The Concept of Representation in Contemporary Democratic Theory

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Abstract

Democratic theorists have paid increasing attention to problems
of political representation over the past two decades. Interest is
driven by (*a*) a political landscape within which electoral representa-
tion now competes with new and informal kinds of representation;
(*b*) interest in the fairness of electoral representation, particularly
for minorities and women; (*c*) a renewed focus on political judgment
within democratic theory; and (*d*) a new appreciation that participa-
tion and representation are complementary forms of citizenship. We
review recent innovations within democratic theory, focusing espe-
cially on problems of fairness, constituency definition, deliberative
political judgment, and new, nonelectoral forms of representation.

INTRODUCTION

The topic of political representation has become increasingly visible and important within contemporary democratic theory for two reasons. The first is a disjunction between the standard accounts of democratic representation, focused primarily on territorially based electoral representation, and an increasingly complex political terrain, which is less confined within state territoriality, more pluralized, and increasingly dependent on informal negotiation and deliberation to generate political legitimacy. These developments are driving renewed interest in the impact of electoral representation on broad patterns of inclusion and exclusion (Lijphart 1999; Powell 2000, 2004), as well as in the new forms of representation that are rapidly evolving in nonelectoral domains such as administrative policy development (Stephan 2004, Brown 2006, Fung 2006a), civil society advocacy (Alcoff 1991, Warren 2001, Strolovitch 2006), and global civil society (Keck & Sikkink 1998, Anheier et al. 2004, Grant & Keohane 2005, Held & Koenig-Archibugi 2005). Here we limit our attention to recent developments in democratic theory, which has been as much affected by these developments as other areas of political science.

The second reason is indigenous to democratic theory, which has tended to follow Jean-Jacques Rousseau in assuming that representative democracy is, at best, an instrumental substitute for stronger forms of democracy (Pateman 1976, Barber 1984). Until recently, participatory and deliberative democrats paid little attention to political representation, leaving the topic to neo-Schumpeterian theorists who viewed democracy as primarily about the selection and organization of political elites (Sartori 1987, Manin 1997; cf. Kateb 1992). This consensus division of labor began to unravel about 15 years ago at the hands of those interested in broad patterns of inclusions and exclusions in political representation, particularly of minorities and women (Phillips 1995, 1998; Williams 1998;

Mansbridge 1999; Young 2000; Dovi 2002). The turning point was clearly identified by David Plotke, who wrote in 1997 that "the opposite of representation is not participation. The opposite of representation is exclusion. And the opposite of participation is abstention.... Representation is not an unfortunate compromise between an ideal of direct democracy and messy modern realities. Representation is crucial in constituting democratic practices" (Plotke 1997, p. 19; see also Urbinati 2000). In addition, democratic theorists are increasingly appreciating the contributions of representation to the formation of public opinion and judgment, as well at its role in constituting multiple pathways of social influence within and often against the state. (Habermas 1989 [1962], 1996; Ankersmit 2002; Urbinati 2005, 2006). Importantly, these reassessments are leading an increasing number of democratic theorists both to reengage problems of electoral design (Beitz 1989, James 2004, Thompson 2004, Rehfeld 2005) and to think about democratic representation beyond the ballot (Saward 2006a,b; Warren 2008).

We review the concept of representation from the perspective of recent democratic theory. In the first section, we list the political and social reasons for rethinking democratic representation. In the second section, we review the background in democratic theory. In the third section, we comment on the developments that are sending democratic theorists back to "first things"—the nature of political representation itself. Next, we argue that constituency definition, long ignored in theories of representation, is among the most fundamental of first things because it establishes the frame—the inclusions and exclusions—within which issues are decided. From this perspective, we can appreciate the renewed interest in representative institutions within democratic theory, discussed in the fifth section. Last, we consider emerging nonelectoral forms of representation: new citizen forums and decision-making bodies, representative claims by civil society and advocacy groups,

and other "voice entrepreneurs," for example. Nonelectoral forms of representation, we believe, are increasingly important to expanding and deepening democracy. But these developments challenge the existing conceptual and normative resources of democratic theory. Democratic theorists need to develop new tools and critical analyses that are sensitive to these new forms of political influence and indirect forms of power.

THE CHANGING POLITICAL LANDSCAPE OF DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION

Representative democracy as we know it today evolved from two key sources. First, during the twentieth century, the expansion of the franchise transformed liberal, constitutional regimes into mass democracies. Second, when structured through constitutionalism, electoral representation enabled a dynamic, if often fractious, balance between the rule of elites and the social and political democratization of society, with political parties displacing parliaments as the primary loci of representation. Until relatively recently, these two sources molded what we call, following D. Castiglione & M.E. Warren (unpublished manuscript), the "standard account" of representative democracy.

The standard account has four main features. First, representation is understood as a principal agent relationship, in which the principals—constituencies formed on a territorial basis—elect agents to stand for and act on their interests and opinions, thus separating the sources of legitimate power from those who exercise that power. Second, electoral representation identifies a space within which the sovereignty of the people is identified with state power. Third, electoral mechanisms ensure some measure of responsiveness to the people by representatives and political parties who speak and act in their name. Finally, the universal franchise endows electoral representation with an important element of political equality.

The complexities of the principal-agent relationship at the core of the standard account are well recognized (Pitkin 1967). The translation of votes into representation, for example, is mediated by varying electoral systems with more or less exclusionary characteristics. Parties, interest groups, and corporatist organizations set agendas, while public spheres, civil society advocacy, and the media form preferences and mold public opinion, as do debate and leadership within legislative bodies themselves (Habermas 1989). In addition, the principal-agent relationship between voters and representatives is notoriously difficult to maintain, for numerous reasons ranging from information deficits to the corruption of representative relationships (Bobbio 1987, Gargarella 1998).

These complexities remain, but they have been overtaken by new realities such that the very formulation of problems within the standard account is increasingly inadequate. Perhaps the most significant of these developments has been the dislocation, pluralization, and redefinition of constituencies. The central feature of the standard account is that constituencies are defined by territory; individuals are represented insofar as they are inhabitants of a place (Rehfeld 2005). Beginning with the formation of the modern state, territorial residence became the fundamental condition for political representation—a condition more inclusive than status- and corporate-based representation. Indeed, territory has had an important historical relationship to political equality that carried over into modern times. In ancient Athens, Cleisthenes changed the condition for counting as an Athenian citizen from family and clan identity to *demes* or village residence (Hansen 1993). In this way, Cleisthenes transformed the bare fact of residence into a sufficient condition for equal power-sharing, and laid the basis for the modern conception of constituency.

Yet territoriality, though historically essential to the evolution of democratic representation, identifies only one set of ways in which

individuals are involved in, or affected by, collective structures and decisions. Issues such as migration, global trade, and environment, for example, are extraterritorial; they are not contained by any existing territorially organized polity (Benhabib 2004, Gould 2004, Held & Koenig-Archibugi 2005, Bohman 2007). Other issues are nonterritorial, particularly those involving identity, such as religion, ethnicity, nationalism, professional identity, recreation, gender identity, and many social movements. Such nonterritorial interests are not new to democratic theorists. The main object of disagreement in making and interpreting the democratic constitution of the Weimar Republic, for example, was whether representation should represent individuals or corporate interests. In modern constitutional democracies, however, the older corporatist views of parliaments and representation have given way to the representation of individuals whose only commonality is residence. Thus, legislatures attend to nonresidential constituencies only indirectly—not because citizens have equal shares of power assigned by territory, but rather because pressure and advocacy groups can organize territory-based votes along nonterritorial lines (Dahl 1956, 1971; cf. Mansbridge 2003). Other venues have emerged to represent other kinds of constituencies. The world is now populated with a very large number of transnational, extraterritorial, and nonterritorial actors, ranging from relatively formalized institutions built out of territorial units (such as the United Nations, the World Bank, the European Union, and numerous treaty organizations), to a multitude of nongovernmental organizations, transnational movements, associations, and social networks (Anheier et al. 2004, Saward 2006a), each making representative claims and serving representative functions.

