

Social Trust and Political Disaffection: Social Capital and Democracy

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Introduction

Current theory argues that there is a strong connection between social capital, on the one hand, and political disaffection on the other, such that a decline of social capital is likely to cause a loss of trust in political leadership and a loss of confidence in the institutions of government (see for example, Nye, et al., eds., 1997; Norris, ed., 1999; Pharr and Putnam, eds., 2000). It is argued that a well-founded society with a wide variety and large number of social networks is necessary to sustain the civic virtues necessary for democratic government. For many theorists voluntary organisations are crucial forms of social networking, and trust between citizens and their political leaders is a key expression of the civic virtues. The theory that voluntary organisations and trust are cornerstones of modern democracy is, of course, an old one going back at least to Hobbes, Locke, Adam Smith, de Tocqueville, and J.S. Mill. And the same general theme was later elaborated in different ways by writers as various as Durkheim, Weber, Simmel, and Toennies. Among more recent social scientists the same general argument was developed by Kornhauser, Coser, Parsons, C. Wright Mills, Coleman, and Luhmann. Most recently, it has been turned to powerful use by writers in the social capital school, above all by Putnam, as well as those who write about the importance of civil society for democratic government. In other words, what might be termed the ‘trust and social networks’ stream of thought¹ has a particularly long and distinguished intellectual history as an attempt to solve one of the classic problems of the social sciences: namely, how and why do some societies, especially modern large scale ones, maintain a degree of social integration and political stability when serious social conflict and political disaffection might easily threaten them.

At the heart of these theories lies a concern with the concept of trust and the role of voluntary organisations. Trust play a central role in modern society and its politics, for as Simmel (1950: 326) says, ‘trust is one of the most important synthetic forces within society’ (see also Arrow 1972: 357; Coleman 1990: 306; Ostrom 1990; Putnam 1993, 1995, 2000; Fukuyama 1995; Braithwaite and Levi 1998; Warren 1999)². Voluntary organisations are crucial because citizen involvement in the community, especially its voluntary associations and intermediary organisations, teaches the ‘habits of the heart’ (Bellah, et al. 1985) of trust, reciprocity, solidarity, and co-operation. Voluntary organisations are also said to create a network of relations conducive to civic engagement and a concern for the common good. A great density and variety of networks is, therefore, of critical importance both for creating democratic attitudes and community involvement, on the one hand, and a stable and integrated structure of social relations, on the other³.

In spite of its intellectual provenance, I want to argue in this chapter that ‘trust and social networks’ theory is only partly right; or, if one wants to put it the other way round, it is partly wrong. More specifically the chapter will argue that:

1. There is no such thing as general trust, but rather different kinds of trust which expressed by different types of people for different reasons. Social disaffection, in the form of low or declining social trust, is one thing; political disaffection, in the form of low or declining political trust is another.

2. Both theory and empirical evidence suggests that voluntary organisations play a relatively minor part in generating trust, and, as a consequence, their role in underpinning social capital seems to have been exaggerated somewhat.
3. The link between social norms and networks on the one hand, and political disaffection, on the other, is rather more distant and contingent than trust and social network theories seem to assume. Political disaffection does not arise out of social disaffection, and nor can it be explained in terms of social capital.
4. Finally, and perhaps most important, it is necessary to test trust and social networks theory at the appropriate level of analysis. While little support for the theory emerges at the individual level, there is much more to be said for it at the aggregate level that compares nations, not individuals.

The chapter will first consider the nature of social trust, and its individual level associations with political trust, and with membership of voluntary associations. It will then do the same with political trust before turning to a closer look at the role of voluntary organisations with respect to both social and political trust. These three sections of the chapter will demonstrate that there is little in the trust and social networks theory of political disaffection, at least at the individual level of analysis. The last part of the chapter will compare nations, not individuals, in an attempt to show that the 'trust and social networks' theory of political disaffection does work at this level, although in a rather indirect and contingent manner. There is a general tendency for countries with high levels of social capital to have well developed democratic systems, but the direct link between social capital and political disaffection can be broken by political factors, especially by poor government performance.

Social Trust

Trust is not easily defined, as a recent spate of books and articles on the concept testify (Barber 1983; Baier 1986; Gambetta, ed., 1988; Hardin 1991, 1993, 1996; Misztal 1996; Seligman 1997; Braithwaite and Levi, eds. 1998; Warren 1999). To confuse matters, trust is not only a contested concept in its own right, but it has many synonyms and terms that are closely related but not identical - mutuality, empathy, reciprocity, civility, respect, solidarity, toleration, and fraternity. To complicate matters further, some scholars argue that trust, whatever it may be, is not the best single indicator of social capital. They claim that the meaning of the term, and the way in which it is measured with the standard survey question, has been so hotly contested that it is best to throw it away and start again with something else. However, for all its problems, it is unlikely that there is a trouble-free definition of trust, or a much better single indicator of social capital. We should not be lured into the belief that other terms are necessarily better; if they were to be examined as closely as trust, they would also be found wanting. Trust is likely to be as good or bad a concept as any, and as good or bad an indicator of social capital as any.

Recognising the problem of defining trust, and of distinguishing it from a large family of similar and closely related terms, the working definition of trust used here is a belief that others, at worst, will not knowingly or willingly do you harm, and at best, will act in your interests. This is a fairly close approximation to Hardin's succinct definition that trust is 'encapsulated interest' (Hardin 1998: 12 – 15). However, it is not the purpose of this paper to dispute the meaning of

words. The central point here is that many social and political theorists from Thomas Hobbes to Robert Putnam agree that trust is an essential ingredient of civilised social and political life, and that low levels of political trust, as an indicator of political disaffection, create problems for democratic politics.

The survey question most frequently used to measure trust was first used in Germany by Elizabeth Noelle-Neumann in 1948. As a result (West) Germany has the longest time series. The question was then replicated in American survey research form where it spread to the rest of the world. The question reads: 'Generally speaking would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?'

This question is often assumed to tap into a core personality trait of individuals – whether they are, deep down and at heart, trusting or distrusting personalities. This approach to trust is most clearly found in the social – psychological work on the 'trusting personality', which argues that it is a basic, general, and enduring personality characteristic that is created by early childhood experiences. Trust is only part of a broader syndrome of personality characteristics, including optimism, a belief in co-operation, and confidence in social and political life in general. Conversely, distrusters are misanthropic personalities who are also pessimists and cynical about the possibilities for social and political co-operation (see Erikson 1950; Allport 1961; Cattell 1965).

