

The Movers and the Shirkers

*Representatives and Ideologues
in the Senate*

Eric M. Uslaner

Ann Arbor

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To Avery, who, like any nine-year-old, tries to get away with as much as he can, but whose fundamental loyalty is never in doubt.

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Preface

Some time around 1982 my friend and colleague Joe Oppenheimer rushed into my office and handed me a paper to read. “It’s about Congress and a new way to measure personal ideology,” he said—or at least something pretty close to that. He asked for my comments. I had seen some similar work—especially Kalt 1981—and doubted that anything such as personal ideology exists. I read the manuscript, liked its boldness, but found it difficult to accept *any* argument that labeled Senators Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY) and Harrison “Pete” Williams (D-NJ) as conservatives or Strom Thurmond (R-SC) and John Stennis (D-MS) as liberals (Carson and Oppenheimer 1984, 174–75). It made little difference that these characterizations were “relative” to their constituents. I was *not* convinced. I was even more surprised when Joe told me some months later that the paper had been accepted at the *American Political Science Review*.

About the same time I discovered a similar approach, developed independently by Joseph A. Kalt and Mark Zupan (1984). Two more articles, one in the most prestigious political science journal and the other in the premier economics journal, did not change my mind. But they made me take the approach more seriously. When an entire literature developed using this methodology, attention must be paid. I decided to put aside my disbelief and at least feign agnosticism.

What bothered me about the personal-ideology literature? And how did I come to terms with it? I was never comfortable with the argument, derived from principal-agent models, that legislators who voted contrary to their constituents were “shirking” their responsibility to the voters. I had long admired those handful of Southern moderates and liberals who sacrificed their careers to the defenders of Jim Crow. Midwestern Progressives were also heroes, especially legislators such as George Norris

and Robert La Follette who stood up to the Republican leaders in the Senate. Yet, I could never accept the argument that these legislators hid their ideology as deep secrets from their constituencies. A La Follette or a Norris was a product of the Midwest and its distinctive political culture. Many Southerners who would be lambasted for their civil-rights stands nevertheless came from districts that appreciated federal economic programs and still embraced much of the Democratic party's ideology.

I was bothered by the attempt to divorce a legislator's personal ideology and constituency attitudes. I was also worried that the estimates of constituency preferences were inadequate. The largest component of constituency ideology is party (Carson and Oppenheimer 1984; Kalt and Zupan 1984). Yet, party is a trait of the senator, not the constituency. When you drop party from the models estimating constituency ideology, you lose much of the predictive power. (See chapter 2 for an elaboration of both themes.) What would happen if we took party out of constituency attitudes and reformulated the whole problem by presuming that party is central? Legislators respond to masses and elites within their parties, rather than to their statewide electorates? What would happen if you dropped the assumption that legislators' values and constituency preferences had to be independent? What would happen if we had better measures of public attitudes?

And what would happen if we could solve all three of these puzzles at the same time and that the answer to one led to the answer to the other two? This fourth question reverses the traditional order in which we first ask, as at Passover, why this study is different from all others. My intellectual puzzle about why there should be such a thing as personal ideology led me to question the use of party as an indicator of constituency opinion and of a demographic approach to estimating public opinion. Dick Fenno (1978) laid out the theoretical framework of multiple constituencies, emphasizing the roles of party followers and elites. This led me to posit that an equation including party as a component of party attitudes really was estimating the ideology of a legislator's fellow partisans. That was the key to part of the problem. Adding elite opinions to the representational mix was also central. And the availability of real data on public opinion solved two difficulties at once: I could get reliable data on the attitudes of a senator's geographic constituency, as Fenno called it, and the member's reelection constituency, presumed to be partisan supporters. Real public-opinion data solve the core theo-

retical problem as well. We no longer need to presume that legislators' ideology and constituency values are independent of each other.