Closely related, the sites of collective decision making are increasingly differentiated. In the developed democracies, markets and market-oriented entities are likely to continue to function as the dynamic sources of change. Governments are increasingly agile at channeling market forces and incentives, as are civil society organizations. In many cases, these developments dramatically shift the locus of collective decisions away from state-centric models of planning—those that can gather, as it were, sovereignty from the people in order to act in their name—and toward governance models. These issue-based and policy-driven networks of government actors and stakeholders are often more effective than bureaucracies accountable to legislatures, but they lack formal legitimacy and clear representative accountability to those affected by decisions.

The landscape of democratic representation is also clouded by the growing complexity of issues, which increasingly strains the powers of representative agents, and thus their capacities to stand for and act on the interests of those they represent. There is the familiar technical and scientific complexity that comes with the vast amounts of information and high levels of technology involved in most public decisions (Zolo 1992, Brown 2006, Beck 1997), which is often compounded by the political complexity that comes with multiple and overlapping constituencies (Andeweg 2003).

As a consequence of these developments, the standard account has been stretched to the breaking point. Among the most fundamental of problems, ironically, is the very element that ushered in democratic representation—residency-based electoral representation. The claim of any state to represent its citizens—its claim to sovereignty on behalf of the people—is contestable, not because states do not encompass peoples, but because collective issues only partially admit of this kind of constituency definition. Electoral representation continues to provide an ultimate reference for state power. But whereas Burke (1968, cf. Manin 1997) imagined that representatives could monopolize considered opinion about public purpose through the use of deliberative judgment, representative assemblies today must reach ever further to gather political legitimacy for their decisions. Judging by

the declining trust in governments generally and legislative bodies in particular, representative claims based on territorial constituencies (under the standard model) continue to weaken (Pharr & Putnam 2000, Dalton 2004). Electoral representation remains crucial in constituting the will of the people, but the claims of elected officials to act in the name of the people are increasingly segmented by issues and subject to broader contestation and deliberation by actors and entities that likewise make representative claims. Political judgments that were once linked to state sovereignty through electoral representation are now much more widely dispersed, and the spaces for representative claims and discourses are now relatively wide open (Urbinati 2006). In complex and broadly democratic societies, representation is a target of competing claims.

THE NEW CONCEPTUAL DOMAINS OF DEMOCRATIC THEORY

Until recently, democratic theorists were not well positioned to respond to these developments, having divided their labors between those who work within the standard account of representation and those concerned with participation and inclusion. The division of labor followed the channels dug by Rousseau well over two centuries ago, which identified *res publica* with direct self-government and representative government with an aristocratic form of power. The English people, Rousseau famously claimed, are free only in the moment of their vote, after which they return to "slavery," to be governed by the will of another. "Sovereignty," Rousseau wrote, "cannot be represented for the same reason that it cannot be alienated. It consists essentially in the general will, and the will cannot be represented. The will is either itself or something else; no middle ground is possible. The deputies of the people, therefore, neither are nor can be its representatives; they are nothing else but its commissaries. They cannot con-

clude anything definitively" (Rousseau 1978 [1762] p. 198). Rousseau thus confined representation to the terms of principal-agent delegation while stripping the delegate of any role in forming the political will of the people. In legal usage, Rousseau understood political representation in terms of "imperative mandate": the delegate operates under a fiduciary contract that allows the principal (the citizens) to temporarily grant an agent their power to take specified actions but does not delegate the will to make decisions, which is retained by the principal.

Rousseau's distinction between legitimate government (or democratic government, in contemporary terminology) and representation built upon discourses with quite different historical roots. Democracy originated as direct democracy in ancient Greek city-states whereas representation originated in the medieval Christian church and the feudal relationships encompassed within the Holy Roman Empire, its monarchies, municipalities, and principalities (Pitkin 2004). In modern discourse, however, the concept of political representation evolved beyond this distinction, becoming something more complex and promising than the Rousseauian distinction between the (democratic) will of the people and the (aristocratic) judgments of political elites. Developing along with the constitutionalization of state powers, representation came to indicate the complex set of relationships that result in activating the "sovereign people" well beyond the formal act of electoral authorization. After Rousseau, representative politics is increasingly understood as having the potential to unify and connect the plural forms of association within civil society, in part by projecting the horizons of citizens beyond their immediate attachments, and in part by provoking citizens to reflect on future perspectives and conflicts in the process of devising national politics (see Hegel 1967). Political representation can function to focus without permanently solidifying the sovereignty of the people, while transforming their presence from formally sanctioning

(will) into political influence (political judgment). And importantly, political representation can confer on politics an idealizing dimension that can overcome the limits of territoriality and formal citizenship on political deliberation.

Rousseau's formulations, however, failed to shed light on these transformative potentials of political representation. Although he believed representatives to be necessary, he held to electoral selection rather than lottery or rotation—mechanisms traditionally associated with democracy. Whatever his innovations in other areas of democratic theory, with respect to representation he restated Montesquieu's idea that lottery is democratic whereas election is aristocratic. He concluded, with Aristotle, that whereas all positions requiring only good sense and the basic sentiment of justice should be open to all citizens, positions requiring "special talents" should be filled by election or performed by the few (Rousseau 1978, see Urbinati 2006).

The contemporary view that representative government is a mix of aristocracy and democratic authorization is the late child of Rousseau's model. "Realist" and "elite" democrats in the mold of Schumpeter (1976), Sartori (1965), and Luhmann (1990) replicated Rousseau's view that representation is essentially aristocratic, while viewing democratic participation in political judgment as utopian. Modern societies—with their bureaucratic concentrations of power, their scale, and their complexity—dictate that citizens are mostly passive, mobilized periodically by elections (see also Bobbio 1987, Sartori 1987, Zolo 1992; cf. Manin 1997). Although elite and realist democratic theorists have been widely criticized within democratic theory, it has not been for their account of representation as periodic selection, but rather for their portrayal of citizens as passive. Pluralist democratic theory, originated by Truman (1951) and Dahl (1956) in the 1950s, emphasized the many ways in which citizens of contemporary democracies can push their interests onto the political agenda

in addition to voting, owing to the porous design of liberal democracies. Participatory democratic theorists writing in the 1960s and 1970s pointed out that the many channels of representation in pluralist democracies were, in fact, filled by those with the most resources, particularly education and wealth. Pulling ideals from Aristotle, Rousseau, Marx, J.S. Mill, and Dewey, participatory democrats focused instead on those features of democracy most immediately connected with self-determination and self-development, while accepting Rousseau's view of representation as essentially nondemocratic (Pateman 1976, Macpherson 1977, Barber 1984; cf. Young 2000, Urbinati 2006).

