## **Public Opinion Matters?**

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1 Gilens

2 Representation

3 Riker

## Gilens

- Observed opinion versus "informed" opinion
- Difficulty of changing information
- Which should be represented?

## Representation

- Mansbridge
  - Promissory
  - Anticipatory
  - Gyroscopic
  - Surrogate
- Static opinion-policy congruence
- Dynamic representation

## Mechanisms of influence

- Constituent interaction
- Opinion polls
- Interest groups

## **Group influence**

- Do people form political groups?
  - Truman
  - Olson

- Group
- Interest group
- Political interest group
- Latent groups

- Group:
  "collection of individuals who have some characteristic in common" (23)
- Interest group
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- Group
- Interest group: "any group, that on the basis of one or more shared attitudes, makes certain claims upon other groups in the society for the establishment, maintenance, or enhancement of forms of behavior that are implied by the shared attitudes" (33)
- Political interest group
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- Political interest group: "If and when it makes its claims through or upon any of the institutions of government, it becomes a political interest group" (37)
- Latent groups

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- Do people form political groups?
  - Truman
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- Do groups have influence?
  - Jacobs and Page
  - Schlozman
  - Helboe Pedersen

## Two-way influence

- Disch's "mobilization" conception of representation
- Schattschneider's "scope of conflict" principle

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- Disch's "mobilization" conception of representation
- Schattschneider's "scope of conflict" principle
- Is there a tension between representation and self-interest?

# Representative versus Direct Democracy

- James Madison on size of republics
- If people voted directly on policy questions, what would that look like
- Riker Ch. 1

### **Attitudes versus Preferences**

- Attitudes are not comparative
- Can people form (transitive) preference rankings?

### Median voter theorem

- Majority rule in one dimension with two alternatives
- Majority rule in two dimensions
  - No median
  - Cycling
  - Institutions matter (esp. agenda control)
- Majority rule with more than two alternatives

# Riker's (Arrow's) "fairness" principles (Ch. 5)

- Universal admissibility of preferences
- Non-dictatorship
- Independence of irrelevant alternatives (IIA)
- Pareto Optimality
  - Monotonicity
  - Non-imposition
  - Instead: Preferred alternatives should be ranked higher in aggregate
  - Similar to a Condorcet criterion

A vs B

$$\mathbf{B} > C > A$$

B vs C

$$\mathbf{B} > \mathbf{C} > \mathbf{A}$$

$$\mathbf{C} > \mathsf{A} > \mathsf{B}$$

A vs C

$$\mathbf{C} > \mathsf{A} > \mathsf{B}$$

Riker

## **Cycling and Paradoxes**

$$A > B > C \tag{9}$$

$$\mathsf{B} > \mathsf{C} > \mathsf{A} \tag{8}$$

$$C > A > B \tag{7}$$

Plurality

Majority/Run-off

$$\mathbf{A} > \mathsf{B} > \mathsf{C} \tag{9}$$

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## **Implications**

Even if individual preferences are well-defined, no guarantee of a coherent, fair social choice

- Testing for opinion-policy congruence seems easy, but not if we actually use a populist institution as baseline
- What if we can't measure preferences?
- And what if people don't have preferences at all?