This is the journey ahead. To show why legislators and constituents' views are more often in sync than opposed, I decided to attack headfirst. I went with the principal-agent model that sees legislators as shirkers to show that they rarely are—and those who do face electoral sanctions. By the time I got into the project I found that the approach, though flawed, had a compelling theoretical focus. It led me to seek my own way of estimating personal ideology, ultimately falling back on the same methodology that I criticized. But by the time I am through with it in this study, I have a much richer discourse and a measure of pure personal ideology that is far less impressive than the shirking literature would lead us to expect.

The critique of principal-agent models would not have been possible without the original data on which one of the classic studies is based. Mark Zupan graciously shared his data on Senate roll call behavior in 1977–78. And Gerald C. Wright provided the public-opinion data, generating state party attitudes for me from his database of CBS News/*New York Times* polls from 1976 to 1982. He also kindly shared the CBS survey of Senate incumbent and challenger ideology in 1982 (see chap. 5). The Honorable Bob Michel (R-IL), former minority leader of the United States House of Representatives, provided data of a different sort. He was most helpful in discussing how he sees a leader's obligations to president, party, and constituency—and did it in his typically gracious manner.

Along the way, I delivered papers from this project at the 1994 and 1995 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association and at the 1995 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association. My original goal was to publish a few papers and move on to other projects. The research program expanded way beyond my expectations, and the book overtook my plans to prepare a series of articles. Early on I did set out the methodology and the core theoretical framework in “If You Can't Please Everyone, Must You Only Please Yourself: Personal or Party Ideologies and Senate Roll Call Voting,” published in *Public Choice* in 1997. This article, in revised form, is much of chapter 2 and a bit of chapter 1.

I have amassed a large number of debts along the way. The Dirksen Center for Congressional Leadership and the General Research Board of the Graduate School of the University of Maryland–College Park

provided valuable support. I could not have done the study at all without the data provided by Mark Zupan and Gerald C. Wright. Throughout the project my colleagues Jim Gimpel, Mark Graber, Paul Herrnson, and (of course) Joe Oppenheimer provided detailed comments on the manuscript and a wonderful sounding board for my ideas.

Friends elsewhere were just as helpful, even if I could not bother them quite so regularly. Mike Munger read much of an early draft and all of a later one, saving me from errors large and small. Linda Fowler, John Lott, Lynda Powell, Wendy Schiller, and Charles Stewart read the manuscript; Bernard Grofman, David King, and Paul Quirk read much of it. All provided sage advice, sometimes help that was too good. John Kingdon, Jan Leighly, and Brian Roberts all provided useful comments as panel chairs or discussants at the meetings where I presented papers. I owe them all a lot — some less than others, since I have repaid them in kind — even as I could not always bring myself to take all of their advice. When I apportion both credit and blame, Jim Gimpel, Paul Herrnson, and Mike Munger go first. They each read several drafts, which surely must qualify as real torture. And a collection of people, collectively known as the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, provided some of the data that I use. They are not responsible for any claims that I make (or fail to make). Charles T. Myers at the University of Michigan Press helped guide this project to completion and publication.

Even more central was the love and support of Debbie and Avery, who endured long hours while I struggled with what seemed a Sisyphean project. Each time I thought I was close to being finished, I thought of another angle or reread a chapter and recognized that it was far too long and convoluted. I hope that I did not shirk my familial obligations too much.

Lies, Damn Lies, and Ideology

Earl Long, Huey's younger brother, was big on promises in his campaigns for governor of Louisiana. Once he pledged to a movie theater lobbyist that he would fight for repeal of a 2 percent tax on movie admissions. The lobbyist (and presumably the theater owners) became avid supporters of the Kingfish's brother. One of Earl's first actions after the election was to announce to his legislature that he opposed annulment of the levy. The lobbyist went to the governor, demanding to know what he should say to his clients. Earl Long replied, "I'll tell you what to tell them. Tell them I lied" (Liebling 1970, 41).