A different approach to trust suggests that it is constantly being modified and updated by experience of the world (Hardin 1993). People are not neither trusters nor distrusters but more or less trusting about different aspects of social and political life according to the circumstances in which they find themselves. Therefore, responses to the standard trust question tell us not about a core personality trait of individuals, but about the society in which they live – whether the people around them behave in a trustworthy fashion or not. That is, responses to the trust question tell us less about the dispositions of individual respondents, than about their evaluation of the external world in which they live.

There are two good reasons for opting for this interpretation of responses to trust questions. First, different forms of trust do not form a single syndrome. As the correlations in Table 1 show, there is a fairly strong positive relationship between trust in the family and trust in fellow countrymen ($r=0.30$), but the correlations between trust in people, in the government, in the family, and in fellow countrymen, are not only substantively weak but also negative. The figures are usually substantively small, but they are statistically significant because they are based upon a large number of observations obtained from pooling samples of over a thousand people in each of twelve countries. However, it is evident that we can predict virtually nothing about a person's trust in other people from their trust in their government. Similarly, one can predict virtually nothing about a person's trust in government from their trust in their family, or about their trust in people from their trust in the family. Different forms of trust do not form a single syndrome; they are largely independent of each other, and they seem to be context specific.

Table 1: Individual Level Correlations Between World Values Measures of Trust in Twelve Nations⁴.

	People	Government	Family
Government	-0.03***		
Family	-0.06***	0.05***	
Countrymen	-0.16***	0.14***	0.30***

In case this should be thought to be an artefact of pooling a number of disparate nations where strong positive and negative associations cancel each other out, Table 2 shows individual level correlations between the World Values measures of personal trust and confidence in parliament in nineteen OECD nations. Confidence in parliament is used here because it is the question the World Values survey most generally uses, and because it is a good indicator of political disaffection. A direct question about political trust (using that the word 'trust') is asked only in the dozen nations listed in Table 1, and the question asks about trust in politicians, something that may fluctuate greatly over a short period of time according to particular political events. In contrast a question about confidence in institutions is likely to tap something that is deeper and more stable than trust in politicians.

Table 2 shows that personal (or social) trust is not significantly associated with confidence in parliament in thirteen of the nineteen nations, and even where the correlation is significant, it is rarely substantively large. The figures clearly confirm Kaase's (1999: 14) conclusion that 'the statistical relationship between interpersonal trust and political trust is small indeed'.

Table 2: Individual Level Correlations Between Interpersonal trust and Confidence in Parliament⁵.

Country	r	(n)	Country	r	(n)
Austria	0.05	(600)	Japan	-0.02	(541)
Belgium	0.06	(839)	Neths	0.09	(411)
Canada	0.01	(916)	Norway	0.04	(785)
Den	0.11*	(586)	Port	0.03	(579)
Eire	0.10*	(485)	Spain	0.06	(585)
Finland	0.10	(357)	Sweden	0.09*	(832)
France	0.04	(380)	Turkey	0.07	(355)
Iceland	0.02	(542)	UK	0.09*	(661)
Italy	0.08*	(9791)	USA	-0.01	(1015)
			W. Ger.	0.12***	(944)

The theoretical implication of this is that it makes little sense to use the term trust as a generic analytical concept, for there seems to be no such thing. We must stop talking about trust as if were a single, indivisible entity, or part of a basic personality syndrome, and remember to qualify the term with a context-specific prefix – 'family trust', 'social trust', 'political trust', 'neighbourhood trust'.

The second reason for doubting the social-psychological interpretation of trust as an enduring personality trait, is that levels of trust can rise and fall quite quickly, apparently in response changing social circumstances. For example social trust in Germany increased steadily and sub-

stantially after the war as the nation moved from the fear and paranoia of Nazi times into the post-war period of peace, prosperity and democracy. It more than doubled in less than ten years from 9% in 1948 to 19% in 1957, rose to 27% in 1973, 37% in 1983, and 45% in 1993 (Cusack 1997). The last part of this chapter will also show that levels of confidence in political institutions can also fluctuate quite rapidly in response to changing political circumstances.

Social networks and social trust.

One of the more puzzling and problematic aspect of social trust is its relationship to membership of voluntary organisations. The point is made in Table 3, which regresses social trust scores in twenty OECD nations on a list of thirteen social, economic, and political variables which might be thought to be associated with social trust and help us to explain its origins. In fact the regression results are generally poor, and in no case do the independent variables explain more than 11% of the variation in social trust in any of the countries. In most cases the adjusted R^2 is closer to 5% and in two cases (Spain and Turkey) not one of the independent variables is significantly associated with social trust. Social trust is an illusive variable that is not strongly associated with the usual batch of individual social, economic, and political variables.

[Table 3 about here]

The variables that are weakly and patchily associated with social trust can be grouped into three types. First, and most important in terms of strength and consistency, is a set of measures of success in life and life satisfaction - social class, income, education, happiness, life satisfaction, job satisfaction, and national pride. One of these, or a combination of them, are associated with social trust in fifteen of the twenty countries. Second is a set of political variables. In four of the twenty countries there is a weak negative relationship between being on the right of the left-right scale and social trust, and in six of them there is a weak and positive relationship between social trust and confidence in parliament. In a few countries there is a tendency towards social trust on the part of those who believe in open government, who do not emphasise the importance of social order, who are interested in politics, and who discuss politics. This is consistent with the social-psychological account of trust as a personality syndrome, but the coefficients are far from strong or consistent enough to provide clear support for the theory.

The third variable is membership of voluntary organisations, which appears as a significant variable in eleven of the twenty regressions, making it one of the stronger of the independent variables. Yet even when the coefficients are statistically significant they are substantively small, explaining little more than one or two per cent of the variance. It seems that membership of voluntary associations often does nothing for social trust, and usually does rather little. There is some evidence here of a statistical association between social trust and membership of voluntary associations, but the pattern presented in Table 3 is not nearly robust enough to support trust and social network theory. France, West Germany, Spain, Eire, Finland, Turkey, Norway, and Portugal provide no evidence to support such an argument, and the other nine countries provide only slight support for it.

In sum, social trust is a puzzle; its relationship to membership of voluntary associations is tenuous, at best, but nor is it explained, in the regression sense, by a wide range of other variables.

