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Toward a Mobilization Conception of Democratic Representation

LISA DISCH *University of Michigan*

This article analyzes what I term "the dilemma of democratic competence," which emerges when researchers find their expectations regarding democratic responsiveness to be in conflict with their findings regarding the context dependency of individual preferences. I attribute this dilemma to scholars' normative expectations, rather than to deficiencies of mass democratic politics. I propose a mobilization conception of political representation and develop a systemic understanding of reflexivity as the measure of its legitimacy. This article thus contributes to the emergent normative argument that political representation is intrinsic to democratic government, and links that claim to empirical research on political preference formation.

This article begins with an empirical finding: U.S. voters are more "competent" than research into opinion formation once took them to be (e.g., Carmines and Kuklinski 1990; Lupia 1992, 1994; Lupia and McCubbins 1998; Popkin 1991; Sniderman 2000; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991).[1] They can form opinions and hold preferences that are coherent and stable enough to be represented. However, the reasoning process by which they form these preferences depends on communications put forward by political elites in their bids to forge a winning majority in an election or policy contest.[2] Elites educate constituents as they recruit them to positions that work to elites' own advantage in an interparty struggle for power, typically without avowing the dual motive (Gerber and Jackson 1993). Political learning takes place by means of communication that is at once explicitly oriented to constituents and silently enmeshed in a struggle for power.

This finding sits uneasily with two prominent democratic intuitions that belong to two different schools of democratic theory. First is the idea that representative democracy is defined by the "continuing responsiveness of the government to the preferences of its citizens" (Dahl 1971, 1).[3] This idea, whose orientation toward preexisting preferences makes it one aspect of what Mansbridge (2003, 518) calls the "traditional model of promissory representation," not only makes responsiveness the signature feature of democratic representation, but also prescribes that it be unidirectional. Pitkin (1967, 140) captures this when she writes that, in democratic representation, the "representative must be responsive to [the constituent] rather than the other way around."

Pitkin expresses here what I term the "bedrock" norm, the common-sense notion that representatives in a democratic regime should take citizen preferences as the "bedrock for social choice" (Page and Shapiro 1992, 354; cf. Achen 1975, 1227; Bartels 2003, 62).[4] According to this norm, which configures the representation process as linear and dyadic, legitimacy turns on voters and representatives being oriented in the proper direction. As Mansbridge (2003, 518) aptly characterizes it, the "voter's power works forward" to hold representatives to the promises they made at election time, whereas the "representative's attention looks backward" to the previously expressed preferences of the constituency. Empirical findings about preference formation sit uneasily with this norm because they defy this static portrait of preferences together with this linear dyadic model of influence. They reveal, instead, that the representative process is dynamic and interactive. Representatives look backward to preferences that have been expressed, and orient themselves forward in a speculative mode toward what their constituency might want or be induced to want at the next election. In short, empirical research reveals political representation to be *constitutive*: legislators do not simply respond to constituent preferences but are "active . . . in searching out and sometimes creating them" (Mansbridge 2003,

Lisa Disch is Professor, Departments of Political Science and Women's Studies, University of Michigan, 5700 Haven Hall, 505 S. State Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48109 (ldisch@umich.edu).

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[1] I define competence, after Lupia and McCubbins (1998, 2), as the capacity for "reasoned choice," which is nonarbitrary but distinct from "rational choice" in being exercised in the absence of full information and relying on the advice of others.

[2] I follow Zaller (1992, 6) in defining elites as "politicians, higher-level government officials, journalists, some activists, and many kinds of experts and policy specialists," as well as corporate elites. They influence preference formation primarily by means of the mass media, and secondarily through such organizations as lobbies, churches, and labor unions. The media serves them not as a platform from which to promulgate their views directly, but rather as means of framing issues and exercising agenda control (Althaus et al. 1996; Bennett 1990; Bennett and Manheim 1993).

[3] Garsten (2009), Hayward (2009), Warren and Castiglione (2006), and Williams (1990) join Mansbridge (2003) in calling "responsiveness" into question.

[4] The bedrock norm originated with the U.S. and French Revolutions whose most radical strands held the people to be the only "legitimate source of power" in a democracy and identified democratic legitimacy with the "idea of a mandate or delegation" (Rosanvallon 2008, 9, 236).

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518; cf. Manza and Cook 2002; Squires 2008; Williams 1990.

This research shows that responsiveness does, indeed, turn "the other way around." Does this inversion irredeemably compromise democratic ideals? For the most committed formal modelers and theorists of rational choice, the answer would have to be "yes" because preference endogeneity in itself troubles their model of the rational individual. In contrast, deliberative democratic theorists allow that political elites can shape constituent preferences as long as their interventions facilitate "mutual education, communication, and influence," rather than manipulation (Mansbridge 2003, 520). For them, the problem is not endogeneity per se but the opening it affords to what they deem strategic action by elites.

This belief that preferences, which are necessarily endogenous to politics, must be deliberatively formed is the second democratic intuition. It is even more at odds with the scholarship on opinion formation by virtue of its intellectual inheritance from discourse theories of democracy. Specifically, it derives from the Habermasian analytic separation of "communicative and strategic action," which aims to distinguish (counterfactually) social coordination that is achieved noncoercively, by the give and take of reasons among speakers oriented toward mutual understanding, from that which either results from the overt use of threats or bribes or occurs under conditions where a party conceals an orientation toward nonmutual advantage (Habermas 1990, 58; cf. Cohen 1989).[5] The discourse ideal casts suspicion on preferences that are formed in information contexts where power is at stake and where unstated motives exist—the very conditions of preference formation according to empirical scholarship.

Scholars who are influenced by this ideal propose to judge representation by a distinction between education and manipulation that, as Mansbridge (2003) acknowledges, is "not easy to operationalize." They define education as (1) lacking intent to deceive, (2) serving to clarify voters' "underlying interests and the policy implications of those interests," (3) leading voters to make choices in their interests, and (4) garnering support for changes that voters approve in retrospect (519; cf. Page and Shapiro 1992, 354; Zaller 1992, 313). One problem with these criteria is that they beg the question "what is and what is not in an individual's interests," another point that Mansbridge (2003, 519) acknowledges to be open to contest. Thus, identifying manipulation requires the analyst to posit the "counterfactual" of how voters would define their interests "under other, often ill-defined circumstances" (Druckman 2001a, 233). A second problem is that if one adheres to these criteria, then one is bound to find manipulation everywhere.

This is not because deception is everywhere, although elites certainly engage in it (e.g., President Johnson's claims regarding North Vietnamese attacks in the Tonkin Gulf or President Bush's assertions regarding the existence of "weapons of mass destruction" in Iraq). Much of the time, political discourse is neither straightforwardly false nor intentionally misleading. It consists, rather, of what Jacobs and Shapiro (2000, 27) call "crafted talk"—messages that political elites systematically develop through the technologies of opinion polling and focus groups "in order to attract favorable press coverage and 'win' public support for what they desire." Such messages have a twofold motivation and a twofold effect: to declare a stand and to "shift ... the line of cleavage" in a bid for power (Schattschneider [1960] 1975, 61). Put simply, whereas elite discourse serves at once to inform potential voters and to recruit them into a winning majority, elites avow only the first of these goals. To disclose the second self-interested aim, as Habermasian deliberation requires, would make their speech acts less likely to succeed.[6]

Empirical research shows that in the "political environment," "communicative" and "strategic" action are linked inextricably.[7] Individuals form coherent and relatively stable preferences not in spite of but by means of messages that political elites deploy in pursuit of unavowed competitive goals. This sets up what I term the "dilemma of democratic competence": citizens' capacity to form preferences depends on the self-interested communications of elites. Research that aimed to vindicate representative democracy ends up provoking the discomfiting sense that "one form of incompetence simply replaces another. Specifically, while people who rely on party cues avoid basing their preferences on arbitrary information, they also expose themselves to the possibility of elite manipulation" (Druckman 2001a, 239). Thus, communication that discourse theory regards as manipulative turns out to be intrinsic to the learning process.

