraud but at the same time they get close to the businessmen, they get close to the church, the American Embassy, certain foreign powers and so on. An idea exists that if this man has been preparing to commit fraud, the possibility exists that we really can beat him (2005).

Journalist Juan Bolivar Diaz adds, “[The opposition parties] always believed they were going to defeat the fraud. And the public's rejection of Balaguer was so strong that it was always thought that he would be defeated (2005a).” Hence, even though the opposition was aware of Balaguer's propensity to commit fraud, they tended to believe that public opinion against Balaguer, and the support of some important political figures would bring them victory.

While the stronger opposition party in each election believed it had a genuine chance to defeat Balaguer, the weaker opposition party was in no position to pull together an effective election boycott. In 1990 the PRD was suffering from the rancorous split between Peña Gómez and Majluta. With both would-be leaders fighting to control the party, and Peña Gómez then fighting to maintain the country's historical opposition party in the face of competition from other opposition parties, a boycott to fight Balaguer was out of the question.

The problems facing the PLD in 1994 were completely different from those faced by the PRD in 1990, but the debility that resulted was similar. In 1994 the PLD was not suffering from factionalization, rather it was experiencing financial difficulty and a void in leadership. An interview with an anonymous former official of Balaguer revealed that Bosch approached Balaguer personally in this period, to inform him that the PLD did not have enough money to participate in the 1994 election.⁶ At the same time that Bosch asked Balaguer for financial support, he was suffering from the onset of Alzheimer's disease (Cowell 2005). It was shortly after the 1994 contest that Bosch resigned from political life. A weak leader preoccupied with financial problems left the PLD in no position to launch an election boycott.

Thus the Dominican Republic presents a case where opposition parties were either too strong or too weak to launch a major boycott in protest of Balaguer's electoral unfairness. In each election one opposition party was so strong that it truly believed it had a chance to win the election in spite of Balaguer's fraud. At the same time, in each election, the other opposition party was in a state of near-complete disrepair, barely able to compete in the election, and certainly not strong or cohesive enough to launch and survive an election boycott.

Conditional Party Finance

The next potential contributing factor to consider in the opposition decisions to contest the 1990 and 1994 Dominican elections, is whether there was conditional party finance that might have discouraged an opposition boycott. In other words, did funds

⁶ Anonymous. 2005. Interviewed by Emily Beaulieu, May 20.

exist that would have been forfeited had the parties decided to boycott the elections? The presence of such funds might further explain why no boycotts occurred in the 1990 and 1994 elections. The technical answer to this question is no. There were no formal provisions of funds for political parties that depended on the parties' participation in elections. Conditional party finance in the Dominican Republic was not established until the 2000 presidential election. There were, however, informal rewards that Balaguer provided selectively to a number of political allies, and competitors, which worked to deter boycott.

So although no formal constitutional provision of funds existed for political parties, Balaguer often used financial means at his disposal to encourage the participation of certain parties. The most blatant, and well-documented, example of this practice is Balaguer's misuse of import tax exemptions, which erupted into a full-fledged political scandal following the 1994 presidential election.

Import taxes in the Dominican Republic are very high. Import tax on an automobile, for example, is close to 100 percent of the cost of the vehicle. It was customary for political parties to receive import tax exemptions for some vehicles, but in 1994 Balaguer provided a considerable number of additional tax exemptions to select political allies. After the election it was discovered that at least 2,926 vehicles had been exempted from import taxes just before and immediately following the previous election (*Hoy* 1995). Only 568 of the exemptions were granted to the three main political parties in the country, with the PRD receiving 230 exemptions, and the PLD receiving 233. The remaining 2,358 exemptions went to some 48 small parties and movements, with some parties receiving as many as 340 vehicle exemptions (*Hoy* 1995).

Balaguer did not provide these exemptions directly, but rather through a customs official named Anisia Risi de Mercedes. One month before the presidential election, Balaguer replaced long-time head of customs Quico Tabar with Ms. Risi. A short time before this replacement, Tabar had been decorated for his exemplary service, and when the press asked the president why he had been replaced, Balaguer explained that Tabar no longer served him, politically (Tabar 2005). It was Balaguer who eventually ordered the investigation of the customs scandal, and Ms. Risi who was tried in court, but there was little doubt among observers of the process that it was, in fact, Balaguer who was behind the distribution of exemptions (Rojas 1995a).

In addition to his use of import tax exemptions, Balaguer could also use his influence in the business community to benefit particular parties. It was precisely this kind of influence that helped assure PLD participation in the 1994 election. Recall that the PLD was experiencing financial difficulty around the time of the 1994 election. A loyal functionary of the Balaguer administration, who met with the president every night, recalls being approached by Bosch. According to the former bureaucrat, Bosch requested a meeting with Balaguer because the PLD did not have enough money to execute a presidential campaign. Balaguer declared he could not pay Bosch directly from state funds, but agreed to contact business associates on Bosch's behalf.⁷ This source did not know the specific outcomes of Balaguer's efforts, but he cited PLD participation in the election as evidence that Balaguer had found Bosch the funds he needed.