Communitarians within democratic theory, borrowing from classical republicanism, have sometimes overlapped with participatory democrats owing to their focus on active citizenship. Although classical republicanism focused on institutional design—particularly checks and balances—these strains were absorbed by the standard account of representation, leaving contemporary communitarians to focus on closeness rather than distance, and direct engagement rather than indirectness (Arendt 2006; Wolin 2004; Held 1996, ch. 2).

Deliberative democratic theory, the third and most recent wave of contemporary democratic theory, is centered on inclusive political judgment. From this perspective, the standard account of representative democracy is suspect for its thin understanding of political will formation. The standard account, with its emphasis on elections, pressure groups, and political parties, suggested that political judgments are, in effect, aggregated preferences. Deliberative theories of democracy were spearheaded by Habermas in the mid-1980s and rapidly followed by parallel theories focused on judgment: Gutmann & Thompson (1996), Pettit (1999a), the later Rawls (2005), Richardson (2003), and others turned their attention to the formation of public opinion and judgment, the institutionalization of deliberation, and the relationship between inclusion and deliberation. Problems of representation,

however, were bypassed by several strains of deliberative democratic theory, either because deliberation was conceived within a participatory framework (Cohen 1996) or because it was conceived within already established institutions (Rawls 2005).

For others, such as Habermas (1996), however, problems of representation reappeared in potentially productive ways. First in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1989 [1962]) and then more completely in *Between Facts and Norms* (1996), Habermas cast representative institutions as mediating between state and society via public spheres of judgment, such that representation is incomplete without the deliberative attentiveness of citizens mediated by public spheres, and the reflective transmission of public deliberations into the domain of representative institutions. Habermas was interested not only in the correlation between judgments emanating from the public sphere and institutionalized representation, but also in those moments of disjunction that generate extraparliamentary forms of representation, particularly through new social movements and other kinds of civil society associations. Importantly, these creative disjunctions are intrinsic to the functioning of representative democracy. In this way, Habermas opened a window on representation beyond the standard account.

Direct attention to representation within contemporary democratic theory has come from three other sources as well. The most broadly recognized of these, Pitkin's now classic *The Concept of Representation* (1967), came from within the standard account itself. Pitkin provided a comprehensive theory of representation, primarily within electoral contexts, just when participatory democracy had captured the imaginations of progressive democrats. Indeed, Pitkin herself turned to the participatory paradigm shortly after publication, returning to the topic only to note that the alliance between democracy and representation is "uneasy" owing to their distinct genealogies (Pitkin 1967, p. 2; Pitkin 2004; Williams 2000). If democracy is based on the presence of citizens, representation is at best a surrogate form of participation for citizens who are physically absent.

Nonetheless, Pitkin sketched out the generic features of political representation in constitutional democracy. For representatives to be "democratic," she argued, (*a*) they must be authorized to act; (*b*) they must act in a way that promotes the interests of the represented; and (*c*) people must have the means to hold their representatives accountable for their actions. Although Pitkin understood these features within the context of electoral democracy, they can in fact vary over a wide range of contexts and meanings, as we suggest below (D. Castiglione & M.E. Warren, unpublished manuscript).

Pitkin did not, however, inquire more broadly into the kind of political participation that representation brings about in a democratic society. Nor were her initial formulations further debated or developed. Instead, they stood as the last word on representation within democratic theory for three decades, until the appearance of Manin's *The Principles of Representative Government* (1997). Manin combined an elitist-realist approach to democracy with a deliberative approach, arguing that representative government is a unique form of government owing to the constitution of deliberative politics through election. Manin's work departed from the standard model by focusing on the deliberative qualities of representative institutions. But in other respects, he replicated the standard division between democracy and representation. In the spirit of Montesquieu, Manin viewed elections as a means of judging the characters of rulers. The value of democratic election is that the many are better than the few at recognizing competent individuals, though worse than the few at acting competently (Manin 1997, ch. 4). But electoral suffrage in itself, in Manin's view, produced no change in the practice and institution of representation, which are substantially the same today as they were when few citizens had the right to vote. Representative government is inevitably an

elected form of aristocracy because it discriminates among citizens and excludes some from the decision-making process. As de Malberg (1920, p. 208) put it, the very purpose of representative selection is to form an aristocratic regime. On this line of thinking, it follows that discourses that implicate representative institutions as exclusionary are simply incoherent. Such institutions cannot be something other than they are, namely, aristocratic entities that are at best constituted and contained by democratic elections. Thus, in this account, parliamentary sovereignty can be seen as an electoral transmutation of Rousseau's doctrine of the general will of the people, which, paradoxically, transforms the people into a passive body, with periodic capacities for selection but not voice (De la Bigne de Villeneuve 1929–1931, p. 32).

Important though these debates about active versus passive representative inclusion were, they glossed over the glaring fact that many groups within the established democracies lacked even passive inclusion. Although earlier participatory critics of the standard account had turned away from representation, by the early 1990s, theorists began to focus on the *representative* exclusion of marginalized groups—particularly those based on gender, ethnicity, and race—from the centers of political power. The initial questions were about injustices in the form of exclusion. But these questions went to the very heart of not only the meanings of representation, but also its mechanisms and functions. Kymlicka (1995) argued for group representation within the institutions of representative democracy, noting that the representation of individuals *qua* individuals is not sufficient to self-development, as self-identity depends on group relationships and resources. Phillips (1995) argued in *The Politics of Presence* that the "politics of ideas"—one in which interests, policy positions, and preferences are represented by agents within political institutions—fails to grasp that rightful inclusions require that diversities within society have represented presence, embodied within representatives who bring distinctive

perspectives into political institutions (see also Guinier 1994, Gould 1996, Mansbridge 1999, Young 2000, Dovi 2002).

Within this literature, Williams' (1998) *Voice, Trust, and Memory* most directly engaged the issue of marginalized groups in the language of representation, framing all of the classic issues of representation within the terms of the contemporary debate. "Liberal representation" of the kind descended from Locke, though promising formal equality, systematically underrepresents the historically marginalized. By treating individuals as individuals rather than as situated members of groups, Williams argues, liberal accounts of representation fail to conceptualize patterns of disadvantage that are based in group situations, and are often replicated within representative institutions. The liberal account (at least in its Lockean form) assumes a trustee relationship based on convergent majority interests, which does not in fact exist for disadvantaged groups. When such assumptions legitimate electoral systems that simply aggregate votes based on territorial constituency—particularly in the form of single-member districts—they serve to justify and stabilize existing patterns of disadvantage. For this reason, Williams argues, we need to think beyond principal-agent models of representation in which principals are presumed to be formally equal individuals. We need to understand representation as a relationship, mediated by group histories and experiences, through which relevant constituencies—particularly those related to fairness—come into existence. Finally, fair representation requires some relationship of trust between individuals and representatives, based on shared experiences, perspectives, and interests, and this is demonstrably not present for historically disadvantaged groups within residence-based systems of representation.

