

whether it is more important to have representation at upper levels of the bureaucracy or at the implementation or street-level of bureaucracy.

Representative bureaucracy is a normative theory that periodically stimulates a modest amount of research on the demographic correlates of public employment. First presented by Kingsley (1944) in his assessment of the English civil service, the theory of representative bureaucracy contends that a bureaucracy recruited from all segments of society will produce policies that are democratic in the sense that they are generally responsive to the desires of the public. Because Kingsley was interested in England with its political system based directly on social class differences, the key characteristic to be represented was social class. Transferring the theory to the United States produced an argument that placed less emphasis on social class and more emphasis on race and gender (Hale and Kelly 1989; Long 1952; Thompson 1978). Despite the narrow focus on questions of race and gender that characterizes most U.S. research, the broader roots of representative bureaucracy are worth preserving even if for comparison purposes only.

This paper is a critical examination of the theory of representative bureaucracy. The logic of the theory will be sketched in some detail to show how the theory relates to other middle range theories of bureaucracy (see Perry 1991). The discussion will focus on the policy dimension of representative bureaucracy. Excluded from the discussion will be the literature on how demographically representative various bureaucracies are and the literature that examines variation in demographic representativeness.

While the theory of representative bureaucracy is essentially a normative theory, it is subject to empirical verification. Some effort will be made to examine the accumulated empirical evidence and use that evidence to modify the normative theory of representative bureaucracy. My objective is to provide a renewed theory to stimulate empirical research and to provide some guidelines on the meaning of current research for individuals who manage bureaucracies. This paper builds on and extends previous efforts to build middle range theory by Thompson (1976), Saltzstein (1979) and others.

REPRESENTATIVE BUREAUCRACY: A THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL EXPOSITION

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ABSTRACT

The theory of representative bureaucracy concerns the ability of bureaucrats to translate values linked to demographic origins into decisions that benefit individuals of similar origins. This paper seeks to provide a stronger theoretical base of support for empirical studies of representative bureaucracy, to integrate the research findings of the past 15 years, and to advance an agenda of future research questions. After specifying the underlying assumptions of representative bureaucracy, a series of hypotheses are derived that suggest when passive representation (changes in bureaucratic to translate into active representation (demographic origins) are likely decisions). The paper includes a discussion of race, class, gender, ethnicity, education, religion, and other factors that under the right conditions can influence the decisions made by bureaucrats. Substantial attention is given to the locus of representation—

UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS

Representative bureaucracy shares many of the basic axioms of public administration that are part of middle range theories of bureaucracy and bureaucratic behavior (Downs 1967; Meier 1987; Rainey 1991; Simon 1947; Thompson 1967). Although there is little cross-fertilization between the representative bureaucracy literature and the organization theory or the bureaucratic politics literature, there should be given that all seek to explain why bureaucrats act as they do.¹

Axiom 1: Bureaucrats Exercise Discretion

A fundamental axiom of public administration as it struggled to escape the epistemology of Max Weber is that individual members of the bureaucracy exercise discretion. At higher levels of the bureaucracy, bureaucrats exercise discretion to influence public policies that the bureau implements (Rourke 1984). They do this not only by providing detail to legislative statutes or executive orders but also by influencing the content of legislation through lobbying, drafting proposed legislation, and setting bureaucratic issues on the policy agenda. Upper-level bureaucrats are clearly players in the policy process; they interact with other policymakers to influence policy (Rourke 1984; Sabatier 1988). They may not be the dominant influence on public policy, but few public policies do not reflect some bureaucratic influences.

Discretion exists not just at the apex of the bureaucracy but also at middle and lower levels. The literature on street-level bureaucracy (see Lipsky 1980) contends that services cannot be delivered without vesting discretion in the bureaucrats who interact with the agency's clientele. Police need to decide if an arrest is warranted; a safety inspector must decide if a citation is needed or if a warning will be sufficient; a welfare case worker needs to decide if a client qualifies for benefits. Street-level discretion exists in all public organizations.

Axiom 2: External Actors Seek to Limit Bureaucratic Discretion;
Upper-Level Bureaucrats Seek to Limit the Discretion of
Lower-Level Bureaucrats

Policymakers are well aware that bureaucracies have discretion in implementing policies. As a result, they seek to structure this

discretion so that bureaucratic decisions produce outcomes that the policymakers favor. Legislatures, for example, write detailed statutes and even at times specify procedures that bureaus must follow when implementing policy (for example, the Magnuson-Moss Act of 1974 specifies the rule-making process for the Federal Trade Commission, see West 1985). Reporting requirements, be they annual reports, legislative hearings, budget documents, or audits, are attempts to determine if the bureaucracy is exercising its discretion in an appropriate manner. Much of the red-tape associated with bureaucracy, in fact, results from the efforts of individuals outside the bureaucracy to structure the discretion within a bureau (see Downs 1967; Kaufman 1977). Rules, reporting forms, and specified procedures are all part of this process. While outsiders can structure the discretion of upper-level bureaucrats, they cannot eliminate it completely. Effective public policy requires that bureaucracy be able to adapt to changing demands from the environment.

Upper-level bureaucrats also seek to limit the discretion of lower-level bureaucrats. They also do this with rules, reporting requirements, uniform procedures, audits, and other efforts. For example, to limit the discretion of police officers who respond to domestic violence calls, the city of Milwaukee requires that an arrest be made anytime police are called on a domestic violence complaint. While bureaus vary in the degree to which they try to eliminate discretion in the lower levels of the bureau, some discretion will always remain in the hands of the street-level bureaucrats. An agency without any discretion at lower levels would soon find the management levels of the bureaucracy swamped with decisions that had to be made. The result would be an inefficient and likely an ineffective organization.

Axiom 3: When Making Discretionary Decisions, Bureaucrats
Will Attempt to Maximize their Own Values

Bureaucrats are no different from other people. When faced with choices, they will attempt to make decisions that reflect their own personal values. This axiom does not mean that bureaucrats will receive direct, tangible benefits from their decisions (although some theories of bureaucratic behavior are built around that axiom, see Niskanen 1971), but rather that a bureaucrat will make decisions that provide some material or non-material benefits including but not

limited to satisfaction with the outcome of the decision, the perception that the decision will further the bureaucrat's career, the feeling that the public interest was furthered, and so forth.

