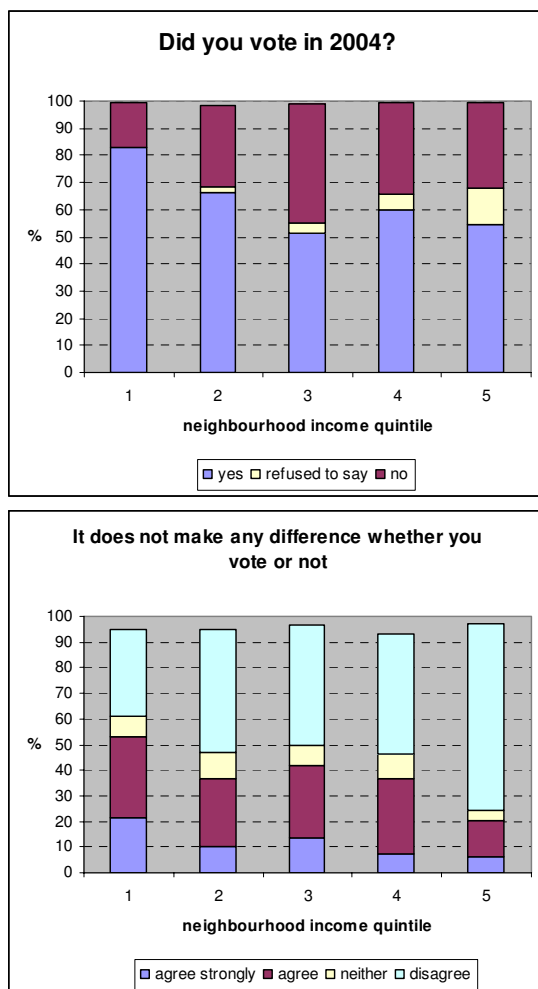


Figure 5: Assessments of the performance of elected leaders, by neighbourhood income quintile (blue indicates 'performs well', pink 'performs badly')

Voting is another measure of how citizens assess the core institutions of representative democracy. Interviewees in all neighbourhoods professed to having voted in the (national and provincial) elections held in mid-2004 (see Figure 6a). People in poor areas were especially emphatic that they had voted. But, when asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement 'in elections, it doesn't make any difference whether you vote or not', more than one-third of the interviewees and over half of those in the poorest neighbourhoods agreed or disagreed strongly (see Figure 6b). It is difficult to know how to interpret this finding, however. It is in fact true that, in most wards, and especially poor wards, the result is so certain that it does not matter whether any individual votes or not; the same is broadly true at the national level also, given the easy and large victories of the ANC. But voting does matter in the calculation of votes for the apportionment of seats in local government through the proportional element of representation, and matters also in provincial elections which are closely-fought. Further research is clearly required into this.



Figures 6a and 6b

Commitment to a political party is a third measure of a citizen's attitude towards the core institutions of representative democracy. Interviewees were asked whether they think of themselves as close to a political party – i.e., a standard measure of 'partisan identification'. Overall, only one in three interviewees said that they were identifiers, whilst 60 percent said that they were not (i.e. they were 'independent' voters). But the proportion of interviewees in the poorest neighbourhoods is a massive two-thirds, compared to less than one in five in the richest neighbourhood income quintile. In terms of partisan identification, the poor are definitely not alienated.

Elected local government is the most immediate and accessible dimension of representative democracy. We saw above (Table 5) that there is a high level of dissatisfaction with the delivery of services at the local level. The services with which the poor are relatively more discontent are those which are, in whole or in part, the responsibility of local government. We have also seen already (Figure 5) that there is a low level of endorsement and a high level of criticism of ward councillors. CAS asked a set of other questions probing interviewees' perceptions of their local councillors. First, only 11 percent of interviewees said that their ward councillor reported back to voters 'often', with an additional 18 percent saying that he or she did so 'sometimes'. Thirteen percent said 'almost never'. Most interviewees – 57 percent – said that they did not know whether or not their councillor reported back. In the poorest neighbourhoods, i.e. in the bottom income quintile, 22 percent said 'often', another 35 percent said 'sometimes', only 9 percent said 'almost never', with 33

percent saying that they did not know. In poor areas, interviewees are also more likely to have spoken to the councillor. In addition, the poor say that they think they can influence the decisions of the City Council (but perhaps not through voting)