Senator Frank Graham (D-NC), who was appointed to a Senate vacancy in 1949 and defeated in a primary the next year, didn't lie. That led to electoral problems. Graham was accused of being too soft on civil rights, too far away from the center of gravity in North Carolina or its Democratic party. He denied the accusation in the campaign but admitted as much in his "Farewell Address" to the Senate on September 23, 1950: "I have run the risk of taking sides in the midst of events which could not wait for certificates of safety and conformity while freedom was embattled. . . . I took sides in the South and in the nation for the fairer consideration of Jews, Catholics, Negroes, and the foreign born" (quoted in Pleasants and Burns 1990, 277).

Are legislators who ignore or even flout constituency pressures knaves or knights?¹ Do they deserve our scorn or our praise? More commonly, we think of independent sorts as "profiles in courage," following the advice of the young John F. Kennedy (1957, 14) before he ever took his seat in the Senate: "[W]e must on occasion lead, inform, correct and sometimes even ignore constituent opinion if we are to exercise fully that judgment for which we were elected. But acting without selfish motive or

private bias, those who follow the dictates of an intelligent conscience are not aristocrats, demagogues, eccentrics, or callous politicians insensitive to the feelings of the public.”

Legislators who revel in turning their backs on the public and those who stand above the “whims” of the moment justify their positions on higher principles and charge others who heed the call of the constituency with baser motives. As Representative Frank E. Smith (D-MS) argued, “All members of Congress have a primary interest in being re-elected. Some members have no other interest. Their participation in decisions of great national import is dependent entirely upon the reaction they expect from their own district or state” (Smith 1964, 127). A member of the House interviewed by Fenno (1978, 160) heaped scorn on some colleagues.

All some House members are interested in is “the folks.” They think “the folks” are the second coming. They would no longer do anything do displeas the folks than they would fly. . . . I imagine if they get five letters on one side and five letters on the other, they die.

Nebraska Progressive senator George W. Norris (R), who reviled in flouting his party and his constituency too, appealed to a higher moral authority than the electorate: “In the end, the only worth-while pay in congressional services is that which comes from a satisfied conscience in the knowledge that you have done your duty as God gives you light, regardless of the effect it may have upon political fortunes” (Norris 1945, 198). And Edmund Burke, the English philosopher and legislator, rejected the notion that he was to represent the views of his Bristol constituents and dared the voters to punish him for his transgressions (which they did).² The House freshman class of the 104th Congress, the first controlled by Republicans in 40 years, saw itself as pledged to an ideological agenda, whatever the consequences. “We’re going to stand for principle. The consequences be damned,” said Rep. John Barden Shadegg (R-AZ). Rep. Charles Joseph Scarborough (R-FL) added: “50 to 55 of [the 73 GOP freshmen] don’t care if we get reelected if we fold on the budget” (both quoted in Gugliotta 1995, A10).

Since Burke, both theorists and empirical analysts of representation have followed his distinction between being a slave to one’s constituents and an independent thinker (either a knight or a knave). Legislators are

either “trustees” looking out for the public interest or “delegates” who heed the issue positions of their constituents (Eulau 1962; Davidson 1969). Some members split the difference, sometimes heeding constituents, at other times going their own way. They are “politicos.”

We presume that delegates are primarily interested in getting re-elected, while trustees are motivated by ideology. This distinction corresponds to alternative spatial models of candidate competition. The *Downsian* model is consistent with the demand that public officials be delegates. Voters cast ballots on the basis of issues. They insist that candidates faithfully reflect constituency positions. So candidates adopt the same positions, the preferred policy of the median voter. Since both candidates take the same stands, voters find little to choose from. They are consigned to using other factors, such as party identification or the performance of the incumbent administration, as voting cues (Downs 1957; Enelow and Hinich 1984).