Given that the PRD was the stronger party in the 1994 election, it seems logical that Balaguer would do as much as he possibly could to support Bosch and the PLD in

this election. Had the PLD not participated in the 1994 elections, it is very probable that the PRD would have won the presidency—or that Balaguer would have had to engage in much more extensive fraud in order to remain victorious. Thus, it was not necessarily important to Balaguer to avoid a boycott—and not clear that Bosch was actually threatening a boycott by asking for money—but what is clear is that Balaguer preferred to have the PLD participate in the contest, in order to split the opposition vote.

In these ways, then, Balaguer was able to use bribery and personal influence to create much the same effect as formal conditional party finance. He applied favors strategically to maintain the participation of small parties, and to discourage any protest against the regime. Although not a formal provision of the constitution in this time period, Balaguer's action had much the same effect in suppressing minor boycotts that we see with conditional party finance in other countries.

Foreign Aid Dependence

The Dominican Republic was not heavily dependent on foreign aid in the early 1990s, and this lack of foreign aid dependence likely contributed to a lack of minor election boycotts in 1990 and 1994. Here, as in chapter three, I characterize dependence on foreign aid by examining annual total aid received as a proportion of a country's GDP.

The mean level of aid dependence among developing countries from 1990 through 2002 was .008, with a minimum aid dependence of 0, and a maximum of .158. In other words, the average amount of aid received annually in this time period was equal

⁷ Anonymous, personal interview, 20 May 2005.

to 8/10 of 1 percent of a country's GDP, with some countries receiving as much as the equivalent of 15 percent of their GDP in foreign aid.

In 1990 the Dominican Republic received aid that was equivalent to 3/10 of 1 percent of its GDP (.003), approximately 1/3 of a standard deviation below the world-wide mean. In 1994, the DR received the equivalent of 1/10 of 1 percent of its GDP in aid—1/2 of a standard deviation below the mean. In both years, then, the country was less dependent on foreign aid than the average developing country, suggesting that any damage that opposition parties might have been able to do to the Dominican Republic's international reputation would have been minor at best. This lack of aid dependence likely reduced the attractiveness of a boycott (either major or minor), because the threat of diminished aid would not have been a particularly frightening one for Balaguer.

Certain Loss: a competing explanation

As with Jamaica, the Dominican case provides no conclusive evidence for those who wish to argue that parties only boycott when they know they are going to lose. Experts seem to agree that in each election the major opposition party did not boycott because it appeared to them that they had a real chance of winning, which would seem to provide support for the "certain loser" theory. On the other hand, in each election, the more minor of the two main opposition parties was certain to be defeated at the polls, yet still chose to participate.

Thus, the certain loser explanation begs the question of why the PRD participated in the 1990 presidential election, and why the PLD did the same in 1994. Instead, the presence (or absence) of certain key features that I have outlined in this section, provide a

more complete explanation for why no boycotts happened in the Dominican Republic, despite extreme electoral unfairness, in 1990 and 1994. In each election, at least one opposition party was quite weak, Balaguer provided strategic incentives for weak parties to continue to participate, and there was little harm to be done to Balaguer in terms of foreign aid, given the Dominican Republic's low level of aid dependence. These factors, in addition to some opposition parties' beliefs about their chances of winning, combine to explain why opposition parties continued to participate in the face of electoral unfairness in 1990 and 1994.

Immediate Aftermath of Each Election

Although there was no election boycott, as with the Jamaica case, we can still analyze the immediate aftermath of the 1990 and 1994 Dominican presidential elections with respect to voter turnout and election violence.

Voter Turnout

Reports of turnout in Dominican elections can differ dramatically, depending on the source, so inferences must be drawn with caution.⁸ Both sources used in this study show a clear decline in voter turnout of at least 10 percent in the 1990 election. This decline could have been an indication that Dominican voters were becoming disillusioned with the electoral process in their country. In the three contests, previous to 1990, turnout had fluctuated by no more than three and a half percentage points and had remained

⁸ The two sources used here are the International IDEA voter turnout database, and Central Electoral Commission (JCE) statistics, as published in Julio Brea Franco's chapter on the Dominican Republic in Deiter Nohlen's *Elections in the Americas*.

between 70 and 75 percent. By contrast, turnout for the 1990 contest was reported at just under 60 percent.