Whilst these results do not in general demonstrate a strong commitment to and endorsement of representative democracy, it is clearly not the case that the poor are more alienated than the non-poor. By most (but not all) measures of commitment, the poor are in fact more committed and less alienated than the non-poor. They are more likely to vote, more likely to assess positively the performance of elected representatives, and more likely to say they voted in the previous elections. But they are also more likely to be critical of their ward councillor's performance, and more likely to be cynical of the value of their votes.

### Direct democracy and social movements

What does CAS say about citizens' attitudes towards and participation in alternative forms of political expression or representation, including social movements, civil society, and direct action?

Interviewees were asked about their participation in a series of activities 'during the past year'. The proportions answering "yes" are shown in Table 6. About one-third of the interviewees said that they had attended a community meeting. One in five said that they had signed a petition. About one in ten said that they had attended a demonstration or protest march. Overall, just over half said that they had participated in at least one of the seven activities, and about one in five said that they had participated in at least one of the three that involved more direct action (demonstrations, boycotts and strikes). There are some evident differences by neighbourhood income quintile. The poor are more likely to attend a community meeting or demonstration or participate in a boycott or strike, whereas the rich are more likely to participate in fund-raising activities or sign a petition.

<b>Table 6: Participation in meetings and protests, by neighbourhood income quintile</b>						
	Neighbourhood income quintile					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Attended a community meeting	46%	34%	27%	28%	20%	31%
Got together with others to raise an issue	19%	27%	25%	22%	12%	21%
Taken part in a campaign, to raise money for a cause	11%	20%	24%	23%	23%	20%
Attended a demonstration or protest march	11%	15%	11%	5%	4%	9%
Signed a petition	8%	17%	24%	19%	24%	18%
Joined a boycott	8%	6%	6%	5%	<1%	5%
Joined a strike	11%	11%	12%	8%	0%	8%
Attended a demonstration <i>or</i> joined a boycott <i>or</i> joined a strike	19%	20%	18%	10%	4%	14%

Any of the above	56%	52%	52%	45%	44%	50%
Source: CAS 2005, d39-45; results are exclusive of 'don't know'; n=						

**Table 7: Proportions reporting that they participate in different kinds of organization, by neighbourhood income quintile**

	Neighbourhood income quintile					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Religious (e.g. church, mosque, church choir, prayer group)	66%	66%	65%	54%	54%	61%
Political party	19%	20%	6%	3%	6%	11%
Community-based group (e.g. street committee or neighbourhood watch)	23%	13%	8%	5%	11%	13%
Sports club or recreational club (e.g. art, dancing, book or soccer club)	14%	16%	11%	12%	26%	16%
Charity or volunteer organization	2%	10%	8%	10%	18%	9%
Trade union	3%	4%	5%	5%	3%	4%
Human rights organization (e.g. TAC, Childline)	1%	3%	2%	1%	1%	2%
Association for professionals, businessmen or traders	1%	2%	4%	1%	8%	3%
School-based committee or club (e.g. PTA or fund-raising committee)	6%	5%	4%	5%	11%	6%
Source: CAS 2005, d39-45; results are exclusive of 'don't know'; n=...; weighted data						

Interviewees were also asked about participation in different kinds of organization. Table 7 reports the proportions of interviewees who say that they participate, according to kind of organization and neighbourhood income. Whilst people in all neighbourhoods participate in churches or other religious organizations, only the poor participate in political parties, and they are more likely to participate in community-based groups (although the rich do so also). The rich are more likely to participate in charities or volunteer organizations, or in professional or business associations. Participation in trade unions is generally low, but is highest in middle-income neighbourhoods, not in poor ones.