So far as one can draw any conclusion from the figures in Table 3, it seems to be that social trust is slightly more likely to be expressed by those who are relatively successful in life – those with relatively high incomes, status and education, and who express relatively high levels of life satisfaction, job satisfaction, and national pride. To put it the other way round, the losers in society are more distrustful. Perhaps the kindest thing to say about such a finding is that it is not exactly counter-intuitive. Social trust is not closely related to measures of confidence in parliament, as a measure of political disaffection. On the contrary, these seem to be very different things that are more or less randomly related at the individual level. In all, these results suggest that some of the basic assumptions underlying the theoretical relationship of social capital to social integration and political disaffection are questionable.

The finding that social trust and political disaffection are not empirically related at the individual level suggests that we should now repeat the exercise in order to analyse the relationship between social trust, political disaffection, and voluntary associations. Perhaps this will do a better job of explaining the origins of political disaffection and relating it to social capital?

Political Disaffection

Social distrust is to social capital as political disaffection is to political capital. And just as social capital has many synonyms and related concepts so also does political capital – political trust, civic conscience, civic duty, political engagement, political participation, citizenship, a concern with the public interest or the public good, political tolerance, political interest and knowledge, an ability to compromise politically, confidence in political institutions, and so on. It may even be that political capital is a modern version of the classical concept of fraternity, in that it signals a common political identity, interest, and purpose, and a capacity to co-operative with fellow citizens in order to achieve common goals in the public arena (Newton 1999:5).

In the same way that social capital is essential for civilised social life, so political capital is necessary for civilised political life – an ability to resolve conflicts peacefully and a capacity to engage productively with the common interest. To this extent political capital might be expected to improve the possibilities of political co-operation, and reduce the chances of free-riding or exploitation on the part of both citizens and political elites. To give just one example, research shows that social trust significantly increases the chances of citizens paying their taxes (Scholtz and Lubell 1998: 398-417. See also Rothstein XXX), without which the state finds great difficulty in functioning at all.

Like social distrust, political disaffection seems to be a reflection of the external or objective state of political life. It is not an expression of a basic personality trait, but an evaluation of the political world, which makes disaffection scores a litmus test of how well the political system is performing in the eyes of its citizens. High or rising disaffection across a sample of the population suggests that the political system – political leaders or institutions, or both - are thought to be functioning poorly. It may be that performance is poor, or that popular expectations of the system are too high, but either way high or rising levels of disaffection tell us that something is wrong.

Some writers argue that a measure of political disaffection is healthy for political life, because too much satisfaction with the system betrays a degree of political innocence (Hardin, 1999). This may be so, but it is not the main point. It does, indeed, make sense to express disaffection with untrustworthy politicians and poorly functioning political institutions, and in such circumstances disaffection is realistic, sensible, and quite possibly good for democracy in the long run. At the same time, the point about democracy is to recruit political leaders who are honest and trustworthy, and, no less important, to create a political system that ensures that leaders are held accountable for untrustworthy behaviour. Political disaffection is important precisely because democracies are supposed to be based on a complex array of institutional mechanisms that ensure that politicians behave in a trustworthy manner (or pay the political price), so minimising levels of political disaffection. It could even be argued that democracy presumes that political leaders will behave badly unless there is a system of checks and balances to constrain them.

In part this is because unlike social trust, political trust cannot be built upon personal knowledge or personal sanctions. Social trust is based upon first-hand experience of the social world and the people in it - friends, family, neighbours, colleagues, and daily contact with others⁶. Political trust, however, is based mainly upon second or third hand information about political leaders we never meet face-to-face⁷. And while social trust can be reinforced by personal sanctions, trust in political leaders for most citizens must be reinforced by institutional mechanisms. Lacking personal knowledge and direct sanctions over politicians, as compared with friends, colleagues and neighbours, we must rely upon institutional arrangements for enforcing accountable and trustworthy behaviour on the part of political leaders. Hence, political institutions are crucial for the creation of political capital – the full panoply of democratic mechanisms ranging from elections, the separation of powers, and from the rule of law rule, to public scrutiny, open government, and, in the extreme, impeachment or dismissal from office. Crucial among the institutions for controlling politicians are the police, the courts, the mass media, and the civil service, as well as the institutions of representative government itself, especially parliament. The more fair, just, impartial, and effective these regulating institutions, the more trust citizens will have in their fellow citizens, and the greater their trust in political leaders.

Hence confidence in these institutions is probably a better indicator of the state of political disaffection, than survey questions about political trust in leaders. For these reasons, this study uses World Values data about confidence in parliament – the central representative institution of democratic government – as its indicator of political disaffection and political capital. It is, to be sure, only one possible indicator of political disaffection, but it is chosen here because it is a theoretically important variable⁸, and one that deals with the core institution of modern, representative democracy.

Table 4 does for confidence in parliament what Table 3 does for social trust. It presents the results of regression analysis that runs confidence in parliament against the same set of social, economic and political variables in an attempt to pin down statistical associations that might help to explain variations in political disaffection. In some ways the results of Table 3 and 4 are much the same. The results of both are disappointing in the sense that the regression coefficients are most generally weak and rather patchy. Only a small percentage of the variance – 10% or less - is explained in most countries. At the same time the results are of some interest because they

suggest contrasts between social and political capital. Social distrust and political disaffection are expressed by different social groups for apparently different reasons. The ‘social success and satisfaction’ variables that are quite often associated with social trust almost disappear from the confidence in parliament regressions. Social trust appears in less than half the equations, and even then its presence is a weak one. The same is true of voluntary organisations. In short, the figures confirm the suggestion that social trust and political confidence are not generally associated with each other or with the same set of independent variables, including membership of voluntary associations.

[Table 4 about here]

Confidence in parliament is most closely and widely associated not with social but political variables, including, in rough order of importance:

- interest in politics and an inclination to discuss them
- pride in the nation and in its political system
- a belief in open government, a low priority given to social order, and a belief that the country is run for the benefit of a few big interests
- the left-right variable. It should be noted that the sign changes, perhaps according to whether a left or right-wing party or coalition is in government - the right expressing confidence when its own is in power, but lack of it when the left is in power.

To conclude this section, Tables 3 and 4 show that social trust is more closely associated with a set of social variables measuring social success and satisfaction, whereas political confidence is more closely associated with a list of political variables. Voluntary associations do not make a powerful showing in either set of regressions, but they are, if anything, rather more closely associated with social than political trust. This raises a significant question about the role of voluntary organisations in the generation of social and political capital. We will turn to this matter in greater detail now.

Voluntary Organisations and Trust

Voluntary organisations are a special kind of social institution precisely because they are voluntary. They are neither family, into which we are born, nor state, which we cannot avoid, nor work, upon which most of us are dependent for a livelihood. They are one of the main wholly voluntary and collaborative activity we are involved in, and as such they are said to form the social foundations upon which a co-operative democratic culture and structure can be built.