Actual voter turnout in 1994 is far less clear. The central election commission of the Dominican Republic reports 87.6 percent of registered voters turned out for the 1994 presidential election. If accurate, this would constitute the largest swing in turnout and the highest absolute level of voter turnout since 1962. International IDEA, however, reports a voter turnout in 1994 of only 42.4 percent, which, if accurate, would reaffirm the pattern of decline in turnout, and constitute the lowest level of voter turnout since 1962. The decline in turnout in the 1990 election would suggest an electorate fed up with fraudulent elections, but given the conflicting nature of the data in this time period, it is difficult to draw any conclusions about changes in voter turnout.

Violence

The elections of 1990 and 1994 do not display any clear pattern in levels of election-related violence. The election of 1990 was reported as “peaceful” by *Keesing’s*, and no journalistic accounts of election violence were to be found. The 1994 election, by contrast was reported as “marred by violence (Burdick 1994).” Several Dominicans were reported to have died in “political clashes (Ferguson 1994, B3) .” It is unclear from accounts, however, whether the government or opposition supporters were responsible for the deaths. Although these two Dominican elections vary in the extent to which they involved election-related violence, they share a common feature: After each election, the leading opposition candidate, in response to perceived electoral fraud, made threats of violence.

Fraud

As previously mentioned, fraud was suspected to be the cause of Balaguer's victory in both 1990 and 1994. Balaguer was believed to have won the 1990 presidential elections by committing fraud, but there was still some room for doubt. Political sociologist Wilfredo Lozano:

They go to elections and there is a problem. It is said that Balaguer won formally and everyone says that Balaguer lost and Bosch had won. The truth is that we will never know with accuracy if there was fraud on Balaguer's part or if in reality Balaguer won the elections (2005).

While there may have been room for doubt in 1990, in 1994 the PRD (who lost by a slim margin) was able to demonstrate conclusively that fraud had been committed. They were able to show that opposition supporters were systematically left off the voter register so that when they arrived to vote, their names could not be found and they were turned away. Hatuey De Camps, former member of the PRD and party activist at the time, explained how the fraud was committed: "With a computer system. I know that they excluded [something like] 20 members of the other party at each of the 10,000 or more polling stations. And then that produced a decrease in votes that gave the win to Balaguer (2005)." Juan Bolivar Diaz adds that in some cases opposition supporters were left off the list, and sometimes their information was assigned to false names so that Balaguer supporters could vote multiples times (Diaz 1996).

Another important aspect of the 1994 elections was that the international community was intimately involved in uncovering and recognizing the fraud. Wilfredo

Lozano described how this involvement of the international community was distinct to the 1994 presidential elections:

In 1994 Pena Gomez wins the elections and there is fraud as you know, but different than 1990. Pena Gomez had prepared him self before, he had prepared his party. He had created an electoral machine, a machine in the defense against fraud. So, then they were able to collect information that demonstrated that fraud had occurred but not only that, in 1994 different than in 1990 Pena Gomez counted with international organizations, which Bosch never counted with (2005).

In his book, *Trauma Electoral*, Diaz provides a timeline of the process by which fraud was uncovered, and members of the OAS observation team are prominent throughout the account. In his description of the fraud, De Camps was careful to stress, repeatedly, that the fraud had been proven both domestically, *and* internationally: “In 1994 he committed fraud, and the fraud was proven, at an international level. I remember that very firm people like Santiago Raton and others called out the fraud, North American congressmen and others (2005).”

After the Fraud

Although there were no election boycotts in the Dominican Republic in the early 1990s, the opposition parties who participated in these elections did not easily accept the results of each election, which they perceived to be fraudulent. Recall from chapter three, that participating oppositions can choose either to accept the results of a fraudulent election or to attempt an overthrow. After both the 1990 and 1994 elections, the leading opposition candidate did not accept the results of the election, at least not initially. They

threatened violence against the state and in 1994, only ceased to protest once their demands for reform had been met.

After the 1990 election, when Balaguer's victory was announced, Bosch declared that he had been the victim of "colossal fraud" and urged his supporters to take to the streets in protest. "He told reporters that he anticipated confrontations and that 'in those confrontations, he whose turn it is to die will die' (Kamen 1990, A22)." Although a recount was ordered as a result of Bosch's complaints, the street protests he attempted to incite never materialized, and he ultimately accepted the outcome of the election.

In 1994, many of the same threats were made, and were realized to a greater degree than in 1990. During the election, the leading challenger Peña-Gomez, of the PRD, had vowed that the "four corners of the country would burn" if he lost the election because of fraud (Farah 1994). Once the fraud was declared, it was reported that supporters gathered outside of PRD headquarters chanting "If they defraud us, you're going to see flames (*Houston Chronicle* 1994)!" In the weeks that followed the election, as he continued to protest, Peña-Gomez was repeatedly heard to say that he did not know how much longer he could control his supporters from committing violence. According to him, it was PRD leadership alone that had prevented serious violence in response to the fraud. Peña-Gomez is quoted as saying, "In at least 10 towns people wanted to burn down the offices of the local electoral boards (Gunson 1994a)."