What are researchers to make of the fact that they can affirm citizens' capacity for preference formation only at the cost of revealing their susceptibility to the self-seeking rhetoric of competing elites? Must they

[5] This distinction gets its critical edge from Habermas' pejorative equation of strategy with instrumental action. If one defined "strategic" to mean simply "goal oriented," then the distinction would do very little critical work because all communication is oriented to some goal. Moreover, as Bohman (1988) argues, the idealization of communication and derogation of strategy works against Habermas' own project by discrediting the speech of the social critic who necessarily mixes the two.

[6] For example, in the early 1960s, when Democratic and Republican party elites radically altered their party's positions on the leading issues of the day (civil rights and the Vietnam War, respectively), they did so "to increase their likelihood of winning elections" but presented it as the right thing to do (Gerber and Jackson 1993, 639). Even if voters suspect (and they surely do) that most political discourse is partisan posturing, politicians would alienate voters by making that explicit. Voters prefer to imagine they are treated as principled decision makers, rather than as pawns in a bid to effect partisan realignment.

[7] Empirical researchers use the term "political environment" to designate the "totality of politically relevant information to which citizens are exposed" by various mediating institutions (Kuklinski et al. 2001, 411). It functions for them as a way to speak of what normative theorists would call the "public sphere," without crediting that environment with the virtues of equality, openness, reasonableness, etc.

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despair of citizens' capacity to live up to democratic norms? Must they denounce the communications apparatus of mass democracy? Or is it time to call the norms themselves into question? I argue for the latter. To rest democratic representation either on the "bedrock" of citizen preferences or on a cognitivist model of deliberation is to misunderstand what preferences are and how they form. It is also to deprecate crucial features of democratic representation: figuration and mobilization.[8] Democratic political representation neither simply reflects nor transmits demands; it creates them as it actively recruits constituencies.[9]

The argument continues over four sections. I begin by specifying the challenge that empirical findings on opinion formation pose to preference-based conceptions of democratic representation. I turn next to the new wave of democratic theory and show how its allegiances to a vestige of foundationalism prevent it from answering this challenge. Following that, I make a brief return to Pitkin's (1967) classic text, which I argue both initiated a bolder move toward representation as mobilization than her successors have managed and opened the gap between normative expectations and empirical research. I build my conception of representation as mobilization out of Pitkin's most radical insights, bringing that conception within the compass of deliberative democracy by drawing on the work of scholars of "rhetorical deliberation" (Garsten 2006; cf. Bickford 1996). I propose "reflexivity" as the measure of its legitimacy. A term that I take up from Mansbridge (2003, 518), I elaborate "reflexivity" as a systemic capacity rather than an individual subjective one.

THE "CONSTRUCTIVIST TURN" IN OPINION FORMATION AND PREFERENCE-BASED DEMOCRACY

Beginning with Gamson and Modigliani (1989), research in public opinion and political psychology has taken what researchers call a "constructionist" or "constructivist" turn (Kinder and Nelson 2005, 103) from a rational individualist to an environmental or contextual account of preference formation. The former holds individuals to define their preferences according to needs, desires, and values that are fixed prior to political contests and relatively impervious to political influence. The latter contends that preferences are constituted in the communication that occurs during decision making, implying that choice is as much something that institutions effect as it is something that an individual makes. Insofar as this is a move from an individualist to an environmental account of preference formation, it might seem more appropriate to label this position "contextualist" rather than "constructivist." I contend that it can indeed be viewed as a "constructivist" turn by virtue of the commitment to the notion that opinion is not simply there to be "discovered or intuited" but must be built either by researchers or by the individual him- or herself (O'Neill 2002, 348).[10]

Findings regarding the context dependence of preferences have significant implications for the "bedrock" norm, which holds that democratic representation is necessarily preference based. For those who subscribe to this norm, preferences that fluctuate in response to politicians' and pollsters' "choice of language" lack the "nice properties of global coherence and consistency that would allow them to play the role of preferences" as "most liberal theorists of democracy (and their cousins, the economists)" have defined the term (Bartels 2003, 67, 56, 49). Their expectation is that citizens should hold "definite, preexisting preferences regarding the underlying issues [that] any reasonable choice of language might elicit ... equally well" (51, 67). I argue for a reframing of this expectation. Is it the case that preferences must display the constancy of bedrock to count as such? Must political representation take preferences as its starting place and ground in order to be democratically legitimate? Constructivist research in opinion formation says "no" to both.

As to the first expectation, Chong and Druckman (2007, 652) counter that the decisive question is not whether preferences change but whether they do so arbitrarily, in response to logically equivalent information.[11] In political discourse, opinion shifts in response to what Druckman (2001a, 235; 2004, 672) calls "issue" framing, instances where a speaker brings "a substantively different consideration ... to bear on the issue at hand." Such change, which is not necessarily arbitrary (although it may be so in some cases), is an ever-present feature of democratic politics, which "involves battles over how a campaign, a problem, or an issue should be understood" (Druckman 2001a, 235). Issue framing is one means of waging what Schattschneider ([1960] 1975, 64) termed the "conflict of conflicts."

[8] I specify "democratic" representation because I take mobilization to be specific to political representation following the eighteenth-century democratic revolutions. Before then, political representation entailed "direct adhesion" to social differences, with representatives acting primarily as delegates, as in the model of the French estates (Urbinati 2006, 49).

[9] The internecine struggles within parties, together with their efforts to navigate the riptides of third party or civil society forces (e.g., the Moral Majority or the Tea Party), show that recruitment goes on even when the constituency is formally defined as a legislative district or state population. Although I focus on that formal electoral context in this article because I chose to draw on empirical research conducted within that context, representation as mobilization is pertinent to the work of international nongovernmental organizations and other "self-appointed" (Montanaro 2010) or "unelected" (Saward 2010, ch. 4) representatives who act outside the bounds of citizenship and national elections.

[10] In fact, the term "constructivist turn" may strike some as a misnomer. These researchers exhibit neither a Kantian concern to justify ethical prescriptions nor a poststructuralist pleasure in relocating agency from conscious, willing individuals to the anonymous processes of meaning-making in language, but rather retain a humanist commitment to capacities of judgment and choice.

[11] Druckman (2004, 672) differentiates "equivalence" framing, which presents logically equivalent information with a different emphasis, from "issue" framing, which brings new considerations to light. Equivalence framing effects are not as pervasive in actual political debate as they have seemed to be in psychology experiments (Druckman 2001b).

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This sensitivity of preferences to contexts of conflict need not compromise their integrity as preferences, except to the methodological individualist who holds that preferences must have the "nice properties of global coherence and consistency" in and of themselves, that is, independent of or prior to political contests (Bartels 2003, 56). For Druckman and Lupia (2000), who have mustered the insights of cognitive science against rational individualist notions of rationality, preferences simply do not attain consistency in advance. As "comparative evaluation[s]" or "ranking[s] over a set of objects" that conflict brings into relationship with one another, they necessarily develop over the course of a political contest (2). This view of preferences takes the normative charge out of the distinction between preference "endogeneity" and "exogeneity" because it suggests that preferences are always endogenous to some context that is beyond an individual's control.

For these researchers, so-called endogenous preferences *are* preferences. Features of the environment such as cues and frames help individuals form preferences that are consistent and relatively stable. Such preferences can be represented; they cannot serve as a *basis* for responsiveness as the "bedrock" norm requires because they cannot have "independent causal import" (Manza and Cook 2002, 657). In sum, there is an emerging consensus that political representation need not and cannot take preferences as its starting place and ground. It remains in dispute whether—given the context dependence of preferences—representation can be democratically legitimate.

In exploring this question, it is noteworthy that researchers do not assess the rationality of voter preferences against the counterfactual of what their interests "really" are. They look at the interaction among messages, rather than at their content, focusing on the "external forces" that make it more likely for political learning to take place (Lupia and McCubbins 1998, ch. 2). Framing research, for example, has begun to study the competition among frames and between frames and cues (e.g., Druckman et al. 2010; Sniderman and Theriault 2004).[12] In effect, this research studies deliberation in the actual public sphere of electronically mediated, highly funded, two-party mass democracy. Taking political communication as it is, neither oriented toward mutual understanding nor regulated by the principle of the unforced force of the better argument, but competitive, self-interested, and oriented toward winning elections, it asks: can competition prompt people to think twice about their preferences rather than absorbing them from elite propaganda? Studying frames, Chong and Druckman (2007) find three ways in which competition fosters political judgment in this sense. First, it can moderate ideological extremes. Second, exposure to multiple frames prompts people to consider which is the most applicable. Third, people make that judgment based on a frame's "relative strength," not merely on its frequency of repetition (639, 651).