Still, the relationship between individual and group representation with respect to fairness remains ambiguous in Williams' argument. Disadvantages in society generate tensions between the formal equalities that lend

legitimacy to representative institutions, and their results, which will often fail to reflect or address issues related to systematic group disadvantages. Clearly, for minorities whose claims consistently fail to be present within political institutions, representation based on formal equality also fails basic fairness. Yet the strongest historical argument for fair representation has not been based on group advantage or disadvantage, but rather the proportional representation of individual interests. If all individuals have an equal claim to representation, their representatives should have presence in representative institutions in proportion to the numbers of individuals who hold interests they wish to be represented. Indeed, as Mill argued, nonproportional counting as occurs in majoritarian systems is a violation of quantitative fairness, whereas proportional representation "secures a representation, in proportion to numbers, of every division of the electoral body: not two great parties alone" (Mill 1991, p. 310). Altering representative systems to increase their sensitivity to historical group disadvantage may trade off against the fairness embodied in quantitative proportionality, a tension that continues to deserve the attention of democratic theorists.

Although Williams' argument was focused on representing historically disadvantaged groups, she built on the emerging discourse of group representation to cast political representation as fundamentally about inclusion and exclusion—that is, about the basic problems of democratic theory and practice (cf. Phillips 1995, ch. 7). At the same time, the strain of thinking originated by Manin—that focusing on the relationship between representation and political judgment—increasingly intersected with deliberative democracy, drawing the "aristocratic" approach to representation closer to democratic problems of discursive inclusion (Plotke 1997, Young 2000, Ankersmit 2002, Urbinati 2005, cf. Williams 2000). Together, these lineages are now producing a new wave of democratic theory.

WHEN IS REPRESENTATION "DEMOCRATIC"?

If democratic representation is to be understood as more than a division of labor between political elites and citizens, we need to understand representation as an intrinsic part of what makes democracy possible. To do so, we must distinguish between generic norms of democracy and the institutions and practices through which the norms are realized. Much democratic theory has moved in this direction, conceiving democracy as any set of arrangements that instantiates the principle that all affected by collective decisions should have an opportunity to influence the outcome (see, e.g., Habermas 1996, p. 107; Dahl 1998, pp. 37–38; Held 1996, p. 324; Young 2000, p. 23; Gould 2004, pp. 175–78). Although there are important variations in the normative presuppositions embedded in this principle, most democratic theorists hold that (*a*) individuals are morally and legally equal and (*b*) individuals are equally capable of autonomy with respect to citizenship—that is, conscious self-determination—all other things begin equal. It follows that collective decisions affecting self-determination should include those affected.

The advantage of such a norm—call it democratic autonomy or simply collective self-government—is that it enables us to avoid reduction of "democracy" to any particular kind of institution or decision-making mechanism. It allows us to assess emerging institutions and imagine new ones by asking whether they fulfill the norm of democratic autonomy—a question we need to be able to ask, for example, of the many transnational regimes that increasingly affect the lives of individuals in ways the standard account of representative democracy cannot encompass, nor even conceive.

At the same time, without the relatively straightforward conceptual apparatus of the standard account, we need to formulate the concept of democratic representation with a rigor sufficient to identify and assess what

has become a rich domain of representative relationships—a concern that increasingly drives the new literature (see, e.g., Williams 1998; Mansbridge 2003; Rehfeld 2006; Rubenstein 2007; D. Castiglione, A. Rehfeld, M.E. Warren, et al., unpublished manuscript).

We owe an initial formal specification to Pitkin, who—despite misgivings about formalizations—observed that democratic responsiveness includes, in one way or another, (*a*) authorization of a representative by those who would be represented, and (*b*) accountability of the representative to those represented. Building on Pitkin, D. Castiglione & M.E. Warren (unpublished manuscript; see also Rehfeld 2006) characterize these relationships as follows:

1. Political representation involves representative X being authorized by constituency Y to act with regard to good Z. Authorization means that there are procedures through which Y selects or directs X with respect to Z. Ultimate responsibility for the actions or decisions of X rests with Y.

2. Political representation involves representative X being held accountable to constituency Y with regard to good Z. Accountability means that X provides, or could provide, an account of his or her decisions or actions to Y with respect to Z, and that Y has a sanction over X with regard to Z.

These elements are generic; they specify only that a democratic relationship of representation is one of empowered inclusion of Y in the representations of X with respect to Z. Under this formula, the individuals or groups who are represented are not passive. There are points at which they assent to be represented, and the practices of assent—including communication—typically require multiple kinds of participation. For their part, if representatives are democratic, they are responsive to those they would represent, with respect to particular goods. A wide variety of actors may potentially fit these criteria:

elected representatives, nongovernmental organizations, lay citizens, panels, committees, and other entities. A wide variety of goods may be formulated and represented: preferences, interests, identities, values. And, in principle, a wide variety of authorization and accountability mechanisms are possible. Along with elections, the possibilities include voice, deliberation, exit, oversight, and trust. This variety of relationships, entities, and mechanisms is close, we think, to encompassing the numerous kinds of representative relationships that inhabit contemporary democracies. Each should be parsed out and specified both in its own terms and in terms of its role within the broader political ecology.

CONSTITUENCY DEFINITION

Because it defines the initial terms of authorization and thus the nature of inclusion in representative relationships, the concept of constituency is receiving new attention. As Rehfeld (2005; see also Burnheim 1989, Pogge 2002) points out, the idea that constituencies should be defined by territorial districts has been all but unquestioned until very recently, although it has long been recognized that initial decisions about who is included in (or excluded from) "the people" constituted the domain of democracy (Dahl 1989, Held 1996).

But there is an even more fundamental issue. For the most part, the project of democratizing "democracies" has been conceived as a matter of progressively including more classes of individuals within territorial communities. But no matter how universal these inclusions, when represented geographically, the people are only a "demos" insofar as their primary interests and identities are geographical in nature. Nongeographical constituencies—those emerging from race, ethnicity, class, gender, environment, global trade, and so on—are represented only insofar as they intersect with the circumstances of location, producing only an accidental relationship between democratic autonomy

(particularly the distributions of opportunities necessary for self-determination) and forms of representation (Bohman 2007; cf. Gould 2004, Held & Koenig-Archibugi 2005).

More generally, issues of justice raised by representation are issues of *isegoria*, or the equal chance each citizen should have to have his or her voice heard (Dworkin 2000, pp. 194–98). "Democratic representation is fair or just representation insofar as it involves issues of advocacy and representativity; issues of a meaningful presence, not simply presence alone, in the game of discord and agreement that is democracy" (Urbinati 2006, p. 42). Fraser (2007, pp. 313–14) has formulated the relationship between representation and justice quite precisely (see also Williams 1998, Fraser 2005, Rehfeld 2005, Saward 2006a):

> [R]epresentation furnishes the stage on which struggles over distribution and recognition are played out. Establishing criteria of political membership, it tells us who is included, and who excluded, from the circle of those entitled to a just distribution and reciprocal recognition.... Representation, accordingly, constitutes a third, political dimension of justice, alongside the (economic) dimension of redistribution and the (cultural) dimension of recognition.

From this perspective, the equality ensured by universal suffrage within nations is, simply, equality with respect to one of the very many dimensions that constitute "the people." Thus, from a normative perspective, geography-based constituency definition introduces an arbitrary criterion of inclusion/exclusion right at the start. Exclusions work not on *people*, who are, after all, universally included through residency-based franchise, but rather on *issues*, since residency-based constituencies define residency-based interests as most worthy of political conversation and decision—an effect that is arbitrary from the perspective of justice. Although the costs of territorial constituency defini-

tion are highest for disadvantaged groups, as suggested above, the theoretical point cuts even more broadly and deeply, as suggested by Fraser's formulation: Representation is a dimension of justice.