Unfortunately the empirical support for this claim is thin and weak. It is not altogether absent, but what little is present is not nearly robust enough to support trust and social network theory. In the first place, at the individual level there is no clear evidence of a strong association between membership of voluntary associations and social trust across a range of twenty western democracies. In the second place, there is even less evidence of any strong association between membership of voluntary associations and political disaffection. And in the third place, there is little evidence that the indicators of social and political capital are even distant cousins. On each side of

the triangle of associations of these three variables, the empirical links are weak, at best, and non-existent, at worst.

There are good reasons for expecting only weak links between membership of voluntary organisations and attitudes of trust and confidence. In the first place, the great majority of us spend most of our time outside voluntary organisations. As children, home and school probably occupy most of our hours. As adults, it is home (family and TV), work, and friends and neighbours. For most people voluntary organisations account for a rather small percentage of the time.

Let us take the Netherlands as a case in point, partly because comparative studies show it to have an unusually strong and vibrant voluntary sector, and partly because it has an excellent time-budget diary study – probably the best single method of way of obtaining reliable information on how people use their time. The study covers the period from 1980 to 1995, so we also have a time series on which to estimate trends. Results published by de Hart and Dekker (1999) show that while 85% of the Dutch were members of a voluntary organisation, 33% of the Dutch sample of 2,354 people were engaged in voluntary activity in 1980, and a virtually identical 32% in 1995. That is, two thirds of the sample were not involved in volunteering beyond membership of a voluntary association. On average the volunteers spend 4.3 hours per week on voluntary activity in 1980 and 4.9 in 1995, which puts it way behind the hours spend working and on household and family activities. In 1980 and 1995 voluntary activity accounted for only 8.4% and 8.9% of all *leisure* time – well behind watching TV, informal socialising and other leisure activities, and less than reading. There is rather little in these figures to suggest that voluntary activity accounts for sufficient time, even among the special minority of voluntary activists, to have much of an impact on building social capital. Of course it might be argued that it is the quality of this time that is important, not the crude number of hours it involves, but is this plausible when we compare the importance of voluntary organisations with home and work for the great majority of people?

The social capital literature gives us clues about why voluntary associations are likely to be relatively unimportant for the most generalised forms of trust because it draws an important distinction between bonding and bridging associations. The former are more likely to generate feelings of trust within the membership group; the latter are more likely to be important for generalised trust insofar as they build bridges between social groups and across social cleavages⁹. Given the tendency of similar kinds of people to cluster together it seems likely that many, if not most, voluntary organisations will have stronger bonding than bridging effects. In the first place, most members and activists of voluntary organisations are middle and upper class, and the more active and involved people are, the more middle and upper class they tend to be. To this extent those who are most active in organisations, and therefore to benefit from their capacity to generate civic virtues, are the likely to be drawn from a fairly restricted range of middle and upper class people. However, working class and minority groups are involved in some voluntary organisations, particularly in churches and some political organisations. The bridging capacity of these two types of organisations are limited, however. Trade unions and labour movement organisations, are, by definition, working class. Churches, precisely for the reason that religion appeals to a broad cross-section of society, tend to be stratified by class, and separated along ethnic lines. Some other voluntary associations are bonding rather than bridging organisations almost by defi-

nition - professional and business organisations, for example, are homogeneous in their composition.

Sports organisations, usually the largest category in surveys of voluntary activity, are also likely to be bonding rather than bridging to the extent that activists and players (as opposed to the large and very heterogeneous range of spectators who sit in front of their TV sets) are often divided by class and race. Country clubs, rowing, sailing, riding, fencing, squash, golf, and tennis usually sit on one side of the social divide. Football, pool, baseball, cycling, athletics, though more popular and more mixed, generally sit on the other. Like churches, sports that attract a social mix of participants are often divided into associations that have a membership of similar types of people in terms of class, religion, or ethnicity, if only because they tend to be based on fairly homogeneous neighbourhoods and communities. Even choral societies have been said to recruit mainly single, young people with an interest in classical music.

We are left with the conclusion that voluntary organisations seem to play a minor role in creating the values and attitudes that underlie social and political capital. Add this to the previous conclusions that social trust and political disaffection are independent of one another, and one is led to the conclusion that the concept of social trust and social capital are unlikely to help us much in the search for an explanation of political disaffection.

Aggregate Analysis

The story cannot be left here, however. If the standard measures of social trust and confidence in political institutions should be interpreted as judgments about the external world in which people find themselves, then our analysis should focus not on individuals, and their socio-psychological properties, but rather on society and its institutions at large. Rather than seeing trust as a socio-psychological characteristics of individuals, perhaps we should compare whole societies and their collective levels of trust and confidence? (Pharr, Putnam and Dalton, 2000: 26-7). Besides, if social capital is anything, it is a societal not an individual property, and should be studied as a social or collective phenomenon, not at the individual level as if it were a property of isolated citizens. According to this view, individuals do not 'have' social capital, but social systems as a whole generate it as a context in which individuals operate.

The reasons for working at the aggregate or systemic level in the case of political confidence and disaffection are much the same. If confidence in political institutions is based upon evaluations of how the political system is working then it is likely to be based upon things such as inflation, unemployment, political corruption or incompetence, victory or defeat in war, economic growth, crime rates, tax rates, public service performance, and government records. These are indicators of government performance that effect everybody. They may not affect all citizens to the same extent, but they are likely to affect most of them to a greater or lesser extent. It is for this reason that attitudes of political disaffection are distributed fairly randomly across society and expressed by a wide variety of social types. Consequently, the analysis should focus not on individuals, but on political systems as a whole. If this is correct then the absence of an association between social and political trust at the individual level is not of great importance for trust and social net-

work theory. What matters is the relationship at the aggregate level of community, society, or nation.

There is a second reason why we should look at social trust and political disaffection as a systemic or societal phenomenon, rather than an individual one. It was argued earlier in the chapter that democracies are built around a complex array of institutional mechanisms that ensure that politicians behave in a trustworthy manner (or pay the political price), so minimising levels of political disaffection. Democracies hope to recruit political leaders who are honest and trustworthy, but no less important, democratic systems create a set of institutional mechanisms that hold political leaders accountable and sanction untrustworthy behaviour. If we trust politicians it is less likely to be because we know about them as individuals, than because we know something about their record in office, and because we have reason to place our confidence in the institutions that constraint politicians to trustworthy behaviour. While individuals may well vary somewhat in their perception of the effectiveness of these institutions, the institutions themselves are properties of the political system, and their operations will affect the whole system, not just discrete groups. The finding that individual variables such as age, education, job satisfaction, social class, and membership of voluntary associations is not associated with political disaffection is consistent with this claim, but the argument leads inevitably to the conclusion that the theory should be tested at the system or aggregate level by comparing communities, societies or nation states.