That "strong" frames win out over loud and insistent ones is no guarantee of democratic legitimacy, however. For a frame to be "strong" means only that it is credible—that it is proposed by a respected source, taps familiar concerns, and applies to the matter at hand. A strong frame is not necessarily a strong—i.e., disciplined and well-reasoned—argument. It may derive that credibility "as much [from] its source and cultural values and symbols it invokes as [from] its causal logic" (Chong and Druckman 2007, 652).[13] It follows that competition among frames cannot satisfy the Habermasian counterfactual of producing a reasoned position that warrants the assent of all affected. Competition may raise the quality of public debate by improving the "odds that germane considerations will be publicized and discussed" (652). Druckman (2010) cautions, however, that a frame may prevail over its rivals by tapping insecurity and prejudice rather than by appealing to logic and fact. Some researchers who focus on cues rather than frames are more optimistic. Lupia and McCubbins (1998, 201) maintain that democratic institutions render people capable of drawing knowledge from the political environment that enables them to be "selective about whom they choose to believe."

Noteworthy here is researchers' turn from the bedrock of autonomous preference to the communication process. This shows, as Mansbridge (2003, 518) argues, that empirical research is newly open to the "deliberative side" of political representation. Yet, I argue that normative theory is not fully equipped to exploit this opening. There remains a mismatch between the constructivism of empirical research and the "deliberative theory of democracy," which Urbinati (2006, 118–19) rightly characterizes as "hesitant to face" the "ideological as rhetorical process of representation." This hesitancy is true of even the most politically astute defenders of deliberation insofar as they hold out for an ideal of independence from partisanship that puts their work out of synch with the findings on preference context dependency.

[12] In this article, I tend to generalize about elite communication. Note that I draw on results from two different research tracks: studies of informational "cues" (e.g., Carmines and Kuklinski 1990; Lupia 1992, 1994; Lupia and McCubbins 1998; Popkin 1991; Sniderman 2000; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991), and studies of such argumentative strategies as "framing" and "priming" (e.g., Chong and Druckman 2007; Druckman 2001a, 2004; Gamson and Modigliani 1989; Kinder and Nelson 2005; Kinder and Sanders 1996; Sniderman and Theriault 2004). Although the lines of inquiry into heuristics and argumentation are distinct, the two phenomena overlap in practice because people can learn from frames and cues can be embedded in the frames proposed by political parties and interest groups (Druckman et al. 2010). A strong distinction between cues and frames does appear to hold with respect to the reasoning process. Framing is more powerful in its early stages and with "online processors," who rely on an initial judgment to screen subsequent information. Cues can provide information updates to those who take them in and will be more powerful with "memory-based processors" who make their decisions based on what they have most recently learned (Druckman et al. 2010).

[13] As a further cautionary note, some research suggests that only the moderately politically aware and well informed are actually open to new information and inclined to bring it to bear on an issue. If this is true, then the proportion of the populace that is open to persuasion and deliberation may be quite small (Druckman and Lupia 2000, 15).

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THE DEMOCRATIC "REDISCOVERY" OF REPRESENTATION

Following the wave of academic theory that embraced "participatory" democracy in the wake of the Civil Rights, student, and antiwar movements (e.g., Barber 1984; Miller 1987; Pateman 1970), normative scholars have proclaimed a "democratic *rediscovery* of representation" (Urbinati 2006, 5; see Dovi 2002; Manin 1997; Mansbridge 1999, 2003; Plotke 1997; Schwartz 1988; Seitz 1995; Urbinati and Warren 2008; Young 1997, 2000). This rediscovery begins by questioning the assumption that democracy need have its origins in a constituency, as a democratic constituency exists "at best potentially" (Young 2000, 130). Being large, dispersed, and vaguely defined, it "rarely brings itself to affirm a common will," but requires "representative institutions and the process of authorization themselves [to] call its members into action" (130). In effect, then, as public opinion researchers have come to recognize the context dependency of preferences, theorists of political representation have taken a similar turn to conceive of the "people," democracy's political subject, as endogenous to the process of representation.

The rediscovery of representation alters the very valence of "representative democracy." This phrase that once struck participatory democrats as an "oxymoron" (Urbinati 2006, 4) for putting representatives in the place where the people should be, now strikes theorists of representation as "in fact a tautology" (Näsström 2006, 330). It is only *through* representation that a people comes to be as a political agent, one capable of putting forward a demand. Thus, representation cannot be regarded as either supplementary or compensatory; it is "the essence of democracy" (330).

This, too, is a constructivist turn, one motivated by a critical awakening to what Young (2000, 125) calls democratic political theory's "metaphysics of presence." Presence, a concept that Young borrows from Derrida ([1967] 1973), names the fantasy of a reality that is self-evident, unmediated by social processes, and sovereign so that it can be imagined to provide an origin and point of reference for assessing the accuracy and faithfulness of any attempt to represent it. To reject such a fantasy is precisely to refute the assumption that representation is a "descriptive and mimetic" process, one that merely transmits "something preexisting it, like for instance a single or collective sovereign that seeks pictorial representation through election" (Urbinati 2006, 46, 33). For proponents of the "rediscovery" of representation, "democratic politics is *constituted* partly through representation" (Plotke 1997, 31; emphasis added).

There remains a conceptual gap between normative and empirical bodies of work that opens at the most basic question of what is to be represented. Many normative theorists would agree with Plotke (1997, 32) that "interest representation" is the "starting point in a democratic view of representation." Plotke's choice of the term "interest" rather than "preference" marks something more than a semantic disagreement with empirical scholars. Mansbridge (2003, 519–20) affirms a qualitative difference between the two, asserting that "questions regarding voters' interests, in contrast to their preferences, are not susceptible to certain resolution." Whereas Mansbridge (517, n. 6) regards preferences in behavioral terms, she takes pains to gloss "interest" as including "identity-constituting[,] ideal-regarding commitments as well as material needs." Mere preferences, she suggests, are unreflexive, but interests are "enlightened preferences," refined dialogically in light of not just "simple cognition" but "experience and emotional understanding" (517, n. 6). The question at stake between normative and empirical scholars is: would the context-dependent "preferences" theorized by Druckman, Lupia, and other such scholars count as what Plotke and Mansbridge term "interests" or "enlightened preferences"?

Not according to the most rationalist version of interest, which is modeled by Habermas' communicative action/strategic action distinction. Deliberative democrats have attempted to translate that ideal into politics by means of "citizens' juries," "mini-publics," and other such experiments that insulate "participants from the usual sources of information and persuasion and the usual conditions under which they respond to polls about their preferences" (Rosenblum 2008, 300).[14] Such experiments are at odds with empirical research on opinion formation because they juxtapose deliberation against "partisan contestation" (300). Not only do they participate in a long tradition of antipartisanship, as Rosenblum argues, but they also open a gulf between normative models of the way citizens *should* reason and empirical accounts of the way they *do* reason (300).

Even those deliberative democrats who have criticized the rationalism of the Habermasian model persist in an intersubjective model of dialogue and an attachment to independent interests as a point of departure for the representative relationship. Plotke (1997, 32) envisions a dialogic process in two stages where citizens first "aim to clarify their own preferences" among themselves, then "seek to select representatives who will try to produce suitable results." Young (2000, 132) also envisions a two-stage process, one that begins with "citizen participation" in a context of conflict to produce demands that are specific to that context, then seeks representatives to carry those demands forward. Even though Young describes demands emerging out of political conflict, she nonetheless insulates the process of their formation from party politics. Hers is a world where "citizens . . . form themselves into [constituencies]" and engage "in debate and struggle over the wisdom and implications of policy decisions" independently of elite cues and frames (131).[15]

[14] In a favorable review of the "macro-political impact of [such] micro-political innovations," Goodin and Dryzek (2006, 220) report that although they rarely have a direct influence on policy content, minipublics and other such forums can serve as a way to test-market policy proposals, promote legitimacy, and build a constituency for change.

