ROLES, RULES, AND RATIONALITY IN THE NEW INSTITUTIONALISM

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I seek to reinvigorate the study of politicians' roles by showing how motivational role theory can be used to examine the impact of goals and incentives upon behavior and thereby integrate economic and sociological perspectives. I address three reasons for the recent neglect of politicians' roles—changes in interdisciplinary tastes, conceptual and theoretical muddles, and failures to demonstrate consequences for behavior—and find them unconvincing. I further argue that the most promising framework for the new institutionalism is one that incorporates not just formal but also informal institutional structures (like roles and norms), a framework that incorporates, rather than excludes, political behavior.

Who now writes about *roles*? Sociologists, novelists, anthropologists, poets, psychologists, journalists, playwrights and historians, among others. The noun "role," which has been used since the seventeenth century, is a word that we cannot do without, yet political scientists have been neglecting it for nearly a decade. Articles continue to be produced on roles but are not much discussed. Nor are there any major research projects underway on political roles or signs of significant innovations in theory and method. It seems difficult to believe that studies of political roles actually dominated our research on politicians during the 1960s and early 1970s. Professional interest in this area has greatly declined. Why?

It is indeed puzzling. It is puzzling because roles are such prominent concepts in the everyday thinking of the politicians we study, quite regardless of what they might pick up second-hand from social-scientific analyses. Politicians use roles in their relationships with one another. For central to the thinking that they bring to their relationships are conceptions of how typical people in typical positions (e.g., minister, whip, or backbencher) are expected to behave. Because so many ordinary people use this concept to organize their experience, it has become well established throughout the social sciences and, with the exception of political science, continues to be studied vigorously (Biddle 1986, 67). Why the exception? There are, I think, three principal reasons that our discipline's interest in political roles has recently gone into eclipse. The first concerns intellectual fashion in the form of a change in interdisciplinary tastes from sociological imports, which include roles, to economic imports, which do not. The second concerns conceptual confusion: a disenchantment with towers of babble constructed in the service of role "theories" that weren't theories after all. The third reason concerns consequences for behavior—there weren't any (or so it

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seemed at the time).

Perhaps these reasons are reason enough to accept the eclipse and not try to recover the study of roles for the study of politicians. I believe, however, that the roles of politicians are much too important to be overlooked. They are central concepts in the symbolic worlds of the people we study. They are also central concepts for the "new institutionalism" that has recently been emerging in political science (March and Olsen 1989; Shepsle 1989). Furthermore, and more forcefully, I believe that all three reasons for the eclipse are unconvincing. I shall examine each of them in turn and take stock of several decades of research on politicians' roles, in order to clear the ground for a new motivational approach to the subject. This approach builds on what went before and satisfies some of the objections that came afterward by being more rational, less muddled, and better oriented to behavior. In presenting these arguments, I shall draw on examples and data about the roles of politicians in the British House of Commons.[1]

Intellectual Fashion

The recent march from *homo sociologicus* to *homo economicus* is more an explanation of, than a justification for, the disappearance of research on roles. It will be difficult to dismiss as "unconvincing," because it is as much a matter of changes in intellectual interest as of argument. Still, there is an argument here that needs to be addressed by putting it in the perspective of the relative significance of formal rules, informal rules, and individual preferences.

Before World War II, classic political views of political institutions were more widely held in political science than they are today, even now that we have brought the state back in. Political scientists and political philosophers emphasized that institutional structures greatly constrained the conduct of politics by shaping the motives and conduct of politicians. They stressed particularly the importance of *formal rules* such as constitutions, laws, contracts, and other institutional arrangements—stable formal rules that guided individual behavior and thereby secured order in the political world (March and Olsen 1989, 5). *Homo politicus* made history, but he made it on stages constructed by constitutionmakers and controlled by formal rules.