Therefore, Table 5 focuses on a comparison of nation states, and shows simple (bi-variate) correlations between the average social trust and political confidence scores in a set of five public institutions in seventeen countries in the two World Value surveys of 1980-4 and 1990-3. The statistics cover a wide range of democratic countries from Italy to Denmark, Japan to Sweden, and the USA to Finland. The results support the idea that the level of social trust in countries as a whole is significantly and strongly associated with confidence in four out of five public institutions – the police, the legal system, parliament, and the civil service. In other words, the association between social and political confidence predicted by trust and social networks theory, is indeed found at the national level¹⁰.

Table 5: Aggregate (National-level) Correlations between Social Trust and Confidence in Public Institutions in Seventeen Western nations¹¹.

Police	0.62**
Legal system	0.51**
Armed forces	0.24
Parliament	0.38*
Civil Service	0.40*
All public institutions	0.56**

It is notable that by far the strongest correlations in Table 5 are between social trust and confidence in the police and the legal system. Why is this? Perhaps part of the explanation is that formal sanctions are increasingly crucial for the maintenance of trustworthy social behaviour in large-scale and impersonal modern society. We increasingly rely not on the thick trust of small, closed societies which can use powerful personal sanctions, but on thin trust based on more distant personal relations and on formal and institutionalised mechanisms of inspection and control.

Formal sanctions in modern large-scale society are ultimately imposed by the police, courts, and more generally by bureaucrats in both the private and public sectors, and in the systems they operate to constrain behaviour within the boundaries of trustworthiness. The more effective, just, and impartial the police, courts, and bureaucrats are in dealing with those who betray trust, the more people can place their faith in the likelihood of trustworthy behaviour of others. The figures in Table 5 are consistent with this argument.

It is also notable that the one insignificant correlation in the table concerns the armed forces. Perhaps this is because the military is the only non-domestic institution in the list, in the sense that it is concerned with the external enemies of the state. There is no particular reason why social trust should be associated with confidence in the armed forces, but every reason why it should be associated with confidence in the police and the courts.

Although the contrast between the individual level correlations in Tables 1 and 2, and the aggregate figures in Table 5 is striking, two important cautions must be stated. First, Table 5 says nothing about possible causes and effects. Does social trust help to create effective institutions which then win the confidence of citizens, or do effective institutions create circumstances in which citizens can behave in a trustworthy manner, or is it some mixture of a bottom-up and top-down process? Second, Table 5 presents simple correlations between two aggregate variables – the average of individual social trust figures for nation states and the average confidence in institutions figures. In this case, aggregated individual data serves as a proxy for a macro or system level variables¹². However the point would be better made if, for the aggregate statistics for confidence in institutions, we could substitute a genuinely macro, structural, or institutional variable that captures a characteristic of the system as a whole.

This is done in Table 6 which presents the average social trust scores for 43 nation states organised according to their Freedom House scores (Freedom House 1997: 579-80) for political rights in 1996-7. The political rights variable is, of course, a structural variable based on a quantitative estimate of how political systems are working. The figures show that the higher the political rights score, the higher the social trust score. Countries with the most developed political rights have an average social trust score more than twice as high as countries with the least developed political rights. Once again, we cannot tell from these figures what is cause and what is effect, but there is evidence here that social trust is associated in some way with the operation of political systems.

Table 6: Social Trust and Political Rights, 1996-7¹³.

Political Rights Score	Average Social trust Score	(n)
1	33.9	(17)
2	20.9	(12)
3, 4	20.4	(11)
5,6,7	16.3	(3)

A similar exercise is repeated in Table 7, this time substituting Freedom House scores for civil liberties in place of political rights. The figures show that countries with high civil liberty scores usually have high social trust scores as well. Once again, the countries at the top of the civil liberties table are notable for their exceptionally high levels of social trust – almost two and a half times higher than countries at the bottom of the table.

Table 7: Social Trust and Civil Liberties, 1996-7¹⁴.

Civil liberties score	Average Social trust Score	(n)
1	46.6	(7)
2	26.3	(13)
3, 4	18.3	(19)
5,6,7	19.4	(4)

For good measure the two scores for political rights and civil liberties are combined into a single index of democratic development in Table 8. This is helpful because it produces a larger spread of categories and a more equal distribution of countries between them. The fit is not perfect but, nonetheless, there is a clear tendency for the more democratic states to have high levels of social trust, and once again, it is the most democratic counties that have exceptionally high levels. Average social trust in the top group of nations is almost twice as much as those that are only slightly less democratic, and more than three times the average of the least democratic ones.

Table 8: Social Trust and Democracy¹⁵.

Democracy Score	Average Social trust Score	(n)
12	46.6	(7)
11	26.1	(8)
10	23.4	(5)
9	21.5	(2)
8	17.6	(5)
7	20.7	(6)
6	21.0	(4)
5 or less	15.1	(6)

The figures in Tables 5 – 8 suggest that there is, after all, a relationship between social trust (as an indicator of social capital) and both political disaffection and democratic performance, though at the level of a comparison of nation states, not individuals within them. By and large social capital is associated with relatively low levels of political disaffection, and with relatively high levels of democratic performance. But the tables tell us nothing about what might link them. To do this we should look more closely at particular countries, particularly at the deviant cases where, for some reason, large stocks of social capital are matched by high or rising levels of political disaffection. Four well-documented cases stand out in recent years – Sweden, France, Finland, and Japan.

Social capital and political disaffection - Sweden

Social trust in Sweden has not declined in recent years. On the contrary Sweden maintained one of the highest sets of figures for personal trust of any western nation in the 1980s and 1990s (Newton 1999b: 176; Holmberg, 1999: 115). In 1981, 57% of Swedes said that most people could be trusted, 66% in 1990, and 60% in 1996. Only Finland and Norway could match these high levels. At the same time, various measures of political disaffection show a steep decline. Confidence in the Swedish parliament dropped from 47% in 1986 to 19% in 1996. Confidence in the cabinet declined from 51% in 1986 to 18% in 1996. Mistrust of politicians rose from around 40% in 1968 to around 70% in 1994 (Holmberg 1999: 112, 118).

