Critical Review

VALUE REPRESENTATION—THE DOMINANCE OF ENDS OVER MEANS IN DEMOCRATIC POLITICS: REPLY TO MURAKAMI

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ABSTRACT: *American democracy is not unconstrained or autonomous, but instead achieves what could be termed* value representation. *Rather than affording representation on policy issues, elections transmit priorities among competing normative ends, while elite politics address the more complex matching of ends and means within the value boundaries established by voters. This results in neither policy representation nor state autonomy, but instead in a specific and limited form of democratic representation.*

A central misconception in the citizen-competence debates is the confusion of the role of ends and means in democratic politics. Competing values (ends) are understood and judged by the electorate, while competing policy proposals (the means to reach them) are decided by elites outside the direct purview of voters, but within the value boundaries that are tested and set through elections.

Contrary to what Michael H. Murakami (2008) has argued in the pages of *Critical Review*, the issues that are of most importance to the American people are not characterized by competing policy means to consensus ends, but instead center on disagreements about the ends themselves. The American political system does not result in policy

representation, which many contemporary scholars believe democracy requires. Nor does it result in the total failure of representation and the *state autonomy* that Samuel DeCanio (2001a, 2001b, 2005, and 2007) has maintained is our predicament. Instead we enjoy what could be termed *value representation*, a specific and limited but meaningful form of democratic constraint on state action. The process of value representation sets limits to which policies will be implemented rather than dictating the exact actions of elites. In this sense it is a form of boundary representation. Like many representative mechanisms within our system, it is a negative check on government rather than a positive command. Value representation is a compromise with the ideal of full representation, not the abandonment of it. Like much of American politics, it is a pragmatic implementation of a desired and feared principle.

Value representation offers a way out of another dilemma posed by Jeffrey Friedman (2005, xxix–xxxii), who borrows from Joseph Schumpeter (1942, 263) in pointing out that while consumers may be bamboozled by enticing advertising into buying an unsatisfactory product (such as, in Schumpeter's example, of a bad-tasting cigarette), the *immediate* feedback they receive from this product allows them to exit from buying it again. By contrast, in politics we are left to analyze bewildering partisan claims about how to interpret *mediated* policy feedback from enacted or proposed policies. This is a dilemma only if the public has to make inferences about the effects of public policies on shared goals. But if government actions embody intentions that reflect conflictual values, then making such inferences is not necessary. The policy itself is feedback enough for citizens to translate its intent into their value system to tell if the policy "tastes good."

In his article that began the public-ignorance debates in *Critical Review*, Jeffrey Friedman (1998) argues that there is little policy representation within an expansive state, or within an electoral democracy that is also a social democracy, in which citizens are called upon to understand the actions of government encompassing the contemporary redistributive and regulatory state. Ilya Somin (1998, 413) states more explicitly in the same issue that "a truly democratic government must, therefore, be strictly limited in scope." This suggests a paradox: Democracy demands that the expanded social-democratic state be either truly responsive to the policy views of the public, or that it is illegitimate. This is to say that there is no middle ground in which the system is democratic once the state has expanded. I argue instead that we

have a different form of democracy based on value representation. Our representatives are neither unconstrained trustees nor instructed delegates, but bounded actors who negotiate public policy within the value limits enforced through elections.

This perspective clarifies several of the prominent questions of the citizen-competence literature, including whether the mass public holds belief systems (they do, grounded in political values); whether public opinion is divided by competing ends, or by competing policy means toward consensus ends (the former); and whether representation occurs regardless of citizen incompetence (it does, at the level of values, about which citizens are competent).

How Values Took a Back Seat in Public-Opinion Research

From the beginning of the study of citizen competence, values have played an important but secondary role, eclipsed by policy attitudes in survey research and by political ideology in studies of citizen competence. In 1962, Robert E. Lane published a crucial but mistitled book, *Political Ideology*, in which he argued that the public has value orientations in abundance, even if they are not well-articulated and do not map directly onto a left/right ideological spectrum. While Lane employed the term ''latent ideology'' to describe citizens' value orientations, it is important to distinguish between these orientations and ideology in the sense of a comprehensive system of left- or right-wing political attitudes, which almost everyone agrees that the mass public does not employ. In Lane's view, most Americans have a different type of belief system than elites have, based on political values.[1]