But territory is not entirely destiny, even when it is the starting point for constituency definition as well as the residence-based distribution of one vote to every citizen. The history of race-based districting in the United States can be understood as attempts to mold geographical constituencies in ways that encompass nongeographical issues, and to do so through the inclusion of racial minorities in decision-making bodies. Quotas and reserved seats also compensate for the inflexibilities of geography, although each arrangement comes with costs to other dimensions of representation (Guinier 1994; Williams 1998, chs. 3, 7; James 2004). Functional role adjustments, even if ad hoc, may sometime compensate. Mansbridge (2003) notes that empirical political scientists increasingly identify forms of representation that are not based on standard "promissory" mechanisms, whereby candidates make promises to voters and are then judged in subsequent elections by the results. In "surrogate representation," for example, a representative claims a constituency beyond his or her electoral district, as when Barney Frank (a member of the US House of Representatives from Massachusetts) represents gays beyond his district, or Bill Richardson (Governor of New Mexico) represents Latinos beyond his state. These functional adjustments testify not just to the inadequacies of territorial constituency, but also to its malleability. A key challenge for democratic theorists is to imagine how this malleability might be harnessed beyond the borders of nation-states.

RETHINKING ELECTORAL REPRESENTATION

Electoral democracy is that subset of representative relationships in which representatives are authorized through election to

represent the citizens of a constituency to act on behalf of their interests, and then are held accountable in subsequent elections. These relationships have been examined and reexamined by political scientists during the postwar period (e.g., Eulau & Karps 1977). What is new is the reemergence of electoral representation as a topic within democratic theory.

Constitutional Design

Most fundamentally, electoral representation is established and molded by constitutional design—that is, the way in which political institutions form and formulate the patterns of inclusion to which they are subject. Again, this is an issue with an old pedigree. Contemporary interest is found primarily within the field of comparative politics—most notably, in debates about the democratic merits of presidential versus parliamentary forms of government. Here we highlight renewed interest within democratic theory, particularly in the impact of constitutional assignments of responsibility on the capacities of representatives for deliberation and political judgment.

Most generally, constitutions provide two concurrent forms of responsibility, one democratic (through elections) and the other hierarchical (appointment by superior organs of political power). The relationship between representation and political judgment is molded by choices between these forms. Consider, for example, the quite different ways in which the US and European constitutions locate the positions of judges, the clearest example of representatives assigned particular responsibilities of judgment. In the United States, many local and state judges are elected just like any other political representative and are therefore directly responsible to the people (see Kelsen 1999). In Europe, the judge is accountable only to the law and must not defer to the opinions of the people (Friedrich 1963, Kelsen 1992). In the US case, the role of the judge as representative of law often clashes with the political responsiveness required of an elected representative—which perhaps ex-

plains why many states seek to increase judges' independence by declaring elections to be nonpartisan (Thompson 1987), and certainly explains why higher courts are insulated from direct representative accountability. In the European case, however, the democratic legitimacy of judges is borrowed entirely from representative bodies that create the law, and judgment is viewed as limited to the application of law. In this way, European constitutions preserve the democratic element of representation within the judiciary, but at the cost of conceiving judges' powers of judgment as the application of rules.

The broader implication of this judicial example is that the ways in which constitutions assign responsibility and structure accountability affect representatives' capacities for judgment. Elections establish the nonindependence of the representative from the represented in principle, although in practice, representative institutions require enough autonomy to carry out their political functions, which will require bodies that can engage in deliberative political judgments (Bybee 1998). Accordingly, most constitutions forbid imperative mandate. But because political representation can only exist in the juridical form of a mandate that is not legally bounded, some other form of mandate is needed to check representatives, which is why almost all democratic constitutions delimit the responsibility of the representatives.

Electoral System Design

The central feature of democratic legitimacy, of course, resides in the electoral system. When we vote, we do two things at once: We contribute to forming a government or opposition, and we seek representation of our positions and preferences. This means that elections are not just a race that some win at the expense of others, but a way of participating in the creation of the representative body, as is suggested by Plotke's (1997) argument that the opposite of representation is not participation but exclusion.

Although comparative analysis is beyond the scope of this essay (cf. Lijphart 1999, Powell 2000), it is worth noting here that different electoral systems empower this kind of participation quite differently, primarily by structuring the inclusiveness of the initial authorization and the strength of vote-based accountability (Urbinati 2006). The key design choice is between electoral systems based on single-member plurality (SMP) districts and those that seek proportional representation (PR) through multi-member districts (Farrell 2001, Przeworski et al. 1999, Powell 2004).

From the perspective of representing residence, it is worth noting that PR systems are inherently less geographical than SMP. Within the boundaries of a district (which may be the size of the entire state, as in the cases of Israel and the Netherlands), voters determine their constituency at the time of the vote (Duverger & Sartori 1988, Rehfeld 2005). In addition, because PR enables representation at lower thresholds (depending on the number of representatives within each district), PR systems tend to include a broader range of interests and identities than SMP systems. It is because of their greater inclusiveness and fairness that democratic theorists at least since Mill have favored PR over SMP systems. A government should reach decisions on the basis of debates among representatives of "every opinion which exists in the constituencies" in a body that reflects "its fair share of voices" (Mill 1991 [1861], pp. 448–50; see also Kelsen 1929, Friedrich 1968, Fishkin 1995). Democratic theorists concerned with the representation of disadvantaged groups also prefer PR, simply because its more inclusive logic increases the chances that disadvantaged groups will have representation (Amy 1996, Barber 2001). In addition, PR may result in more deliberative legislative bodies: Because the electoral system is less likely to produce governing majority parties, parliaments operating under PR are more likely to develop consensus forms of government (Sartori 1976, Lijphart 1999, Powell 2000, Steiner et al. 2005). For similar reasons, the design of local electoral systems—particularly municipal systems—is now back on the table (Guinier 1994).

Electoral systems that produce more inclusion may have costs to one feature of representation. They often produce coalition governments that can diffuse accountability, as party platforms that were authorized by voters are subsequently compromised for purposes of governing. Likewise, because they separate powers, presidential systems are often said to dampen responsiveness to citizens and diffuse accountability (Dahl 2003). In contrast, parliamentary arrangements based on SMP tend to provide citizens with stronger ex post accountability. These systems authorize governing majorities, which are then clearly responsible for governing as long as they retain the confidence of majority party members of the legislature.

It is not clear, however, that inclusiveness and accountability *necessarily* trade off against one another, given the variety of possible accountability mechanisms (Warren 2008). Some of these other forms of accountability are deliberative in nature, and depend on publics demanding that representatives provide accounts of their positions and decisions, even as they change (Mansbridge 2004, Urbinati 2006). This increasing attention to discursive accountability is yet another reason democratic theorists have paid more attention to the impact of constitutional design on deliberative judgment (Habermas 1996, Manin 1997, Elster 1998, Sunstein 2002, James 2004). These issues have returned also in contemporary debates over fair representation (Beitz 1989, Williams 1998, Thompson 2002). At this time, however, theories relating constitutional forms and electoral systems to new accounts of democratic representation remain underdeveloped.