[15] Forst (2001, 369) depicts a similar scenario of demands produced in "information networks of discussion" entering into the "center

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On such accounts, it is not elite communication but a "public sphere of discussion" that orients citizens in conflict by setting "an issue agenda and the main terms of dispute or struggle" (Young 2000, 130). To be sure, Young does not adhere strictly to the bedrock norm; she does not understand interests to be fixed, but rather conceives them to be arrived at dialogically. But she does preserve the temporal logic of bedrock, together with the requirement of unilateral responsiveness, by stipulating that it is only once citizens have "organize[d] and discuss[ed] the issues that are important to them" that they "call on candidates to respond to their interests" (130). As Squires (2008, 190) notes, the "process here flows from the constituents to the representatives." In sum, although both Young and Plotke recognize that interests are not fixed prior to politics, they make them endogenous to politics in an idealized way: they are formed by practices of public reason to secure the independence and autonomy of citizens' judgment against the opportunistic communications of elites.

These models of two-stage processes conflict with empirical accounts of context-dependent preferences in two ways. First, they hold onto an ideal of independence from partisan communication as a touchstone for democratic legitimacy, departing from liberal/economic models of politics by making interest (rather than preference) its site and dialogue (rather than preference exogeneity) its guarantor. This is effectively a deliberative rewriting of the bedrock norm. Second, they model deliberation out of the context of interparty conflict, as occurring first among citizens and then between citizens and their representatives. In contrast, as I argue, empirical research on preference context dependency shows preferences to evolve in the context of interparty competition and to be responsive to communications from representatives and other elites. These communications, although addressed to constituencies, are primarily oriented toward that competition. Put simply, citizens learn *from*, not *in spite of*, the frames and cues that political elites deploy to gain an edge in partisan contests. In short, empirical research recognizes political communication as twofold: addressed explicitly to constituencies and silently enmeshed in interparty struggle. What would happen to dialogic models if they had to confront this twofold character?

Mansbridge (2003, 515) grapples with precisely this question in a path-breaking article where she takes up the normative implications of empirical studies of "'retrospective voting,'" in which voters assess their representatives' performance based on priorities that they developed over the course of the term, rather than on those that they held at the moment of election. Mansbridge explains that retrospective voting effects a "shift in temporal emphasis" that gives rise to "unexpected normative changes" (518). In the traditional promissory model, the representative is bound by a common-sense moral imperative "to do what he or she had promised the voters at [election time]" (515, 518). In retrospective voting, legislators act not only according to the "actual [past] preferences of the voter," but also according to their own "*beliefs*" about "the future preferences of the voter" at reelection time. When voting is retrospective, representation becomes "anticipatory," creating "a prudential, not a moral, relationship to those voters" (518). Whereas promissory representatives have only one course of action (to do as they said or to justify any deviation in terms of the principles they professed to hold), anticipatory representatives, who aim to please "future voters," have two. They attempt to gauge what a voting majority will want at the next election, turning to "public opinion polls, focus groups, and gossip about the 'mood of the nation'" so as to adapt themselves to the electorate's movement (517). They also make themselves agents of that change, attempting to shape public opinion so that voters "will be more likely to approve of the representative's actions" (517).

Mansbridge (2003) draws two important conclusions from this new landscape. First, anticipatory voting opens up the possibility that "voters can change their preferences after thinking about them" (517). In turn, because representatives will not merely follow those changes but will actively seek to influence them, it follows that anticipatory representation "encourages us to think of voters at [re-election time] as educable (or manipulable)" (517). Mansbridge insinuates into her text (by means of the parentheses) an all-too-familiar distinction. The question is: how does she propose to tell the difference between them?

This question brings Mansbridge (2003, 518) to her second important conclusion, that anticipatory representation is "in most instances interactive and more continually reflexive" than the promissory model allows. Consequently, the "appropriate normative criteria for judging [anticipatory and other] more recently identified forms of representation are systemic, in contrast to the dyadic criteria appropriate for promissory representation" (515). In other words, we can no longer assume that democratic representation is secured by the match (or "congruence") between constituent policy preferences and legislative votes. Nor can we emphasize, as Young and Plotke do, the quality of deliberation among constituents and between them and their legislators. Although Mansbridge notes that it is necessary to evaluate the "quality of mutual education between legislator and constituents," she cautions that this communication "depends only in small part on the dyadic efforts of the representative and constituent" (518–19). It is impersonal and systemic, relying on the "functioning of the entire representative process—including political parties, political challengers, the media, interest groups, hearings, opinion surveys, and all other processes of communication" (519).

Mansbridge (2003) moves much closer to the competitive political environment than either Plotke or Young is willing to venture. She recognizes that political reasoning is mediated by "opinion polls and

of decision-making processes" *by way of* "parliamentary debate and hearings," so that elected representatives do not craft demands but transmit them from below.

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focus groups," as well as by "opposition candidates, political parties, and the media" (520). These need not be mere "tools of manipulation" but may contribute to a genuinely deliberative process of interest formation, one that need not be unidirectionally responsive (as in promissory representation) but would be "reflexive" (520). What would reflexivity entail? Despite her innovative moves beyond the foundationalist model of democratic representation, here Mansbridge falls back on a familiar communicative ideal, defining reflexivity subjectively as a property of an individual's judgment rather than as a systemic capacity. For Mansbridge, a reflexive "representative system [should contribute] to ongoing factually accurate and mutually educative communication" (519).

The difficulty is that what would count as education for Mansbridge rarely occurs in actual political discourse. Education, as Mansbridge (2003, 519; emphasis added) defines it, is a "form of influence" that meets two criteria: it "works through *arguments on the merits* and *is by definition in the recipients' interests*." Druckman's (2001a) arguments regarding issue framing—that politics involves conflicts over precisely what considerations should be brought to bear on a particular question—cast doubt on the feasibility of this first criterion. Although it is possible to identify deceitful, irrelevant, and misleading claims, there is often no neutral standpoint from which to resolve the question what is or is not on the merits of the case.[16] As to the second criterion, Mansbridge (2003, 519) herself has conceded that being "in the recipients' interests" is similarly contested. Once again, in a political environment where political elites never speak exclusively as educators of constituents but use political communication to gain an edge in interparty competition, education is not an orientation but a side effect of the battle.

Despite recognizing the need to give normative theory a "systemic" turn, Mansbridge's normative vision of political communication sets aside precisely what I take to be definitive of its systemic aspect—that representatives and opinion shapers are not only (or even primarily) in relationship to potential voters, but also in competition with each other. Her definition of education falls back on criteria better suited to assess an intersubjective relationship than a representative system. Why should this be so? The pervasiveness of the Habermasian paradigm of deliberation has something to do with it. Even those who, like Mansbridge, would not endorse Habermas' rationalism, nonetheless retain a vestige of his urge to separate "communicative" from "strategic" action. In addition, these scholars are following a path blazed by Hanna Pitkin who anticipated more of today's debates than she is credited with doing—both the insights and the impasses.

HANNA PITKIN'S "MOBILIZATION" CONCEPT OF REPRESENTATION

In 1967, Hanna Pitkin initiated a bolder break with the traditional dyadic model of representation than many of her successors managed. This claim might come as a surprise to the many scholars who would credit the most mainstream understanding of representative democracy to the summary definition that Pitkin (209) formulated: "representing here means acting in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them."[17] As Rehfeld (2006, 3) notes, "few historical treatments have been so completely accepted as a standard account of a concept in all areas of political science" as Pitkin's. This "standard account" reduced Pitkin's central thesis to the nutshell formulation that "responsiveness is what representative government is all about" (Kuklinski and Segura 1995, 4). And this short phrase made Pitkin's work easy to assimilate to the empirical paradigm of the moment, which held "constituency influence" to be the hallmark of democratic political representation and made "congruence"—the literal match between a legislator's votes and the preferences of his or her constituents—its index (Miller and Stokes 1963).[18] That assimilation, in turn, covered over her intricately argued assault on a fundamental premise: that representation can be understood on the model of a principal–agent relation.