Two years later, however, the Michigan school produced its most influential work in the form of Philip E. Converse's ''The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics.'' Converse inspired much of the next four decades of opinion research with a stunning series of empirical findings that raised foundational questions: Does the mass public understand and have ideological belief systems? Does it have policy attitudes that are consistent over time and constrained by other beliefs in an ideological ''package''? How do we reconcile the disparity between the low levels of political knowledge of democratic citizens and the high expectations in democratic theory? Arthur Lupia and Matthew McCubbins (1998, 1) later boiled these questions down to ''the

democratic dilemma,'' namely ''that the people who are called upon to make reasoned choices may not be capable of doing so.''

In line with Converse's emphasis on attitudes and ideology, and following the lead of other great works of the Michigan school (e.g., Miller and Stokes 1963), democratic representation has often come to be regarded as policy responsiveness (e.g. Jacobs and Shapiro 2002). One of the most widely-cited works on the nature of representation describes four competing conceptions, but only one (substantive representation) accords with policy congruence (Pitkin 1967). Two others (descriptive and formal representation) have also been widely discussed, but Hannah Pitkin's fourth concept of symbolic representation—when leaders ''stand for'' their constituents' beliefs rather than ''act for'' their specific policy preferences—may be the one that we have the most ability to achieve even if it is the most difficult to operationalize or measure. One important facet of symbolic representation has been conceptualized as trust (Eulau and Karps 1977; Guo and Musso 2007). Another aspect of symbolic representation, which could serve as a foundation for trust, may be a congruence of values.[2]

One of the standard approaches to research on belief systems following Converse has been to define the constructs that researchers believe ought to be present in the minds of the American public, such that these constructs can be represented in policies adopted by the government. The researchers then ''take attendance'' to see which of the allegedly necessary constructs are present. Attendance has always been spotty at best.

Ideology is the first major construct that does not show up regularly in the American electorate. The ''innocence-of-ideology'' thesis first advanced by Converse has been supported by further research (see Kinder 1983 for an overview; for a more recent study of the 2000 election see Jacoby 2001). Given the definition of ideology as one that can be mapped onto the American liberal-conservative continuum employed by political elites, the non–ideology thesis still holds.

Political knowledge is a second major area where attendance has been found wanting. Perhaps the least contested empirical finding in the public-opinion literature is that the mass public holds very little knowledge of government actors or actions. As Donald Kinder (1998, 785) put it, in an oft-repeated phrase, ''the depth of ignorance demonstrated by modern mass publics can be quite breathtaking.'' This is ''one of the strongest findings that have been produced by any social

science—possibly *the* strongest'' (Friedman 1998, 397). The best-documented statement of this finding is probably Michael Delli Carpini and Scott Keeter's 1996 volume, which details just how little Americans know about politics.

Granting that most members of the public do not possess much in the way of political knowledge or ideology, however, it might be worthwhile to go back to Lane's approach and investigate what the public *does* bring to the table politically: values. This perspective is grounded in qualitative studies of a sociological bent (e.g., Hochschild 1981; McCloskey and Zaller 1984). Such findings have been confirmed by survey research that documents the strong relation between values and political judgment. Jon Hurwitz and Mark Peffley (1985) demonstrate that individuals tend to use general principles to derive specific attitudes, even in the foreign-policy realm, where the public's thinking was often thought to be even more disorganized and unconstrained (Hurwitz and Peffley 1987). Stanley Feldman and William Jacoby also demonstrate that values constrain issue positions (Feldman and Steenbergen 2001; Jacoby 2006). Perhaps an even stronger case can be made for the role of value constraint in candidate evaluation (Feldman 1988). What this evidence demonstrates most clearly is that political judgments are constrained by core values. All of this is quite in line with how Converse ([1964] 2006, 7) described the structuring principles of belief-system constraint: ''Often such constraint is quasi-logically argued on the basis of an appeal to some superordinate value or posture toward man and society, involving premises about the nature of social justice, social change, 'natural law,' and the like. Thus a few crowning postures . . . are of prime centrality to the belief system as a whole.''