These three axioms generate the dilemma that the theory of representative bureaucracy addresses (Krislov 1974, p. 35). If bureaucrats exercise discretion, they are authoritatively allocating scarce societal resources with their decisions. In its most classic sense, such decisions are an exercise in politics. Bureaucratic decisions affect the lives, property, or liberty of individuals. Bureaucrats, however, are not elected and, therefore, cannot be removed from office by the electorate. Bureaucrats in most agencies have job security and cannot be fired simply because a citizen disagrees with a decision that was made. The dilemma requires that the need for bureaucracy be made consistent with the demands of democracy.

Several methods of reconciling bureaucracy with democracy have been discussed in great detail ranging from overhead democracy (Finer 1941; Redford 1969) to the fellowship of science (Friedrich 1940) to the elimination of bureaucracy to the greatest extent feasible (Ostrom 1973). Representative bureaucracy is one of those methods. Although most theorists of representative bureaucracy are skeptical about the efficacy of other means of subordinating bureaucracy to democracy, one need not take this position to advocate representative bureaucracy. Even if most other methods of democratic control over bureaucracy are successful, representative bureaucracy could still be viewed as a valuable way to increase administrative responsiveness to citizen needs.

TWO KEY DEFINITIONS

Passive Representation

Students of representation have devoted substantial effort to providing precise definitions of representation (Eulau and Karpis 1977; Pitkin 1967). At least two different definitions of representation are used in the theory of representative bureaucracy. "Passive representation" or descriptive representation is the major concern of representative bureaucracy. A bureaucracy is representative in the passive sense if the bureaucracy has the same demographic origins (sex, race, income, class, religion, etc.) as the population that it serves (Mosher 1982).

Several measures of passive representation have been developed. Subramanian (1967) advocated the representation index where the percentage of the bureaucracy with a given characteristic (e.g., Hispanic ethnicity) is divided by the percentage of the population with that characteristic. Perhaps the most widely used measure, the representation index has a value of 1.0 when a bureaucracy perfectly mirrors the population. It is less than 1.0 when the group is under-represented and greater than 1.0 when the group is over-represented.

The representation index is a useful measure, but it has flaws. When the population represented by a group is small, any representation at all often results in extremely large numbers that distort the index. Engstrom and McDonald (1981) have discovered one way to avoid the problem of extreme values. If one uses the percentage of bureaucratic representation as the dependent variable in a regression and the percentage that the group comprises of the population as the independent variable, then the regression slope provides a "representation index" estimate that is less affected by extreme values resulting from a small minority population. Engstrom and McDonald (1981) developed this measure for political representation. While the measure has come to be the accepted measure of representation in that field of study, its use in studies of representative bureaucracy has been fairly modest (see e.g., Mladenka 1989a, 1989b).

With the regression approach, if the intercept is close to zero, the slope can be interpreted in a manner similar to the representation index. A slope of 1.0 means that a group holds exactly the percentage of representatives that their population warrants. A slope of less than one indicates under-representation, and a slope of greater than one indicates over-representation. The regression approach is limited to situations where the representativeness of a group of institutions rather than a single institution is assessed. It has the advantage of permitting control variables that can adjust for different levels of access to education and other factors related to bureaucratic employment.

An alternative method of measuring representation is presented by Nachmias and Rosenbloom (1973); this measure has been used in empirical work by Grabosky and Rosenbloom (1976) and Kellough (1990). They calculate a measure of variation which essentially contrasts the composition of the organization for several groups simultaneously with that of the general population. Their

measure is similar to the dissimilarity index used to measure segregation. One problem with the Nachmias/Rosenbloom measure is that high scores represent a relatively equal distribution of groups rather than a distribution proportionate with the population distribution.

Sigelman and Karnig (1976) have argued that researchers need to be concerned not only with access to bureaucratic positions (what they call penetration) but also the distribution of persons within the organization (what they call stratification). Passive representation might not translate into active representation because the group in question is segregated only at lower levels of the organization. Three approaches to stratification exist. Saltzstein (1983, 1986) uses separate assessments for representation at upper and lower levels of the bureaucracy (see also Dye and Renick 1983; Mladenka 1989a, 1989b). Sigelman and Karnig (1976) proposed the stratification index, a ratio of lower level representation to higher level representation. Meier (1975) advocated the use of the Gini index of inequality, but it has gained little currency outside his own work (see Meier and Nigro 1976).

Active Representation

While passive representation is a characteristic, active representation is a process. Person A is said to represent person B, if A pursues the interests of B (see Pitkin 1967). This definition is similar to Meier's (1975) definition of responsiveness, where A is considered responsive to B if A acts as B would act if B were in A's position. Representation is not a process that is amenable to rigid specification. The definition implies that a representative exercises some choice on behalf of the information or better judgement, representation may or may not produce the exact outcome that the represented wants. Rather the process should produce the same outcome that the represented person would produce if the represented person could be there and actively participate in the bureaucratic process.

In general active representation should be measured by policy congruence (Eulau and Karpis 1977), that is, whether or not the process produces policies that are congruent with the policy preferences of the represented. Policy congruence is not the only form of representation, however. Representation can produce symbolic

benefits. A pro-life activist might receive great benefits from the passage of a state law that bans abortion (knowing full well that such a law will be declared unconstitutional) because the legislature has affirmed the activist's values (see Gusfield 1963). Blacks in the armed forces might receive great symbolic benefits from the success of Colin Powell as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Symbolic benefits might be as valuable to citizens as policy benefits, but this paper will focus primarily on policy benefits not symbolic ones.

Measuring active representation is an indirect process. The analyst needs to specify the policy outputs of an organization that would benefit the group to be represented. Active representation is then defined as the congruence between hypothetical outputs and actual organization outputs. The best way to measure this congruence is through multiple regression with controls for the other variables that also affect agency outputs.

A second dimension of active representation that is worth considering will be termed process representation.² Process representation means that the representative makes the process of governing more congenial to the person being represented. Policies might not necessarily change but the process by which decisions are made provide some benefits to the represented. For example, a bureaucrat might explain a negative decision in terms that make sense to a client; or a female administrator might be more receptive to hiring additional women at managerial positions; or a minority administrator might seek out minority contractors for agency projects. Some benefits accrue to the represented (in material goods or perhaps just in a sense of efficacy) yet policy might not become more congruent with the values of the represented. While our prime consideration in terms of active representation will remain policy congruence, cases of process representation will also be noted.