We also asked some questions on street committees or neighbourhood watch groups, and civic or ratepayers' organizations. About 40 percent of interviewees said that there was a street committee or neighbourhood watch in their area, and about 30 percent said that there was a civic or ratepayers' association. These proportions did not vary much by neighbourhood income. Most residents thought that their street committee or neighbourhood watch was performing well, and that their civic or ratepayers' organization was doing likewise. Again, there were no clear variations in this assessment between poor, middle-income and rich neighbourhoods.

## Does discontent with representative democracy lead to participation in civil society or protest among the poor?

Finally, we use regression analysis to test a simple model of class-driven political protest (as set out in Figure 7). Our goal is to assess the extent to which 'class' influences grievance-formation, the extent to which this in turn shapes or combines with alienation from democracy, and the extent to which all of these influence endorsement of alternative participatory organizations and protest activities.

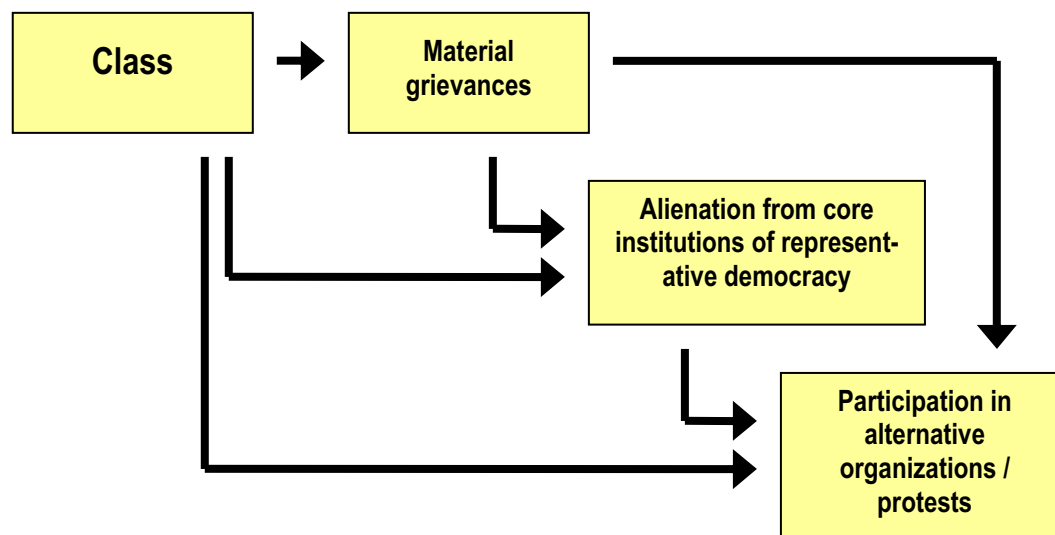


Figure 7: A simple model of class-driven political protest

CAS 2005 does not provide us with an ideal set of data to test this model. (CAS was not designed with this task in mind). So our measures of the four key components in this figure are crude. Class is measured using neighbourhood income, as we have done throughout this paper. The class variable thus has a value between 1 and 5. "Material grievances" are measured in three ways. The first measure ('grievance') is an index constructed out of all eight variables reported in Table 5 above. The second is a binary variable ('poor') summarizing the assessed changes in the number of poor people in the recent past and future, and the assessment of whether the government was doing enough for the poor. The third variable ('rich') is the equivalent for the rich. The fourth measure ('personal') summarises the interviewee's assessed personal situation, in both the recent past and future. Alienation from the core institutions of representative democracy is measured using an index ('alienation') comprising assessments of the performance of elected representatives, non-identification with political parties, and not voting. (We also separate out these three components as independent variables in one regression, as 'assessment', 'notidentify' and 'notvote'). Participation in protest is measured in terms of participation in demonstrations, strikes or boycotts ('protest') whilst endorsement of alternative organizations is measured in terms of approving assessment of street committees, neighbourhood watch or civic organization ('organization'). At each stage, basic social variables (race and gender) are included in the regressions. Full details of all of these measures and variables will be set out in an appendix.