Pitkin refutes the principal–agent model by opposing the intuition, definitive for late twentieth-century liberalism, that citizen preferences are and ought to be the "principal force in a representative system" (Sunstein 1991, 6–7; Wahlke 1971, 272–73). She argues that legislators respond to too "great a complexity and plurality of determinants" for citizen preferences to be a driving force in legislative decisions (Pitkin 1967, 214 or 220). Such decisions are multidimensional; they cannot be reduced to a "one-to-one, person-to-person relationship" between a principal and an agent (221). Even if a legislator were to want to accord the constituency pride of place, constituents seldom hold articulate and well-formed preferences on the bills that actually come before Congress. When they do, the discrete preferences of the members of a district would not add up to a "single interest," and so lack the unity of a principal (221).[19]

Pitkin (1967) sets the dyadic model aside to propose that political representation should be conceived as

[16] Has anyone put this point better than E.E. Schattschneider ([1960] 1975, 66) who wrote: "political conflict is not like an intercollegiate debate in which the opponents agree in advance on a definition of the issues. As a matter of fact, *the definition of the alternatives is the supreme instrument of power*"?

[17] Kuklinski and Segura (1995, 4) claim that "this conception has motivated nearly all empirical work, often implicitly, from Miller and Stokes' classic study" to a range of recent work. Those who make it their take-away point include Eulau and Karps (1977, 237), Jewell (1983, 304), Peterson (1970, 493), Prewitt and Eulau (1969, 429), Rogowski (1981, 396), and Saward (2006, 300). Notable departures include Runciman (2007) and Näsström (2006), who aim to give Pitkin's "paradox" of representation its due.

[18] Miller and Stokes (1963) set out only to *measure* congruence between legislators and constituents; they emphasized that a "congruence" finding is *proof* of "constituency influence" only in a context of institutional arrangements that give citizen opinion leverage over official conduct.

[19] Pitkin's arguments on this point are at odds with Saward's (2006, 300) claim that Pitkin takes the represented as "unproblematically given."

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a "public, institutionalized arrangement," one where representation emerges not from "any single action by any one participant, but [from] the over-all structure and functioning of the system" (221–22). For representation to take place, there does not need to be a meeting of the minds between representative and constituency, or even so much as a meeting. Pitkin contends that legislators' "pursuit of the public interest and response to public opinion need not always be conscious and deliberate," and that "representation may emerge from a political system in which many individuals, both voters and legislators, are pursuing quite other goals" (224).

This is Pitkin's own constructivist turn. She effectively redefines democratic representation from an interpersonal relationship to a systemic process that is anonymous, impersonal, and not seated in intent.[20] The process will be judged representative so long as it "promot[es] the interests of the represented, in a context where the latter is conceived as capable of action and judgment, but in such a way that he does not object to what is done in his name" (Pitkin 1967, 155). As Runciman (2007, 95) insightfully argues, the measure of interest here is "negative." The representativity of the system turns not on the match between the opinions of the represented and the votes of the representative, but rather on what he terms Pitkin's "non-objection criterion": the "ability of individuals to object to what is done in their name" (95).

Pitkin's nonobjection criterion not only robs congruence of its substantive ground, but it also casts it under suspicion. She suggests that a congruence finding can be trusted as an indicator of democracy only when a constituency has the capacity to object. As provision for such a capacity, Pitkin calls for competitive elections, the guarantee that those who win genuinely have the power to govern, universal franchise, and the protection of opposition and its extension to all. I suggest that this list is inadequate, even on Pitkin's own terms, because it fails to make good on a significant clause of the nonobjection criterion: that the represented be "conceived as capable of action and judgment." This, which I call the "judgment" clause, is crucial because without it there is no trusting that citizens' objection or nonobjection has not simply been framed or primed out of the debate by habit, ignorance, or stereotype. As Druckman (2010) cautions, the most successful frames may not stimulate judgment but foreclose it by tapping exactly those features of the political environment (cf. Chong 2000, ch. 4). I come back to the question what it would take to satisfy the "judgment" clause at the end of this article.

A few of Pitkin's early readers picked up on the radicalism of her arguments. Registering this move to "understand representation as a systemic property," they warned that it could upset many "conventional assumptions" (Prewitt and Eulau 1969, 431; cf. Hansen 1975, 1186). Not least among these was the reigning wisdom that representative government is democratic because it realizes not majority rule but "*minorities* rule" (Dahl 1956, 132)—the representation of a plurality of groups, understood as "context-independent entities" (Lavaque-Manty 2006, 6). In contrast, Pitkin (1967, 215; emphasis added) holds democratic representation to involve acting for an "*unorganized* group."[21] To the empirical democrats, who regarded self-organizing as prerequisite to political representation, an "unorganized" group would not only be an oxymoron, but its political representation would be next to impossible. Pitkin understands representing to participate in defining group identities. Speaking of the "national unity that gives localities an interest in the welfare of the whole," she insists that it is "not merely *presupposed* by representation [but] also continually re-created by the representatives' activities" (218; emphasis added). Her point is not that representation invents constituencies out of whole cloth but that it draws them together: it imputes to them a unity that they discover only through being represented. This makes representing an activity without a model, without certainty, and—in Pitkin's words—without "guarantee" (163).

At its most radical and unique, then, Pitkin's is what I term a "mobilization" conception of representation.[22] She holds the process of representation to participate in forming demands and social cleavages, not merely to reflect them. Thus, for Pitkin, as for Urbinati (2006, 37), political representation does "not simply allow the social to be translated into the political, but . . . facilitates the formation of political groups and identities." It aims, then, not to *re*produce a state of affairs but to produce an effect: to call forth a constituency by depicting it as a collective with a shared aim.

A mobilization conception of representation is anticipatory, in Mansbridge's sense. It both seeks to attract potential constituencies and aims, prudentially, to please future voters. Pitkin (1967, 164) even sounds like Mansbridge when she writes, "legislators often pattern their actions not on what their constituents ought to want but on what they anticipate their constituents will want (in all their ignorance)." What neither Mansbridge nor Pitkin recognize is that this anticipatory aspect makes the mobilization conception of political representation analogous to aesthetic and literary models of representation that emphasize that representations are performative: representing is an activity

[20] Pitkin (2004, 340; cf. 1989) seems to retreat from this position in her later writings on representation, where she affirms the need for a "centralized, large-scale, necessarily abstract representative system [to be] based in a lively, participatory, concrete direct democracy at the local level."

[21] This notion made Pitkin a better interest group pluralist than those who claimed the title, being truer than they were to the "anti-foundationalism" of Bentley's (1908) conception of groups (Lavaque-Manty 2006, 10). Lavaque-Manty (2009, 109) writes that Bentley "conceived of interest as a relationship that depended on the context in which similarly situated individuals might find themselves," so that groups do not precede politics but "come into existence" in response to that context.

[22] Mobilization, as I use the term, applies to the work that images, narratives, and other mediated messages do in soliciting individuals to identify with a larger group or principle. This should not be confused with activities such as canvassing, phone banking, and other forms of direct contact that parties and other organizations use to get out the vote or turn members out to meetings (cf. Rosenstone and Hansen 1993).

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that produces ontological effects while seeming merely to follow from an existing state of affairs (cf. Butler 1995, 134).[23]

A mobilization conception of representation accords with "poststructuralist" or "post-Marxist" pluralist theories that have emphasized how political identities and demands do not emerge directly from social divisions, but rather that social differences and the politics to which they give rise are influenced by elite discourse (Laclau 1996; Laclau and Mouffe 1985; McClure 1992).[24] The idea is not that political elites create constituencies arbitrarily and in words alone.[25] Instead, the claim is that there is an inescapably figurative moment in the emergence of a democratic constituency.[26] Several theorists have proposed ways of characterizing this moment. Laclau (1996, 98; 2005, 155) writes of the "impurity" in political representation that "does not simply reproduce . . . a fullness preceding it" but is primary "in the constitution of objectivity." Saward (2006, 300) proposes the concept "representative claim" to underscore that "at the heart of the act of representing is the depicting of a constituency *as* this or that, as requiring this or that, as having this or that set of interests." Ankersmit (2002, 115; emphasis added) explains that without representation, "we are without a *conception* of what political reality—the represented—is like."[27] Representing rouses a constituency to action by giving it a picture of itself that enables it to recognize itself in terms of a "generality"—a common enemy, shared problem, shared virtue—that is neither given nor self-evident but must be narrated into being (Rosanvallon 2008, 11).