By contrast, the decades after the war, especially the 1960s and early 1970s, witnessed the rejection of this formalistic political institutionalism and its replacement by new sociological perspectives. This sociological era of research on politicians turned the discipline's attention away from formal rules and toward the *informal rules* of political organizations, toward norms and roles that were said to guide behavior more directly (Ferejohn and Fiorina 1975; Hall 1985; Sinclair 1983). But what was at first a set of creative and stimulating ideas became increasingly rigid and "sociologistic" as parliaments became characterized as highly structured institutions that, by determining their norms and roles, determined the behavior of their members.

Today, this sociological emphasis on informal rules is still one of two recognizable perspectives in the study of legislative behavior. The other, which took the lead from the mid-1970s and is now intellectually dominant, is associated with economic models of individual behavior—models that are purposive and stress the significance not of either formal or informal rules but, instead, of *individual preferences* and choices (e.g., Fenno 1973; Mayhew 1974; Shepsle 1978; Smith and Deering 1984). Thus, the informal rules, the norms and roles of *homo sociologicus*, have been pushed aside by the reasons of *homo economicus*, by a new interest in the preferences and calcu-

lations of individual politicians. Yet just as the sociological approaches were shortsighted in giving short shrift to such individual preferences or goals, so the new economic models underestimate the significance of institutional contexts. Politicians, they seem to suggest, calculate their self-interests and act upon them in a vacuum.

Rules, roles, and reasons—these are ingredients that March and Olsen (1989) have proposed to blend in the new institutionalism. This new perspective on the relationship between institutions and individuals has been emerging since the late 1980s and has come to be regarded as the new wave in legislative studies. It seeks to synthesize the political and sociological theses about rules with the economic antithesis about reasons. Formal and informal rules, March and Olsen argue, do indeed constitute very important institutional constraints on the behavior of politicians. At the same time, however, politicians are purposive actors who pursue their individual preferences or goals. They calculate and they compromise as they adapt to their situations. Surely the new institutionalism offers fertile ground for the study of "rational norms" and "rational roles"—that is to say, norms and roles that are both framed by institutional rules and shaped by individual preferences. But the new institutionalism has so far focused its investigations mainly on formal rules rather than on the informal rules whereby norms and roles play their parts.

This concentration on formal rules seems odd, not least because the study of organizations is currently moving in the other direction and has always, in fact, shifted back and forth between the formal and the informal. It has always recognized the significance of each and also their interdependence (Ouchi and Wilkins 1985). Let us remind ourselves of the distinctions involved. The formal structure of an organization is found in its constitutional code which defines lines of authority and divisions of work by specifying the organization's principal offices and their principal duties and responsibilities. These formal rules always differ, as Herbert Simon long ago taught us, from the organization's actual operations because they can never fully specify or be fully consistent with all the relationships, attitudes, and behaviors that must be developed if the organization is to run smoothly (1957, 147–49).

The informal structure of an organization refers to these relationships, attitudes, and behaviors that are not fully specified in the formal scheme. Informal rules are critical to an organization, for it is not possible to operate without them (Selznick 1943). Every organization, therefore, develops and maintains a structure of informal rules. And the principal components of these informal rules are norms and roles. The relationship between the formal and the informal is reciprocal and complex. The most obvious connection is that the formal rules set boundaries for the informal rules and thereby guide informal relationships along lines that are appropriate for pursuing the organization's goals. Perhaps the current resistance to studying informal rules like norms and roles reflects a reluctance to return to the sociological models that were set aside to pursue the new economic perspectives. Perhaps it is also due to the fact that many of the "new institutionalists" are rational choice theorists, whose models favor explicit rules of the game that politicians can take into account in calculating how they might best achieve their preferences. For rational choice theorists, rules are "the strategic context in which optimizing behavior takes place" (Shepsle 1989, 135). This characterization sometimes applies to formal rules but only occasionally to informal rules, which, in fact, often drive out calculational conduct and replace it with what March and Olsen call a disposi-

Table 1. The Impact of Norms in the British House of Commons (%)