The results are reported in Tables 8 to 10. In most cases variables are omitted from the models if they are of no import; some are included despite there being no significant relationship with the dependent variable, if there are good reasons to

believe that we need to control for them or they are of general interest (notably, the measure of class, i.e. neighbourhood income quintile).

Table 8 shows that class effects are generally weak in terms of the correlation between class and grievances, as we have measured them. Most striking is the absence of any correlation between class and personal financial situation (see models 7 and 8). Models 3 and 5 confirm what we showed earlier, that the poor (and African people) perceive less growth in poverty but more growth of affluence. Model 1 shows that there are weak class effects on grievances: being in the poorest income quintile raises your score on the grievance index (which ranges from 0 to 8) by more than 1, relative to being in the richest quintile.

Table 9 shows that there are positive correlations between grievances and alienation from the core institutions of representative democracy, but being poor or African actually has a negative effect (i.e. reduces alienation). Models 11 through 13 entail separate regressions for the three components in the 'alienation' index. They show the effects of grievances on alienation are more marked with respect to identification with political parties than with assessment of the performance of elected leaders or non-voting. In short, being aggrieved with service delivery correlates with alienation from the political parties more than it does with specific elected leaders or voting.

The most striking aspect of Table 10 is the lack of correlation between grievances, alienation and endorsement of participatory organizations at the local level (see models 17 to 19). The correlations are stronger with respect to protest activity. People are more likely to engage in protest action if they are in the poorer neighbourhoods, they have grievances with service provision (although the coefficients are very small) or if they are coloured. But being alienated from the core institutions of representative democracy has no significant effect (see model 14), and when we disaggregate 'alienation', only non-identification with political parties comes up as significant. Curiously, seeing one's personal financial position as worsening seems to correlate with a diminished propensity to protest (see models 15 and 16).

The fact that most of these conditional correlations are small indicates a lack of strong evidence for the model set out in Figure 7. It does not appear to be the case that discontent leads to alienation from the core institutions of representative democracy which in turn leads to protest and participation in alternative organizations, nor does it appear that the poor are especially distinctive.

## **Conclusion**

This paper begins to examine the relationship between class and democracy in South Africa, in terms of how attitudes towards democracy differ between classes. More specifically, do urban social movements represent a mechanism for the poor to express their voices, in protest not only against non-delivery of services and other material grievances but also against the unsatisfactory performance of political parties and elected representatives, i.e. the core institutions of representative democracy? Do social movements represent – to their participants – an alternative to representative democracy, supported because the poor have become alienated from representative democracy whilst social movements are pro-poor? We used recent survey data from Cape Town to explore issues raised by the emerging literature on 'social movements' in South African cities. The survey was not designed for this specific purpose, and the data available are far from ideal in terms of answering the questions posed here. It must also be emphasized that the analysis of these data are very preliminary, not least because a crude proxy is used for class. Also, it is no

straightforward to interpret the statistical analyses at the end. (How big must a coefficient be to be of importance?).

We have suggested some tentative findings. First, we show that people in Cape Town have a general understanding of the unequal and class-stratified character of the social structure. Then we show that there is a general concern with the rising numbers of poor people in South Africa, although poor people themselves are slightly less pessimistic about this general trend than the rich, and are no more likely than the rich to consider that their own personal financial position has worsened in the recent past. Everyone thinks that the government is not doing enough for poor people. Poor people believe that the numbers of rich, white people are growing, but are not disproportionately likely to say that the government is too pro-rich. Poor people are especially discontented with some of the services provided by local and provincial government, including notably the delivery of electricity and water, as well as housing.

Turning to attitudes towards the core institutions of representative democracy, we do not find evidence that the poor in Cape Town are more alienated than the non-poor. Indeed, we find evidence of the opposite: poor people are more positive in their assessments of elected leaders, more likely to identify with a political party, and more likely to say they voted in the most recent elections. But they are also sceptical about the value of voting, and are more critical of the performance of elected ward councillors. Whilst it is not clear that the poor are committed strongly to representative democracy, there is little evidence that they are especially alienated.