To link Pitkin to this radical strand of contemporary democratic theory is to put her work at odds with the standard account of (unidirectional) responsiveness with which so many readers have associated it.[28] Are those readers simply wrong? No. Pitkin retreated from the most challenging implications of what I have termed her "constructivist turn."

The retreat begins at the end of the book, where Pitkin (1967) sums up her unconventional argument in these conventional terms: "representing here means acting in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them" (208). Read out of context of her critique of the principal–agent model and endorsement of representation as a systemic process that is anonymous and impersonal, this could sound like (and was taken to be) a return to the standard dyad. Pitkin quickly counters this, however, writing that, as she understood it, responsiveness is not a "constant activity" but a "condition . . . of potential readiness to respond" (233). This feature, that it "requires only potential responsiveness, access to power rather than its actual exercise," makes her conception of representation "perfectly compatible with leadership and with action to meet new or emergency situations" but "incompatible . . . with manipulation or coercion of the public" (233).

Here is the language that so bedevils contemporary normative theories of democratic representation. Pitkin recognizes, as does Mansbridge, that as soon as representation becomes anticipatory (rather than merely responsive) it opens up the possibility for political elites to change voters' preferences. Pitkin, like Mansbridge, is inclined to parse this possibility in terms of what she presents as an opposition between "leadership" and "manipulation." Although Pitkin (1967, 223) acknowledges that the "line" between these two "is a tenuous one, and may be difficult to draw," she leaves no doubt that normative theory should find ways of doing so. As to just what this might entail, she does not say. Instead, Pitkin finishes by asserting, as if italics could make it so, "there undoubtedly *is* a difference, and this difference makes leadership compatible with representation while manipulation is not" (233; emphasis original).

Just what underlies Pitkin's italicized conviction? Nothing less that what she terms the "etymological origins" of the word representation, which she reads off its prefix: "*re-presentation*, a making present again" (Pitkin 1967, 8). That is, Pitkin invokes etymology to secure the distinction between democratic leadership and authoritarian manipulation. In a memorable passage, she writes: "as the 're' in 'representation' seems to suggest, and as I have argued in rejecting the fascist model of representation, the represented must be somehow logically prior; the representative must be responsive

[23] Saward (2006, 302), who also stresses the "performative side of political representation," tends to define the term theatrically as "performing" and "action by actors." I adopt the speech act theory conception of performativity in order to disrupt the imputation of cause to effect, a move that is significant to displacing the bedrock norm from its centrality in democratic representation.

[24] It is noteworthy that Urbinati and Warren (2008, 395) leave this work out of their account of the new wave, attributing the shift to "constitutive" representation, on the one hand, to scholarship on group-based inequalities and, on the other hand, to scholarship emphasizing the connections between political representation and political judgment.

[25] For a radically constructivist conception of political representation, see Bourdieu ([1981] 1991).

[26] Writing about the mobilization effects of political movements, Snow and Benford (1988, 198) argue that whereas movements "frame . . . relevant events and conditions in ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists," activating (or suppressing) a constituency is no simple linear top-down initiative. It is a "dialectical" process, constrained by the belief system of the potential supporters, the range of concerns they consider to be relevant, and their assessment of the "utility of becoming active in the cause" (202, 204).

[27] It is important to underscore that representing creates the conception of reality, not the reality itself. Ankersmit (2002, 115; emphasis original) loses this subtlety in the very next sentence, writing that: "Without representation there is no represented—*and without political representation there is no nation as a truly political entity.*" Näsström (2006, 331) criticizes Ankersmit for this radical constructivism, which assigns the creativity of political representation to the representative alone, thereby undercutting the democratic aspirations of his account.

[28] A notable exception is Garsten (2009, 91), who groups Pitkin together with Constant and Madison, thinkers who hold the "counterintuitive" position that the purpose of representative government is "to *oppose* popular sovereignty as it is usually understood"; it is not to aim for but to "undermine the idea that government can adequately represent the people."

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to him rather than the other way around" (140). Pitkin imposes here a stricture of unidirectionality that I term the "etymological protocol." This protocol is Pitkin's return to the bedrock norm. It ensures that there is a "one-way flow of influence from public opinion to policy" (Manza and Cook 2002, 639), establishing, as if it followed inevitably from the prefix to the word, that when responsiveness is functioning properly, it is properly democratic. Thus does Pitkin, by a linguistic sleight of hand, fuse representation to democracy in a way that turns one of her genuinely radical suggestions in reverse: she has moved from demonstrating that democracy is intrinsically representative to asserting that representation is intrinsically democratic (cf. Rehfeld 2006).

Scholars who came away from *Concept* with the common-sense notion that "responsiveness is what representative government is all about" at once got less from Pitkin's text than they might have and took on more than they bargained for. Whereas they missed her assault on the principal–agent model, they internalized the etymological protocol of unidirectionality. This protocol ensured that contemporary empirical findings, which leave no doubt that responsiveness has indeed turned "the other way around," would seem to betray a fundamental democratic norm. Furthermore, Pitkin left contemporary scholars with the urge to rehabilitate that norm by way of the leadership/manipulation difference. Yet, it is precisely this difference that proves so elusive in the face of current empirical findings about preference context dependency. First, as I argue, citizens learn from communication that recruits them to a side in interparty conflict. Second, there is no "bedrock"—unadulterated preference or enlightened interest—on which to ground a determination as to which of these has occurred. In short, by its fall back on unidirectional responsiveness and its normative orientation to a difference that proves difficult to discern, Pitkin's text left normative theory without a purchase over the empirical findings that have established elite cueing, framing, and other modes of influence as *preconditions* for democratic competence.

RETHINKING RE-PRESENTATION

I propose to change the terms of this debate by enlisting Derrida's ([1967] 1973) *Speech and Phenomena*, which, incidentally, was published in France in 1967, the same year that Pitkin's book appeared in the United States. This text, which demonstrates that the meaning of signs is not derived from the ideas that they are taken to represent but rather generated in their relations to other signs, casts suspicion on this habit of deriving governing protocols for re-presentation from its etymology. Against the presumption that a re-presentation must *follow* from something that has already been present ("primordial presentation"), Derrida proposes that it is from repetition that reality acquires the attribute of originality, the quality of seeming to be both logically and temporally prior to its repetition (45, fn. 4). As he puts it, "the presence-of-the-present is derived from repetition and not the reverse" (52). On Derrida's account, representation is not a "reduplication that *befalls* a simple presence" (53). It is an activity that creates its own reference points and then affects, by "etymological" feint, to have done nothing at all.

I take Derrida's argument to call into question the etymological protocol of unidirectionality. Why assume that the "re" is a temporal "re," the "re" of return? It might just as well be an iterative "re," the "re" of repetition. When Pitkin defines representation as "*re-presentation*, a making present again," she puts both into play. One could follow the etymological protocol to emphasize making present *again*, the "re" of return (temporal and recapitulative). Yet, as I show, there is much in her text that violates this protocol and warrants a Derridean reading. Such a reading would put the emphasis on the *making* present, activating the "re" of repetition (iterative and active) and bringing out what I call its figurative and mobilizing aspects.

Derrida's account has the merits of explaining at once why violations of unidirectionality in responsiveness need not stir anxiety and why they will do so nonetheless. The very word representation perpetrates a ruse by the ambiguity that is built into its prefix. Representing is a making (the iterative "re") that affects fidelity to something prior (by the "re" of return). I suggest that the dilemma of democratic competence is, in part, an effect of this ruse. For to find politicians framing, cueing, and priming, and to find citizens forming preferences in response to that activity, is merely to find both exercising the practice of representation, understood in the iterative sense. At the same time, it is to find a breach of that practice insofar as the etymology of the word seems to promise not a *making* present but a making present *again*.