LINKING ACTIVE AND PASSIVE REPRESENTATION

The theory of representative bureaucracy holds that passive representation is important because it leads to active representation.³ The logic is fairly straight forward. Demographic origins, as the socialization literature demonstrates, are important because variation in demographic origins is associated with variation in socialization experiences. Socialization experiences in turn are the source of a

person's values (Dawson, Prewitt and Dawson 1977). Values then are what the bureaucrat attempts to maximize when exercising discretion in an organization. Variation in bureaucratic values, therefore, should produce variations in bureaucratic policy. If the policies are well designed, then these variations in bureaucratic policy should produce outcomes that benefit the groups of people who are demographically represented. A passively represented bureaucracy, therefore, will have bureaucrats who are representative in terms of values, and the normal process of bureaucratic politics should produce results that are supported by the general public.

While the general theory of representative bureaucracy seems plausible, a wide variety of other information known about bureaucracy and public policy suggests that the theory needs some modifications. First, while demographic origins are related to values, that relationship is fairly modest. Meier and Nigro (1976) found that the demographic origins of adult federal bureaucrats could explain only small percentage of the variation in policy-relevant values. Their study found that the upper-levels of the federal service were very unrepresentative demographically yet highly representative in terms of values. Such a situation was possible only because demographic origins were weakly tied to values.

The weak linkage between demographics and values can be explained. Although socialization patterns vary across groups in American society, few groups have totally uniform socialization patterns. Perhaps more important, political systems do not necessarily address those values produced by the differences in socialization patterns. Perhaps no better illustration of the variance in socialization patterns exists than for sex. That women are socialized differently from men is widely accepted (see Dawson, Prewitt, and Dawson 1977). At the same time there are many political issues that are relevant to sex roles in society. Support for feminist policy options (e.g., equal pay, abortion, etc.), however, is not related to gender in the general population (Gurin 1985). Males are as likely as females to support these positions. In this case socialization differences do not produce differences in political values. The failure to address certain policy issues is illustrated by the role of social class in the United States. American political parties do not generally raise class-based issues at least not in the overt way that English political parties do (Epstein 1986). Because few class-related policies are addressed by the U.S. political system, any class-based values

possessed by bureaucrats are difficult to translate into public policy. Representation can only occur if the polity addresses questions relevant to differences that arise out of demographic influences.⁴

Demographic Linkages in Representative Bureaucracy

To find a linkage between passive and active representation, therefore, the demographic in question must somehow produce a value that is addressed in the policy process. This becomes our first hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1. Passive representation will be related to active representation only when the values socialized are the focus of policy disputes in that political system.⁵

As noted above, for the United States, a wide variety of socialization experiences are not relevant to public policy disputes and thus are unlikely to reveal a representational linkage. The most likely socialization experiences in the United States that will generate values relevant to public policy are those associated with race (see Rosenbloom and Featherstonhaugh 1977). Although overt appeals to race are not as common in public policy as they once were, there have been numerous covert appeals to race and a wide variety of political issues that appear to have racial components. President Bush's use of Willy Horton and the crime issue in 1988 was a not particularly subtle attempt to inject racial questions into the campaign. Other issues linked to race are affirmative action, public housing, welfare spending, and minority contractor set-asides. These are issues where racial differences show up strongly on public opinion polls and issues that are frequently addressed in policy forums (see Monroe 1975). There are probably others. Our first subhypothesis, therefore, is:

Hypothesis 1A. In the United States, a linkage between active and passive representation is mostly likely to be found for racial variables.

Demographic characteristics that are not particularly relevant in the United States might well be important for representative bureaucracy in other nations. Class issues and class-based

socialization are not particularly visible in the United States, but they form the major political cleavage in Great Britain. Kingsley's (1944) stress on the class nature of bureaucracy in his book on representative bureaucracy was directly on target for the bureaucracy he examined. Similarly, India, a society with class or caste as an integral part of the political system, could also produce active representation based on class (Krislov 1974, p. 83). Our second subhypothesis is:

Hypothesis 1B. In countries with overt class-based politics such as England, a linkage between passive and active bureaucratic representation is likely to be found for social class.

Religion is a major social cleavage in numerous countries. In the United States, there have been consistent findings that Catholics are somewhat more liberal than Protestants (see Davidson 1972). These broad comparisons, however, masked what has become a major religious cleavage in the United States today. Protestants are a heterogeneous group. Mainline Protestant sects (Episcopalians, United Methodists, Presbyterians) hold theological views distinctly different from fundamentalist Protestants (Southern Baptists, Mormons, Church of Christ). These differences are exacerbated by differences in what each group considers a political issue. Traditionally mainline Protestant and Catholic politicians have attempted to separate the secular from the religious. More recently militant Catholics and Protestant fundamentalists have seen the political system as an appropriate mechanism to spread the faith. Religious issues have been injected into politics, and some political issues have taken on religious dimensions. This change suggests that representative bureaucracy might well be relevant for some morality issues such as school prayer, abortion, sex education, and birth control in the United States. The somewhat-related issues of gambling and alcohol could also be linked to religion. Even foreign policy concerns might be relevant because fundamentalists tend to support a more hard-line foreign policy (see Miller and Wattenberg 1984, p. 309). This suggests our third subhypothesis:

Hypothesis 1C. In the United States, the linkage between representative bureaucracy and public policy should become increasingly relevant on morality issues such as abortion, school prayer, and birth control.

This hypothesis is limited by two factors. First, bureaucrats are less likely to be Protestant fundamentalists than are the American people in general (Lewis 1990).⁶ Bureaucrats, in fact, are far more supportive of tolerance (religious and other forms) and separation of church and state than are the American people (Lewis 1990). Second, these morality issues are rarely bureaucratic issues. Abortion, school prayer, gambling, alcohol, and sex education tend to be legislative or court issues. They are perceived as too salient to be decided by bureaucrats hidden from public view.⁷ While bureaucrats are less likely to influence legislative issues such as these, however, they are quite likely to influence the regulations that implement such policies.

For students of comparative administration, religion might well be the most important social cleavage addressed by representative bureaucracy. Lebanon, when it still existed as a nation, had an elaborate system of religious representation in the bureaucracy (Krislov 1974, p. 97). Religious politics is also important in Northern Ireland, Israel, Iraq, and several other countries.