Because of the normative importance of proportionality to the democracy-justice relationship, a small but growing number of theorists are becoming interested in representative bodies that are randomly constituted. Randomness would, on average, ensure that such assemblies would represent whatever

issues are salient to the public at the moment of selection, not only in proportion to the numbers of individuals with interests in particular issues, but also in proportion to the intensity with which interests and opinions are held (Burnheim 1989, Fishkin 1995, Pogge 2002, Rehfeld 2005; cf. Dahl 1989, Warren & Pearse 2008). Closely related is the concept of randomly selected citizen representative bodies, discussed below.

Political Parties

Although democratic theorists have been reengaging questions of institutional design, they have ignored political parties (cf. Rosenblum 2008). No doubt the explanation for inattention mirrors the more general picture: Parties have been viewed as strategic organizations that are primarily instruments of political elites rather than venues of participation. Moreover, parties are, well, partisan—and thus do not provide a hospitable environment for reasoned deliberations about common ends, the preferred mode of political interaction for political philosophers from Plato to Rawls.

Yet if elections provide real choices for citizens—that is, if citizens are able to use the vote to authorize and to hold to account those who would represent them—parties will naturally form, structurally determined by the characteristics of electoral systems, the regulations that enable elections, and the constitutional form of government. As Rosenblum (2008) notes, in contrast to democratic theorists, most political scientists view democratic representation as unthinkable without parties. They are arguably the key representative bodies within representative government. Their representative functions include aggregating and deliberating interests and values, and linking issues through programmatic visions within political environments that are increasingly segmented. Because they perform these functions in ways that can be more or less inclusive and more or less deliberative, political parties should find their way

back onto the agenda of democratic theory (see Beitz 1989). Such integration, however, will require that we understand partisanship as an essential feature of deliberation. Parties as organizations are not to be confused with factions since they can and should transform particular forms of advocacy into more competing accounts of common goods and interests, and in this way structure public discourse (Urbinati 2006, pp. 37–38; Rosenblum 2008).

Ethical Obligations of Representatives

If representative roles are structured in part by institutional rules and inducements, they are also structured by the ethical duties of public office. Representatives are elected to do certain jobs, and their jobs come with obligations. The question of representative roles was famously conceived by Burke (1968), who argued that representatives should serve as trustees of the interests of those who elected them—"virtual representatives"—rather than serving as delegates. Representatives should not be bound by the preferences of constituents; they should use their autonomous judgment within the context of deliberative bodies to represent the public interest.

The notion that representatives are trustees is widely understood as a quasi-aristocratic understanding of representation: the best judgment of elites replaces the judgment of the people. This understanding of the delegate-trustee distinction crowds all "democratic" meanings of representation into the delegate model. The formulation drains the meaning from "democracy" and tells us nothing about how constituents' interests are converted into decisions within the context of a representative institution. That is, the concept of delegation provides no explanation of decision making and thus fails to provides an account of democratic rule. Pitkin (1967) offered more nuance when she noted that representatives cannot simply reflect their constituents' interests—in part because interests are often unformed (thus, it is unclear what

should be represented) and in part because their jobs include making collective decisions that accord with democratic institutions. Instead, Pitkin argued, we should understand representatives as having the ethical obligation to be responsive to their constituents' interests. This formulation had the advantage of covering the complexities of the relationship, although it did not provide much more.

Ironically, perhaps, early incarnations of group representation arguments fell on the trustee side of the dichotomy, with its elitist leanings. If a representative is descriptively representative of a group, then the group's members must trust their representative, since descriptive similarity in itself implies no mechanisms for accountability—and, indeed, carries ambiguous role obligations. But working through the requirements for group representatives has put the problem of role ethics back on the agenda (Phillips 1995, Williams 1998, Mansbridge 1999, Young 2000, Dovi 2002). Interestingly, the category of trust has proved more fruitful than that of delegate, reconfigured so it is clear that, as a trustee, the representative is obligated to keep his or her constituents' interests in view (Dovi 2007, ch. 5). Mansbridge (2003) argues that much democratic representation is "gyroscopic": Voters select a representative because she holds values that converge with theirs. Voters then pay little attention to the representative, trusting her to do the right thing. They often "select" rather than "sanction"; they trust rather than monitor. On Mansbridge's view, there is nothing undemocratic about this strategy. Voters are, in effect, judging character rather than performance, but they retain their capacity to remove a representative should the bases of their trust be disappointed or betrayed (J. Mansbridge, unpublished manuscript).

Interest in the ethical obligations of representatives has also been fueled by problems of campaign finance and corruption (Beitz 1989, ch. 9; Thompson 1995; Stark 2000; Warren 2006). We are likely to see full theories of representative ethics in the near future (cf. Dovi 2007; E. Beerbohm, unpublished manuscript).

Deliberation and Judgment

As we suggested above, one of the most important inspirations for rethinking political representation within electoral democracy has been the increasingly sophisticated emphasis on deliberation within democracy. From this perspective, representation induces and forms relationships of judgment that enable democracy, some of which may be formalized by election, and others of which may work through group advocacy, voice, the media, or indeed, representative claims by any number of actors from both within and outside institutionalized politics (Rosanvallon 1998). Intrinsic to these processes of judgment is what Urbinati (2006) calls indirectness in politics—the representation of citizens' judgments to them by their representative and vice versa—through which the demos reflects on itself and judges its laws, institutions, and leaders (see also Ankersmit 2002).

These reflexive relationships often go unnoticed, but they are essential to making political judgment work in complex, pluralistic, democratic societies. Representation functions to depersonalize claims and opinions, for example, which in turn allows citizens to mingle and associate without erasing the partisan spirit essential to free political competition. Representation serves to unify and connect citizens, while also pulling them out of the immediate present and projecting them into future-oriented perspectives. Representation, when intertwined with citizens' reflexivity and participation, evokes and focuses the natality of politics, through which individuals transcend the immediacy of their interests, biographical experience, and social and cultural attachments, and enlarge their political judgment on their own and others' opinions (Urbinati 2006; see Arendt 1989). Thus, even at its most divisive, in a democratic society representative institutions are never solely descriptive of social segmentations

and identities. And at their best, they tend toward transcendence of the here and now in a process that is animated by a dialectic between what is and what can be or ought to be (Przeworski 1991, p. 19; cf. Hegel 1967). Finally, of course, representation also enables citizens to survey and discipline power holders, not only through the direct mechanisms of voting but also through the gathering and exposure of information by groups and the media who claim (not always credibly) to act as representatives of the public.

In short, we should think of representative democracy not as a pragmatic alternative to something we modern citizens can no longer have, namely direct democracy, but as an intrinsically modern way of intertwining participation, political judgment, and the constitution of demoi capable of self-rule. Understood in this way, elections are not an alternative to deliberation and participation, but rather structure and constitute both. Elections are not a discrete series of instants in which the sovereign will is authorized, but rather continuums of influence and power created and recreated by moments in which citizens can use the vote to select and judge representatives (Dahl 1971, pp. 20–21). Likewise, we should understand electoral representation as having an elective affinity with deliberative politics because it structures ongoing processes of action and reaction between institutions and society, between mistrust and legitimacy, and between sanctioned will and censuring judgment from below (Rosanvallon 2006).