The *ideological-equilibrium* model holds that voters care about issues but prefer candidates who take distinct positions. Voters worry that candidates who converge to the median voter’s ideal stand are opportunists. They prefer sincere candidates. Officeholders gain reputations for honesty by taking clear policy stands that they stick with over the years. If voters worry about risk, they might prefer a candidate they don’t agree with to a nominee whose position is unclear. At least the devil you know will be consistent. You know what you are getting (Glazer and Grofman 1989; Dougan and Munger 1989; Richardson and Munger 1990). Voters have policy preferences, so why shouldn’t candidates? In a world where both voters and candidates care about policies, office-seekers can do better by stressing their true ideals than by catering to the public’s whims (Wittman 1983). It is quite acceptable to be a trustee. Ideology and electoral success can go hand-in-hand.

This great debate between Downsian delegates and ideological-equilibrium models has shaped our understanding of representation in American politics. Are all politics local, as former Speaker Thomas P. “Tip” O’Neill, would tell fellow House members?³ Or, is politics mostly about national issues, as the former Speaker, Newt Gingrich, admonished his flock?

This great debate is misplaced. So is most of our thinking about representation. We picture legislators as making choices between their own values and those of their constituents. Yet, most politicians don’t have to choose between their own ideals and constituency preferences.

Voters usually elect public officials who are in tune with public beliefs. When legislators fail to reflect constituency views, we presume that they jump ship. Perhaps they believe that ideological stands can bring them votes; perhaps officials believe that they must remain true to their own ideals.

Looking at representation in terms of delegates and trustees makes four fundamental mistakes. First, it presumes that there are but two actors, voters and legislators, in the great game of politics. Second, it assumes that one side (voters) tells the other (elected officials) what to do. Third, it presumes that what one wants is often different from what the other prefers. Fourth, it posits that legislators who want to get reelected must present bland policy alternatives to the electorate. Each assumption is wrong.

I shall outline below a model of representation based on principal-agent theory in economics that views voters as management and elected officials as employees. Each has its own preferences and, as in real workplaces, they often come into conflict. Legislators prefer to be trustees, while voters want to compel them to be trustees. This sets up the problem of how to ensure compliance. What steps do the “bosses” have to take to get their “employees” to do their bidding?

Not so much, I argue. Most of the time legislators and their constituents share similar views on key questions of public policy. There is no problem of compliance when both sides want the same thing. But the political world is not a two-person game. Legislators have more than one constituency. Elected officials heed the calls of voters. But they don’t face an undifferentiated populace. They pay particular attention to their fellow partisans, in the electorate, in their party organizations, and in other elected bodies. When elected officials take positions that depart from those favored by their constituents, they are most likely responding to the preferences of their fellow partisans.

These claims rest on a very simple, but often overlooked, assumption: Legislative representation is not random. Liberal electorates elect liberal legislators. Conservative electorates choose conservative legislators. Moreover, liberal electorates choose Democrats and conservative constituencies vote for Republicans. Of course, there are exceptions, but they are just that: unusual cases. In constituencies that tilt leftward, Democratic activists are even more liberal than the rank and file. They put further pressure on elected officials to move in the direction of — and sometimes past — constituency opinion. The same dynamic holds on the

right for Republicans. When legislators go against public opinion, they are not simply behaving like trustees. They are responding to *different constituencies*, not just to their own whims. Principal-agent models miss the mark when they consider only one “principal.”

Even if they don’t make this mistake (and a few don’t), the principal-agent models miss the mark by treating legislator and constituency attitudes as if they were in conflict. Most often they aren’t. The big divide is not between legislators and constituents but between legislators *and* constituents in each party. Democrats and Republicans stand for different ideals. This is widely acknowledged for elected officials (Poole and Rosenthal 1984, 1997). Voters are also divided ideologically along partisan lines, though not as sharply as elites are. Legislators respond *more closely* to their partisan constituents and activists than to their state electorates. They can get away with this “misrepresentation” because statewide opinion is mostly a function of the attitudes of the dominant partisans. Massachusetts elects liberals such as Senator Edward M. Kennedy because its Democrats are progressive and *so is the statewide electorate*. The Democrats dominate Massachusetts because it is a liberal state.