The poor are more likely to engage in some kinds of protest action and to attend community meetings. They are, however, no more enthusiastic about local civil society organizations – either street committees/neighbourhood watch groups at the very local level, or civic or ratepayers' associations – than are people in middle-income or rich neighbourhoods.

Finally, we test whether there is a significant relationship between grievances, alienation from the core institutions of representative democracy, and enthusiasm for alternative forms of protest and participatory organization. We develop a simple model, constrained by the availability of data in CAS. We find that there is little strong evidence for the relationships set out in this model, although there is evidence of correlations between many of the component elements.

These results prompt several possible interpretations. The one that we find most plausible at this stage is that poor people are not, for the most part, engaging in radical protest or alternative organization out of any *rejection* of representative democracy. Rather, direct action is seen as a complement to representative democracy. This was broadly the argument we put forward in an article some time ago (Cherry, Jones and Seekings, 2000), using evidence from the late 1990s. 'Even' in 2005, representative democracy retains considerable loyalty among the poor.

It is of course very possible that results from a survey of this sort in Cape Town might differ from the results of surveys conducted elsewhere in the country. There are two obvious reasons for this. The first is that Cape Town (and to some extent the Western Cape) is the part of South Africa with the most competitive representative democracy. If representative democracy is likely to have supporters on the basis of competition, those supporters are likely to be found here in Cape Town. At the same time, CAS 2005 was conducted at a time when the ANC, i.e. the party to which most poor citizens are loyal, was in power at both provincial and municipal levels. This, too might boost support for representative democracy among the poor. Secondly, the

racial cleavages in Cape Town might have effects on the results. It would be foolish to disregard the effects of cultural difference and the persistent 'racial order' in Cape Town, on how poor people see the social structure and the need and opportunities for protest and organization.

	Grievance with public service provision (values from 0 to 8)		More poor #		More rich #		Bad personal financial situation #	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
NIQ 1 # (i.e. poorest neighbourhood income quintile)	1.56*** (0.19)	1.28*** (0.28)	-0.17*** (0.04)	Not sig	0.25*** (0.05)	Not sig	Not sig	Not sig
NIQ 2 #	0.77*** (0.20)	0.73*** (0.28)	-0.09** (0.04)	Not sig	0.21*** (0.05)	Not sig	Not sig	Not sig
NIQ 3 #	1.16*** (0.20)	1.17*** (0.28)	0.11** (0.04)	0.14** (0.06)	0.27*** (0.05)	0.20*** (0.07)	Not sig	Not sig
NIQ 4 #	2.05*** (0.20)	0.58** (0.24)	0.14*** (0.04)	0.15*** (0.05)	0.18*** (0.05)	0.13** (0.06)	Not sig	Not sig
African #		0.54** (0.24)		-0.33*** (0.06)		0.18*** (0.06)		-0.11*** (0.04)
Coloured #		Not sig		Not sig		0.08* (0.05)		-0.10** (0.04)
Male #	-	Not sig	-	Not sig	-	Not sig	-	Not sig
Post-matric #		Not sig		Not sig		Not sig		-0.13*** (0.02)
Matric #		Not sig		Not sig		Not sig		-0.07** (0.02)
Constant	2.05 (0.14)	1.84 (0.34)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Adjusted/pseudo r-squared	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.10	0.03	0.04	0.02	0.05
n	1208	1114	1208	1114	1208	1114	1208	1114

**Notes:** regressions on 'poor', 'rich' and 'personal' are dprobit regressions, and the coefficients reported are dF/dx. Standard errors in brackets. Reported significance: \*\*\* significant at the 0.1 level, \*\* at the 0.05 level, and \* at the 0.01 level. "Not sig" denotes not significant at the 0.01 level, therefore unreported. # indicates a dummy variable. The baseline in regressions is white woman without matric in the highest neighbourhood income quintile.