Hypothesis 1D. Religion is an important variable for representative bureaucracy in those countries that are not religiously homogeneous and which consider political issues that can be linked to differences among religions.

Gender is perhaps the most interesting demographic variable involved in representative bureaucracy because the relationship between gender and policy values is extremely complex. One might dismiss the possibility of representative bureaucracy involving gender since until recently there have been few differences on policy values that were associated with gender. Such a decision, however, would be premature. First, there is some evidence that gender results in some process representation. Saltzstein (1986), for example, found that women mayors were more likely to hire women for high level administrative and policy positions. Recent work by Guy (1992) reveals that women in public sector management positions tend to manage somewhat differently from men, especially if the organization has a larger percentage of women employees.

Attention to the gender gap in political campaigns implies that gender is also related to policy values such as attitudes toward foreign policy. Even if there were no attitudinal differences between men and women in the general population, however, substantial evidence now

exists that upper-level women managers hold attitudes on some issues that are distinctly different from those of upper-level male managers (Hale and Kelly 1989). A survey of Arizona state administrators revealed that women managers were significantly more likely to favor agency efforts to provide child care for employees, more likely to favor pay equity, provisions for job sharing, and flexible work hours (Hale, Kelly, and Burgess 1989, p. 61). Similar differences were found for men and women managers in Texas and Utah (Stanley 1989, p. 78; Kavar 1989, p. 99). These studies also found that women were more likely to perceive that discrimination based on sex was common in government. The bottom line of these studies is that women managers are likely to make different decisions from those that men managers would make on these workplace issues.

Hypothesis 1E. In the United States, gender is an important issue for representative bureaucracy on those issues that directly affect the job status of men and women. Women managers are more likely to hold attitudes that suggest greater consideration of the demands on women in the workplace.

Ethnicity is the last of the major demographic variables that will be considered here. In the United States, ethnic concerns were at one time fairly salient with new immigrants placed at the bottom of the political and social hierarchy. While some urban communities still have strong ethnic neighborhoods and politics based on ethnicity, few national issues center on ethnicity. The one exception involves Latinos. Latinos are covered under the civil rights laws and have been successful in defining themselves as a group politically. Public opinion polls generally show Latinos to have more liberal political attitudes than Anglos (Garcia and Arce 1988).

Latino ethnicity is not as likely a candidate for finding representative bureaucracy impacts as race is, however. Latinos are a highly diverse people in terms of education, income, mobility patterns, and residence (Bean and Tienda 1987). Latinos have immigrated to the United States from 23 different countries; their values have been shaped by both their country of origin and also how they were treated on arrival in the United States. Cuban Americans have little in common with Puerto Ricans. Recent immigrants have vastly different needs from those who have resided in the United States for several generations. Values, as a result, also

vary. Cuban Americans tend to be conservative Republicans who are staunchly anticommunist. Mexican Americans in Texas tend to be liberal Democrats. This does not mean that there will be no linkage between passive and active representation for Latinos, only that such a linkage will be more difficult to find.

For countries other than the United States, ethnic cleavages might be the primary place where representative bureaucracy is relevant. Several African nations such as Nigeria and Tanzania have significant divisions based on ethnicity or tribal affiliation. Representative bureaucracy has been specifically applied to some of these cases (Dresang 1974). Ethnic cleavages between the French and the English in Canada, between Flems and Walloons in Belgium, and among a wide variety of groups in former nations such as Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union are also likely to generate linkages between representative bureaucracy and public policy. This leads to our final subhypothesis:

Hypothesis 1F. In nations where the primary social and political cleavage is ethnicity, the representativeness of the bureaucracy in terms of ethnicity is likely to lead to policy impacts if policies with different ethnic impacts are considered by the bureaucracy.

Agency Socialization

One major reason why representative bureaucracy is unlikely to link passive representation to active representation is agency socialization. Socialization is a learning process, and, as such, it does not cease when a bureaucrat accepts employment by the government. Socialization continues through out one's lifetime (Brim and Wheeler 1966). Perhaps the dominant socialization influence in an adult bureaucrat's life is the agency. Agencies need employees who support the goals of the organization. This need reflects the agency's recognition that it cannot eliminate the discretion that exists in the organization. Since the agency cannot control all behavior, it seeks to influence that behavior by influencing the values held by the employee. Agencies can produce employees who are supportive of the agency and its goals in two possible ways.

First, the agency can recruit individuals who are already favorably predisposed to the agency and its goals. In part, the agency need not actively do this because individuals will likely seek employment with

agencies that have goals that are consistent with their own values. The congruence need not be total. Agency values, at a minimum, must fall within an individual's zone of indifference (Simon 1947). Self-selection may be sufficient to do this. Environmentalists are likely to seek employment with environmental protection agencies. More conservative individuals are likely to view the Defense Department more fondly as an employee. The frequently discovered phenomenon that public employees are more likely to be Democrats than Republicans (Lewis 1990; Garand, Parkhurst, and Seoud 1991a) reflects the general values of Democrats and Republicans concerning the role of government in society.

Partisanship is not the only value that distinguishes public sector employees from private sector employees. Studies of Master of Public Administration and Master of Business Administration students reveal that potential public sector employees are more likely to be empathetic to the plight of others, more likely to be innovative, more interested in the public interest (Nalbandian and Edwards 1983), and more interested in public service (Rainey 1982, p. 293; Perry and Wise 1990, p. 371). They are also more likely to be motivated by challenging work than by higher pay (Pearce and Perry 1983, p. 318).

Both self-selection and the ability of agencies to hire people who already share agency goals should become more common in the United States given the changes resulting from the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978. In implementing that act, the Office of Personnel Management under Alan K. Campbell decentralized federal hiring practices so that individual agencies have more control over who was hired. Even though there were some attempts to recentralize hiring after Campbell left, the current process is still more decentralized than it was before 1978. Decentralized hiring limits the influence of the Office of Personnel Management. Agencies, therefore, have more discretion in terms of the individuals who they hire for jobs; and individuals can apply directly to the agency rather than for government employment in general.

