

Chapter 16

Does Commitment Change Worldviews?



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In this chapter, we examine whether commitment affects participants' worldviews. Worldviews, or meanings,¹ are defined as thinking-feeling tools individuals use to make sense of their social and political environment (Mead 1934; Weber 1978). In the present study, participants are those individuals who join an environmental protection organization, a charitable organization, or a union. Evidence in the literature on biographical consequences of activism is supportive (e.g., Passy and Monsch *forthcoming*; Giugni 2004): Individuals who join an organization synchronize their worldviews with the cultural scripts that circulate in the community. For example, Blee (2016) shows that women who join far-right organizations experience a critical transformation indebted to a radical shift in their interpersonal network. As one of her interviewee's states: "I made new friends and started to become obsessed with race....I thought about race 24/7" (p.9). Commitment therefore affects people's meanings. Yet, a conflicting argument exists in the literature, one that stresses a reverse causality, that is to say, specific worldviews are required to belong to the so-called mobilization potential eventually leading the individual to engage in joint action (e.g., Cotgrove and Duff 1980; Gamson et al. 1982; Kriesi 1989; Klandermans 1997). With this logic in mind, individuals solely join political or civic organizations if their meanings correspond. Commitment, then, does not change worldviews. Our present contribution aims to shed light on this debate by analyzing the effects of joining a political or civic organization on worldviews over time.

¹In this contribution, we use the terms "worldviews" and "meanings" interchangeably.

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According to McAdam (2009: 69) “cognitive liberation is sometimes a product rather than a cause of protest.” Accordingly, we suggest that the story behind the relation between worldviews and joint action is more nuanced than has previously been stated. Commitment can have a variety of influences on activists’ meanings because commitment experiences are particular. For example, we know that life course effects of movement participation in terms of employment, marriage, and childbirth patterns are usually stronger for women than for men (e.g., Van Dyke et al. 2000; Viterna 2013). Yet do we also find group specific variation in terms of effects on worldviews? We advance that there is a *plurality of effects on the meanings* of people who take on a commitment. Some perceive the world as members who sustain the commitment do. Others become members of a political or civic organization without the necessary cognitive tools. For the latter, we assume that synchronization of worldviews will occur once they join a specific organization.

Three questions structure our contribution. First, does commitment generally change the worldviews of new members? Second, does commitment have a group-specific effect, especially when it comes to members who join an organization with dissimilar meanings? Finally, are these effects durable? Before we answer these questions, it is necessary to offer a short overview of the literature on participation in social movements.

Worldviews of New Members: Before and after Commitment

The study of members’ worldviews and the relation to commitment is fraught by divisions. Scholars focus either on causes to join an organization, or on effects of participation, rather than treating commitment as what it actually is: a continuum. Individuals who join activism belong to a specific group: The so-called movement potential (Klandermans 1997). Alongside structural factors (biographical availability and social networks), such individuals are internally predisposed toward participation. Indeed, their worldviews lead them to worry about specific social problems or to harness an awareness of certain political conflicts. Joiners possess a specific social anchorage and are equipped with particular values (e.g., Cotgrove and Duff 1980; Gamson et al. 1982; Kriesi 1989; Klandermans 1997; Passy and Giugni 2001). For example, activists within the post-industrial movement commonly belong to the new-middle class, are highly educated, and are part of the post World War generations. In addition, they share post-materialist values, are left wing oriented and highly progressive (e.g., Kriesi 1989; Passy and Monsch 2016). While the literature on the matter highlights the characteristics of a movement’s potential, it fails to answer the two following questions: First, what happens to joiners with similar worldviews as those who are already committed? Second, what about people recruited outside the mobilization potential? We have elsewhere shown that the latter is a fairly common phenomenon (Passy and Monsch 2016). Unionists, for instance, often begin their commitment in the wake of a conflictual experience at work and lack the worldviews a typical union member would have. Another

example is the widespread practice of street-recruitment, which attracts new members outside the traditional movement potential. Does commitment affect the worldviews of this group of people? And if it does have an impact, is it a durable one?