Are Citizens' Values Represented? Ends Versus Means in Democratic Politics

The initial studies of citizen competence emphasizing what the public lacks (ideology) came to negative conclusions about the prospects for democratic representation, but a smaller stream of mostly later studies that focused on what the public does possess (in addition to value systems, psychological heuristics)[3] have made more optimistic assessments. In a similar vein, most studies of representation have focused on

what was found to be lacking in studies of public opinion: comprehensive policy preferences and political knowledge. Implicitly, accurate representation would occur when elected leaders implement the policies preferred by the majority of the voting public; otherwise representation fails. But if the majority of citizens do not have informed (let alone stable) policy preferences, we are likely to become pessimistic about the nature of democratic representation. A more optimistic assessment would follow if we believe that what should be represented is the public's values, as the minimalist conceptions of democracy suggest.

Electoral politics is sometimes conceptualized as a contest over which means we will pursue toward commonly held ends, such as prosperity and national security. Alternatively, elections can be characterized as a competition over which ends (values) should guide public policy and be respected in our collective symbolism. In the latter view, representation is achieved when the public's political values set boundaries for elected officials' policy choices and symbolic endorsements. *Value representation* fails when electoral or policy outcomes violate the dominant value system of the electorate.

The Murakami thesis is that "the policy issues that voters care about the most are, generally, those in which there is a consensus about ends," such that "overall, the public is most concerned about issues in which ends are taken for granted but the means are contested" (Murakami 2008, 94, 97). This represents a mischaracterization of what is in the public mind for several reasons.

The first is that the compiled empirical evidence indicates that the public cannot understand and determine questions of policy means, but that it does understand and focus on competing ends. The heart of the belief system of the mass public is values, which citizens hold and employ to make political judgments.

A second objection is that many of the issues cited as questions of means are at heart disputes over ends. Prosperity is perhaps the most frequently offered example of a consensus end, but as soon as the surface is scratched it becomes a divisive issue depending on the vision of prosperity that is offered. Is it equal prosperity or a rising tide that lifts all boats, but some more than others? Prosperity *for whom* is always the question at hand, and "all of us" is not a viable answer. By the same token, the health care debate is not simply about better health care, but is instead about the tradeoff between more advanced but market-driven medicine versus more constrained but universally distributed treatment.

In other words, the issue of health care reform is not about better medicine, but equality. National defense is likewise not a consensus end, military security, but is instead a question of clashing values of militarism, pacifism, nationalism, internationalism, etc.

Moreover, means are not disconnected from values. A policy proposal also reveals a value priority. There are rarely *neutral means* toward consensus ends; usually there are only *value-laden means*. Even if we had a consensus vision of prosperity, any means offered to achieve it will invoke value conflicts between individualism and communitarianism. Policy proposals regarding national security also reveal divisions over the priority of greater protection versus upholding civil liberties, or between isolationism and interventionism.

A more subtle argument against the ''means position'' is that most citizens are likely to assume that the effects of policy means are obvious, and therefore that opponents disagree on ends. Liberal-leaning citizens do not tend to see conservative-leaning citizens as sharing the same ends and merely having a different theory of how to get there. Arguments that we cannot raise the minimum wage or redistribute wealth through taxes without causing other problems are instead believed to be smokescreens to hide greed and individualism. Conversely, conservatives rarely imagine that left-leaning citizens have been convinced by other evidence, instead seeing them as foolishly compassionate and obsessed with equality. This could be thought of as a political extension of what social psychologists refer to as the fundamental attribution error: Just as we tend to assume that personal differences are due to character traits rather than circumstances, we also tend to see political differences as rooted in normative rather than empirical disagreement. Hence questions of means morph almost uncontrollably into questions of ends, as Friedman (2007, 216–18) points out.[4] This may be as true among politicians and other elites as among other citizens.

A final objection to believing that disputes over means are the heart of democratic politics is that much of government decision-making revolves around budgeting, which transforms even those issues characterized by shared ends (and which therefore seem to center on means), into disputes over priorities among competing ends. As soon as two or more *shared* ends are considered, the question becomes which is more important (prosperity *versus* environmental protection *versus* national security, etc.) Each of these considered alone might be understood in terms of competing means, but that is not how they are addressed within

our politics. This is often true of regulatory policy as well. Debates over environmentalism can be thought of as competing means to the end of long-term survival, until the more immediate question becomes the tradeoffs involved in environmental regulation. Opponents don't hate the environment; they just don't want to pay for the costs of fixing it, given other things they value more. And as soon as environmentalism is in the picture, prosperity is no longer a question merely of competing means, but of competing ends: Do we put money into environmental control or job creation? It is ends, not means, that must be prioritized.