Thus, the threat of violent overthrow seemed much more powerful following the 1994 elections. At the same time, however, it is interesting to note that other individuals within the PRD leadership were promoting more peaceful protest. Hatuey de Camps was heard to say "We want tranquility, but we also want respect for democracy here (French

1994).” At the same time that Peña-Gomez was unsure he would be able to keep his supporters calm much longer, de Camps was declaring that the PRD would respond with, “peaceful protests of the Gandhi type (Gunson 1994b).”

Long-Term Effects of Each Election

Some small reforms came about after the accusations of fraud and threat of violence that followed the 1990 elections, but the most important political changes happened after the 1994 elections.⁹ As in 1990, following the 1994 election, the PRD threatened violence because of fraud. The difference was two-fold: in 1994, PRD was able to offer proof of the electoral fraud and was able to involve the international community in the process of uncovering the fraud.

The long-term consequences of the 1994 election can be seen in both the proximal and distal consequences of the election. Proximally, a series of important reforms were enacted that have worked to increase the fairness of Dominican elections. Beyond reform, we see improvements in both outside assessments of the country’s electoral fairness, and the freedom and fairness of elections suggested by alternation in presidential power.

Proximal Consequences

Dominican elections in the early 1990s did not have any obvious consequences for international election observation in that country. International monitoring groups

⁹After the 1990 elections there were some changes to the central election commission, but the commission remained firmly in the control of Balaguer supporters.

were invited to observe Dominican elections throughout the 1990s, and have continued to do so up to the most recent presidential election in 2004. By contrast, however, the 1994 election did have marked consequences for political reform in the Dominican Republic.

According to Hatuey De Camps the exposure of fraud on the part of Balaguer in 1994 forced a series of democratic reforms: “We proved it nationally and internationally and so because of that, a situation was created where Balaguer, was forced into a negotiation (2005).” Not only did reforms result from the 1994 Dominican election, but they were reforms, according to Holguin, that had important consequences for democracy. “What happens here is the great electoral change and great electoral modifications are given in 1994...they are a product of the crisis of 1994 and the signature of the pact for democracy (2005).”

The following were among the reforms made as part of the “pact for democracy” after the 1994 election:

- 1) A shortened (2 year) term for Balaguer
- 2) The abolition of consecutive reelection of the president
- 3) New appointment procedures for the central election committee, which would assure the agreement among the three major parties concerning the members of the committee, and hopefully promote impartiality on the part of the committee
- 4) The institution of a second round of presidential elections if no absolute majority was achieved in the first round
- 5) Voting rights for Dominican citizens abroad

For many observers the construction of a more independent electoral commission was an important reform for electoral fairness, as was the removal of Balaguer from office.

Holguin, however, argues that the run-off election system has positive consequences for democracy as well. “It is true the elections are cleaner...because of the change in the voting system of 50 percent or more. The existence of the second round has created that fraud isn’t that easy anymore. So, now you will have to commit two frauds (2005).”

Distal Consequences

Expert assessments of political unfairness in the Dominican Republic have shown steady improvement since 1994. The country’s combined scores for political freedoms and civil liberties from Freedom House hit a high of twelve in 1994, indicating a high level of electoral *unfairness*. Since the reforms that followed the 1994 election, Freedom House has reported a steady decline in unfairness in the Dominican Republic, with the score dropping to nine in 1996, six in 1998, and four in the year 2000.

The pattern of alternation in power since 1994 in the Dominican Republic is also suggestive of democratic improvement in that country. Since 1994 the PRSC, Balaguer’s party, has not won a presidential contest, but power has been held alternately by both the PRD and the PLD. And while legislative control has remained with the PRD in this time period, the PLD has been increasing its legislative vote share. In 1996 PLD candidate Lionel Fernandez won the presidency. In 2000 the presidency went to PRD candidate Hipólito Mejía, and in 2004 the PLD and Fernandez won again.

Conclusion

The Jamaican and Dominican cases present both support for and interesting challenges to my theory of the causes and consequences of election boycotts. The

experiences of both countries support my theory concerning the causes of election boycotts. Furthermore, Jamaica's 1983 experience is consonant with many of my findings concerning the effects of boycotts for democracy. The Jamaican boycott shows a clear case of a major Gandhian boycott motivated by unfairness, but the Dominican elections of 1990 and 1994 show that even with high levels of unfairness, other factors must be considered before determining whether or not a boycott is likely to happen. In the case of the Dominican Republic, weak opposition parties, the presence of informal finance for parties, and a low dependence on foreign aid all worked to suppress boycotts.