Studies investigating individuals after they have committed have revealed that activism has multiple and durable impacts on an individuals' life (e.g., McAdam 1988, 1989; Sherkat and Blocker 1997; Giugni and Grasso 2016). In addition to altering activists' social networks and influencing activists' practices, such as orienting personal choices and adopting new lifestyles, commitment shapes activists' worldviews and identity (e.g., Taylor 1989; Beckwith 2016; Whittier 2016). In a study on pro-life activists, Munson (2009) demonstrates that beliefs regarding abortion rarely impel individuals to get involved. By joining pro-life groups, however, activists went through a socializing process during which participant's views became more robust and consistent about abortion, while some converted from pro-choice to pro-life beliefs. Scholarship in social movement and volunteering studies emphasizes that commitment has substantial and durable effects on volunteers' worldviews and lives (Wilson and Musick 2000; Wilson 2012). While these findings are remarkably consistent across studies (McAdam 1989), many of them are beset by methodological problems (Giugni 2004). Among these, causality is without contest the most harmful. Many studies rely on retrospective data and lack a control group. This problem is not specific to social movement studies as scholars investigating biographical outcomes of volunteerism face the same drawback (Wilson and Musick 2000; Wilson 2012). In addition, most studies focus on high levels of commitment and are restricted to a specific type of activists: The New-left contention.

Thanks to the panel design adopted by the Swiss Household Panel (SHP) data, we are able to overcome these shortcomings. First, we take time into consideration and analyze what happens before and after individuals join a civic or political organization. Second, as the SHP is a general population survey, we are in a position to compare members with non-members. With longitudinal data and a control-group we are able to make a causal argument on the consequences of collective action on people's worldviews. Finally, our data set includes both highly committed members as well as the large majority of passive members who support a cause financially.

Malleable Understandings of Common Good and Politics

We define worldviews,² or meanings, as a thinking-feeling tool that allows individuals to perceive reality and the world around them, to make sense of their social and political environment, and set their intentionality to act (Jasper 2014, Searle 2004).

²Worldviews are neither values nor attitudes. Values are "enduring beliefs" (Rokeach 1973) whereas we know that an individuals' mind changes (see work on mind plasticity, e.g. Macrae and Bodenhausen 2000). Attitudes are orientations towards a positive or negative assessment of something or someone specific. Here, we consider broader worldviews that help individuals make sense of their social and political environment.

Opting for this terminology situates us in the interpretative tradition in sociology (e.g., Mead 1934; Berger and Luckmann 1967; Goffman 1967; Blumer 1969 among many others). Weber (1978), one of the main proponents in this field, conceives of human beings in terms of ‘voracious meaning makers’. Hence, worldviews lie at the center of individuals’ life: They enable them to perceive social realities, to make sense of them, and to act in their social environment. But meanings are social entities too. Cognitive processes are socially constructed, which means that worldviews are shared within the social sites an individual evolves in (e.g. commitment community, family, workplace, nation). They are constructed through social interactions (e.g., Mead 1934; Blumer 1969; Collins 2004; Fligstein and McAdam 2012): Through talks and disputes, individuals practice cultural scripts which circulate in the social sites they partake in (Mische 2008; Polletta 2008), and this practice shapes their worldviews and orients their action.³ Correspondingly, moving from one social site to another affects individuals’ meanings (Zerubavel 1997; Eliasoph and Lichterman 2003). With this definition in mind, we expect that *joining a political or civic organization has an impact on members’ worldviews*.

However, activists join and experience their commitment differently. Therefore, we expect *variation among members regarding the effect of commitment on worldviews*. As we saw in the previous section, some joiners already share their worldviews with members of a given organization. For these individuals, we suppose stability, i.e. joining commitment will not drastically change their meanings. Others engage with dissimilar views compared to those present among members. They encounter a host of new cultural scripts which can be practiced through talks and disputes with fellow members, as well as within informal networks. Commitment is hence expected to affect their worldviews. It remains to be known if changes are durable, as the literature suggests.

In addition, individuals have many worldviews though not all of these are affected by political and civic commitment. We focus on two particular dimensions: Worldviews about common good and politics because they are the ends and means of the joint action taking place within the organizations considered here: Members of organizations of environmental protection use a contentious action repertoire (means) that aims to protect the environment (end). Volunteers of charitable organizations provide support to deprived people (end), and by helping the poor directly, seek to supplement state intervention (means). Unionists, finally, use institutional and contentious politics (means) to protect worker’s rights (end).