Many agencies cannot rely on self-selection or recruiting individuals with supportive values because agencies' goals are often far more specific than are people's values. Few individuals have any preconceived notion of what the proper policy for the Federal Trade Commission should be. While many individuals might be committed to housing the nation's poor, they might not have any thoughts on the technical nuances of housing policy. Even what would be

considered a broad question in the Department of Housing and Urban Development (e.g., the use of vouchers versus direct provision of housing) would be a narrow question that few members of the general public would have an opinion about. Agencies deal with specific policy proposals; self-selection and targeted recruitment can only produce more diffuse support for agency goals.

To instill more specific values that directly relate to agency missions, agencies socialize their employees. Several methods of socialization are available (Simon 1947). Agencies can create a total organizational environment that encompasses most of the employee's life. As an illustration, Jerry Mashaw (1983, p. 216) describes the Social Security Administration:

SSA is a paramilitary organization. It has a band, a chorus, an anthem, and a flag. Many of its top-level administrators have worked nowhere else. Its headquarters on the outskirts of Baltimore constitutes almost a separate city. Three generations of families are sometimes employed there.

The Social Security Administration is not unusual. The Forest Service uses personnel rotation and heavy use of symbols to socialize its forest rangers (Kaufman 1960). The Army Corps of Engineers retains its military trappings despite its increasingly civilian function. Often socialization can create a full blown organizational ideology (Romzek 1990).

An agency need not use uniforms and obtrusive formal methods of socialization. It can be far more subtle by rewarding behavior consistent with agency norms and penalizing behavior that is inconsistent with such norms. Employees learn over time that the agency has certain expectations and that rewards are attached to these expectations. Employees who desire to be promoted and given greater authority rationally endorse the values of the organization (see Downs 1967). Even agencies with relatively similar functions such as the National Parks Service and the Forest Service can socialize their employees with distinctly different values (Allin 1987).

In combination socialization and self-selection are a major obstacle to linking passive representation to active representation in most agencies. Employees who represent interests other than the organization are likely to be ignored or even penalized by the organization. A fair amount of empirical support exists for the impact of agency affiliation (either through self-selection or socialization) on

the values held by bureaucrats. Garand, Parkhurst and Seoud 1991b) found that state and local employees were more liberal than federal employees; this difference can be explained by agency of employment since a conservative organization (the Department of Defense) was the major employer of federal bureaucrats while liberal organizations (schools) were the major employers of state and local bureaucrats. Stone (1977) examined social service bureaucrats and found that certain task-related attitudes developed over time, a pattern consistent with agency socialization.

The relative impact of agency socialization and demographic origins on employee values has also been addressed. Meier and Nigro (1976) found that agency affiliation had two to five times more impact on civil servants values than all demographic origins. In a study of housing policy Bell (1985) found that values derived from professional education were able to influence public policy only when those values were consistent with the values of the organization. When they were inconsistent, they had little impact. In a study of California state executives, Rehfuss (1986) found that women and minorities adopted a "management ideology" as they became top level managers. These findings suggest a second hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2A. The linkage between active and passive representation is likely to be weaker in agencies that rely heavily on socialization to gain employee commitment to agency goals. One exception to this hypothesis will be those agencies that socialize their employees consistent with their background values (hire minorities to become minority advocates). In those cases the linkage between active and passive representation will be strong.

Hypothesis 2B. For agencies that rely heavily on self-selection, the probability increases that agency mission and personal values will coincide. In such cases, representative bureaucracy is likely to be enhanced.

As noted in Hypothesis 2A, there should be a special case where the relationship does not hold. Some agencies are designated as active representatives, that is, their function is to represent the interests of a group of people. At the state level, for example, some public utility commissions have individuals or units that are designated to

represent the interests of consumers. Although many organizations have some elements of active representation in their mission (e.g., the U.S. Department of Agriculture is charged with protecting the interests of farmers), perhaps the most important place where active representation is created is in equal employment agencies and affirmative action offices (see Romzek and Hendricks 1982). In a study of regional offices of the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Hinderer (1990) found that the racial composition of the regional offices was positively correlated with the racial composition of the cases that the regional offices processed. Since EEOC employs a large percentage of women and minorities, passive representation and the mission of the agency coincide.

Although not directly related to representative bureaucracy, an interesting empirical question involves the distinction between targeted agency recruitment and self-selection. In other words, do agencies have employees with fairly similar values because the employees self-select the agency that they work for or because agencies socialize the employees after they are hired? These two situations can be distinguished empirically. If agreement with agency goals increases the longer a person has been employed by the agency, then agency socialization is the likely determinant of these values. If time employed by the agency is unrelated to congruence with agency values, then self-selection or targeted recruitment is the likely process.

Hypothesis 2C. If agency socialization is a determinant of employee values, then there should be a positive correlation between time in the organization and employee values that coincide with the goals of the agency.

An interesting hypothesis on agency socialization can be derived from the work of Schein (1978). Schein argues that individuals go through life cycles both in the organization and in their personal life. Not every person makes it to the top of the organization; many are shunted off into less meaningful positions or decide to leave the agency. Schein's work suggests that attachments to an organization will increase with time spent in the organization up to a point. After that point, the commitment to the organization will decline as the employee thinks about retirement, leaving the organization, or reducing the energy committed to the job. This argument challenges Hypothesis 2C.

Hypothesis 2D. In organizations that rely heavily on socialization, the relationship between commitment to organization values and time in the organization will be curvilinear.

The Scope of Discretion

Although all bureaucracies must vest discretion in the individuals who make up the organization, the amount of discretion is not constant. Discretion clearly varies across organizations; it may vary within organizations as well. An agency, for example, that relies heavily on socialization might decide to vest a great deal of discretion in lower-level employees and much less discretion in upper-level employees. This section is concerned with variation not just in discretion but in the discretion that is relevant to passive representation.

Discretion That is Relevant

Even though all organizations vest some discretion in their employees, the discretion might not involve any values that are likely to be socialized by demographic experiences. A black employee in the agriculture programs of Department of Agriculture, for example, would be hard pressed to find many decisions that would influence the status of black farmers (see Thompson 1976).⁸ U.S.D.A. policies have successfully eliminated most of the black farmers in the United States. The result is that agriculture (as opposed to food policy) is only marginally relevant to blacks, about as relevant as it is for the average urban dweller.

Hypothesis 3. Most decisions in most organizations will not be relevant to values created by demographic socialization. In such situations, the demographic origins of the agency members are irrelevant.