Politicians don’t scatter to the winds when they hear a message based on issues, as a Downsian model would suggest. They are linked to their constituents by an *ideology*. A “belief system” or “ideology” is a pattern of intercorrelated positions across a set of issues (Converse 1964, 207). An ideology is a simplified way of viewing the world. It reflects a set of ethical prescriptions for how the world ought to work — or, as I shall argue later, a culture (Hinich and Munger 1994, 11–13). A highly constrained belief system *need* not be unidimensional. But the most straightforward ideology that is likely to be useful to both voters and candidates (as well as to developing a system of ethics) lies on one continuum, usually assumed to differentiate left from right (Converse 1964, 221). Ideologies become, as Downs (1957, chap. 3) himself argued, a short-cut for linking one’s own attitudes to a party affiliation. Simply put, they separate Democrats from Republicans. Converse had us believe that elites were polarized by consistent belief systems, but ordinary citizens aren’t. Achen (1975) showed that this isn’t true: Ordinary people have consistent belief systems, once we recognize the fuzziness of questions asked in surveys and the measurement error in administering polls.

Ideology isn’t the scourge of electoral politics, as in Downsian models and principal-agent theories. Instead, it is an electoral resource. Voters know what they are getting when they select a Democrat or a

Republican. Occasionally they might make a mistake and choose someone who is out of step ideologically with a party or a state. But most of the time this isn't a problem. Within limits, voters *want* ideological representation, and they use party affiliation as a cue to get it. Elected officials share the same values that their constituents espouse. Finding an elected official who consistently strays from public opinion should be a rarity.

Suppose we all woke up one day to find that chocolate ice cream is good for us. It helps *lower* cholesterol and makes us live *longer*. Downsians and principal-agent theorists (largely the same folks) would be no less surprised to find that moving to the left or right, as opposed to the center, helps a candidate win an election. What they believed to be an indulgence (either voting against the constituency or consuming a lot of ice cream) turns out to be the staff of life. Just as most doctors would be skeptical of the report on chocolate ice cream, most (though not all) spatial theorists would think twice before accepting the argument that ideology helps a candidate. Most doctors, even if they came to believe this new report, would urge us not to become chocoholics. They'd be right. Too much of a good thing can be harmful. And political advisors would do well to recommend ideology in moderation as well.

Elected officials face a dilemma under the ideological-equilibrium model. Voters prefer candidates who take distinctive positions. Elites, who know more about issues and care more about them than all but a handful of citizens (Converse 1966), will press officials to go further to the right or left. They are like the candy makers and grandmothers who keep advising: "Eat, eat!" Elected officials aren't in much danger of giving voters what they don't want. Instead, their cardinal sin may be giving them more of what they want than they can handle. That's when politicians get in trouble—for not knowing when to stop. The voters may decide to reign them in and put them on an ideological diet.

How far can elected officials go to the right or the left? Who sets the limits? In each state there is either a dominant ideology or roughly balanced competing ideals that determine the constraints. This dominant ideology is part of a state's political culture (Elazar 1972; cf. chap. 6). It stems from a state's history and the values of the different segments of the population. The Northeast is more liberal, the South and West more conservative, and the Midwest an ideological battleground. Where one value system predominates, elected officials are more constrained. The parties will be less polarized. The majority party will

reflect the dominant ideology best, and the minority party will be pressured to mimic the majority. Majority party legislators will feel “free” to go beyond the bounds of public opinion, but minority-party officials realize that their electoral success depends upon not seeming too out of touch with public attitudes. Mimicking the majority is the only way a minority party can be competitive. There is no guarantee that it will (or can) do so. If one party (or officeholder) so dominates a state’s politics, the opposition may become dispirited. Its candidates may go well beyond the bounds of acceptable values, and the party and its candidates will be doomed to long-term minority status (see chapter 5). In a state with a dominant ideology, either both parties will espouse it or only the majority will. In the first case, the parties need not offer me-too platforms, but the minority will be constrained as to how far from the existing consensus it can go. In the second instance, the minority will feel free to cast the consensus aside, but it will do so at its electoral risk.