The Jamaican case shows that boycotts can have positive consequences for democracy, with the 1983 boycott resulting in political reform and alternation in power at the next election. But it is in further examining the effects of boycott that both Jamaica and the Dominican Republic provide challenges for my theory. In the case of Jamaica, the boycott occurred and resulted in democratic reform in an era when there was little international pressure to democratize. We see that there was little international pressure on Jamaica following the boycott, and yet democratic change still occurred. This makes the Jamaican election of 1983 anomalous in that all the motivation for boycott and subsequent reform would have come from the domestic audience. This is not the pattern we observe in the aggregate, where there are clear indications that international donors care more about democracy than do domestic electorates.

The challenge from the Dominican Republic is that major reforms came about without an election boycott. I do not wish to argue that election boycotts are the only route to democratic reform in developing countries, but the fact that reform came about in the Dominican Republic, which appears to have resulted in freer and fairer elections,

does raise questions about the extent to which we can assign causality to the Jamaican Boycott for the political reforms that followed there.

Both cases make it very clear, however, how important international involvement in elections has become for developing countries since the end of the cold war. In 1983, when the PNP boycotted in Jamaica, there was little concern about the state of democracy in that country, and certainly none from the United States, who responded by establishing stronger economic ties and granting more direct aid to Jamaica's regime which was being accused of unfair electoral practices. Since the end of the cold war, however, international pressure for democracy has grown, and domestic politicians are clearly aware of this pressure.

The comments of Hatuey De Camps echo the importance of international actors in elections today. For De Camps, international certification of fraud in 1994 provided legitimacy to the opposition. "In 1994 that electoral process was produced. We called the international community, and the international community certified that there was fraud (2005)." Furthermore, the fact that the PRD relied so heavily upon support from international actors in 1994, and that no such support was sought in 1990 shows how international involvement in democratization has increased since the end of the cold war.

CONCLUSION

This study has explored the causes and consequences of election boycotts. Given the number of different analyses of election boycotts presented in this text, readers may wonder what, precisely, they were meant to have learned. Put succinctly, the thesis that I wish to emphasize is that although election boycotts in the post-cold war era can take on many different forms, they appear to represent the birth pangs of democracy, with various international actors increasingly acting as would-be midwives. This assertion can be illustrated by the following examples of major election boycott: Jamaica in 1983, Haiti in 2000, and Bangladesh in 1996.

Jamaica 1983

In 1983, the governing Jamaica Labor Party called early elections before a series of reforms had been completed, reforms which would have increased the freedom and fairness of the election. The biggest problem was that voter registers had not been updated since the 1980 election that had brought the JLP to power. This fact was problematic not only because it left an estimated minimum of sixty thousand voters disenfranchised (those who had reached voting age in the past three years) but also because it gave the JLP an unfair advantage in the election by allowing it to compete again on its “winning” lists. Faced with this unfairness, the People’s National Party—the main opposition party—chose to boycott the election.

Initially the party was divided over the decision to boycott, but the boycott was eventually undertaken primarily because of the strong, charismatic leadership of Michael

Manley. Even though PNP members recognized the inherent unfairness involved in the early elections, there were many in the party who believed that they should contest the election either out of responsibility to constituents or because they had a chance to win. Manley was, at the time, the most popular politician in Jamaica, and when he threatened to step down as leader of the party if chose to participate in the election, the decision to boycott was effectively sealed.

Throughout the course of the boycott, the PNP took a principled, nonviolent stance against what it referred to as a “bogus election.” At the same time, the government sought to portray the PNP as undemocratic, and fearful of losing the election. In the end, the election passed with far less violence than is typical in a Jamaican election, and the JLP took control of a one-party parliament.

Although the 1983 election boycott left Jamaica with no formal opposition, it did have some more positive, long-term consequences. Voter registers were updated for the next election in 1989 and have been kept current for every election since. Additional safeguards were put in place to help ensure the fairness of elections, such as government printing of ballots. Furthermore, it is believed that the boycott helped to galvanize the importance of the independent Election Management Committee. Finally, the next election observed an alternation in power, suggesting democratic accountability at work.

It is possible, on the one hand, to view as unfortunate the fact that the PNP opted out of elections in 1983. Such an act could have been seen as signaling the death knell of democracy, with a one-party parliament leading to authoritarian rule. In fact, what we observe in the Jamaica case, is that the Gandhian boycott undertaken by the PNP actually worked to improve democracy by consolidating institutions and practices and

encouraging democratic accountability. This case provides one example of how major boycotts constitute the birth pangs of democracy, not the death throes.

In addition to arguing that boycotts represent the birth pangs of democracy, I have suggested that post-cold war international involvement in democratization and democracy promotion is another important factor in considering both the causes and consequences of major election boycotts. Because it occurred before the end of the cold war, the Jamaican case does not provide a good example of how international actors can influence major election boycotts. For that example we turn to the Haitian election boycott of 2000.