Understood as making present *again,* representing will inevitably give rise to a normative urge for fidelity to a popular mandate. If representing is a *making* present, as the mobilization conception would have it, then that mandate cannot be trusted; the risk will always be that it testifies not to the deliberative competence of the people but to the duplicity of the representative who seduced them into voicing a demand. This does not mean that a mobilization conception of representation cannot be democratically legitimate, only that it cannot be legitimate on the terms that the bedrock norm defines.

In fact, it is no simple matter to bring existing democratic norms to bear on representation as mobilization, which is at odds with the model of interest representation to which leading proponents of deliberative democracy subscribe. On the mobilization conception, representing is "not meant to make a preexisting entity—i.e., the unity of the state or the people or the nation—visible" (Urbinati 2006, 24). Nor can it be regulated by the Habermasian distinction between communication and strategy. Representation as mobilization aims to persuade: its modus operandi is rhetorical and anticipatory. Urbinati (46; emphasis original) explains, representatives "prefigure courses of action and project their deliberation in the future, which is,

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unavoidably, a dimension inhabited by *things* that have only a hypothetical or fictional nature."[29]

Representation as mobilization is at odds with deliberation on the Habermasian model, which aims to "legitimiz[e] one shared and authoritative perspective from which to judge all public controversies" (Garsten 2006, 190).[30] As Bohman (1988, 187) argues, this model denigrates rhetoric by "asserting the primacy of the literal use of language and often of the argumentative, if not logical, structure of discourse," requiring deliberators to argue their case in terms with which all reasonable people could agree.[31] In contrast, scholars who are building a model of "rhetorical deliberation" from Aristotle begin from the unabashed avowal that rhetoric aims to influence a particular audience. They argue that the constraints on the practice of rhetoric can only be immanent to its own orientation to success. Rhetors who want to persuade cannot invent frames out of whole cloth. They must engage the sympathies of a specific audience that holds particular value commitments at a particular place and time (Garsten 2006, 190). As Garsten explains, a good rhetorician targets an audience "where they stand" and seeks to bring them "to thoughts or intentions they might not otherwise have adopted" (3, 6). Rhetoric does not succeed without the active participation of the audience, who "*change their own* beliefs and desires in light of what has been said" (7; emphasis added). Bickford (1996, 42) adds that Aristotle's rhetoric is an art of attunement "whose function is 'to see the available means of persuasion in each case'" and thereby to identify what kinds of appeals are likely to set a particular audience thinking. This is the aim of deliberation on the Aristotelian model. Not to produce a justifiable general understanding but to "dra[w] out good judgment" in a time- and place-bound audience (Garsten 2006, 190).

In Aristotle's terms, the finding that citizen preferences respond to such rhetorical techniques as issue framing need not indicate a pathology. It simply confirms that persuasion has occurred. As Lupia and McCubbins (1998, 40) argue, "in settings where reasoned choice requires learning from others, *persuasion is [its] necessary condition*." If citizens are persuaded by a rhetor who respects their art as something that should provoke thinking rather than merely tap prejudice, the resulting preferences can be affirmed as reasoned choices. Yet, this notion of respecting the art brings us to the limit of this Aristotelian position. To establish, as Aristotle does, that there is an art to rhetoric, hence that it is not in itself instrumental, is no guarantee that every rhetor will respect the constraints that are immanent to its practice as an art. In short, whereas these Aristotelian theorists of deliberation do make a place for representation as mobilization in deliberative democracy, they leave open the crucial normative question of how it is to be evaluated.

FROM RESPONSIVENESS TO REFLEXIVITY

To characterize representation as mobilizing is to call attention to its creative effects and, thereby, to alter expectations about what it ought to do. If democratic representation neither takes the social as its ground, nor relies on good reasons alone to recruit supporters, then it is not best assessed by its congruence with group interests because the very notion of congruence assumes that representatives do and should carry forward demands that "belong" to groups in a prefigured social field. In characterizing representation as mobilization, I emphasize how acts of representation work together with political practices to configure the social field and to frame the terms of conflict within which the pertinence and cogency of arguments are judged.

These claims suggest that representation as mobilization is not well suited to be judged by an ideal model of argumentation that forces a distinction between communication and strategy. For the democratic representative, as for the social critic, legitimate political communication can be simultaneously "oriented to understanding and oriented to success" (Bohman 1988, 195). Both the critic and the representative will recruit supporters as they educate them, employing rhetorical practices that aim to effect "changes in beliefs, desires, and attitudes" not by the unforced force of argumentation alone, but by appeal to identity, emotion, and bias (195). If elite communication is inescapably twofold, at once oriented toward constituents and enmeshed in interparty struggle, then does it follow that manipulation is inevitable? Is it no longer possible to tell the difference between a popular mobilization that uses its constituency as a pawn in elite partisan warfare and one that activates incipient concerns to stage a new and potentially transformative conflict?

Even without congruence, responsiveness, and other measures that rely on some version of bedrock, it should be possible to assess whether a democratic political system is more or less representative. But normative theory in the wake of the constructivist turn needs to break with typical assumptions about the relationship between democratic representation and popular sovereignty. It requires what Garsten (2009, 91) rightly identifies as "counterintuitive" thinking about what political representation is supposed to do. Its purpose, Garsten argues, drawing on liberal thinkers in eighteenth-century France and the United States, is not to respond to popular demands but to "*multiply and challenge governmental claims to represent the people*" (91). By his emphasis on contestation, I believe that Garsten gets closer to naming the conditions that

[29] Hawkesworth's (2003, 531) analysis of "racing-gendering" in the U.S. Congress shows how these rhetorical dynamics operate not only between elected representatives and their constituents, but also within the legislature itself, to produce "difference, political asymmetries, and social hierarchies."

[30] The core commitments of Habermasian deliberative democracy can be found in Habermas (1998, chs. 7 and 8) and Cohen (1986, 1989). Bohman (1996, 1–22) is an excellent overview.

[31] Garsten (2006, 6) clarifies that although such theories "do not call upon us to always reach consensus," they nonetheless presume "universal agreement" as setting the boundaries within which people disagree. This puts them in contrast to the "classical-humanist tradition of rhetoric, which assumed that people disagreed and asked how they could engage in controversy through speech rather than force" (6).

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would actualize Pitkin's "non-objection criterion" than she did herself.

I propose "reflexivity" as the normative standard for evaluating political representation understood in these (nonsovereign) terms. I elaborate this concept not primarily as a quality of individual judgment, but rather as a system capacity. As I use the term "reflexivity," it is not purely descriptive. It is not a synonym for feedback, the interference that occurs when authoritative predictions and pronouncements become an active force within the systems they are supposed merely to regulate or observe.[32] Nor is it normative in the strong sense, naming the mode of argumentation that produces warranted decisions, thereby securing the "moral right" of each individual "not to be subjected to certain actions or institutional norms that cannot be adequately justified to them" (Forst 2010, 712). It would not make sense to say of the design or outcomes of a representative system, as one might say of a principle of justice, that they are "right" in the sense of justifying the assent of all affected. Finally, reflexivity, as I use it, is not that consciousness of self in time or in relation to others that makes possible a modern sense of history or ethics, one ordered without reference to a transcendental principle (Koselleck [1979] 2004). It is, instead, the measure according to which a representation process can be judged as more or less democratic insofar as it does more or less to mobilize both express and implicit objections from the represented.

Building on Garsten, I try to imagine what it would mean to extend reflexivity not only to government institutions, but also to the representation process as a whole—"including political parties, political challengers, the media, interest groups, hearings, opinion surveys, and all other processes of communication" (Mansbridge 2003, 519). For a representation process to be reflexive, it would have to encourage contestation. First, no official or unofficial body could claim to speak for the people absolutely and definitively, so that dissent would be a norm rather than a betrayal. Second, the represented would enjoy both formal and informal means of communication and action to contest government and party initiatives or, equally important, to protest government and party inaction where initiative should be. Finally, the political communications of advocacy groups, mass media, and opinion shapers would be in competition with one another so as to mitigate passive absorption of elite communications.