In states without a dominant ideology, as in the Midwest (especially in states with moralistic cultures, as noted in chapter 6), the two parties will be more polarized. Each party will reflect the values of its stronger supporters, and elected officials will feel pressure to move toward activists in their own parties. A dominant ideology can set the limits for political actors. Without it, politics becomes more of a free-for-all between two parties that fight a real battle of ideas.

Who Is Represented?

The idea of “profiles in courage” suggests a lone wolf braying at political winds. So does much of our language of representation. A trustee is a person set apart from the constituency—often one who knows better. But politicians are hardly solitary agents. Even great moralists such as Norris and Smith—especially such legislators—did not go into battle alone. Nebraska Republican leaders tried to defeat Norris in the 1930 Republican primary and ultimately pushed him out of the party six years later (Norris 1945, chaps. 28, 34). Norris had little use for Nebraska Republicans or their leaders, whose victories “were obnoxious and detrimental to the public good” (Norris 1945, 371). Smith (1964, 280), who was gerrymandered out of his House seat in 1962 after urging moderation on civil rights, bemoaned the “disastrous mutation in Mississippi’s political character in the last forty years” that led state legislators to dismember his district.

Yet both legislators were creatures of their constituencies. For all of Smith's (justified) self-righteousness, he acknowledged that he was more than just a seer who stood out from the crowd. While he had to tread gently on his message of racial reconciliation, he had more leeway than other Southern moderates (Smith 1964, 246–47).

The fact that the largest town in my district was Greenville, the most urbane and progressive city in Mississippi, was an invaluable asset to me as a congressman. The business leadership of the community understood the role federal programs could play in the town's economic development. . . . Greenville was an oasis in the racial strife and obsession that smothered the rest of Mississippi.

Smith recognized that his independence reflected his overwhelmingly Democratic district. Norris was not a loner either. Nebraska had a long tradition of independence; it was one of Populist presidential candidate James B. Weaver's strongest states in 1892 and gave Progressive Robert M. La Follette 6 percent more of its vote than did the nation in 1924.

Even many of the freshmen Republicans of the 104th House admit that they are not pure profiles in courage. Rep. Mark Edward Souder (R-IN) maintained that “[Washington commentators] may think of us as extremists here, but none of us are extremists at home. For our constituents to acknowledge that we're extremists is to say either that we duped them or that we [the voters] are all extremists” (quoted in Gugliotta 1995, A10). It's not just on the right: Rep. Bernard Sanders (I-VT), the only self-proclaimed socialist in the House of Representatives, explained how someone with his beliefs could get elected to Congress: “It's not just me. Many hundreds and hundreds of people have been working for the same things I have. In Vermont, we have been doing third party politics for thirty years.”⁴

The view of representation as a battle between legislators and constituents misses something critical: context. Public officials don't stand naked before an undifferentiated mass public. Nor do they jump through ideological hoops. They are pushed — by their partisans, party activists, and fellow officeholders. Most legislators don't see constituencies as undifferentiated masses of voters: 60 percent of Kingdon's (1973, 33) congressional respondents see elites as a key component of constituency politics; legislators who view either elites (or both elites and voters)

as a key component of their constituencies are more likely to say that pressures from back home affect their roll call behavior.