The situation for U.S.D.A. holds for a variety of other organizations (see Thompson 1976). A person regulating the practice of physicians might be able to make an occasional decision that reflects passive representation, but most decisions will center on technical questions of physician performance. Similarly, should NASA hire a large number of black engineers, it is difficult to perceive a policy area

where the values of black persons might affect the programs operated by NASA except at the extreme margins (e.g., more black astronauts).

These comments only hold for the policy congruence form of representation. For process forms of representation, agency employees can often have a great deal of influence on who is hired by the organization, who is allowed to contract with the organization, and who is granted status within the organization. A minority employee even in NASA could influence personnel procedures so that more black persons were hired by the organization or influence contracting decisions so that black-owned businesses would receive NASA contracts or designate black persons to be visible spokespersons for the organization. The process side of representation is generally ignored in the literature, but such decisions provide substantial monetary and psychic benefits to the individuals who are represented.

The Extent of Rules

Some programs are more amenable to rules that specify the actions bureaucrats should take and thus have less discretion than other programs. The social security retirement program, for example, is governed closely by rules to specify who is eligible for retirement benefits. In the same agency, however, the disability program has vast amounts of discretion (Mezey 1986). Determining that a person is disabled is not as susceptible to rules as determining that a person is 65 years old and retired.

Programs with little discretion have been the subject of a large literature in urban politics. This literature began with an interest in the underclass thesis, the hypothesis that urban political systems would systematically disadvantage poor and minority residents. The literature is vast and has a variety of contradictory findings (see Meier, Stewart, and England 1991 for a review). A great many attempts to measure urban services have found that urban services are not distributed in a manner to benefit the nonpoor. Such indicators as police response time, fire department response time, the location of parks, the quality of streets, and the frequency of garbage collection seem to be fairly equitably distributed in American cities, even those cities with a tradition of political machines. The reason according to students of this literature (see Miladenka 1981; Lineberry

1977) is that bureaucratic decision rules cover these programs. Police response time is determined by the seriousness of the call; all fire calls must be responded to; all garbage must be collected; and once located, parks are difficult to move. Reasonably neutral bureaucratic decision rules eliminate the discretion of street-level bureaucrats.

The decisions studied by the urban services literature are not uncommon ones. In such areas, there will likely be no linkage between passive representation and active representation. Representative bureaucracy is relevant in two types of policy areas—those where rules cannot be made all encompassing and those where rules reinforce values that can be linked to demographic origins. In this first instance, how police treat suspects that are arrested, the placement of recreation programs, educational placement decisions, decisions on personnel who are hired are much more likely to be influenced by the demographics (usually race) of the public employee (see Meier, Stewart, and England 1991; Eisinger 1982; Stein 1986).

Hypothesis 4A. The linkage between active and passive representation is likely to be strong in programs and agencies where rules do not limit the discretion of the agency bureaucrats.

At times, organization employees are placed in a situations where rules reinforce the values that they hold. A black person designated by the police department to serve as the liaison with the minority community would normally operate under rules that reinforce the opportunities for representative bureaucracy. Demographically inspired values might also be incorporated into the rules process so that the rules generate representative outputs. Corrections institutions, for example, generally have rules that require only female personnel will search female prisoners. Recreation department rules that target the minority community could have a similar impact.

Hypothesis 4B. The linkage between active and passive representation is likely to be strong in programs where rules reinforce demographically determined values or where rules were influenced by the demographic values of the employees.

Environmental Constraints

Limits on discretion for both upper and lower-level bureaucrats might exist but not be related to organizational rules (see Saltzstein 1979, p. 470). In many cases the environment of the bureaucracy constrains the action that individual bureaucrats can take (Rainey 1991). At upper levels of the bureaucracy, environmental constraints are fairly obvious. Although not examining bureaucrats, the literature on black mayors illustrates this constraint. In many cases after blacks won the position of mayor in major cities, changes in policy were modest (Karnig and Welch 1980; Keller 1978; Levine 1974). The reason for the minor amount of change was that mayors were constrained by the environment of their cities. City tax rates were capped by state law, few slack resources were available, the demands of current programs often absorbed more resources than the city had, and a continual set of crises prevented any long-range policy planning. In short, many of these mayors were in cities where the environment dominated the public sector. The mayor's only option was to cope as best he or she could.

Some environmental constraints were political, but they were real nonetheless. Mayor Federico Pena of Denver relied heavily on the business community for support. As a result his policies differed little from those of his predecessor (Hero 1987). If a mayor or a bureaucrat relies on outside political support (a virtual certainty), maintaining that support constrains policy action (see Rourke 1984).

These political studies can be generalized to bureaucracy. Bureaucratic leaders are also limited by the resources that their environment allows. In current times of fiscal constraint, few state or local bureaucrats without a growing tax base have the flexibility to undertake policy initiatives. In some cases courts have mandated that agencies spend money for designated purposes (Straussman 1986). New resources that are available are often earmarked for specific projects.

Similar constraints, though of a different magnitude, affect street-level bureaucrats. Resource constraints, of course, flow downward in the organization. An in-take worker might not have the funds to provide services for clientele. Although this is not the case in entitlement programs, a great many social welfare programs are not entitlement programs. In these cases the implementing organizations have to deny persons services if there is no money to provide the

services. Other environmental constraints also exist. An administrator of a domestic abuse center knows that solutions to domestic abuse often require that marriages be terminated and the women be provided with some means of economic support. Long-term solutions require jobs. In an area of chronic unemployment, however, the administrator might be constrained from seeking the optimal option because the likelihood of economic self-sufficiency is low.

The relationship between environmental constraints on the organization and the discretion available to bureaucrats at all levels of the organization suggests the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 5. The relationship between passive representation and active representation will be stronger in organizations with slack resources.

Just as slack resources are associated with innovative organizations (Rainey 1991, p. 231), they should also be related to discretion. As argued above, as discretion increases so does the likelihood of bureaucratic representation.