Activists are supposed to act on a specific *understanding of common good*. Those goods are specific, as they should objectively improve people’s well-being and be shared by all community members (Aristotle 1988; Murphy 2005). Who are the beneficiaries of the common good? Is it society as a whole or restricted to specific

³While we stress the social construction of worldviews, we nonetheless endorse an agentic conception, with room for idiosyncrasy and an individual capable to resist. Individuals are involved in various social sites and face different and often conflicting worldviews that they have to integrate in their self. This integration and use of their cognitive resources is made with agency (see Swidler 1986; Fligstein and McAdam 2012).

groups? And are members concerned by many common goods or only by the one they commit to? Six indicators allow us to evaluate this dimension: General trust, women's penalization, measures for women, changes for foreigners, environmental protection, and wealth redistribution.⁴

The second dimension is their *understanding of politics*, which is how people perceive and think about actors in the political arena. Are state actors accountable for the common good and should they intervene to enlarge and secure it? Do individuals legitimize state actors and their performances? And what is the role of a citizen in democracy? Should a citizen be interested in, and vigilant about, political processes and decisions? Should a citizen value the importance of taking part in participatory politics? We rely on seven indicators to evaluate this dimension: Opinions on the amount of social expenses, general satisfaction with democracy, trust in the Federal Government, political interest, and the intention to boycott, demonstrate, and strike.⁵

Unfortunately, survey data in general is limited in scope regarding the analyzable nuances of people's worldviews. This is especially visible when one wants to enquire into worldviews provided by a general population survey, as the SHP is mandated to cover a broad range of subjects. As a consequence, some indicators are proxies at best, or are loosely related to our concept. For example, political interest provides only a rough measure for political vigilance. While someone probably has to have some interest in politics in order to be vigilant, one can easily imagine that

⁴For *general trust*, respondents were asked whether they would say that most people can be trusted or if you can't be too careful in dealing with people, where 0 means "Can't be too careful" and 10 means "Most people can be trusted." *Women's penalization* was measured with this item: "Do you have the feeling that in Switzerland women are penalized more than men in certain areas", where 0 means "not at all penalized" and 10 "strongly penalized"? For *measures for women*, we used the following question: "Are you in favor of Switzerland taking more steps to ensure the promotion of women", where 0 means "not at all in favor" and 10 "totally in favor"? Respondent's opinions about *changes for foreigners* is evaluated with the following: "Are you in favor of Switzerland offering foreigners the same opportunities as those offered to Swiss citizens, or in favor of Switzerland offering Swiss citizens better opportunities?" Respondents could be either favorable to equal opportunities, to better opportunities, or neither. Regarding *Opinion about environmental protection*, respondents were asked whether they are favorable to Switzerland being more concerned with environmental protection than with economic growth, and vice-versa. Again, respondents could either be in favor of environmental protection, economic growth, or neither. The question for *wealth redistribution*, finally, evaluates whether the respondent is in favor of an increase or decrease in the taxes on high income, or neither.

⁵For their opinion on *social expenses*, respondents were asked whether they are in favor of a diminution, in favor of an increase of the Confederation social spending or neither of the two. *Satisfaction with democracy* was measured with this item: "Overall, how satisfied are you with the way in which democracy works in our country", if 0 means "not at all satisfied" and 10 "completely satisfied." *Trust in the Federal Government* is based on this question: "How much confidence do you have in the Federal Government" if 0 means "no confidence" and 10 means "full confidence." *Political interest* is measured with the following question: "Generally, how interested are you in politics, if 0 means "not at all interested" and 10 "very interested"? To evaluate the *intention to boycott, demonstrate and strike*, respondents were asked with three items: "If 0 means never and 10 certainly, tell me to what extent, in the future, you are prepared to take part in a boycott/demonstration/strike."

someone is politically interested without being vigilant. As a consequence, the validity of our measures is somewhat limited, making it hard to evaluate the underlying theoretical dimensions. We nonetheless consider the ensemble of attitudinal indicators analyzed a reasonable representation of a worldview. Therefore, the SHP's panel design largely outweighs this drawback, offering a rather unique opportunity to explore the worldviews of members over time.

How to Analyze Changes in Worldviews?

Our analyses investigate worldviews of all the individuals included in the original sample who responded regularly over 11 years (1999 to 2009).⁶ 1999 is the starting date of the panel and 2009 is the last year when questions on membership were asked annually. From 2009 onwards, the membership questions were put into a rotative module and are now only measured once every 3 years. Membership is obviously crucial for the analyses conducted here as it allows us to attribute respondents to the group of members who sustain commitment, new joiners, and non-members respectively.⁷ It was tempting to add the years 2011 and 2014 where the information on membership exists. However, this would have required us making assumptions about individuals' commitment in 2010, 2012, and 2013. To increase the robustness of the findings, we decided to dismiss this time period from our sample.