Haiti 2000

In May, 2000 the Organization of American States sent an observer mission to Haiti to monitor legislative elections. In the course of observing these elections, the OAS mission found discrepancies in vote counting methods for certain races in the senate and legislature, which awarded seats to the ruling Lavalas Family party. Furthermore, the OAS found that the actual process for addressing complaints or concerns about electoral proceedings was inadequate, and not in keeping with the spirit of Haitian electoral law. These findings were published in a July OAS report, but some of the OAS concerns regarding vote counting had already been leaked to the Haitian media, and seized upon by the opposition, after the first round of legislative elections (OAS 2000, 94; Ulloa 2005, 377).

Opposition parties declared a boycott of the presidential elections in November of the same year, once Aristide announced his candidacy. The opposition asserted that the

May legislative elections had been rigged to favor Aristide's Lavalas Family party, and that similar fraud was sure to take place in the presidential contest (James 2000a).

Although Aristide attempted to portray the opposition as merely sore losers, it was clear that the opposition boycott resonated with the international community.¹ At this time, foreign donors were already holding over \$500 million in aid for Haiti, conditional upon their restoration of a democratically elected government, and countries such as the United States were pushing for electoral reform (Wilson 2000).

No major observer organizations agreed to monitor the presidential elections, but the proceedings and the accompanying boycott still received intense attention from the international community. The United States refused to support the election because of "the absence of meaningful action to address serious electoral deficiencies (James 2000b)." The same day that the US denounced the election, Secretary-General Kofi Annan recommended that the UN mission to Haiti be terminated before Aristide's inauguration, citing the "violation of democratic norms," on the part of Haitian political leaders (*New York Times News Service* 2000).

The importance of international involvement in Haiti's political process was not lost on Aristide, nor did international involvement end with diplomatic maneuvering in response to the boycotted election. Approximately one month after he was elected, Aristide sent a letter to President Clinton in which he vowed to undertake a series of political reforms (Gonzalez 2000). Perhaps the most important reform undertaken was a negotiated agreement between government and opposition for a new election timetable,

¹ James (2000a) quotes an Aristide spokesman as saying: "This is a poor excuse for not participating. The future president is the most popular man in the country, and the other candidates simply are afraid of a humiliating defeat."

and a new election management body. These reforms were achieved with the help of the OAS, who drafted the agreement in June of 2002 (Gonzalez 2000).

Thus, the Haitian boycott of 2000 presents another example of a major boycott resulting in political reform, but is distinct from the Jamaican case in three ways. First, unlike the Jamaican case seventeen years earlier, the international democracy-promotion community was a factor in every step of the boycott, from highlighting unfairness that helped motivate the boycott, to providing an attentive audience for opposition claims about norms of fairness, ultimately to helping motivate and facilitate subsequent political reform. The second difference is that although both boycotts motivated political reform, Haiti's has not been followed by the sort of long-term democratic success that Jamaica has enjoyed. Finally, Haiti's election boycott was distinct from Jamaica's in that it involved more violence.

Whereas the Jamaican election boycott of 1983 was relatively peaceful, the Haitian boycott in 2000 was accompanied by a series of bombings that resulted in several deaths. In this particular election, it is unclear whether the opposition was the perpetrator of the violence. The government blamed the opposition, and the opposition blamed the government. Although the Haitian case is ambiguous as to the source of the violence, this dissertation has shown that even though major election boycotts are generally peaceful affairs, boycotting oppositions will sometimes employ violence, depending on the message they are trying to send. Bangladesh in 1996 provides an example of an opposition staging an election boycott that managed to have positive consequences for democracy even though the opposition engaged in violence.

Bangladesh 1996

The basis for the 1996 boycott of parliamentary elections in Bangladesh was established during 1994. The opposition Awami League accused the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) of rigging a by-election in Magura, and of being likely to rig the next parliamentary elections because they had suffered recent losses in municipal elections (Ahmed 2001; Wagstyl 1994). Accordingly, the Awami League demanded that the next election be administered by a neutral caretaker government. The BNP government attempted unsuccessfully to pass a constitutional amendment to install a neutral caretaker government, but when that attempt failed, it did not choose to step down and allow a third party to administer elections in 1996.² Accordingly, the Awami League boycotted the 1996 parliamentary elections on the grounds that they would likely be rigged.

The Awami League accompanied its boycott of the 1996 parliamentary elections with a campaign of violence. In certain instances, Awami League supporters were clearly the perpetrators of violence. Eight recorded attempts, made by boycotters to disrupt ballot distribution, left one militiaman dead; and opposition attacks on polling stations were reported to have left at least 50 injured (*Courier Mail* 1996). In other instances, there were widespread reports of Awami League involvement in “violent clashes” with government forces. Opposition and Government supporters took turns throwing bombs at one another in the capital, and voting was nullified at approximately

² The BNP was unable to pass the constitutional amendment because the Awami league had boycotted parliament following the results of the by-election. The BNP could have stepped down, however, and allowed a caretaker government to administer the election, even without a constitutional amendment. This is precisely what the BNP and Awami league—both in opposition—had forced then president Ershad to do in December, 1990.

