III REPRESENTATIONAL BEHAVIOR

Representational behavior refers to that aspect of legislative conduct that is studied for the nature, extent, and basis of its correspondence with constituency opinions. Representatives are assumed to differ in the extent to which they reflect their constituents' opinions in their legislative activities, most notably in their decision making. The modern student of representational behavior is interested in (1) determining the extent of agreement between constituency opinion and legislative behavior on various issues, (2) accounting for differences observed in the relationships between representatives and their constituencies, and (3) specifying the effect of different representative-constituency relationships upon public policy formation.

The study of the representational behavior of individual legislators is particularly important in political systems where party voting is not essential for governmental stability. In a parliamentary system featuring well-disciplined parties and slim majorities, most notably the modern British Parliament, individual representatives are subject to restraints on their voting behavior that are unknown in other legislative bodies, such as the United States Congress, where members are relatively free to vote their opinions or to respond to political forces other than the party leadership. Although eighteenth-century Britain can be credited with the birth of interest in representative-constituency relationships, the United States has produced the most extensive research on the topic. In Britain, within the last century, the motivations for research on representational behavior apparently decreased as party voting increased in parliament.

Development of interest. The study of representational behavior and representative-constituency relationships assumed importance with the development of representative democratic government. Democratic theory held that the general public ought to have some participation in governmental policy making so that the government would do what the people wanted it to do (or at least did not do what they did not want). All modern democracies eventually developed some form of representative government, which institutionalized popular participation in governmental policy making.
through popular election of representatives empowered to formulate governmental policy. The establishment of a popularly elected legislative body did not, however, insure that governmental policy would follow public opinion. Once elected, the representatives might or might not satisfy popular desires in formulating public policy.

Viewed strictly from the standpoint of democratic theory, it was undesirable for representatives to act contrary to public opinion. But at the same time, it was obvious that complete reliance upon public opinion in governmental policy making was also likely to have undesirable consequences. The voters' ignorance or misunderstanding of the facts involved in the issues, their inclinations toward selfishness in promoting their own interests, and their tendencies toward hasty and ill-considered actions were cited as factors that would lead to unwise or unjust governmental policies if the representatives were merely to act in accordance with their constituents' wishes.

On one hand, then, both abstract requirements of democratic theory and practical consequences of making representatives directly accountable to the people urged a close correspondence between constituency opinion and legislative behavior. On the other hand, both abstract notions of desirable government and practical necessities of rational decision making argued against a close correspondence between them. The conflict between these considerations was of concern to scholars who sought to evaluate the operation of representative government. This conflict provided the initial interest in the study of representational behavior.

Those who were interested primarily in evaluating the operation of representative government sought to determine the proper relationship between the representative and his constituency. Later students who were less interested in the evaluative aspects of political science were also less concerned with determining the "proper" relationship between the representative and his constituency. They sought instead to clarify types of relationships, discover the factors associated with different relationships, and predict the probable consequences of different relationships for public policy.

Early approaches. Edmund Burke's defense of his voting record in his classic "Speech to the Electors of Bristol" in 1774 set forth a conception of the proper role of the representative as one who ought to respect his constituents' opinions, who ought to prefer their interests above his own, but who ought not to sacrifice his unbiased opinions in deciding for the good of the whole nation (quoted in de Grazia 1951, p. 38) [see Burke]. Burke's often quoted statement most certainly influenced the subsequent study of representative-constituency relationships. Inquiry into the topic commonly raised the general question to which Burke addressed himself: What ought to be the relationship of the representative to his constituency? This question elicited normative prescriptions but did not invite empirical inquiry, and the literature that developed was characterized by opinions and arguments concerning the proper role of the representative. In general, extreme democrats (e.g., the Levellers of seventeenth-century England and the "direct democrats" in the early twentieth-century United States) insisted that the representative ought to obey the wishes of his constituents, while those less enamored with the unqualified application of democratic principles argued that better legislation would result if the representative relied mainly on his own judgment when deciding upon legislation.

Interwoven with the question of whether the representative ought to obey the wishes of his constituents or vote according to his own judgment was another question: Ought the representative to be guided in his decisions by the welfare of his constituency or the welfare of the state as a whole? The logical independence of these questions was not always recognized in the polemics concerning the proper role of the representative. The distinction between the two questions has recently been acknowledged and labeled as a difference between the "style" and the "focus" of representation (Wahlke et al. 1962, p. 269).