Number of Cross Votes	Conservatives		Labour	
	Formal Collective Responsibility (Members of the Government)	No Collective Responsibility (Backbenchers)	Informal Collective Responsibility (Opposition Front Bench Spokespersons)	No Collective Responsibility (Backbenchers)
None	100	39	62	23
One	0	22	20	29
Two or more	0	39	18	48
Number of cases	(42)	(202)	(50)	(174)

Note: Cross votes are votes cast against the stated policy of one's government (for Conservatives in this case) or one's parliamentary party (for Labour).

tion to pursue normatively appropriate behavior (1984, 744).[2] All the more reason, then, to reemphasize the importance of recovering informal rules and to press the point that without them the new institutionalism may turn out, much like its predecessors, to be rather more sectarian than synthetic.

It is a question of the relative significance of individual preferences, formal rules, and informal rules. From the new economic models, we have learned to take individual preferences and calculations very seriously. And those who have taken them most seriously are now reintroducing formal political rules such as constitutional and other institutional codes. *Homo economicus* is being reunited with *homo politicus.* But what about the informal rules? Handicapped by a distaste for calculation, *homo sociologicus* remains unwelcome because of further doubts about the political significance of informal rules, doubts that linger from our discipline's experience in studying relationships among norms, roles, and political behavior. With regard to roles, I shall address this matter below. But as for norms, if Jon Elster's (1989) recent arguments have not convinced skeptics of the considerable significance of these informal rules, perhaps the data in Table 1 will.

The point is that informal rules are extremely effective in shaping the behavior of politicians and therefore cannot be overlooked. The illustration presented in Table 1 refers to collective responsibility rules in the British House of Commons, rules that apply, conveniently for our present purposes, formally in one situation and informally in another. Thus, the formal rule of collective responsibility, which is a long-standing and important constitutional doctrine (Norton 1982, 61–63), applies to members of the government. It says, among other things, that if they wish to vote against government policy, they must first resign from the government and return to the back benches. By contrast, the informal rule of collective responsibility, which applies to opposition front bench spokespersons, has no constitutional or formal standing. It is instead a norm that has developed during the postwar period, a norm that says if they wish to vote against their party's policy, they, too, should first resign their leadership positions and return to the back benches (Punnett 1973, 287–88).

The relative influence of formal and informal rules can be explored in Table 1 by comparing the number of cross votes cast by members of the government or opposition front bench spokespersons, who are under the collective responsibility rules,

with the number of cross votes cast by their party's backbenchers, who are not encumbered by these particular constraints. To be sure, the formal rule of collective responsibility has the strongest absolute effects over the behavior of the Conservatives to whom it applies—there are no deviations. But the informal rule of collective responsibility is impressive as well. In fact, it ensures that nearly three times as many of Labour's opposition front bench spokespersons as compared to the party's backbenchers refrain from cross voting—a ratio that exceeds the parallel ratio between Conservatives.[3]

The new institutionalism seeks to free politicians from their utilitarian cocoons and send them back into the institutional contexts where they work and pursue their goals. Yet, important as formal and informal rules may be, it is necessary to remember that individual preferences are active, too. Indeed, the unfortunate sociological history of role theory's "oversocialized" analyses should caution us against tilting the enterprise too far back toward the institutional side. The reintegration of the formal institutional rules of the prewar period with the informal rules of the postwar sociological decades can be done without losing sight of what has been learned more recently by looking through economic spectacles. What is needed is a new conception of roles that is sensitive to the interplay between institutional frameworks and individual preferences—and to the fact that this balance between framework and preference varies greatly from one role to another.

The best way to understand political institutions is to understand the interaction between such rules and reasons—between the constraints of institutional frameworks and the preferences of individual members. And there is no place where such rules and reasons come together more clearly than in an institution's roles. This leads directly to the motivational approach to the study of roles. But first it is necessary to dispose of the remaining two objections to role analysis itself.