These conditions suggest that political issues tend to be translated more quickly into conflicting values than into consensus politics. To be clear, both Murakami and Friedman agree that many disputes will be *seen* as revolving around conflicting values; they argue that this masks the reality that they are *really* about conflicting means. My position is that many political disputes are understood as value conflicts because citizens perceive accurately that they contain irreducible value dimensions on which Americans disagree.

A focus on means rather than ends also ignores the well-documented evidence of American cultural divisions (Hunter 1991 and 1994; Green et al. 1996; Layman 1999; White 2003; Brewer and Stonecash 2006). This literature shows that two types of political issues tend to dominate our political discourse: value-laden issues and cultural identity questions. Rather than consensus ends such as an agreed-upon vision of prosperity or national security, the issues at the heart of American political divisions tend to invoke clear value conflicts: redistribution of wealth, foreign interventions, civil liberties, abortion, gay rights, etc. More subtly, cultural questions—which occupy a great deal of electoral politics—are not just value-laden but entail expressions of identity. For instance, illegal immigration and related questions regarding bilingual education center on expressions of national identity versus the broader claims of a multicultural society. Gun control is another cultural issue that is often mistaken as policy-centered. Gun politics are not simply about whether allowing or banning gun ownership will lead to more security (competing means to a consensus end). On the one hand the issue is about the acceptance or dismissal of a fundamental right; on the other, less-recognized hand, is a question of cultural identity for citizens who grew up in gun culture against those from urban and coastal America who did not. For most citizens, their position on guns is first a cultural statement, second an agreement or disagreement with a certain view of

rights, and only last, if at all, an empirical assessment of which approach will lead to security, for which there is little and conflicting evidence.

The importance of cultural politics suggests that an important segment of political participation is fundamentally symbolic. Citizens do not need to believe that they can influence policy to engage in politics. Purely non-instrumental, expressive politics are no less influential in elections, and can create boundaries for politicians. This is especially the case when certain values are held to be absolute or sacred (see Tetlock 2000 and 2003; Marietta 2008 and 2009). Protected values, which are seen as non-instrumental, non-consequentialist, and non-negotiable, may have disproportionate influence on political engagement and on constraining politicians from crossing these boundaries.

That is the essence of what value representation establishes: a bounded area within which elites can negotiate policy means. The requirements of value representation are that (1) voters hold well-established core political values, (2) those values constrain elections, (3) elected representatives are guided by these values in constructing and approving policy, and that (4) the voting public will punish leaders who violate their value boundaries.

The first requirement seems well demonstrated by both qualitative and quantitative studies of the mass public. What stands out most about American belief systems is that they are not constrained by ideology, but are characterized by stable normative predispositions toward competing social ends. These values constrain political judgments, especially electoral choices, thereby meeting the second requirement. Citizens—even unsophisticated ones—*are* adept at choosing the electoral candidate who represents their value system most closely (Marietta and Barker 2007). Thus, citizens ensure that those values will guide policy, both because representatives hold similar personal values to the electoral majority, and because they will fear offending those voters when tempted to stray from them. In this way, representatives will make similar decisions to what the electorate would have made if they were more informed.

The argument that value congruence leads to an important form of representation may seem optimistic to those who emphasize the autonomy of congressmen or presidents between election campaigns. Candidates might espouse certain values in public but be persuaded by interest groups to advocate others in policy formation. This no doubt occurs in some circumstances, but is limited by the desire for re-election and the rational incentives to stay within the bounds of the public's

tolerance. David Mayhew's view of congressional representation relies similarly on the fear of electoral reprisal regardless of the actual probability of it occurring (Mayhew 1974). As Robert Dahl (1956, 132) phrased it, "politicians subject to elections must operate within the limits set both by their own values, as indoctrinated members of society, and by the expectations about what policies they can adopt and still be re-elected."