The style of representation refers to the particular criterion of judgment the representative ought to use in deciding on legislative issues. The basic argument over the proper style of representation was whether the representative ought to behave as a "trustee" and arrive at decisions either on the basis of his own sense of right and wrong or on his personal evaluation of the facts or whether he ought to behave as a "delegate" and disregard his personal opinions while executing those of his constituents. (It should be noted that the trustee-delegate terminology is not standard in the literature. Some writers have reversed the application of the terms or substituted other labels, such as "agent" or "ambassador," for those given here.)

The focus of representation refers to the particular group of persons whose welfare the representative ought to consider in deciding on legislative issues. The basic argument over the focus of representation was whether the representative
ought to be "district-oriented" and consider primarily the welfare of his constituents or whether he ought to be "nation-oriented" and consider the welfare of the nation as a whole.

Argument over the normative question of how the representative ought to act characterized the literature on representative–constituency relationships from the second half of the eighteenth century to the middle of the twentieth century. Like many other "ought" questions in political science, the question of the proper role of the representative defied definitive answers. The answer to this question involved more than reasoned appeals to value positions concerning what constituted good government. Vital information was lacking on empirical aspects of representative–constituency relationships, such as the nature and extent of the constituents' knowledge of legislative issues, the ways by which the constituents' opinions on issues were communicated to the representative, the correspondence between his perceptions of constituents' opinions and their actual opinions, the politics of his district, and so forth. It became obvious that detailed knowledge of these and other factors was not only important in its own right but was also essential for those who remained interested in the classic normative question.

Recent developments. Modern research in representational behavior has been characterized by its concern for empirical questions, but research to date has been handicapped by the unavailability of certain behavioral and psychological data required for an adequate understanding of the subject. In order to determine the faithfulness with which representatives represent their constituents' wishes, for example, data are needed both on the behavior of incumbents and on the opinions of their constituents. In general, relevant data on the representatives' behavior has been more accessible than matching data on their constituents' opinions.

Research on representational behavior has been aided by the ready availability of public information about important aspects of the incumbents' behavior, such as votes cast on the floor and sponsorship of bills. Information on other legislative activities, such as speaking on proposed bills, may also be found in published sources or observed directly. Behavior in committee meetings, party conferences, or outside the legislature proper is less easily learned but may be determined through interviews with representatives or other participants in the political process. Despite the wide variety of legislative activities that could have relevance for the disposition of public issues on which constituents have opinions, studies have generally relied solely on the representative's floor votes for the data on his side of the relationship. Although some doubts have been raised concerning the wisdom of relying on the recorded floor vote as the sole indicator of the representative's behavior, there seems to be little question that floor votes do constitute important data. In legislative bodies that feature strong party voting, however, some aspects of a representative's activities other than his floor votes would probably be more suitable for research.

The overriding research problem has not been obtaining data on representatives' behavior but on constituents' opinions. The sample survey is the most suitable research technique yet developed for obtaining reliable information about the distribution of personal opinions among populations. An appropriately drawn sample of about 2,000 respondents furnishes an adequate basis for making confident statements about the distribution of voters' opinions in the United States. But the science of probability sampling is such that a sample of practically the same size is needed to make statements at a similar level of confidence about a population of only 400,000—about the size of the average congressman's constituency in the United States. Because careful sample surveys are expensive to conduct and complex to administer, survey techniques until very recently have not been used at all for systematic research in representational behavior.

A pioneering effort was undertaken in 1958 by the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center, which designed its national sample of the United States electorate in a manner that permitted limited analysis of constituency opinions in about one hundred congressional districts (Stokes & Miller 1962). That effort opened the door for a genuine breakthrough in the study of representational behavior, enabling the first direct comparisons to be made between representatives' behavior and their constituents' opinions (Miller & Stokes 1963). Much additional work remains to be done with this approach, however, before firm generalizations can be made concerning the interesting empirical questions of representative–constituency relationships. It is unlikely that these generalizations will soon be formulated, for cost and complexity factors involved in sampling a number of constituencies still obstruct the development and application of this methodological approach.

Without the use of sample survey methods, students of representational behavior have conducted their research by classifying constituencies according to social characteristics on which census-type data were available (such as occupation, per cent
urban, per cent native-born, and so on) and then correlating these characteristics with the voting positions of their representatives. In some cases, researchers have attributed opinions to the inhabitants of certain districts on the basis of their social composition: constituents in working-class districts were said to favor unemployment guarantees, those in farming districts were said to favor agricultural subsidies, and so forth. In other cases, this somewhat risky imputation of opinions has been avoided, and researchers have simply examined similarities and differences in the voting patterns of representatives from various types of districts. A common refinement of such research involved introducing the variable of party competition in the district and analyzing legislators' votes according to the "safe" or "doubtful" nature of their constituencies as determined by past election returns.