We then decided to look only at membership for the years 2003, 2004, and 2005 in order to *observe the same group over time*. This decision excludes people who join or leave in other years but brings along two key advantages. First, the worldviews of every joiner can be observed over a substantial amount of time: Four years before and after commitment takes place.⁸ Second, an identical group of joiners is observed over time, thereby eliminating any inter-individual differences from the analyses. These tend to erase intra-individual variation, which makes the procedure a valuable one. In terms of age, we include a large age range in our working sample so as to provide respondents with the opportunity for membership unrestricted by age or mobility. In the first year of inquiry (1999) we took individuals from 15 years to 80 years of age for the last year of observation (2009).⁹

⁶“Regularly” means that an individual has to take part in every wave where a specific question was asked. However, as not all indicators were measured over the whole timespan, the sample size slightly varies between indicators.

⁷For membership, respondents are asked the following question: “I will now read out a list of associations and organizations. Could you tell me for each of them whether you are an active member, a passive member or not a member?”

⁸Due to data availability, this is not always possible. “Intention to demonstrate”, for example, is only available between 1999 and 2008. Hence, for this particular indicator, we provide data for 4 years before but only 3 years after an individual has become a member.

⁹All these decisions are the product of an iterative process during which we tested several possible constructions of the membership variable and ran analyses with and without weights. Overall, the results are very similar and we are confident with the result presented here.

The analyses presented below merge members of environmental organizations, charitable organizations, and unions.¹⁰ In addition, we decided to combine active and passive membership because the number of active members is too small to be analyzed separately. Moreover, we have elsewhere shown that commitment affects worldviews of both active and passive members (Passy and Monsch 2016). Whereas active members enjoy opportunities to practice community specific cultural scripts in their interactions with other members, empirical evidence shows that passive members rely on people in their interpersonal network (friends and relatives) who are favorable or committed to the community in question (see also McAdam 1988; Klandermans 1997). We hence take full advantage of the potential of the SHP panel design. This allows us to observe the same individuals yearly over a long period, both before and after they become members. In addition, as the SHP is a general population survey, it naturally entails a control group of non-members. These characteristics make these data well suited to study biographical consequences.

Specific Worldviews of Members

Before turning to the effects of commitment on worldviews, we need to clarify three points. How important is political and civic commitment as a phenomenon in Switzerland? Is it common for new members to maintain their commitment? And do members hold specific worldviews which depart from non-members? First, commitment is clearly an important and widespread phenomenon in Switzerland. According to the SHP data, more than 40% of all respondents are members of Green contention, unions, or a charitable organization.¹¹ Commitment in Switzerland is hence a widespread phenomenon including about half of the national population. Given the fact that we do not possess indicators on other types of activism, such as LGBT, human rights, migrants' rights, peace groups, etc., the evidence inevitably underestimates the range and extent of commitment in the country. Another element is the rather stable feature of commitment over time. From 1999 to 2009 the numbers do not change and are quite impressive. What is stressed is that investigating political and social participation, and consequences of commitment on worldviews, is not merely a rhetorical question, especially given the large number of individuals involved. Second, we ask whether members, who have just joined a collective endeavor, are inclined to maintain their commitment. After all, if worldviews are affected by commitment, the effect must occur once activists enjoy social interactions and practice cultural scripts within the given community.¹² We observe such

¹⁰We do this for three main reasons; first, limited constraints. Second, it allows us to obtain reasonable numbers to analyze subgroups, especially for the group of joiners who possess other understandings. Third, the results are very similar when members of these groups were analyzed separately.

¹¹We tested this factor for the years 1999, 2004 and 2009.

¹²About 80% of members under study are passive members who support their respective organization financially. We have shown that passive members are also involved in social interactions and practice the cultural scripts available in their commitment communities (Passy and Monsch 2016).

sustained commitment in the SHP data: Around 80% of all individuals who were committed in 1999 sustain their involvement over time (30% sustain commitment between 2 and 4 years and 50% more than 5 years). Sustained exposure to social interactions within these communities thus offers opportunities to influence members' worldviews at the very least.