Another objection is that political values will not necessarily be translated into policies that actually uphold them. While many policies will have an influence in the desired direction (as well as unintended consequences in an unknown direction), errors about policy effects will occur. But this objection as a whole raises the question of the meaning of a policy. One could argue that the *real meaning* of any choice among competing policy options is the actual effect of that policy, such that policy errors counteract value representation. But that is not the same thing as the *political* or *representative meaning* of the same policy. The public has no real understanding of the precise future effect of many government actions. Perhaps more importantly, elites are in the same position, even though they often believe otherwise. Even experts who study the theory and evidence of policy questions often reach contradictory conclusions, and we should always bear in mind that expert judgment is consistently overrated (Tetlock 2005). Even after observing conditions months or years after a policy was enacted, we will often never really know what the effect of a specific policy was. For these reasons we can know the perceived or intended value meaning of a proposed policy more accurately than the real-world effect of the same policy. The real effect *cannot* be politically represented with any accuracy, given our lack of knowledge about it. The only thing that can be represented is the value-laden intention. Value intentions may not always be borne out in terms of the actual effects of taking or not taking a specific government action that is believed to promote a given value. But that failure is of social science, not of representation. The people got the attempt they desired; even if their dice roll fails, representation still succeeds.

Value Representation and Deliberation

Value representation has broad and negative implications for the prospect of deliberative democracy. In the view of Jürgen Habermas and his

followers, democratic legitimacy requires collective discussion based on the "discourse principle"—that decisions should be made only if all affected by the decision would agree.[5] This ideal requires that no concerned citizen be excluded, and no power relation distort the discussion. Under these circumstances the governing factor is in Habermas's phrase, "the forceless force of the better argument" (Habermas 1984). Good arguments, not coercion, are the ultimate source of deliberative-democratic legitimacy, such that what is legitimate is only _what is deliberated to consensus by the people collectively_.[6]

In this view, deliberation leads to consensus, which leads to legitimacy. However, the greater the degree to which politics center around conflictual rather than consensus ends, the less deliberation will lead to consensus and the more it will reveal entrenched antagonisms (see Mutz 2006). The Achilles' heel of deliberative theory is sincere value conflict. Only under conditions of broadly shared ends does deliberation lead to the recognition of these shared values, which are therefore more legitimate. Hence if the Murakami thesis is correct and, at bottom, members of the public usually share a consensus over ends and differ only over which policies will best achieve them, the prospects for deliberation increase. However, the more politics revolves around divisive ends themselves, the less chance there is for legitimacy to be achieved and the more deliberative democracy is hamstrung from the outset.

Value Representation and Elections

Value representation may not be accurate in every election, especially if a campaign is dominated by a single event, or is characterized by systematic misleading during the campaign, or is profoundly retrospective following a failed administration. Conditions that distort the translation of candidates' positions into their significance for voters' value systems will disrupt value representation from being achieved in regard to specific elections or policies. But these circumstances are likely to be unusual and corrected in future elections. A small shift in emphasis among the public's value priorities may translate through elections into larger shifts in choices among ideological elites. But these elites must govern within the public's value boundaries. The electoral victory of one value set over another allows our leadership to enact a range of policies in line with those value predispositions. But suggested policies that go too far will

begin to activate public opposition, and other political actors will be emboldened against the policy, even one advocated by a popular president. In specific cases, politicians may be able to exceed the public's value boundaries by framing their rhetoric to appear otherwise. In this sense, the bounds of value representation may be flexible depending on the skill of risk-taking politicians, but there are boundaries nonetheless. The public's inability to understand and translate all government actions does not lead to state autonomy when a partial translation sets effective limits.

So far I have been arguing that elections establish a form of representation regarding our salient conflictual values. Another, perhaps more important, aspect of value representation centers on our consensus values. In regard to several value dimensions, Americans seem to display a long-term consensus on an acceptable value range, which is narrower than the ideologically informed spectrum of political elites (see McCloskey and Zaller 1984). Regardless of which group of elites gains office, it cannot exceed this core set of values by very much without anticipating retribution from an activated electorate. This establishes a brake on the broader ideological ambitions of elite politicians. In this sense, a scheme of value representation provides not only short-term representation reflecting shifts in public values or in the current salience of particular value priorities, but also a long-term form of representation reflecting the limits of our consensus set of values.