Street-Level Versus Upper-Level Bureaucrats

The literature on representative bureaucracy contains some dispute as to where representative bureaucracy is likely to occur. Meier and Nigro (1976) argued that representation was most important in policy-making positions. They focused, as a result, on upper-level bureaucratic positions and ignored street-level or lower-level bureaucrats. Such a position is clearly incorrect. While individual upper-level bureaucrats exercise a great deal more policy discretion than do individual lower-level bureaucrats, street-level bureaucrats collectively could have a policy impact that is larger than the collective impact of the bureau leadership. There are theoretical reasons for finding representative bureaucracy at all levels of the bureaucracy. This section will discuss some of the reasons why bureaucratic representation is more likely at some levels of the organizations than at others.

Frank Thompson (1976), in a perceptive paper, has argued that street-level bureaucrats are more likely to be bureaucratic representatives than are bureau leaders. The core of his argument is based on agency socialization. Agency leaders have been subjected

to 20 years or more of organizational socialization; Thompson feels that such efforts are likely to limit any demographic representation. Street-level bureaucrats are likely to be more recent hires and, thus, less socialized to organizational norms. The counter to Thompson's argument is that organizational rules are more likely to be imposed on street-level personnel than on upper-level personnel who are acting in a policymaking role. Street-level bureaucrats tend to perform similar tasks repeatedly, and such behavior is more easily reduced to rules than is policymaking behavior.

The focus on upper-level bureaucratic personnel is also consistent with other literature on bureaucratic control. An extensive empirical literature has developed on political control of bureaucracy at the federal level (Moe 1985; Wood 1988). In examining several federal regulatory agencies, Wood and Waterman (1991) concluded that the key event was the replacement of a bureaucratic leader with another individual who held different values. They find fairly dramatic policy changes in the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice (Wood and Anderson 1991). These policy changes generally reflected the values held by the administrators.

One study has specifically attempted to disentangle the impacts of upper and lower-level bureaucrats. Meier and Stewart (1992) examine educational classification decisions in all Florida school districts; racial differences in such classifications have been linked to educational discrimination against minority students (Heller, Holtzman, and Messick 1982). Their research question is whether racial equity in such decisions is related to bureaucratic representation at lower levels (among teachers) or at upper levels (among school administrators). Their study finds that teachers are far more important than administrators in these decisions. While this study supports Thompson's (1976) view that representative bureaucracy is more likely at lower levels, the organizations studied might be too unique to be generalized beyond the educational case. Schools are organizations bound by a fair amount of rules, heavy professional socialization regarding such decisions, and a variety of environmental constraints that encourage the district to assign students to special education classes. On the other hand, finding representative bureaucracy impacts in organizations that have such

characteristics (that is are inimical to representation) is encouraging for advocates of representative bureaucracy.

The bottom line on bureaucratic location and representative bureaucracy remains unclear. Until there have been substantially more studies in a variety of organizations, we need to look for representative bureaucracy at all levels of the organization.

Education and Policy Values

In the U.S. context the influence of education is rarely studied in terms of representative bureaucracy, but a growing literature attests to the influence of professional education. Much of the professional training of individuals involves the inculcation of values. These values might not be readily apparent since they are often imbedded in professional procedures or technical activities, but they have the potential to influence public policy. Lawyers, for example, are trained to see problems in terms of advocacy with two individuals arguing a case before a third (Plumlee 1981). City planners have strong values on land use including consistency of use, an aversion to strip development, and protection of property values (Vasu 1979). Micro-economists see public policy in market system terms and generally endorse market-system solutions to public policy problems. Agencies can provide post-entry training that includes similar attempts to structure values. For example, all federal judges appointed during the Reagan administration were sent to a law and economics training program at the University of Miami (Eisner 1991). The purpose of this program was to introduce judges to economic reasoning so that efficiency concerns could be incorporated into judicial decisions.

Although a substantial literature exists on this influence, none of it is crafted in terms of representative bureaucracy. Eisner's (1991) study of antitrust policy under Reagan illustrates the impact of micro-economics on public policy. As economists were recruited to the Antitrust Division, policy shifted from monopoly and merger cases (which micro-economics feels lead to efficient outcomes) to price fixing cases (which micro-economics feels is the major antitrust problem). A broader study of deregulation of several industries by Dertthick and Quirk (1985) concluded that professional values competed in a politics of ideas. As the economic ideals of a competitive market won out, policymakers in the bureaucracy and in other policy institutions were willing to deregulate transportation,

communications, banking and other industries. Much of the ongoing conflict in regulatory policy can be attributed to different professional values. In a study of four regulatory agencies, West (1988) found that substantive specialists, analysts, and economists took different positions on a variety of rules and that these positions reflected their respective professional training.

The advantage of professional education over most other demographic sources of values is that professional education is often highly specific so that values translate directly to public policy options. Industrial hygienists, for example, consistently favor reducing exposure to chemicals in the workplace through the design of equipment rather than the use of individual respirators (Thompson 1982). Other demographics rarely produce values this specific and as a result cannot be translated into public policy.

Hypothesis 6. In studies with a single agency or comparing several agencies with similar functions, professional training can be used to predict the values and policy decisions of the bureaucrats.

Hypothesis 6 could predict either a linkage between passive and active representation or the lack of a linkage depending on the professional education. If the professional education is part of the socialization process of the agency, then traditional representative bureaucracy linkages would be attenuated. If the professional education is in the form of training to make individuals more sensitive to the impact of their decisions on certain groups in society, then it might strengthen the linkage.

A second aspect of education with relevance to representative bureaucracy is also worthy of mention. Educational institutions, particularly at the post secondary level, play a role in the socialization of minorities and women by raising consciousness about the problems facing minorities and women in society. Especially for women, higher education is likely to expose them to problems faced by women that were not apparent to the high school student. This interaction between education and gender is reflected in public opinion polls that show feminist attitudes are positively correlated with education (Gurin 1985). Similarly, black students attending college are exposed to black organizations and black scholars who articulate visions for the black community. The process should

encourage black activism at the same time that it provides some of the skills necessary to succeed in organizations. The second education hypothesis, therefore, specifies an interaction between education and both race and gender:

Hypothesis 7. The relationship between active and passive representation for both blacks and women will be stronger in organizations that employ blacks and women with high levels of education.

Political Support

In many cases being an active representative might threaten the organization and its goals. In organizations that are not charged with active representation, the organization will place a great deal of pressure on individuals who seek to be advocates. For an advocate to survive in such a situation, the advocate must have some political support either within the organization or outside the organization.