Finally, *worldviews of members' depart from those of non-activists*. As shown in Table 16.1, members who sustain participation clearly hold specific meanings when it comes to their understanding of common good and politics.¹³ Let us discuss this aspect in more detail. Members' understanding of common good clearly differs from that of non-members. On average, they trust others, perceive women as more penalized than men, and are prone to encourage women promotion more. These worldviews significantly depart from those of non-members (see Eta and Chi-squared coefficients). Additionally, members think foreigners should benefit from the same opportunities than Swiss citizens, environmental protection should be a priority, and taxes for higher income earners should be increased to enable a better distribution of common good. These questions concern members more than non-members.

Members' understandings of *politics* are also specific, especially regarding their political interest and intention to boycott, to demonstrate, and to strike. Meanwhile, differences for their opinions concerning increases in the state's social expenses, their overall satisfaction with democracy, as well as their trust in the Federal Government are statistically significant, but only by a small margin. It is surprising to note that members are more satisfied with democratic procedures and are more inclined to trust politicians. Indeed, we could have expected a more critical stance resulting in less satisfaction and trust because state de-legitimization is considered to constitute an important factor for protest participation (Piven and Cloward 1977). Three elements help clarify this result. First, the Swiss population generally displays a high level of political trust compared to populations of other European countries (Bauer et al. 2013). Second, many types of organizations are included in the member category, entailing that individuals could be members of a typical protest actor or not. For example, the union community is quite fragmented in Switzerland when it comes to sectorial (public vs. private) and ideological (left wing vs. Christian) lines (Kriesi and Trechsel 2008). In turn, this influences the action repertoire deployed and the subsequent conception of politics. Finally, the two indicators used to assess Swiss democracy and its political institutions are rather general. While it is necessary to take these exceptions into account, the overall picture remains clear: Members possess a specific understanding of politics.

However, less is known about the time-span necessary for activists to synchronize their worldviews with their peers. It seems reasonable to expect variation with respect to the participant's level of commitment and the political challenge their mobilization involves. For individuals lightly committed to a mobilization of low level of political challenge, we expect that the process takes longer than for active members involved in challenging contentions.

¹³ People in this category were members of either an organization of environmental protection, charity, or union during 2003, 2004, and 2005.

Table 16.1 Comparison between worldviews of members and non-members

<i>UNDERSTANDINGS OF COMMON GOOD</i>			
	Members	Non-members	
	Means	Means	Eta
General trust in people <i>n</i>	6.60 (1.7) 827	6.02 (1.9) 1614	.14***
Women penalized <i>n</i>	5.75 (1.8) 821	5.50 (1.9) 1602	.06**
Measures for women <i>n</i>	6.07 (2.5) 809	5.81 (2.6) 1559	.05*
	%	%	χ^2
Changes for foreigners <i>n</i>	83 781	67 1506	67.8***
Environmental protection <i>n</i>	59 784	48 1454	26.5***
Taxes for high income <i>n</i>	82 792	77 1499	16.0***
<i>UNDERSTANDINGS OF POLITICS</i>			
	Members	Non-members	χ^2
Increase in social expenses <i>n</i>	50 779	44 1499	30.2***
	Means	Means	Eta
Satisfaction with democracy <i>n</i>	6.30 (1.4) 807	6.04 (1.5) 1563	.08***
Trust in Federal Government <i>n</i>	5.94 (1.6) 808	5.62 (1.8) 1565	.09***
Interest in politics <i>n</i>	6.57 (2.2) 814	5.45 (2.5) 1584	.22***
Intention to boycott <i>n</i>	5.52 (3.0) 811	3.98 (3.1) 1570	.23***
Intention to demonstrate <i>n</i>	5.34 (2.9) 810	3.70 (3.0) 1580	.25***
Intention to strike <i>n</i>	4.79 (3.1) 806	3.27 (2.9) 1562	.23***

Note: *p < 0.05 **p < 0.01 ***p < 0.001. Eta for interval scaled variables and χ^2 for dummies. Source: Swiss household panel

Throughout the discussion of Table 16.1, we have shown that *members possess a distinct understanding of common good and politics* when contrasted with non-members. They have a more inclusive vision of society, are more concerned by different common goods, legitimize state actors more, and have a more vigilant and participatory conception of citizenship. As other variables (e.g. education, social class) were not assessed, this is merely correlational evidence which highlights the differences between members and non-members.