300 polling stations as a result of disruptive fighting between opposition and government (Zubrzyck 1996).

In the aftermath of the election, the BNP won full control of the parliament, and passed a constitutional amendment to install a caretaker government before each election. In some sense, the installation of a neutral caretaker government is a way to achieve the impartial election administration that opposition groups in Haiti sought to accomplish with a new election management body. Since 1996, international election observers have also become more involved in the electoral process in Bangladesh. In 2001 both the European Union and the United Nations were invited to observe parliamentary elections.

So what have the preceding examples of election boycott demonstrated? They have shown that a great deal of variation exists among types of boycott. In some instances major election boycotts can be largely peaceful, with the opposition enforcing a moral commitment to non-violence. Such boycotts have here been described as Gandhian. In other instances, violence may still result. The opposition not may be the perpetrator, or opposition parties may choose to engage directly in violence as part of their boycott strategy. I have labeled the latter type of boycott, exemplified by the case of Bangladesh in 1996, Fearonian. Unlike Gandhian boycotts that seek a moral appeal to norms of fairness, Fearonian boycotts aim to threaten the government with the possibility of future overthrow in order to effect change.

The examples above have also shown the importance of international democracy promoters since the end of the cold war. The international community was largely absent

from the Jamaican boycott, which took place during the cold war.³ Since the end of the cold war, however, we see international actors playing increasingly important roles in the electoral process in developing countries. In Bangladesh, for example, one of the long-term effects of the 1996 boycott has been the involvement of international election observers.

Even more striking, however, is the extent to which the international democracy promotion community was involved in every aspect of the 2000 election boycott in Haiti. It was international election observers who first publicized potential fraud. The fraud which led opposition parties to boycott. No doubt opposition parties were encouraged further to boycott by the enormous international attention that Haitian politics were receiving at the time. From diplomatic actions on the part of powerful actors such as the United States and the UN to the specter of foreign aid denied, opposition parties realized that they had a receptive audience for their complaints about electoral unfairness. Finally, even the consequences that followed from the 2000 boycott were encouraged by the international community, motivated by pressure from the United States, and facilitated with the help of the Organization of American States.

All three of the boycotts discussed in this conclusion underscore is the fact that election boycotts are better understood as the birth pangs of democracy, rather than democracy's death throes. After each of these three boycotts, political reforms and other measures (such as inviting international election observers) were undertaken to improve the fairness of elections in Jamaica, Haiti, and Bangladesh. Clearly, some of these

³ Except for a small number of British editorials, which accused the boycotting opposition of irresponsibility.

reforms have resulted in greater long-term democratic success than others, and we should not be uncritically enthusiastic about the effects of major election boycotts. But, at a minimum, it is clear that major election boycotts give opposition parties in developing countries a means, which incumbent rulers find difficult to ignore, to press for democratic change.

Central Themes

It is not just the cases of Jamaica, Haiti, and Bangladesh that illustrate the main themes of this dissertation. Throughout this project I have shown a series of statistical analyses that provide systematic confirmation for the conclusions I have demonstrated with the above examples. By asking why election boycotts occur and what happens when they do, a series of findings have emerged that show major election boycotts, in their various forms, as the birth pangs of democracy with increasing international involvement since the end of the cold war.

Fearonian & Gandhian Boycotts

With respect to the variation among types of boycott, the formal model presented in chapter three suggested that opposition parties which might handle participation in the election differently (due to their differing capacities to commit violence) might, nonetheless, decide to launch a major boycott. At the same time, these differences should then have observable consequences for the effects of major boycotts on the elections in which they are launched. Chapter four demonstrated that, in fact, although the majority of major election boycotts are nonviolent, major boycotts do increase the probability of

opposition-initiated election violence. This finding serves to demonstrate the variation that exists among election boycotts and the consequences that this variation will have for boycotted elections.

Birth Pangs of Democracy

Evidence from both chapters three and five supports the idea that major election boycotts represent the birth pangs and not the death throes of democracy. Chapter three investigated the causes of major election boycotts and found that they arise in response to fraud and unfairness, not particularistic concerns. Chapter five, which dealt directly with the consequences of election boycotts for democracy, found that major election boycotts increase the probability of political reform and also increase the probability that international election observers will be involved in the process in the future. Both the institution of political reform and the invitation of international election observers to future elections bode well for democracy when considered in terms of the necessary inputs to democracy outlined by Dahl (1971).