THE NEW FRONTIER: NONELECTORAL DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION

As we argued above, there are limitations to a purely electoral rendering of democracy and representation. Some of these limitations are mutable in principle but unlikely to be changed in practice. The central organizing principle of territorial constituency, for example, is likely to remain, if only because it

provides a transparent and practical basis for the distribution of votes to persons. But some of the primary virtues of electoral democracy are also limitations. Elections, for example, can and should be institutionalized in such a way that the rules are knowable and predictable, and accountability can be achieved over long periods of time (Thompson 2004). Yet the very stability of elected representatives and electoral institutions means that they are slow to respond to emerging or marginalized constituencies. Neither are elections very sensitive to information. Although the campaigns leading up to elections are, ideally, energetic periods of issue-focused deliberation, votes in themselves are information-poor. Elected representatives are left to rely on other means (polls, advice, focus groups, letters, petitions, and the like) to guess what voters intend them to represent—over what spectrum of issues, in what proportion, and with what intensity. Although electoral cycles of authorization and accountability provide a strong check against gross abuses of power, as representative devices they lack nuance and sensitivity (Dunn 1999). Stated more positively, insofar as electoral representation works, it does so in conjunction with a rich fabric of representative claimants and advocacy within society (Rosanvallon 2006, Urbinati 2006). This point was appreciated within early pluralist theory, though without the critical eye for the social and economic inequalities that group advocacy–based democracy usually entails (Truman 1951; Dahl 1956; cf. Held 1996, ch. 6).

Further limitations of electoral representation inhere in its partisan qualities, however necessary they are if elections are to serve as instruments of authorization and accountability (Urbinati 2006). This necessity trades off against others: If speech is always strategic, it will dampen or subvert deliberation oriented toward norm- or fact-based consensus (Chambers 2004, Mansbridge 2004). The deliberative elements of representation are likewise dampened by the fact that legislative institutions are responsible for decisions

affecting the exercise of state power, meaning that they are poor venues for representing emerging agendas, which do much better in the less restricted give and take of deliberation in the public sphere (Habermas 1996).

In addition, these features of electoral representation—their inability to refract fine-grained representation into political institutions and their dampening effects on deliberation—fit poorly with the norms of citizenship evolving in the developed democracies. Dalton (2007) argues that new generations of citizens are voting less but engaging more. They want more choice; they want more direct impact. These are goods that electoral representation cannot provide. This fact alone should spur us to think about representation more broadly, including nonelectoral venues—not necessarily as competing forms of representation (though they can be), but possibly as complementary forms (Saward 2006a,b).

Finally, as we noted above (When is Representation "Democratic"?), the globalization of democratic norms and expectations simply does not fit with any electorally based constituencies at all—not only within the international domain but also in contexts that have weak or nonexistent electoral democracies.

Owing to these functional limitations of electoral representation, practices of democratic representation increasingly go beyond electoral venues, a phenomenon that testifies to the expansion and pluralization of spaces of political judgment in today's democracies. One of the most remarkable developments has been the proliferation of representative claims that cannot be tested by election. These claims come from at least two classes of representatives, discussed below. First, there are innumerable agents who, in effect, self-authorize: Advocacy organizations, interest groups, civil society groups, international nongovernmental organizations, philanthropic foundations, journalists, and other individuals, including elected officials functioning as surrogate representatives, claim to represent constituencies within public discourse and within collective decision-making bodies. Second, governments and other entities are increasingly designing "citizen representatives": new, nonelected forms of representative bodies such as citizen panels, polls, and deliberative forums (Warren 2008).

Self-Authorized Representatives

Self-authorized representatives are not new. Individuals and groups have always petitioned government and made representative claims on behalf of interests and values they believe should have an impact. Interest group liberalism and pluralism assume that this kind of representation does much, if not most, of the work of conveying substance (Dahl 1971; Held 1996, ch. 6). Moreover, history is replete with unelected leaders and groups making representative claims in the name of groups, peoples, or nations precisely because they are not formally represented. The constitutional revolutions of the seventeenth century were induced by groups such as the Levellers. In the French Revolution, Sieyes declared the existence of a "third class" that was the nation, and they proposed themselves as the speakers or representatives of this class, and thus for the nation.

It is not the existence of self-authorized representatives that is new, but rather their large number and diversity (Warren 2001). Collectively, self-authorized representatives organize what might be called the "negative power of the people" (Urbinati 2006) and can function as a "counter-politics" when institutionalized politics fails its representative purposes (Rosanvallon 2006). Groups claim to represent women, a particular ethnic group, victims of landmines, the impoverished and marginalized, parents, and children (Strolovitch 2006). They claim to represent a wide variety of goods: human rights and security, health, education, animals, rainforests, community, spirituality, safety, peace, economic development, and so on. They often claim to represent positions and arguments, functioning as "discursive"

representatives (Keck 2003; cf. Alcoff 1991, Dryzek 2000, ch. 4). So representation of this kind can be targeted and issue-specific; it can be flexible and respond to emerging issues, and particularly to constituencies that are not territorially anchored. The collectivities representatives seek to influence are increasingly diverse: not only governments and power holders but also public discourse and culture, as well as powerful market actors such as corporations. These kinds of representatives can and do function beyond borders. Not only do they have the potential to compensate for electoral inflexibilities—providing high levels of targeted, information-rich representation—but they also function in areas where no electoral democracy exists: in the global arena, and in authoritarian contexts (Dryzek 2000, ch. 5; Grant & Keohane 2005; Saward 2006b; Bohman 2007; Rubenstein 2007). Indeed, these representative functions are increasingly recognized by international organizations. For instance, the United Nations has begun recognizing civil society organizations within its programs as representative of groups that are not well represented by its member states. The challenges for democratic theory are to understand the nature of these representative claims and to assess which of them count as contributions to democracy and in what ways. It is now clear, for example, that self-authorized representation is not necessarily a precursor to formal, electoral inclusion but rather a representative phenomenon in its own right, which may contribute to democracy in ways that electoral representation cannot. But unlike electoral mechanisms, the arena of self-authorized representatives offers no discrete domain of institutional processes, and so identifying and assessing their democratic contributions will take imagination (D. Castiglione & M.E. Warren, unpublished manuscript).

One way to begin would be to ask the same generic questions asked of electoral representation, as suggested above: (*a*) How are the representatives authorized by those in whose name they act? (*b*) How are they held accountable by those they claim to represent? With respect to authorization, the nature of the representative agent will make a difference. Many self-authorized representatives are voluntary organizations with followings and memberships. In such cases, authorization might work through members' votes and voices. Other kinds of self-authorized representatives make claims on behalf of ascriptive, involuntary constituencies, such as racial or ethnic groups (Alcoff 1991, Strolovitch 2006). Then there are agents who claim to represent those with little or no voice, such as international human rights organizations, or organizations representing the interests of children or animals. Finally, there are many agents—nongovernmental organizations and foundations, for example—who claim missions on behalf of others, more or less formally (Grant & Keohane 2005, Saward 2006b). In these kinds of cases, initial authorization is inherently problematic; agents claim representative status and it is up to those who are claimed as "represented" to say yes or no or to offer alternative accounts. Authorization is, as it were, reflexive and retrospective at best. Where those who are represented are silent because of their context—or absent, as in the case of future generations—the analogy to electoral authorization breaks down altogether, and we are better off to look at generic norms and functions of democratic representation, and then to imagine nonelectoral devices that might serve these norms and functions (Rubenstein 2007).