Several scholars have suggested the vital need for support within the organization to facilitate representative bureaucracy. Frank Thompson (1976, p. 217) contends that the linkage between active and passive representation is likely to increase when members of a minority group work in close proximity to each other. He argues that interactions with others in similar situations will reinforce the minority bureaucrat's predilection for active representation. Similarly, minority employee organizations can provide support for minority administrators within the organization especially when the administrator takes an advocacy role (see Henderson 1988, p. 26; Herbert 1974; Thompson 1976, p. 216).

Minority administrators can also gain political support for an advocacy role from sources external to the agency (Henderson 1979). In a community with strong minority organizations, the black administrator is often subject to demands to become an active representative. Such organizations are likely to provide support as well as demands (Henderson 1979). Related to external political support is the presence of minority elected officials. Minority elected officials can fight the political battles necessary to adopt policies that benefit minorities and they can also protect administrators who have become aggressive advocates (Henderson 1988, p. 29). In their study of Latino education, Meier and Stewart (1991) found that Latino

teachers were able to produce policies that benefitted Latino students only when there were Latino members on the school board.

Hypothesis 8. The relationship between passive and active representation is likely to be stronger if the administrators have strong political support either from within the organization or from sources external to the organization.

Hypothesis 8A. The relationship between passive and active representative is likely to be stronger in organizations with more employees from the group that is represented.

Hypothesis 8B. The relationship between passive and active representation is likely to be stronger in organizations that have employee associations to represent the minority administrators.

Hypothesis 8C. The relationship between passive and active representation is likely to be stronger if there are elected officials who share the represented characteristic.

Hypothesis 8D: The relationship between passive and active representation is likely to be stronger if there are organized community groups that support the policies advocated by the administrative representative.

A NORMATIVE INTERLUDE

The theory of representative bureaucracy contains an unexamined normative assumption (not included among the axioms because it was normative and not needed to discuss the empirical theory). The theory assumes that bureaucracies should be representatives just as legislators, elected chief executives, and judges are representatives. That assumption is controversial. Ventriss (1991), for example, argues that representation belongs in the realm of action or politics; it is not part of what he calls behavior or bureaucracy. In this view passive representation has nothing to do with representation in the classical sense. It is only a short step from that position to argue that bureaucracy should not attempt to turn passive representation into active representation.

The opponents of bureaucracy as a representative institution are generally proponents of overhead democracy forms of controls on bureaucracy (see *Finer 1941; Redford 1969*). They would argue that the decision on who or what is to be represented should be made by institutions that are designed to be representative institutions. Only if a bureaucracy is charged with active representation is representation a legitimate function for bureaucracy. Such a position has widespread support among elected officials. Daley's (1984) survey of state legislators found that they enthusiastically supported virtually all means of bureaucratic responsiveness except those that required advocacy from the bureaucracy. Although representative bureaucracy requires less advocacy than does, say, the new public administration (*Marini 1971*), the general thrust of representative bureaucracy was not popular with elected officials. A normative defense of this position is presented in the work on administrative ethics by *Burke (1986)* which is also grounded in the doctrine of political supremacy.

The reader should be aware that whether or not bureaucracies should be active representatives is a normative question. Empirically, bureaucracies do act as representatives on a wide variety of dimensions. Even in a political system that rejects the notion of bureaucracy as representative, active representation by bureaucracies is a fact of life.

CONCLUSION

Representative bureaucracy concerns the demographic representation of bureaucracies and what difference that representation makes. The theory of representative bureaucracy is concerned with when and under what conditions representation in the bureaucracy results in bureaucratic outputs that benefit the individuals who are represented. This exposition of the theory of representative bureaucracy attempted to specify the linkages that exist in the theory for the purpose of providing more specific hypotheses. In the process it has identified new areas of research that are likely to reveal additional cases of representative bureaucracy. There remain several interesting questions worth pursuing in this area. None of them are easy studies to design, and only by linking research efforts to theories such as

the one discussed here will we be able to provide for some cumulative research that adds to our existing knowledge about bureaucracy.

This paper did not specifically point out the various ramifications of the theory for public managers. Most of them should be fairly self-evident. Managers who wish to gain the benefits of a representative bureaucracy need only examine the hypotheses and attempt to build organizations that resemble those that are likely to generate representative bureaucracy impacts. The task of the manager in such a case is to take this general theory and apply it to the specific circumstances that exist in the organization.

NOTES

1. One interesting effort to integrate representative bureaucracy with the policy implementation literature is the work of *Hindera (1990)* on the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.
2. The concept of process representation was suggested to me by *James Perry*. The literature has not dealt with this concept, yet it appears to be a significant concern of bureaucratic representatives and the people who are represented.
3. One need not take this position to find passive representation a worthy field of study. Passive representation could be a way to study the openness of a bureaucracy to persons of all backgrounds. This equality of access, at least in a nation such as the U.S., is a reasonable policy objective in and of itself. A substantial literature on urban politics focuses on just that point with studies of minority employment in urban bureaucracies (see *Eisinger 1982; Mladenka 1989b*).
4. As an illustration for many years after Reconstruction southern states did not address issues involving race except as a way to unify southern whites.
5. This hypothesis and all others presented in this essay assume that all other things remain constant. While it is unlikely that all other things will remain constant, we are too far from a fully developed theory to specify how relationships exist in the presence of simultaneous changes in other variables.
6. This difference might be the result of social class differences. Bureaucrats are generally of higher social class than the American population since most bureaucratic positions require a college degree. Protestant fundamentalists tend to have more members from lower social classes than do other religions. These lower-class origins are logically related to lower levels of formal education.
7. Religious influences might be broader than I have illustrated here. A person designated to become an assistant secretary of education in the Reagan administration was quoted as saying that physical handicaps were the result of a lack of spiritual faith. This nominee was withdrawn, but the linkage between physical handicaps and faith is not uncommon. *Oral Roberts University*, for example, fought a long battle with the federal government over its refusal to make the university handicapped persons since the university contended that it neither admitted nor hired handicapped persons since the university was limited to only those with the appropriate faith.

8. A black employee in the food programs of the Department of Agriculture, in contrast, would find numerous opportunities to represent the interests of black persons. The Department of Agriculture operates the food stamp program, the Women, Infants, and Child Supplement food program, the school lunch program, and numerous other programs that involve aid to poor people.

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