Using multiple regression analysis, Holmberg (1999: 120) finds that political factors - not demographic, economic, or media variables - were most strongly related to trust in Swedish politicians and institutions, and that of the political factors two performance variables were most important. These were evaluations of party policies and assessments of the government, particularly policies involving the EU membership and immigration. Holmberg (1999: 122) concludes that 'Government performance, and people's perceptions of that performance, are the central factors. In this sense, political distrust is best explained by politics.'

Social capital and political disaffection: Finland

In 1980 social trust in Finland was at a very high level; by 1990 it was even higher. In the same period, stocks of social capital in the form of a vibrant associational life was also maintained at a level that was high by the standards of almost any other country in the world (Siisiäinen 1999: 139). There was a rapid increase in the creation of new voluntary associations between 1990 and

1995, and no evidence of a decline in membership of them. On the contrary there was an increase in multiple membership of three or more associations between 1975 and 1988.

In the 1980s, however, confidence in parliament in Finland fell from one of the very highest in West Europe (65% in 1981, second only to Norway) to one of the lowest (34% in 1991, and lower only in Italy). Between 1981 and 1996 Finland registered one of the largest falls of confidence in parliament of any western nation (Putnam, Pharr and Dalton 2000: 20). Confidence in the police and civil service also declined steeply in this period. This is a dramatic case of high and rising stocks of social capital accompanied by a steep rise in political disaffection.

The causes of political disaffection are easy to see in Finland in the late 1980s and early 1990s and derive very largely from the collapse of the Soviet Union, its close neighbour and best customer. With this came a deep economic recession in Finland in which unemployment rose to an historical high, government deficits trebled, taxes increased, and services and wages were cut. Huge amounts of money fled the country, interest rates soared, and the value of the currency dropped steeply. Business bankruptcies multiplied. Open conflict developed between the government and the central bank. A general strike was threatened. In addition, a cabinet minister resigned in 1992 - unusual in Finland - and another minister (Kauko Juhantalo) was found guilty of corruption and expelled from Parliament – unprecedented in Finland. There was deep division about membership of the European Union¹⁶.

Social capital and political disaffection – Japan¹⁷

Stocks of social capital in Japan were maintained or even increased between the 1970s and 1990s. Interest groups and voluntary associations proliferated in this period. Social trust stayed at exactly 42% in 1981, 1990, and 1996 (Newton 1999b: 176). Levels of satisfaction with politics in Japan have generally been low by OECD standards since the 1970s, but they fell to near-record low levels in the early 1990s. Dissatisfaction with politics rose from 40% in 1985 to an all time high of 74% in 1996. Conversely, satisfaction with politics fell from 12% to 5%, and the 'Somewhat satisfied' figure halved from 31% to 15%. (Pharr 2000: 175). At the same time cross sectional regression analysis shows that membership of voluntary associations had no significant effect on individual levels of political trust (this is consistent with the results of Table 4 in this chapter). What explains the rising tide of political disaffection in Japan is not a decline of social capital, but the recent political history of the country, particularly the performance of politicians in office and reports of their misconduct and corruption.

Social capital and disaffection – France¹⁸

Social capital in France has increased over the past decades. More than three times as many voluntary organisations were created each year at the turn of the century as in the 1960s (70,000 a year compared with 29,000), and in 1997 over half the French population belonged to a voluntary organisation compared with a third in 1967. Levels of social trust are low in France, but they remained pretty constant between 1981 and 1990. French trust in the citizens of other EU countries rose quite substantially between 1976 and 1993, and they did in many other EU countries (Newton 1999b: 178).

At the same time, levels of political distrust and disaffection have risen quite sharply in France. In 1977 slightly more than half (53%) the population believed that politicians cared about people like them, but twenty years later only 19% believed this. Over the same period, those believing that elected representatives and politicians are mostly corrupt rose from 38% to 61%. Figures for confidence in parliament (1981-90), for feeling well represented by a political party or a political leader (1989 – 1999), and for distrust in politicians tell the same story. Cross-sectional regression analysis shows a slight tendency in France for members of voluntary organisations to be more civic, to vote more, and to be more tolerant than non-members, but the differences are small (this is consistent with the results for France in Table 4).

The increase of political disaffection in France seems to be the result of political developments, particularly ‘co-habitation’, which has encouraged anti-system parties, and anti-political sentiments. Political corruption is also a theme in France, as in Japan.

Conclusions

Among individual citizens, social trust is not associated with political trust or confidence in political institutions, and neither is closely associated with membership of voluntary organisations. To this extent, there is little evidence in the survey research of individuals to support the claim that increasing levels of political disaffection in modern society are caused by or related to declining levels of social trust, or depleted stocks of social capital. On the other hand, some versions of trust and social networks theory, like social capital theory, leads us to expect no strong associations at the individual level, as opposed to cross-national comparisons of nations.

Sure enough, cross-national comparison of nation states shows substantively important and statistically significant associations between aggregated country scores for social trust (as an indicator of social capital), and aggregated country scores for confidence in public institutions. Similarly, countries with well-developed civil and political rights, a property of the political system not of individuals within it, also demonstrate high levels of social trust. Political disaffection, like poorly developed democratic rights, are generally associated with low levels of social trust.

But simple correlation analysis, gives us few clues about why social capital and democracy are linked, or about the processes that connect low levels of social trust and high or increasing levels of political disaffection. For that we have to delve into country studies. The recent history of four deviant cases – Sweden, France, Finland, and Japan - show that these four countries have maintained high levels of social capital, while experiencing a steep increase in political disaffection. The explanation for this increase lies not in social factors related to trust and social networks, but to recent political history, and especially to the performance of their political systems.

Systematic cross-national comparison of many countries suggests that democracy and relatively low levels of political disaffection are usually associated with high levels of social trust, and good stocks of social capital. More detailed investigation of particular countries suggests that political disaffection among well established democracies can rise steeply in a relatively short period, if politicians and/or institutions perform unusually poorly. As the Russians say, a fish rots from the head down: the same may be true of democratic political systems.