For a system as for an individual, however, reflexivity means more than the mere fact of contestation. Official and unofficial representatives must have regular, structured ways of taking objections into account. In the case of official representatives (e.g., government or party), reflexivity would require provision for a formal response that at least registers (if not necessarily incorporates) popular challenges. In the case of unofficial or "self-appointed" representatives, reflexivity is difficult to mandate but could be observed in the representative's response to challenges to his or her (or its) reputation or to a decrease in following or contributor base (Grant and Keohane 2005; Montanero 2010, ch. 5). As for the mass media and opinion shapers, it would be important to assess the degree to which audiences expose themselves to diverse sources or remain in discrete ideological "silos."

Although it is beyond the scope of this article to develop it in full, I draw an example of reflexivity from the constitutional design proposed by French revolutionary Condorcet, whom both Rosanvallon (2008) and Urbinati (2006) have rediscovered as a theorist of democratic representation. Condorcet's model of representation is reflexive because it is not "binary," premising democratic legitimacy on a link between the people and its representatives that is "zippered" by elections, but iterative, involving a dynamic movement between authoritative acts and opinion in process (176). Although Condorcet's model was never adopted and was limited to formal government institutions, it is nonetheless possible to extract principles from its features that could guide a more expansive democratically representative practice today.

The design begins with a system of primary assemblies. These were to be organized at the district level, composed of 450 to 900 members each, run by an elected bureau of 50 members, and federated—first into communes and then into the 85 departments that were represented in the National Assembly (Condorcet 1793, Title 7, Article 2). The primary assemblies were not sites of direct democracy, but rather entry points into representative government. In them, citizens would select nominees, vote on candidates, and, most important, set in motion the iterative process by which opinion and authoritative acts were made to engage each other (Title 8, Article 1). They would be the means by which, in Pitkin's terms, citizens object to government acts.

The objection process would begin with a motion to repeal a law, submitted by an individual citizen to the bureau of his or her primary assembly in the form of a petition signed by 50 members of his or her district (Title 8, Article 3). As long as the signatures were valid, the bureau would convene the District Assembly to hear the petition. Following a week's deliberation, Assembly members would be required to vote—yes or no—on whether the petition warranted consideration at the communal level. If a majority of its members voted yes, then the primary assemblies across the commune would be required to convene to decide whether to submit it to the consideration of the department as a whole. If majorities in a majority of the assemblies across the commune put it forward, then the departmental administration would have to order a general convocation, submitting the petition to the judgment of all assemblies in its communes.

I draw two principles from these aspects of Condorcet's design. First, reflexive institutions are interlocking so that a ruling by one triggers a review by another. Second, they are structured to incrementally broaden what Schattschneider ([1960] 1975, 3) terms

[32] Kaplan (2003) is a powerful analysis of the monumental effect that Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan's speculative phrase, "irrational exuberance," had on global financial markets.

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the "scope of conflict." At the lowest levels of the structure, a commune simply heard what the majority in one district referred to it and decided whether the petition warranted further consideration, whereas a department would both hear and rule on the merits of a proposal that a majority of its communes deemed worthy of its attention (Condorcet 1793, Title 8, Article 10). In the move from the communal to the department level, then, there would be an expansion of the scope of conflict and an intensification of its stakes. At the departmental level, if voting majorities in a majority of the communes voted for repeal, then that judgment would extend the scope of conflict and raise its stakes once again, triggering reconsideration of the law by the National Assembly (Title 8, Article 13). In short, Condorcet's design would permit voting majorities of the Assemblies in just 1 of the 85 national departments to call the legitimacy of a national law into question.

Urbinati (2006, 196) argues that, by its "complex system of time delays" and multiplication of the "sites of debate," this structure increases the possibility of producing a judgment that "command[s] rational conviction" (Urbinati 2009, 196). This is, indeed, possible. But the more certain and, hence, striking feature of Condorcet's design is that it would steadily and automatically bring new participants into a conflict. It lends momentum to dissent. That Condorcet designed this momentum to build through deliberative public forums, rather than instantaneously (or "virally" by today's vehicle of blogs and 30-second advertising spots), *may* encourage greater rationality. Reflexivity is, however, a necessary but not a sufficient condition: although it protects against the spontaneous and immediate mobilization of citizen objections, it cannot guarantee that objections that make it through the process will be reasonable.

Finally, Condorcet ensured that no site would be privileged as the locus from which to express the popular will. As Urbinati (2006, 183) argues, Condorcet "set up political processes that presumed dissenting interpretations of the meaning of the 'common opinion,'" creating the means to put any statement of popular will—whether by majority vote, popular initiative, legislative action, or executive order—up for revision or even repeal. This is evident from the next step in the process, the ruling of the National Assembly, which would be required to happen within two weeks of a vote to repeal by the department (Condorcet 1793, Title 8, Article 13). The National Assembly would have the option to affirm the departmental repeal or oppose it and stand by its law. If it voted against repeal, then that ruling would not be final; on the contrary, it would perpetuate the conflict by occasioning a general convocation of every primary assembly in the 85 departments (Title 8, Article 20). The scope of conflict would expand again because, if the National Assembly stood by its law in the face of one department's challenge, the question of repeal would be referred to the citizenry as a whole.

Remarkably, that a majority joined in the opposition would still not suffice to repeal the law. For Condorcet, even a popular referendum is not synonymous with the voice of the people: it cannot make a substantive claim in the people's name. It can, however, set in motion what amounts to a recall of their representatives. If the general convocation results in a "yes" for repeal, then there would be new national elections in which members who stood by the law would be prohibited from competing. Once reconstituted, the National Assembly would take up the question of repeal again, with its decision subject to the same process of censure, beginning anew with a petition to the district (Condorcet 1793, Title 8, Articles 22 and 26). Condorcet's constitution makes it possible to call any statement of the popular will into question. Because no site is privileged for its expression, the process of its articulation is always open to amendment.

Condorcet's design exemplifies what reflexivity might look like as a capacity of formal government institutions. His account is limited by that focus and by the fact that it institutionalized deliberation by means of interlocking face-to-face arenas. Today, the principles of his design would have to be extended to the representative process as a whole, including opinion surveys, lobby groups, and other organized forces, and take account of the mediation of political communication by television, the Internet, and political advertising (together with the structure of its financing).[33] However, these principles—interlocking assemblies, systematically broadening the scope of conflict, and privileging no site as the locus of the popular will—foster the kind of competition that Chong and Druckman (2007) suggest may activate citizens' judgment. These principles, then, begin to fill in the details of what it would take to satisfy Pitkin's "non-objection criterion" together with its "judgment" clause. Expanding the scope of conflict mobilizes objections; competition among the sites aims to ensure (but cannot guarantee) that objections raised will be well reasoned. Insofar as it is reflexive, a representative process may be democratically legitimate in spite of the fact that it includes and even requires the participation of self-seeking elites.

CONCLUSION

This article opens with an apparent dilemma: the political environment that enables citizens to form representable preferences renders them susceptible to elite manipulation. This seems to be a pathology of mass-mediated democratic politics; however, I argue that it is not, or at least not entirely. What drives the sense of pathology is the bedrock norm, with its expectation of unidirectional responsiveness. In place of that norm, I propose a mobilization conception of democratic representation and put reflexivity forward as an alternative measure of its legitimacy. As a norm of representative democracy, reflexivity recasts the dilemma of citizen competence by taking the citizen-representative dyad out of its center. Rather than worry that elite communication affects citizen preference formation, and

[33] In their survey of the "incentive effects of democratic institutions," Lupia and McCubbins (1998, 206, ch. 10) find what I would term "reflexivity" internal to the legislative process in the U.S. House of Representatives and the bureaucracy.

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quest after criteria to determine when it is educative and when manipulative, reflexivity shifts the focus to the process that sets claims about preferences in play. There is no fixed standard against which to judge the representativity of such claims; it depends, instead, on having means to put them to the test, not by simple immediate refusal, but by a system of interlocking sites of opinion formation and decision making. Absent reflexivity, there is good reason for concern that context-dependent reasoning renders individuals susceptible to elite manipulation. Reflexivity is one condition (necessary but not sufficient) that enables them, instead, to be—in Pitkin's terms—"capable of action and judgment."

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