Value Representation and State Autonomy

If value representation applies only to policies formulated by elected officials, it may fail to account for policies made by the expansive regulatory bureaucracy. Hence the DeCanio thesis: The paradox that democratically legitimated governments may regularly do things of which voters would not approve, simply because voters cannot know about more than a fraction of the things that huge bureaucracies do.

The DeCanio thesis, like the Murakami thesis, is empirical and does not necessarily delegitimize modern democracy in normative terms: The bureaucratic elements of the modern state are not meant to be representative or responsive in the same fashion as elected officials are. Bureaucratic representation is at best indirect, through the elected officials who appoint agency heads and who have oversight authority

over the policy outputs. The bureaucracy that produces those outputs, however, is *designed* to be staffed by professionals who are insulated from changes in political regimes. The political aspect of regulation is mostly a question of whether we do or do not regulate (a value choice made by the public); the exact form of the regulation is left to either elites in Congress or to the more specialized ones in the bureaucracy. The politics of regulation focus on the *establishment* of regulation rather than its *content*; the political question is mostly *whether* to tinker with a particular aspect of the economy rather than exactly *how* to tinker with the economy. So the core question is again one of values: do we uphold individualism, free markets, and a less intrusive state, or the goals of egalitarianism, redistribution, and fair access to education and markets?

The very idea of policy representation in the regulatory state would have to assume that there is something approaching real knowledge of the future effects of policy. Once we take into account that most members of the public do not have views about the efficacy of competing regulations and that, even if they did, they would not be any more accurate than those of alleged experts (such that we should necessarily value public input on these matters), then we come to the conclusion that viable representation centers on the perceived meaning of a decision to regulate or not regulate. It is a question of values, even in regard to the regulatory state.

Value Representation and Policy Feedback

The final requirement for value representation is that the voting public can take notice or be alerted when their value boundaries are violated, such that politicians will fear crossing those lines. An awareness of public ignorance, however, might prompt the rejoinder that the voting public may not be aware enough to know if their value boundaries have been violated by a specific action, and therefore cannot set effective policy limits. This objection would ignore the asymmetry in translating from policy to values, rather than from values to policy. It is not incumbent on citizens to translate their values into the appropriate policies if they are to be represented; they must only be able to translate proposed or enacted policies into the values they represent. Even a clear value system requires the addition of very specialized political knowledge if a voter were to try to come up with a value–appropriate policy. But one may be able to tell

the value meaning of an offered policy with much less knowledge. This is analogous to the process of translation while learning a language. In the early stages of language acquisition, it is much simpler to translate a sentence spoken in the new language than to take a sentence in one's native language and speak it in the new one. It does not take much knowledge to conclude that a specific foreign policy represents militarism or pacifism, or that it promotes isolationism or foreign intervention. Does it invoke internationalism by going to the U.N., or nationalism by going at it alone?[7] In economic policy, priorities toward individualism or egalitarianism are equally easy to discern. While a more egalitarian citizen will not necessarily know which policy to suggest, once one is suggested, his value priorities allow him to gain a sense of whether it is acceptable. The same is true in regard to values such as secularism, patriotism, tolerance, and tradition, on which Americans strenuously disagree.

This presents a different take on the feedback problem endemic to complex political situations. The most understandable (translatable) kind of evidence for the mass public is, in the example from Schumpeter invoked by Friedman (2005, xxix), the taste of a bad cigarette or other consumer choices. The least understandable are the real-world effects of a policy change regarding the economy or national security. But in between these two extremes are the value implications of a public-policy change, which are more understandable than complex policy effects. Value representation treats policies as more akin to consumer goods than capital goods. They are ends in themselves, embodying discernable conflicting values, rather than means to the end of achieving shared values. As such, their intent can be understood by citizens almost as easily and accurately as consumers evaluate the quality of the products they buy.

The relative ease of reverse translation is aided by the negativity bias of citizen politics. It is much simpler to know what you are against than to know what you should be for. Political engagement is driven more by what we don't like than by what we prefer, more by what we can't stand than by what we would like to see. For value representation to be viable, it is only necessary that citizens notice whether a policy's value implications exceed the boundaries of what is tolerable. The negativity bias aids in this process. It also explains the central focus of many political commentators on expressing policies in terms of values and violated boundaries.