Conceptual Confusion

Another reason that the discipline dropped the study of roles was weariness with the conceptual confusion surrounding "role theories"—which were themselves eventually unmasked as untheories. However, by clearing up the clutter, this too can be shown to be unconvincing. The task can be accomplished by (1) sending most of the neologisms down the memory holes of history, (2) clarifying why "role theory" is not a theory and cannot be a theory, and (3) ordering and interpreting the existing literature, particularly the existing empirical studies, so that we can see where we have been and where we need to go.

Efforts to study roles in the most general terms have produced some of the most spectacular scholasticism in the social sciences (Heiss 1981, 94–96). This has been created by many different scholars studying many different roles from the perspective of many different disciplines. Although it is appropriate to develop different definitions for different research purposes, conceptual pluralism was turned into pandemonium by an extraordinary passion for neologisms that often contained very peculiar assumptions about the determinants of social behavior.[4] *Role* was modified by long lists of adjectives to create concepts like *covert roles, complementary roles, reciprocal roles, contextualized roles,* and *personalized roles;* and it was itself used as an adjective to produce more of the same, such as *role visibility, role enactments, role sets, role integration,* and *role networks.*

I have suggested that "role theory" is not a theory. What is usually called "role theory" are frameworks consisting of topics, concepts, and assumptions. There are in such frameworks no sets of statements that explain why or how pheno-

Table 2. Three Approaches to Studying the Roles of Politicians

Approaches	Principal Topics	Preferred Research Methods	Examples
Structural	Sets of norms linked to performance of institutional functions	Structured interviews with large numbers of respondents, using both open- and closed-ended questions to examine norms	Converse and Pierce 1986; Davidson 1969; Jewell and Patterson 1977; Newton 1974; Wahlke et al. 1962
Interactional	Interaction in specific settings, negotiation and learning of roles	Participant observation or in-depth studies with manageable numbers of respondents	Cain, Ferejohn, and Fiorina 1987; Fenno 1978; Huitt 1961; Manley 1969
Motivational	Description of roles emphasizing the influence of goals and incentives	Semistructured interviews with moderate-sized samples, preference for tape-recording responses	Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman 1981; Barber 1965; King 1974; Payne 1984; Woshinsky 1973

mena occur. There are, in short, no general role theories (Biddle 1986, 86; Stryker and Statham 1985, 312). The difficulty is that this quest for a general theory of roles has always been fundamentally misguided and as unlikely to produce satisfying results as would be a quest for a general theory of holes. The phenomena in question, roles or holes, are so utterly polymorphic that the only general statements applicable to all of them are likely to be as general (and as useless) as this: "The general principle is clear: the more [that] persons have their preferences and needs met in role relationships, the more satisfied they are in those relationships" (Stryker and Statham 1985, 349). The most promising path to theory construction is not a search for a single general role theory but, instead, a series of quests for particular theories about particular problems involved in particular types of roles.

Finally, it is necessary to bring some order to decades of seemingly discursive literature so that we can build constructively rather than simply continue to muddle through. Fortunately, the waters have cleared somewhat since political scientists last looked; and it has become apparent that most studies have more or less proceeded under one or more of the frameworks summarized in Table 2. Each framework concentrates on a different aspect of the subject: the *structural approach* highlights connections between institutions and roles; the *interactional approach* focuses on the processes through which roles are learned; and the *motivational approach* focuses on the content of roles, particularly on the goals and incentives that drive them.

Just as legislative studies do not neatly sort themselves into the sociological and economic traditions I have discussed, neither do they neatly sort themselves into the three approaches to role analysis. Most efforts have been eclectic. And many authors will be uncomfortable with seeing their work categorized in this way. Nevertheless, I believe that there are three identifiable streams of research on the roles of politicians, each influenced more by one of the three approaches than by the others. The studies within each stream share many features with one another and

share at least several important features with the general approach under whose umbrella I have gathered them together.