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Table 3
Individual Level Regressions of Social, Economic, and Political Variables on Social Trust in
20 OECD Nations, 1990

	<u>USA</u>	<u>France</u>	<u>UK</u>	<u>W.Ger</u>	<u>Italy</u>
Voluntary Organisations.	0.09** (3.01)		0.14*** (3.31)		0.13*** (3.43)
Age	0.10*** (3.42)		0.13* (2.54)		
<u>Success/Satisfaction</u>					
Education	0.10** (3.04)		0.12* (2.45)	0.10** (2.68)	
Occupational class/Income	0.12*** (3.67)			0.07* (2.22)	
Life Sat./Happiness	0.09** (3.09)			0.16*** (3.43)	0.08* (2.06)
Job. Satisfaction.				0.08* (2.04)	
National Pride				0.09* (2.32)	
<u>Political interest/liberalism</u>					
Right Wing	-0.09** (2.97)	-0.13* (2.38)			
Confidence in Parliament			0.09* (2.04)	0.12** (3.13)	0.08* (2.34)
Interest in/ Discuss politics					0.14** (2.98)
Maintaining order					
Open Gov. Religious					
Adj. R ²	0.08***	0.05**	0.05***	0.08***	0.08***
F ratio	11.62	1.95	2.42	4.10	4.25
(n)	1114	380	661	944	791

Table 3 cont.

	<u>Belgium</u>	<u>Spain</u>	<u>Eire</u>	<u>Japan</u>	<u>Sweden</u>
Voluntary Organisations	0.11** (2.94)			0.11* (2.53)	0.12*** (2.10)
Age					
<u>Success/Satisfaction</u>					
Education	0.09* (2.14)			0.15** (2.82)	
Occupational Class/Income			0.12* (2.12)	0.10* (2.14)	0.09* (2.14)
Life Sat./Happiness					0.11* (2.38)
Job satisfaction					
National Pride	0.08* (2.04)				
<u>Political interest/liberalism</u>					
Right Wing					
Confidence in parliament			0.10* (2.02)		0.09* (2.46)
Interest in/ Discuss politics					
Maintaining order					- 0.12** (3.50)
Open Gov					
Religious	0.11* (2.14)				
Adj. R ²	0.04***	0.02	0.06***	0.07***	0.09***
F ratio	2.54	1.38	2.35	2.99	4.67
(n)	839	585	485	541	822

Table 3 cont.

	Finland	<u>Switz.</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Turkey</u>	<u>Canada</u>
Vol. Organisations		0.15** (3.24)	0.15*** (3.63)		
Age					0.14*** (3.77)
<u>Success/satisfaction</u>					
Education.					0.18*** (4.62)
Occ.Class/ Income					0.09* (2.29)
Life Satisfaction/ Happiness	0.18* (2.39)				
Job satisfaction					
National Pride	0.12* (2.22)	0.13** (2.77)			0.07* (2.20)
<u>Political interest/liberalism</u>					
Right Wing					
Confidence in par- liament					
Interest in/ Discuss politics	0.12* (1.98)		0.13* (2.48)		0.09* (2.31)
Maintaining order					
Open Gov					
Religious					0.08* (2.05)
Adj. R ²	0.05*	0.07***	0.05***	0.02	0.10***
F ratio	1.84	3.05	2.40	0.75	5.47
(n)	357	530	600	355	906

Table 3 cont.

	<u>Neths.</u>	<u>Den.</u>	<u>Iceland</u>	<u>Norway</u>	<u>Portugal</u>
Vol. Organisations	0.10* (2.01)	0.09* (2.94)	0.09* (2.10)		
Age			0.10* (2.12)	0.09* (2.01)	
<u>Success/satisfaction</u>					
Education					0.11* (2.21)
Occ. Class/ Income			0.09* (2.08)		
Life Satisfaction/ Happiness				0.11** (2.98)	0.10* (2.01)
Job satisfaction					
National Pride	0.15** (2.88)				
<u>Political interest/liberalism</u>					
Right Wing		-0.11* (2.57)	-0.09* (2.11)		
Confidence in Par- liament		0.11** (2.80)			
Interest in/ Discuss politics					
Maintaining order			- 0.09* (2.08)	- 0.08* (2.25)	
Open government	0.10* (2.03)				0.09* (2.13)
Religious			0.10* (2.28)		
Adj.R ²	0.11***	0.08***	0.08***	0.09***	0.01
F ratio	3.43	3.59	3.26	4.65	1.24
(n)	411	586	542	785	579

Notes for table 3

The table reports the standardized Beta coefficients at 5 per cent or greater significance (t statistics in brackets).

Source: World Values Surveys 1990.

Table 4
Individual Level Regressions of Social, Economic, and Political Variables
on Confidence in Parliament in 19 OECD Nations, 1990

	<u>USA</u>	<u>France</u>	<u>UK</u>	<u>W.Ger</u>	<u>Italy</u>
<u>Political variables</u>					
Right wing	0.09** (2.98)	- 0.19** (2.93)	0.10* (2.41)	0.12*** (3.49)	
Open government		0.13* (2.46)	0.16*** (4.30)	0.17*** (5.39)	0.14*** (4.09)
Need for national order					
Interest in/ Discuss politics				0.09* (2.18)	0.13** (2.85)
Pride in nation/ Political system.				0.13*** (3.73)	0.12** (3.28)
Country run for few big interests					
<u>Other variables</u>					
Social Trust			0.07* (2.04)	0.11*** (3.43)	0.09* (2.38)
Education		0.16* (2.35)	0.10* (2.20)		
Age	- 0.09** (3.03)			0.09** (2.62)	
Occupational class/Income	- 0.07* (2.05)				
Job Satisfaction					
Vol. Organisations					
Happiness			0.08* (2.02)		
Satisfaction with household finances			0.10* (2.39)		
Adj. R ²	0.02***	0.05*	0.17***	0.15***	0.05***
F ratio	3.39	1.87	7.33	8.82	3.09
(n)	1114	380	661	944	791

Table 4 cont.

	<u>Neths</u>	<u>Denmark</u>	<u>Belgium</u>	<u>Spain</u>	<u>Eire</u>
<u>Political variables</u>					
Right wing		0.13** (2.97)			0.13** (2.79)
Open government.	0.18*** (3.61)		0.11** (3.14)		0.11** (2.62)
Need for national order					
Political interest/ Discuss politics	0.18** (2.91)		0.15*** (3.56)		0.16** (3.18)
National pride	0.10* (2.03)		0.14*** (3.94)		
Pride in political system				0.78*** (25.79)	
Country run for few big interests				- 0.08** (2.76)	
<u>Other variables</u>					
Social Trust		0.12** (2.80)		0.12*** (3.41)	0.09* (2.02)
Education					
Age					
Occupational class/ income				0.09* (2.47)	0.16** (2.89)
Job Satisfaction					
Voluntary organisations					
Happiness					
Satisfaction with household finances					0.12** (2.32)
Adj. R ²	0.09***	0.02*	0.06***	0.57***	0.14***
F ratio	2.84	1.60	3.40	34.04	4.52
(n)	411	586	839	585	485

Table 4 cont.