Value representation suggests that public policy is not policy set by the public; it is policy regarding the public, set by elites within the value bounds established by the public—just as consumer goods are not created by consumers, but by businesses operating within the boundaries of consumer desire. In evaluating the form of representation achieved in this process, we can focus on means or ends, on policy or values. The focus on policy congruence as the core of democratic politics leads scholars to argue that modern mass democracy fails. We know that the public is not politically knowledgeable or even aware. But we also know that the public holds belief systems in which values play a central role. This constitutes an answer to concerns about citizen competence, both empirically and normatively.

NOTES

1. "[T]here is a difference between the articulated, differentiated, well-developed political arguments put forward by informed and conscious Marxists or Fascists or liberal democrats on the one hand, and the loosely structured, unreflective statements of the common men of Eastport. . . . I distinguish between the 'forensic' ideologies of the conscious ideologist and the 'latent' ideologies of the common man" (Lane 1962, 16). Values can be understood most simply as core normative predispositions, what Donald Kinder (1983, 406) describes as "general and enduring standards." Examples include individualism, communitarianism, secularism, or religiosity. An ideology, on the other hand, entails a specific constellation of values and other beliefs that organize a coherent political program. In the United States this most often falls along the liberal–conservative continuum, although it includes other ideologies such as libertarianism or populism. Important facets of the distinction between values and ideologies include their stability, level of generality, level of consciousness, and prevalence within the general population. An excellent full explication of the distinctions can be found in Rohan 2000.
2. As Pitkin (1967, 237) defines it, "representation means the making present of something that is nonetheless absent." The debated question is what that thing must be, whether the demographic characteristics, policy preferences, or political values of constituents. An elected politician might be representative in these or other ways, but "from the 'standing for' interpretation, he may represent by embodying the values of a society" (ibid., 117).
3. The approach to citizen competence grounded in cognitive psychology argues that the public can make up for its deficits through various forms of heuristics, or "judgmental shortcuts, efficient ways to organize and simplify political choices, efficient in the double sense of requiring relatively little information to execute, yet yielding dependable answers even to complex problems of choice" (Sniderman et al. 1991, 19; see also Popkin 1991 and Lupia 1994 among others).

4. Friedman (2007, 216) stipulates that "as a practical matter, therefore, measures intended to achieve a certain end will be treated as if they were ends in themselves." Our difference lies in the interpretation of this psychology: Friedman suggests that the transmutation of policy disputes into principled divisions is due to the public's inability to process the complex arguments on either side of means disputes, and therefore does not get at the heart of what is going on, while I see it as more revealing than illusory.

5. "The only regulations and ways of acting that can claim legitimacy are those to which all who are possibly affected could assent as participants in rational discourse. In light of this 'discourse principle' citizens test which rights they should mutually accord one another" (Habermas 1996, 458).

6. Seyla Benhabib (1996, 67) identifies three public goods that "complex modern democratic societies since the Second World War face the task of securing," the first of which is legitimacy (the others are economic welfare and collective identity). The only viable method of gaining this political good, she contends, is deliberation. Habermas (1996, 458), too, defines deliberation as the "democratic procedure that lends legitimating force to lawmaking under conditions of social and ideological pluralism." One way of explaining the connection between deliberation and legitimacy, as well as the origins of deliberative theory, is the post-war European concern about the historical legitimacy of basic institutions that had allowed and then had been dominated by fascism and Nazism. Fascist and Nazi governments were delegitimized in the eyes of their people (as were the communist governments of the Soviet Bloc in later decades), so a new, extra-historical source of legitimacy seemed to be required. American politics, on the other hand, is grounded in a reverence for the past, in the form of the Founding. Contrary to Habermas's assertion that we "no longer legitimate maxims, practices, and rules of action simply by calling attention to the contexts in which they were handed down" (ibid., 97), this is precisely what Americans do (and what American constitutional law does). Legitimacy in the sense of public certainty about the form and justification of political institutions is not an American problem; that Habermas is a member of the postwar German generation that faced that problem is not a coincidence.

7. To be clear, most citizens do not employ terms such as isolationism or interventionism to describe their values. They do hold value preferences along these dimensions, but employ more common-language phrases to describe the same concepts.

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