Multiple Effects of Commitment: Stable and Malleable Worldviews

Members possess specific worldviews. But when do these meanings become specific? Table 16.2 allows us to investigate whether and under which conditions worldviews of members change. The table is organized in the following manner: The bold vertical line in the middle marks the moment respondents became members. In relation to this moment, the columns before and after the bold vertical line outline the 4 years prior (t-4, t-3, t-2, t-1) and after (t + 1, t + 2, t + 3, t + 4) these individuals began participation. In addition, at the right end of Table 16.2 we have added a column where t-tests between the indicators 1 year before people started commitment (t-1) and 1 year after this event happened (t + 1) are reported. This is so in order to evaluate whether members' worldviews changed. Like in Table 16.1, the rows go through the indicators of joiners' understandings of common good and politics with the exception that each indicator is listed twice: Once for all joiners and once for new members with other worldviews.¹⁴ Accordingly, discussion of the results centers first on all joiners, then turns to the sub-group with other meanings.

What happens to worldviews of joiners? Do they change after they join their respective organization? And if changes occur, are they durable? Overall, we observe a high degree of stability for individuals who enter into participation: *Their worldviews do not change*. Their understanding of common good and of politics remains the same before and after joining a given organization. However, two exceptions contradict this general pattern of stable worldviews: Trust in others and political interest. Both the level of trust and interest in politics increases once individuals join an organization. The literature on volunteerism shows similar results (Eggert and Giugni 2010 for political interest; Sivesind et al. 2013 for social trust). Our result therefore backs these findings. Indeed, commitment affects social trust and political interest in a positive manner.¹⁵ Social trust and political interest set aside, the worldviews of activists do not change. This implies that social interactions which occur after individuals enter activism do not necessarily influence their worldviews. As we see when comparing the results with those reported in Table 16.1, joiners are already close to members before they start participation, and these particular understandings remain stable over time. Hence, scholarship that stresses that activist groups recruit newcomers in their mobilization potential is right: Their worldviews overlap substantially with those of members already committed.¹⁶

¹⁴We defined benchmarks for new members with other worldviews in relation to the results for the member category in Table 16.1 (see the greater-than signs in Table 16.2). For the interval-scaled indicators, the basis for this decision was the means of members who sustain participation. For nominal-scaled indicators, we have excluded the respective modal value of faithful members.

¹⁵Measures for women and taxes on high income also show significant changes (see t-test in Table 16.2). However, these difference remain small and tend to vanish over time (see t + 2, t + 3 and t + 4).

¹⁶Additional analyses show that members also predominately belong to the movement potential in terms of their social characteristics (age, social class, and education).

Table 16.2 Joiner's worldviews of common good and politics over time

Time	<i>UNDERSTANDINGS OF COMMON GOOD</i>										t-1 vs t+1 t-test
	t-4	t-3	t-2	t-1	t+1	t+2	t+3	t+4	Means (SD)	Means (SD)	
All joiners	Means (SD)	Means (SD)	Means (SD)	Means (SD)	Means (SD)	Means (SD)	Means (SD)	Means (SD)	Means (SD)	Means (SD)	
General trust in people (n = 983)	-	-	-	6.30 (2.0)	6.62 (1.9)	6.64 (1.9)	6.66 (1.9)	6.67 (1.9)	6.10***		
Women penalized (n = 923)	-	5.58 (2.2)	5.66 (2.2)	5.61 (2.1)	5.67 (2.1)	5.67 (2.1)	5.62 (2.0)	5.46 (2.0)	ns		
Measures for women (n = 902)	-	5.95 (2.9)	5.92 (2.9)	5.96 (2.8)	6.21 (2.7)	6.09 (2.7)	6.15 (2.7)	5.99 (2.7)	3.68***		
Joiners with other worldviews											
General trust in people (n = 141) < 5.0	-	-	-	2.87 (1.6)	4.48 (2.0)	4.35 (1.7)	4.34 (1.8)	4.40 (2.0)	7.89***		
Women penalized (n = 214) < 5.5	-	3.39 (1.7)	3.54 (1.7)	3.61 (1.5)	3.81 (1.9)	3.82 (1.8)	3.83 (1.8)	3.89 (1.8)	1.66(*)		
Measures for women (n = 227) < 5.5	-	2.92 (2.0)	2.82 (2.0)	2.91 (2.0)	3.42 (2.1)	3.49 (2.1)	3.31 (2.1)	3.28 (2.1)	3.92***		
All joiners	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	t-test		
Chances for foreigners (n = 857)	75	73	74	73	74	75	76	76	ns		
Environmental protection (n = 861)	53	53	52	50	50	53	52	53	ns		
Taxes for high income (n = 856)	78	79	79	78	81	79	78	78	2.16*		
Joiners with other worldviews											
For equal chances for foreigners (n = 125)	0	0	0	0	6	7	3	6	2.91**		
For environmental protection (n = 286)	0	0	0	0	6	8	7	7	4.11***		
For higher taxes for high income (n = 110)	0	0	0	0	11	5	7	11	3.65***		
UNDERSTANDINGS OF POLITICS											
Time	t-4	t-3	t-2	t-1	t+1	t+2	t+3	t+4	t-1 vs t+1	t-test	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%		(continued)	