Studies of roll call voting in the United States Congress and in American state legislatures have disclosed tendencies for representatives from different types of districts to vote on certain measures in accordance with presumed or imputed interests of their constituencies. The strength of these tendencies appears to increase with an increase in homogeneity of the social composition of the district. Those representing districts composed almost entirely of working-class people, for example, tend to give more support to legislation establishing unemployment guarantees than those representing districts dominated by working-class people but with substantial white-collar elements. Nevertheless, constituency characteristics have been shown to account for only a part of voting behavior in American legislatures. The representatives' party affiliations generally stand out as the most pervasive influence on voting alignments, despite the undisciplined nature of American parties. The importance of party affiliation is so clearly recognized that researchers often attempt to measure constituency influences on voting by examining the instances when representatives abandon the party position. When the party's position on an issue coincides with the position assumed to be favored by the constituency, the representative's vote is unlikely to be contradictory. When the party's position and the assumed constituency position are in conflict, his vote is less predictable. There is some evidence to indicate that a representative will tend to favor the presumed interest of the constituency in case of such conflict if he comes from a "doubtful" rather than a "safe" district.

Students of representational behavior who have made use of census-type data on constituency characteristics in lieu of sample survey data on constituents' opinions have produced these and other suggestive findings. But they have not been able to answer some of the most important empirical questions because they have lacked reliable knowledge about the nature and distribution of constituency opinions.

In the absence of survey information about constituents' preferences, the exact impact of constituency opinions on representational behavior cannot be measured. Not only is the researcher unable to establish the extent to which the legislator's behavior conforms to constituency opinions, but he is also unable to determine how closely the representative's personal attitudes and perceptions match these opinions.

Research needs. The two basic types of data required for research in representational behavior are, for reasons mentioned above, data on constituency opinions and data on representatives' behavior. At least four other categories of information, which remain to be discussed, are especially important for the study of representational behavior. Data are needed on representatives' personal attitudes toward policy issues, the motivational bases of their behavior, their perceptions of their constituencies, and representative-constituency communications. Each of the last four categories will be discussed in turn.

Representatives' personal attitudes. In general, students of legislative behavior have shown that a representative's voting record reflects, to some extent, his personal attitudes as determined by independent attitude tests. Representatives whose voting behavior suggests that they are especially attuned to the opinions of their constituents may in fact exert little or no effort to ascertain district opinions and may merely vote according to their own personal attitudes. Their votes, however, may conform closely to their constituencies' positions simply because they hold the same basic attitudes and values as their constituents. The mechanics of representation operating in this situation are quite different from those involved when a close correspondence between constituency opinions and voting behavior exists regardless of the representative's personal attitudes toward the issues. Shifts in constituency opinions over time are more likely to be reflected in the representative's behavior when he is consciously responsive to those opinions. In order to assess the operation of constituency control over a representative's behavior, it is necessary to know something of his personal attitudes toward the issues on which he votes.

Motivational bases. In order to understand why a representative acts in a given way, it is necessary
to give explicit attention to the motivational forces guiding his behavior. Scattered attention has been given to motivational factors in case studies of legislative decisions, but this obviously important variable has been largely ignored in more comprehensive studies of legislative behavior. Undertaking motivational explanations of human behavior may appear to be hopelessly complex. But complexity can be avoided and the understanding of representational behavior can be helped considerably if some simple motivational concepts are introduced into the analysis. Three different motivational bases seem to be particularly relevant to the study of representational behavior. The representative's behavior might be guided by a desire to (1) express his own personal attitudes toward the legislation before the chamber, (2) fulfill his personal conception of what the proper representative ought to do (e.g., act as a delegate or a trustee), or (3) be re-elected to office at the next election. Probably no representative's behavior is completely guided by any one of these three motivational bases, and more than one base may underlie any given act. There undoubtedly are other important motivational bases. The point is, however, that the study of representational behavior will remain incomplete unless explicit attention is given to the collection and analysis of data relevant to the motivational bases of political conduct.

Representatives' perceptions of the constituency. A person's reactions to a situation depend on how he perceives it, and his perceptions do not necessarily accord with reality. It is important to determine the accuracy of the representative's perceptions of his constituents' opinions on various policy matters. The representative who consciously tries to vote in accordance with his constituents' opinions, but who frequently misreads them, may seem to be ignoring his district when in fact his behavior is due to a failure in communication instead of a lack of concern for constituency opinions.