	<u>Iceland</u>	<u>Japan</u>	<u>Sweden</u>	<u>Finland</u>	<u>Austria</u>
<u>Political variables</u>					
Right wing		0.17*** (3.84)	- 0.08* (2.20)		
Open government		0.15*** (3.62)	0.21*** (6.36)	0.27*** (5.44)	0.12** (2.98)
Need for national order	- 0.10* (2.22)	- 0.11** (2.67)			
Interested in/ Discuss politics	0.18*** (3.60)	0.13** (2.64)	0.19*** (4.77)	0.19** (3.19)	0.17*** (3.40)
Pride in nation/ Political system.	0.10* (2.19)	0.14** (3.24)	0.16*** (4.73)	0.14** (2.79)	0.18*** (4.43)
Country run for few big interests					
<u>Other variables</u>					
Social Trust			0.08* (2.46)		
Education			0.08* (2.16)		
Age					
Occupational Class/Income					
Job Satisfaction			0.11** (3.13)		
Voluntary organisations				0.11* (2.18)	
Happiness					
Satisfaction with household finances					
Adj. R ²	0.05***	0.13***	0.14***	0.17***	0.06***
F ratio	2.31	4.98	7.01	4.44	2.65
(n)	542	541	832	357	600

Table 4 cont.

	<u>Turkey</u>	<u>Canada</u>	<u>Norway</u>	<u>Portugal</u>
<u>Political variables</u>				
Right wing				
Open government			0.15*** (4.17)	
Need for national order				
Interest in/ discuss politics			0.10* (2.31)	0.11* (2.07)
Pride in political system	0.41*** (8.85)	0.44*** (14.65)		
National pride	0.10* (2.12)		0.10** (2.73)	
Country run for few big interests	- 0.19*** (4.31)	- 0.18*** (6.03)		
<u>Other variables</u>				
Social Trust				
Education				
Age				
Occupational class/income			0.09* (2.26)	
Job Satisfaction				
Voluntary organisations				
Happy.				
Satisfaction with household finances				
Adj. R ²	0.43***	0.30***	0.05***	0.04
F ratio	12.58	18.18	3.00	1.98
(n)	355	935	785	579

Notes

- ¹ It is evident from the list of writers that there is no tight school of thought involved here, but rather a broad stream of thinking that converges on basic essentials about the importance of trust in society, and on the crucial role of voluntary organisations as a foundation for democratic politics. Hence the broad term 'trust and social networks' is used to group this wide variety of approaches under a single umbrella, while avoiding any suggestion that there is a single, integrated, theory.
- ² For an overview of the literature on trust see Miztal 1996.
- ³ For overviews of the literature on voluntary organisations see Smith and Freedman 1972, and Pugliese 1986.
- ⁴ Source: Computed from World Values data, 1990, in those countries where all four questions were asked, namely, Canada, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, India, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, Nigeria, Spain, Turkey, and the United States.
- Notes: *** = significant at .001, n = 13,802.
- The questions asked were:
- 'Generally speaking would you say that most people can be trusted [Scored 2], or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people [1]?'
 'How much do you trust the government to do what is right? Do you trust it almost always [scored 4], most of the time [3], only some of the time [2], or almost never [1]?'
 'I now want to ask you how much you trust various groups of people: Using the responses on this card, could you tell me how much you trust your family/ the British (Substitute your nationality for 'British'); completely [scored 5], a little [scored 4], neither trust nor distrust them [3], do not trust them very much [2], do not trust them at all [1]?'
⁵ Source: Computed from World Values data, 1990.
- Notes: * = significant at 0.05, *** significant at 0.001.
- The questions asked were:
- Social trust - see Table 1
 Confidence - 'Please look at this card and tell me for each item listed, how much confidence you have in them, is it a great deal [scored 4] quite a lot [3], not very much [2], or none at all [1]? This question is asked about parliament (or the equivalent representative institution), and repeated for the police, the courts, the armed forces, and the civil service.
- ⁶ Personal trust is based to some degree upon personal contact or knowledge of individuals, or of social groups and categories. I cannot know all British people any more than I can have personal knowledge of all policemen, shopkeepers, dentists, or taxi drivers in the country, but I have some first or second hand experience and knowledge of them in everyday life, which enables me to make a judgement about their trustworthiness in any given situation.
- ⁷ This is why Hardin believes it makes no sense to trust politicians.
- ⁸ Seligman (1997) lays out an elaborate argument for this suggestion.

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- ⁹ Since all organisations are likely to both bond and bridge to a certain extent the distinction is likely to be difficult to operationalise. For example, even the most homogeneous organisation, such as an upper middle class, all-white, all-male golf club will bridge across occupational groups of lawyers, doctors, and businessmen, even if it fails to bridge divisions of gender, class, generation, or race.
- ¹⁰ Support for these findings and for the reasoning that lies behind the explanation of them is provided by Rothstein and Stolle 2001.
- ¹¹ Source: World Values Surveys of 1980-4, and 1990-93. N=34 Nations, as presented in Newton and Norris, 2000.
- Notes: ** significant at < 0.01, * significant at < 0.05.
- Correlations between mean social trust and confidence in institutions scores in each nation. Countries included in the analysis are Austria, Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, Eire, Finland, France, Iceland, Italy, Japan, The Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Norway, Spain, West Germany, USA.
- ¹² It might also be argued that aggregated responses to individual questions about confidence in institutions are an indicator of how these institutions are functioning in practice. In this case, the figures tell about the system and its performance.
- ¹³ Source: Political rights scores from Freedom House 1997: 579-80; social trust scores from World Values, mid-1990s.
- Notes: Countries with political rights scores of 3 and 4 and 5, 6, and 7, because of small numbers.
- ¹⁴ Source: See table 6.
- Notes: Country scores for political liberties are grouped in the same way as Table 6 for the sake of consistency.
- ¹⁵ Source: See Table 6.
- Notes: The democracy score consists of the Freedom House political rights and civil liberties scores combined.
- ¹⁶ For details of economic and political events in Finland in the 1990s see Jan Sundberg's annual entry in the Political Data Yearbook of the *European Journal of Political Science*.
- ¹⁷ This section on Japan is based on Pharr 2000: 173 - 201
- ¹⁸ This section on France is based upon Mayer 2000 and 2001.