Representation comes in concentric circles (Fenno 1978). What we consider to be *the* electorate is the most remote constituency. It acts as a check on members who stray too far from public attitudes. The other constituencies are a legislator's bases of support. They range from fellow partisans to other officeholders and party activists to close personal friends. As loyal supporters, they have a more direct effect on how a legislator behaves. As we move from fellow partisans to close personal friends, we see two related dynamics at work. First, successive groups care more about ideology. A legislator's party identifiers are less preoccupied with issues than party activists. Second, familiarity breeds likeness. Opposites don't attract each other in politics. The closer you are to a legislator's inner circle, the more likely you are to share his (her) ideology. If legislators stray from the ideological center of their constituents, they won't be able to count on their supporting constituencies to bring them back.

Candidates aren't free to adopt any policies they believe the electorate wants. To get a party's nomination, a potential office-seeker must gain the support of party activists. These devoted supporters of a party will push a candidate toward the party's preferred ideology, which will be more extreme than the mass public's (Aldrich 1983; 1995, chap. 6; Grofman 1993).⁵ Party activists monitor the behavior of incumbents, pushing Democrats more to the left and Republicans to the right. Both initially and once in office, this immoderate strategy will help candidates win primaries (Coleman 1971; G. Wright 1978a, 1978b). When candidates take distinctive positions, they energize their base—increasing turnout among party activists in the general election. This boost in participation might compensate for any votes lost from alienated voters in the center (Aldrich 1995, 191). Or it might not—and lead to a confrontation among the constituencies.

Multiple constituencies complicate the problem of representation. If you have many bosses, whom do you obey (cf. Denzau and Munger 1986)? The full electorate is the ultimate check on member behavior. But is an ideological mismatch between voters and officeholders misrepresentation? Or is it representation of someone else? When legislators pay more attention to their core supporters than to all voters, are they burrowing themselves into ideological holes at the expense of the public's ideology?

The central messages in the pages ahead are (1) legislators are creatures of their constituency; and (2) we need a broader view of representation. Fenno (1978) provides us with the key to the puzzle in his four-constituencies model. The full set of voters is the “geographic constituency.” It is most distant from the day-to-day life of the officeholder but has the ultimate check on how moderate or extreme legislators can choose to be. The other three blocs exert more ideological pressures on members. “Reelection constituencies” are the people who are *reliable* supporters at the ballot box. Much, though not all, of the time, fellow partisans in the electorate comprise the bulk of a member’s reelection constituency (Fenno 1978, 8). These reliable supporters not only produce the votes necessary to secure another term every second or sixth November (for the House or Senate, respectively) They also provide the bulk of a legislator’s base in primary elections. A legislator’s strongest supporters form the “primary constituency” (Fenno 1978, 18–24). Members call this bloc “my political base,” “my hard core,” and “my true believers.” They include, in Fenno’s characterization, the volunteers and financial contributors, and fellow elites (Fenno 1978, 18–19; cf. G. Wright 1978a, 1978b, 1994).

Finally, there is the member’s inner circle, the “personal constituency” (Fenno 1978, 24–27). These are a legislator’s closest friends, who see the outside world in the same way. One House member described his “group” as “philosophical soul mates” linked together by “an emotional grab” (Fenno 1978, 26). Others become valued advisers *because they share the same worldview*. Most of the time fellow partisans and elites share the values of the full electorate. Yet, they are usually more extreme than the full electorate. They push legislators to the left (if they are Democrats) or the right (if they are Republicans), beyond what the full electorate would wish.

Is representation a battle for legislators’ souls between centrist voters and immoderate partisans and fellow elites? Sometimes, but not usually. Mostly partisans and elites share the values of the full electorate. There is often no conflict between the demands of a legislator’s various constituencies (cf. Lascher, Kelman, and Kane 1993, 84). Kingdon’s (1973, 235–36) study of roll call voting among House members found that 47 percent of all decisions involved no conflict among *any* of the influences on legislative voting. Legislators’ own views were in conflict with constituency attitudes only 15 percent of the time.⁶ *Multiple constituencies don’t necessarily create cross-pressures. Most of the*

time the various constituencies are on the same side of the ideological divide. Elected officials are usually pulled between degrees of liberalism or shades of conservatism. But sometimes there is tension among the constituencies. When there are divisions, legislators run for cover. This is push-me pull-you politics, where the full electorate demands moderation and the core supporters expect fealty to an ideological program.