It is also important to gather information on the representative's perceptions of the important political forces in his district, which can affect his chances for renomination or re-election. These forces may exert themselves at either stage, depending on the structure of politics in the district. They may, for example, be important at the nomination stage, where the official party endorsement is acquired. In some cases, the representative himself may control his own renomination through his domination of the district party organization. (This situation is not uncommon in the United States but perhaps occurs less frequently in countries with stronger national parties.) In other cases, effective control at the nomination stage may lie with a small group of party leaders, whom the incumbent must court in order to be renominated. Finally, where the nomination is won through elections at a party primary or in conventions, there is the possibility that a large number of party workers or rank-and-file voters may be the force to be courted.

The importance of the general election stage as an obstacle to re-election depends on the tendencies toward party voting in the district. In districts that are safe for one party, failure to be renominated constitutes the only real threat to re-election. In competitive districts, the key to victory may involve cultivating support among various groups of voters. A candidate is not likely to be unaware of these obvious political facts, but because of his closeness to the situation or because of his anxiety over re-election, he may perceive them somewhat differently than an outside observer.

Data on the representative's perceptions of the district's politics are important for understanding his reactions to constituency-based demands, especially if he is strongly motivated by a desire for re-election. Data on the legislator's perceptions of his constituents' opinions have broad utility for the study of representational behavior but are especially important if the representative is strongly motivated to do what his constituents want, for then his behavior depends on how he perceives those wants.

Representative–constituency communications. The representative's perceptions of his constituency are affected by the content of the messages he receives and by the manner of their transmission. A useful distinction can be made between representative-initiated and constituency-initiated communications. The representative may himself try to determine the opinions of his constituents by examining the local newspapers, conducting his own public opinion polls, or circulating among the voters in his district. The amount of effort he expends in initiating communications with his constituents, the types of communication activities employed, and the specific constituents or constituency groups contacted can be expected to depend on the motivational basis of the representative's behavior and on his various constituency perceptions.

 Constituents may also initiate communications to their representatives by such means as writing letters, sending telegrams, and making personal visits. Studies have shown that the opinions conveyed through various forms of constituency-initiated communications are unlikely to be accurate reflections of the distribution of constituency opinions due to the operation of distorting influ-
theses. For example, representatives are more likely to hear from those who agree with them than from those who disagree, and letters are more likely to be written in opposition to proposals than in support of them. Those who do initiate communications also tend to rank higher in education, income, political involvement, and occupational status than those who do not.

Sources of distortion are also present in representative-initiated communications. Legislators tend to communicate more with those who agree with their views, who are more highly involved in politics, and who share the same party identification. Although faithful disclosure of constituency opinions can be produced by professional polling or survey research organizations, few representatives can afford such expensive means of acquiring this information. Lacking essential technical and organizational resources of professional research firms, those who engage in opinion polling seldom develop accurate knowledge of constituency opinions because of sampling difficulties or biased wording of questions. The fact is that some representatives are relatively unconcerned about the accuracy of their polling procedures, for they frequently conduct polls for purposes of public relations with little intention of studying the findings for decision-making purposes.

Whether representatives poll their constituents for public relations or for decision-making purposes probably depends, once again, on their perceptions of the constituency and on their motivational basis of behavior. A delegate-styled representative, who is motivated primarily by a desire to perform his representational role by voting the way his constituents want, would probably strive for greater accuracy in polling and give more consideration to poll findings than would, for example, a trustee or a representative from a safe district whose chances for renomination are controlled by a group of party leaders. But regardless of the motivational bases of the representative's behavior, detailed information concerning the persons, groups, messages, and media involved in communications constitutes another important category of data for the study of representational behavior.

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[See also Interest groups; Legislation; Lobbying. Other relevant material may be found in Decision making; Political behavior; Political recruitment and careers.]

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REPRESSION
See Defense mechanisms; Psychoanalysis.

REPRISALS
See Sanctions, international.

REPRODUCTION, HUMAN
See Fertility; Fertility control; Population.

REPUBLICANISM
See Democracy; Monarchy.

RESALE PRICE MAINTENANCE

In the practice of resale price maintenance the manufacturer determines and enforces the price at which distributors resell his product. Hence, resale price maintenance is also known as vertical price fixing, as price protection, or as the practice of imposed prices. The term "fair trade" is an American euphemism. A manufacturer may set resale prices for either or both the wholesale and retail stages of distribution, and the prices may be fixed prices or minimum prices.

The practice is confined largely to branded goods but is also found in unbranded products such as various building materials (for example, in the United Kingdom). Among branded goods, resale price maintenance is or has been associated with drugs, proprietary medicines and toilet preparations, books and magazines, phonograph records, domestic electrical appliances, furniture, motor vehicles, tobacco products, liquor, confectionery,