No doubt because of the absence of formal authorization in most cases, the work relevant to these new forms of representation has focused primarily on accountability (Ebrahim 2003, Kuper 2004, Held & Koenig-Archibugi 2005, Castiglione 2006). There are several potential mechanisms of accountability. When membership-based voluntary organizations claim to represent their members, for example, members can either lend their names to the organization, or they can exit, producing market-like accountability

(Goodin 2003). Groups without power may go public, gaining influence precisely because they can justify their representations (Warren 2001, ch. 4). A group may be held to account indirectly through "horizontal" policing by other groups, by boards, or by the media, often through comparisons between the group's representative claims (e.g., in its mission statement) and its actions (Grant & Keohane 2005). Devices such as performance indicators, audits, and surveys can add elements of accountability.

Of course, this list of possible ways and means of authorization and accountability only tells us that, in principle, we could develop theories that would stretch to the domain of self-authorized representatives. It is neither a theory in itself, nor a judgment as to whether or how this emerging domain contributes to democratic representation (cf. Warren 2001, ch. 7; 2003). But one key issue for democratic theory is increasingly clear, even in advance of well-developed theories. In the case of electoral representation, an abstract equality is achieved through the universal franchise. There is no equivalent equality of influence or voice in the nonelectoral domain, where the advantages of education, income, and other unequally distributed resources are more likely to translate into patterns of over- and underrepresentation (Warren 2001, Cain et al. 2003, Strolovitch 2006). The many advantages of self-authorized representation—and they are considerable—may also result in increasingly unequal representation.

Citizen Representatives

Self-authorized representation provides a possible frame for understanding the rapid evolution of what we call, following Warren (2008), "citizen representatives" (Rowe & Frewer 2000, Brown 2006). These forms involve nonelected, formally designed venues into which citizens are selected or self-selected for representative purposes. The oldest form of citizen representative is the court-room jury, which represents the considered judgment of peers. We can now add more recent experiments with citizen juries and panels, advisory councils, stakeholder meetings, lay members of professional review boards, representations at public hearings, public submissions, citizen surveys, deliberative polling, deliberative forums, and focus groups (Pettit 1999b, Fung 2006b). Citizen representatives typically function not as alternatives but rather as supplements to elected representative bodies or administrative bodies in areas of functional weakness, usually related to communication, deliberation, legitimacy, governability, or attentiveness to public norms and common goods (Brown 2006, Warren 2008).

Although these representative forms are typically categorized as participatory democracy, direct democracy, or citizen engagement, these terms are misleading because only a tiny percentage of citizens are actively involved in any given venue. The more important properties of these forms of citizen participation, we think, are representative. A few citizens actively serve as representatives of other citizens. What is most interesting about these new forms is that they have the potential to represent discursively considered opinions and voices that are not necessarily represented either through electoral democracy or through the aggregate of self-authorized representatives in the public sphere. Fung (2003) highlights this unique representative function by referring to these new forms as "minipublics." They have the potential to capture opinions and voices that are not heard, not necessarily because of group-based disadvantage, but because the sum total of advocacy will often fail to represent unorganized interests and values. Minipublics can also represent considered public opinion, particularly opinions representing compromises and trade-offs in complex or fractious issue areas. Under the standard model, the work of deliberatively crafting policies belongs to the formal political institutions—and these institutions find it increasingly difficult to

represent considered, legitimate solutions before the public. Under the citizen representative model, venues are designed, as it were, to generate considered opinion. Deliberative polls, for example, involve a random selection of citizens who are convened for a weekend to discuss an issue such as health care policy. During this time, participants learn about the issue, deliberate, and then register their opinions (Fishkin 1995). The results should represent what informed public opinion would look like, were citizens to organize, become informed, and deliberate. Presumably, the results are not simply counterfactual; they represent a statistically representative snapshot of the existing but latent preferences of citizens—preferences that power holders seeking to represent "the people" should need to know.

For similar reasons, governments increasingly constitute citizen juries and panels charged with representing the views of citizens more generally, on a given issue (Brown 2006). In an unusual experiment in nonelectoral representation, the government of British Columbia (BC) sought to assess the province's electoral system and recommend an alternative in the form of a referendum question. Rather than leaving the job to the legislature or an expert commission, the government constituted a "citizens' assembly" composed of 160 members, selected from voter rolls though a near-random process. The assembly met over a period of nine months, which included learning, public hearings, and deliberations. Professional representatives—in particular, organized advocates and professional politicians—were excluded. They were invited to speak with the assembly, but the designers assumed that the public interest would be represented only if stakeholder advocacy were separated from learning, listening, and deliberation (Warren & Pearse 2008). In short, because it combined authorization by an elected government, random selection, a deliberative format, and accountability through a referendum, the BC Citizens' Assembly was designed as a counter-

balance to both electoral representation and self-authorized representation. Its democratic credentials stemmed from its initial constitution by elected representatives, its statistically representative makeup (so as to "look like the people of BC"), and its submission of its final recommendation directly to the people.

Randomly selected bodies represent a novel and potentially important new form of representative—or, more precisely, the rediscovery of an ancient form (Fishkin 1991, Lieb 2004). Should these forms grow, they will bring new challenges. Because any randomly selected deliberative body will inevitably generate opinions that differ from public opinion, for example, connecting them to broader publics will require new institutions, yet to be devised (cf. Fung 2003, Warren & Pearse 2008). At worst, randomly selected bodies might become tools that elites use to legitimate policies while bypassing electoral accountability, or they might substitute for broader citizen judgment and participation (Ackerman 1991, p. 181). At best, however, such bodies might function as an important supplement to existing forms of representation. They have the potential to link the judgments of political elites much more closely to public opinion, while correcting for the inequalities introduced by the rise of self-authorized representatives.

THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

If elections alone qualify as representative democracy, then it is hard to find good arguments against the critics of contemporary democracy who seek to unmask the role of the people as a mere myth, and point to the oligarchic degeneration and corruption of electoral democracy. Such criticism depends on an institutional history of representative government that has not been substantively edited since the eighteenth century. Moreover, the suggestion that we extend the meaning of democratic representation to include the informal, discursive character of a pluralistic public sphere of associations,

political movements, and opinions risks looking like an ideological refurbishment, functional to the new legitimation strategies of political elites. Indeed, almost without exception, it remains the case that only an elected political elite has both deliberative and decision-making power, unlike the citizens, whose formal freedom to discuss and criticize proposals and policies does not ensure that their opinions will affect legislation and policy making.

Here, however, we draw attention to the important changes in representative institutions. These changes began with the adoption and extension of universal suffrage, which generated new forms of political life within society, in turn altering the nature and functions of representative institutions. Dahl's (2003) comment on the US case goes precisely to this point. "Even if some of the Framers leaned more toward the idea of an aristocratic republic than a democratic republic, they soon discovered that under the leadership of James Madison, among others, Americans would rapidly undertake to create a more democratic republic" (pp. 5–6). Given the complex and evolving landscape of democracy, however, neither the standard model of representation nor the participatory ideal can encompass the democratic ideal of inclusion of all affected by collective decisions. To move closer to this ideal, we shall need complex forms of representation—electoral representation and its various territorially based cousins, self-authorized representation, and new forms of representation that are capable of representing latent interests, transnational issues, broad values, and discursive positions.

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