Bringing fellow partisans and elites into the representational mix makes us rethink the distinctions between delegates and trustees and between Downsians and ideological-equilibrium theorists. These “new” actors introduce more ideology into American politics than either delegate theorists or Downsians admit. But they also raise the threat of electoral sanctions against members who stray too far from the preferences of the full electorate, threatening trustees and violating the premises of ideological-equilibrium theories.

Politics can be local *and* ideological: The values that count most are rooted in one’s own constituency. We must take a broader view of constituency to see how one can be a hybrid of the Downsian delegate and the ideological-equilibrium trustee. When legislators vote against their districts or states, they generally reflect the values of their partisan base. When they “violate” their “responsibilities” to their constituents, they are representing followers who may be as important to them as the full electorate. In many cases, these core supporters pull legislators away from districtwide (or statewide) public opinion. I offer a more complex view of representation than we have. It acknowledges that both parties and elites matter even in an electoral world largely ruled by public opinion. Yet it is more than that: It is a different way of looking at representation, expanding the base of who matters. This way of looking at the world suggests that legislators fare very well at representation. Only a handful stray from statewide, state party, and state party elite ideology. Those who do pay an electoral price. When we incorporate these new actors into the representational equation, we find that legislators who go against their constituents are not so much profiles in courage who dance to a different drummer as much as fellow travelers with other partisans.

Whose Constituents?

The debate over representation has been dominated by Miller and Stokes’s (1963) “diamond” model. This framework begins with constituency opinions, which shape both legislators’ perceptions of constituency

attitudes and members' own values. Both in turn affect legislator roll call behavior.

This model served us well for a long time, but diamonds aren't forever. For Miller and Stokes, the critical—and weakest—linkage is between constituency attitudes and legislators' perceptions of these opinions. Only for salient issues is there a strong linkage between the two (Miller and Stokes 1963; Erikson, Luttbeg, and Holloway 1975). The rest of the diamond model isn't nearly as interesting if legislators don't know what's on voters' minds or if there is not much on voters' minds at all. For Miller and Stokes, ignorance runs both ways, making the representational nexus weak. Since 1963, there have been numerous challenges to Miller and Stokes. Members of Congress may not be able to tell you much about what people think on a particular roll call, but they have good ideas about what their constituents believe. This is what Fenno's concept of "home style" is all about. Powell (1982, 666) shows that constituents aren't so badly informed about their representatives either. There is a moderate correlation ($r = .50$) between legislator ideology and legislators' perceptions of these values.

A more profound challenge to the diamond model came from the recognition that legislators represent their core supporters, mostly composed of their fellow partisans, better than they do the full electorate. This is hardly a new idea. It dates to the early days of quantitative analyses of representation, in Huntington's (1950) study of legislator ideology and electoral marginality. Without public-opinion data, Huntington was forced to rely upon an ingenious argument about why marginal representatives are more extreme than safe legislators. Miller (1964) and Fiorina (1974) followed in the same tradition. Study after study concluded that legislators respond better to their reelection constituencies than to the geographic constituency.⁷

This two-constituencies perspective still treats legislators and constituents as combatants in a representational struggle. Fellow party identifiers enter into the picture to help explain why legislators don't always adhere to the ideology of the geographic constituency. But short of adding another actor to the mix—and sometimes referring to politicians' need to win primary elections—the two-constituencies perspective on representation remains a thin story. Fenno's account is richer. It provides a context for partisan representation.

The reelection, primary, and personal constituencies share a partisan base. Just as fellow party identifiers form the core of a legislator's