<b>Table 9: Regressions on alienation</b>					
	Alienation from core institutions of representative democracy (values from 0 to 12)		Assessment of performance of elected leaders (values from 0 to 6)	Not identify with any political party #	Not vote #
	Model 9	Model 10	Model 11	Model 12	Model 13
NIQ 1 # (i.e. poorest neighbourhood income quintile)	-0.43* (0.26)	-0.63** (0.26)	Not sig	-0.13** (0.06)	Not sig
NIQ 2 #	Not sig	Not sig	Not sig	Not sig	Not sig
NIQ 3 #	Not sig	Not sig	Not sig	-0.14** (0.05)	0.09* (0.05)
NIQ 4 #	Not sig	-0.40* (0.22)	Not sig	-0.10* (0.05)	Not sig
Grievance with public service provision (values from 0 to 8)	-	0.14*** (0.03)	0.11*** (0.01)	Not sig	Not sig
More poor #	-	0.48*** (0.15)	0.17** (0.07)	0.06* (0.03)	0.06** (0.03)
More rich #	-	-	-	-	-0.09** (0.03)
African #	-1.89*** (0.19)	-1.18*** (0.19)	Not sig	-0.52*** (0.04)	***
Post-matric #	-0.40** (0.17)	-0.41** (0.17)	0.22** (0.10)	-	-
Constant	4.41 (0.19)	3.91 (0.20)	0.22 (0.09)	-	-
Adjusted/pseudo r-squared	0.16	0.18	0.07	0.22	0.03
n	1115	1115	1115	1137	1137
<p><u>Notes:</u> regressions on 'not identify with any party' and 'not vote' are dprobit regressions, and the coefficients reported are dF/dx. Standard errors in brackets. Reported significance: *** significant at the 0.1 level, ** at the 0.05 level, and * at the 0.01 level. "Not sig" denotes not significant at the 0.01 level, therefore unreported. The baseline in regressions is white woman without matric in the highest neighbourhood income quintile.</p>					

<b>Table 10: Regressions on alternative protest and organisation</b>						
	Protest #			Organization #		
	Model 14	Model 15	Model 16	Model 17	Model 18	Model 19
NIQ 1 # (i.e. poorest neighbourhood income quintile)	0.20*** (0.05)	0.16*** (0.04)	0.15** (0.07)	Not sig	Not sig	Not sig
NIQ 2 #	0.23*** (0.06)	0.21*** (0.06)	0.16** (0.08)	-0.16*** (0.04)	-0.15*** (0.04)	Not sig
NIQ 3 #	0.21*** (0.05)	0.19*** (0.05)	0.14** (0.07)	-0.11*** (0.04)	-0.11** (0.04)	Not sig
NIQ 4 #	0.10** (0.50)	0.09** (0.05)	Not sig	-0.22*** (0.03)	-0.22*** (0.03)	-0.16*** (0.04)
Grievance with public service provision (values from 0 to 8)		0.02*** (<0.01)	0.02*** (<0.01)		Not sig	
More poor #		Not sig	Not sig		Not sig	
Bad personal financial situation #		-0.05** (0.02)	-0.05* (0.02)		-0.08** (0.04)	-0.08* (0.04)
Alienation (values from 0 to 12)	Not sig			-0.02*** (<0.01)		Not sig
Assessment of performance of elected leaders (values from 0 to 6)			Not sig			Not sig
Not identify with any political party #			-0.07*** (0.02)			Not sig
Not vote #			Not vote			
African #			Not sig			Not sig
Coloured #			0.08* (0.05)			Not sig
Post-matric #			0.07*** (0.03)			
Adjusted/pseudo r-squared	0.04	0.07	0.10	0.03	0.03	0.05
N	1208	1208	1115	1208	1208	1137
<p><b>Notes:</b> these are all dprobit regressions, and the coefficients reported are dF/dx. Standard errors in brackets. Reported significance: *** significant at the 0.1 level, ** at the 0.05 level, and * at the 0.01 level. "Not sig" denotes not significant at the 0.01 level, therefore unreported. The baseline in regressions is white woman without matric in the highest neighbourhood income quintile.</p>						

## Appendix

Details of the construction of the indices and other variables used in the regression:  
To be added

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This bibliography includes material which we shall be discussing more fully and incorporating in a revised version of this paper!

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