Chapter five also provides evidence that major election boycotts should not be considered the death throes of democracy. Investigation on the long-term effects of major boycotts found that both political reform and international observer presence are weakly associated with improvements in future assessments of electoral unfairness. Although the relationship is not statistically significant, it suggests quite strongly that major boycotts do not lead to increased unfairness in the future. Furthermore, chapter five shows that major boycotts are also not associated with democratic interruption.

The International Midwife

Finally, this project has shown the importance of international democracy promoters for elections in developing countries, with respect to major election boycotts in particular. The boycott trend highlighted in the introduction has followed broader trends of increased electoral activity and international election observation since the end of the cold war.⁴ Beyond this correlation, chapter three showed that minor boycotts are systematically affected by foreign aid dependence, with a pattern that suggests that dependence on foreign aid affects the calculus of both opposition and incumbent actors. It is likely that major boycotters are also influenced by the presence of foreign aid, seeing it as a means of threatening the incumbent with loss of revenue, and it is equally likely that incumbents fear the loss of foreign aid in the event of a major boycott. But bargaining difficulties in such situations, will tend to obscure a systematic relationship between foreign aid and major election boycotts.

Chapters two and three suggested that Gandhian boycotters may be trying to appeal to an international audience. This premise is substantiated by the findings of Hyde & Beaulieu (2004) and builds on the idea that the promotion of democratic norms around the world has become more prevalent since the end of the cold war. Thus international actors may provide an incentive to boycott, either because they represent a receptive audience, or because they control resources that a boycott might jeopardize, or both.

Chapter five demonstrated the roles that international actors can play in helping to determine the consequences of election boycotts for democracy. In this chapter, we

found that international election monitors were more likely to be invited to subsequent elections following a major boycott. It was once again highlighted that international actors might prove to be a receptive audience, particularly for Gandhian boycotters, and might be able to pressure incumbent regimes, either for political reform or for greater international involvement in the future. Thus, international involvement is motivating the behavior of both incumbent rulers and their oppositions, leading rulers to hold elections and, in some cases, to make those elections more fair, and providing oppositions with an opportunity to engage in this particular form of protest.

Democracy

The main themes and findings presented here take us a great distance in understanding the causes and consequences of election boycotts, but they beg the question of how we are to understand countries that hold problematic elections where the incumbent commits fraud and the opposition boycotts. Are such countries democracies? Are they democratizing?

Certainly countries experiencing major election boycotts have not yet attained the “gold standard” of democracy—although even countries who are considered to have reached this standard continue to face problems such as election fraud.⁵ And yet, the findings of this project suggest that countries holding fraudulent elections and experiencing major election boycotts are not hopeless autocracies. They are clearly in a state of flux, which is not to say that they are on an automatic path to democracy (or

⁴ For more on the monitoring trend see Hyde (2006)

⁵ See Campbell (2005) for a discussion of election fraud in the United States through 2004.

dictatorship) but that they are still engaged in some process of better-defining how their country will be governed to the satisfaction of its citizens. Furthermore, boycotts, although they carry some negative short-term implications, appear to help such countries proceed in a more democratic direction.

This work adds to the growing idea that even if elections in and of themselves are not sufficient for democracy they may still help to improve democratic accountability, even when they are deeply flawed. When a major election boycott occurs, it is because the opposition is confronted with a ruler who is unfair, committing fraud, or otherwise not playing by the rules. The opposition is using elections as a point of coordination around which either to generate support for a moral defense of electoral fairness, or to threaten the government with the possibility of overthrow. Free and fair elections may provide the citizenry with an opportunity to credibly threaten the incumbent and extract democratic accountability, but even a fraudulent election can provide the opposition with an opportunity to push the government for reform.

Weingast (1997) argues that entrenching democracy is like drawing lines in the sand. If the government knows that its citizens will join forces and rise up to defend a particular principle, then the government will not violate that principle. If, by contrast, citizens cannot coordinate in the defense of particular principles, then those principles will not constrain the behavior of the government.

I argue that the democratic lines in the sand regulating the conduct of elections emerge through a messy and painful process of competition for power. In each polity, incumbent governments reinvent the wheels of unfair advantage and their oppositions seek to combat those advantages as best they can. Sometimes, the opposition is able to

marshal the implicit or explicit threat of force to convince governments to play fair. In other cases, the opposition is able to expose the government's tricks and threaten or shame them into better conformity with broader norms of fairness.

Whatever the details, the history of elections in any given country is a series of tactics used to bias the electoral process and a series of agreements that make the use of those biasing tactics more difficult. What this dissertation has shown is that in an era of post-cold war democratization boycotts are now one of the primary techniques that oppositions employ in their quest for a more level electoral playing field. Boycotts are the birth pangs of democracy and international actors are increasingly the midwives.

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