Table 16.2 (continued)

UNDERSTANDINGS OF COMMON GOOD

	49	47	45	46	46	46	47	45	46	47	45	t-test
All joiners												
Increase in social expenses (n = 824)	49	47	45	46	46	46	47	45	46	47	45	ns
Joiners with other worldviews												
For an increase in social expenses (n = 322)	0	0	0	4	4	4	5	2	3.82***			3.82***
All joiners	Means (SD)	Means (SD)	Means (SD)	Means (SD)	Means (SD)	Means (SD)	Means (SD)	Means (SD)	Means (SD)	Means (SD)	Means (SD)	t-test
Satisfaction with democracy (n = 907)	6.23 (1.6)	6.15 (1.7)	6.18 (1.5)	6.16 (1.6)	6.16 (1.6)	6.18 (1.6)	6.20 (1.6)	6.20 (1.6)	6.18 (1.6)	6.20 (1.6)	6.20 (1.6)	ns
Trust in Federal Gov. (n = 913)	6.02 (1.9)	5.84 (1.8)	5.68 (1.8)	5.60 (1.8)	5.60 (1.8)	5.56 (1.8)	5.63 (1.8)	5.69 (1.8)	5.56 (1.8)	5.63 (1.8)	5.69 (1.8)	ns
Interest in politic (n = 936)	6.03 (2.4)	6.16 (2.4)	6.10 (2.5)	6.22 (2.4)	6.22 (2.4)	6.19 (2.4)	6.26 (2.3)	6.27 (2.4)	6.19 (2.4)	6.26 (2.3)	6.27 (2.4)	2.62**
Intention to boycott (n = 914)	4.68 (3.4)	4.99 (3.5)	4.81 (3.4)	4.69 (3.4)	4.69 (3.4)	4.64 (3.4)	4.36 (3.4)	—	4.64 (3.4)	4.36 (3.4)	—	ns
Intention to demonstrate (n = 926)	4.32 (3.4)	4.51 (3.4)	4.40 (3.3)	4.42 (3.3)	4.42 (3.3)	4.32 (3.3)	4.25 (3.3)	—	4.32 (3.3)	4.25 (3.3)	—	ns
Intention to strike (n = 902)	3.81 (3.3)	4.05 (3.4)	3.93 (3.3)	3.91 (3.3)	3.91 (3.3)	3.76 (3.2)	3.72 (3.2)	—	3.76 (3.2)	3.72 (3.2)	—	ns
Joiners with other worldviews												
Satisfaction with democracy (n = 211) < 6.0	4.59 (1.2)	4.49 (1.4)	4.58 (1.2)	4.67 (1.5)	4.67 (1.5)	4.74 (1.4)	4.74 (1.4)	4.70 (1.5)	4.67 (1.5)	4.74 (1.4)	4.70 (1.5)	ns
Trust in Federal Gov. (n = 230) < 5.5	3.98 (1.4)	3.80 (1.5)	3.82 (1.5)	3.89 (1.5)	3.89 (1.5)	3.83 (1.5)	3.83 (1.5)	3.96 (1.5)	3.83 (1.5)	3.83 (1.5)	3.96 (1.5)	ns
Interest in politic (n = 248) < 5.5	3.22 (1.8)	3.34 (1.7)	3.14 (1.8)	3.50 (1.9)	3.50 (1.9)	3.52 (1.9)	3.62 (1.9)	3.63 (1.9)	3.52 (1.9)	3.62 (1.9)	3.63 (1.9)	3.81***
Intention to boycott (n = 293) < 5.0	1.59 (1.7)	1.61 (1.7)	1.52 (1.7)	1.77 (1.9)	1.77 (1.9)	1.69 (1.8)	1.60 (1.8)	—	1.69 (1.8)	1.60 (1.8)	—	3.16**
Intention to demonstrate (n = 340) < 5.0	1.41 (1.6)	1.51 (1.6)	1.41 (1.6)	1.58 (1.8)	1.58 (1.8)	1.71 (2.0)	1.54 (1.8)	—	1.58 (1.8)	1.54 (1.8)	—	2.56*
Intention to strike (n = 389) < 5.0	1.24 (1.5)	1.30 (1.6)	1.32 (1.6)	1.43 (1.8)	1.43 (1.8)	1.47 (1.8)	1.43 (1.8)	—	1.43 (1.8)	1.43 (1.8)	—	1.91(*)

Note: (*)p < 0.10 **p < 0.05 ***p < 0.001. t-tests for dependent samples. Source: Swiss household panel

However, the picture changes once we consider *joiners with other worldviews than those who sustain commitment*. For this group, we observe a significant change once membership has begun. A synchronization process is clearly at work, be it for their understandings of common good, or regarding their understandings of politics. While very few indicators were significant when all joiners are considered together, most of them are affected by commitment for joiners with other worldviews. And these changes are not merely visible a year after membership has occurred ($t + 1$), but remain stable over time, and do not regress to the level before the organization was joined. As for the dimension of common good, five out of six indicators show a significant change once members with other understandings commence their commitment. While still significant, the question regarding the level of women's penalization departs from this general picture. Joiners with other worldviews than those shared by members of environmental protection groups, charitable organizations, and unions, only increase slightly in their perception that women are disadvantaged. By contrast, they become more favorable to taking measures for the promotion of women. Joiners' with other worldviews see their understandings of politics equally affected by commitment. This group becomes more inclined towards an increase in state social expenses, more interested in politics, and shows a higher protest intention on average. However, satisfaction with democracy, as well as trust in the Federal Government, diverges from this general trend. While satisfaction with democracy grows slowly over time ($t + 2$, $t + 3$ and $t + 4$), trust in the Federal Government is not affected by commitment.

Multiple Effects on Members' Worldviews

This chapter provides evidence for two arguments. On the one hand, many individuals join a political or civic organization with similar worldviews to those held by members of the organization. In that regard, the low numbers for the group of joiners with other understandings is a result in its own right, as only few joiners belong to this group. This group's worldviews is only marginally affected by commitment. On the other hand, *commitment has a durable effect on the worldviews of individuals who join a commitment with other understandings*. Unfortunately, we are limited by very general indicators, as well as by small numbers, when we want to compare subgroups. Further research will be required to investigate the worldviews of members over time.

Throughout this chapter, we argued that commitment changes people's worldviews. The results indicate that commitment has a differential effect on the understandings of common good and politics of individuals who become members of an environmental protection organization, a charitable organization, or a union. The majority of joiners engage with meanings close to those of members who sustain commitment, a result that sustains the argument put forth by movement potential scholars, who claim that, individuals need to hold particular worldviews in order to

join an organization. However, a non-negligible part of joiners become members with other worldviews of common good and politics, and this group is clearly affected in the way we suggested: Their worldviews are synchronized and these changes are durable. Thus, stability and changes are not mutually exclusive when it comes to the effects of political and civic participation.

Our major aim consists in taking a first step towards the study of variations among socialization patterns and pointing out that *mental consequences are group specific*. In terms of future research, we should analyze the various effects of commitment according to different groups. We would hence further our knowledge regarding the conditions under which commitment has an effect on members' worldviews, concerning the gendered experience in union activism, for example (Van Dyke et al. 2000). Longitudinal data would be indispensable if we were to undertake such a study. The SHP data has proven valuable in this respect. However, assessing the meanings of members with the sole use of indicators destined to survey a general population has its limits. In the future, an additional task will hence be to develop more refined measurements, which could take the form of a panel study dedicated to analyzing the effects of political commitment, to complement this fascinating dataset. Going down this path will increase our understanding of the role played by political and civic commitment for participant's worldviews in particular, and allow us to examine the effects on their life course more generally.

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