The Structural Approach

The structural approach, an application of structural-functional analysis, was developed under the guidance of Linton (1936), Merton (1957, 1967), Merton and Barber (1963), Parsons (1964), and Znaniecki (1965). It emphasizes the dominance of institutions over individuals, since it treats roles as constructs that are maintained by institutions and have little to do with individual preferences (Homans 1964). Individuals are presented with roles that are built into an institution's structure and will continue to exist whether or not these individuals choose to play them.

The main difficulty with the structural approach as an all-purpose strategy for studying roles is that it introduces, through its definitions, two important but unacceptable assumptions. The first is that there will normally be widespread consensus about how any given role should be played. Actually, such consensus varies enormously from one role to another. It is a variable (Jewell 1970, 494–95; Wrong 1963). The second unacceptable assumption is that the individual's role-related attitudes and behaviors are determined by the expectations of his or her associates. Again, the power of such expectations is surely a variable that differs across different roles and institutions.[5] By the mid-1970s, this emphasis on conformity had cost the structural framework its position as the dominant approach to role analysis.[6] Paradoxically, however, the most important contemporary contribution of the structural approach continues to be its emphasis on what it has always overemphasized: that roles are deeply embedded in institutions that structure the range of roles available and structure how particular roles are to be played. The structural approach takes structure seriously.

The influence of this structural approach has been most apparent in empirical studies that define politicians' roles as sets of legislative norms and use formal interviews to investigate them. One of the earliest and best studies in this tradition was Richard Fenno's (1962) description of roles in the U.S. House Committee on Appropriations, where he found that existing expectations for these roles were very closely defined and very successfully taught to newcomers. These themes of clarity and consensus have been underscored by the many political scientists who have defined roles as sets of norms "that are expected of *anyone* holding . . . a particular position" (Jewell 1970, 462). And the emphasis on conformity can be seen in characteristics of role learning as the teaching of norms needed to perform according *to the organization's* expectations (Gertzog 1970). Although most of the early political studies adopted a structural-functional perspective and therefore sometimes overdid "the cohesion necessary for institutions to continue to exist," they were also usually conducted by political scientists who themselves interviewed politicians and became aware thereby of more variability than the framework allowed. Budge and his colleagues, for example, produced data on the role of the councillor in Glasgow that supported this point (1972, 83–99; see also Rose 1970, chap. 4). And Mishler and Mughan (1978) followed this same lead when they investigated the roles of Scottish and Welsh backbenchers.

Another common characteristic of studies in the structural tradition is that they often interview large numbers of respondents in order to map the complex patterns of expectations for each role. This was certainly true of *The Legislative System* (Wahlke et al. 1962), the best-known political study in the structural tradition. But even this influential book

was not as immersed in structural thinking as it seemed to be. The assumptions of clarity, consensus, and conformity were there; but the authors were also inspired by George Herbert Mead's symbolic interactionism. Still, it was the structural perspective that produced *The Legislative System*'s principal research product—a set of representational roles that became by far the study's best-known and most frequently replicated contribution (Jewell 1985, 104–5). *Trustees, delegates,* and *politicos* have by now been examined in nearly every country where systematic interviews with politicians are conducted. Moreover, these roles have been analyzed so much that they have virtually become synonymous with the very concept of politicians' roles. The situation is unfortunate because these representational roles have unexpectedly compounded our confusion. As they have been measured, they reflect a general tendency in the structural tradition to reduce role concepts from the actors' understandings to a few specific norms.[7]

It is easy to see how the confusion arises. In order to link the institution to the individual, the structural approach defines roles as sets of norms that are widely endorsed by an actor's associates. When roles are defined as sets of norms, the tendency to study them more precisely by breaking down these sets and isolating their segments seems standard procedure.[8]

The Interactional Approach

The interactional approach is part of the symbolic interactionist tradition that traces its intellectual roots back to the Scottish moral philosophers of the eighteenth century (Stryker and Serpe 1982). This perspective was adapted for contemporary social science by George Herbert Mead (1934) and is associated with the influential empirical work of Blumer (1962, 1966), Goffman (1959) and Turner (1962, 1968). Symbolic interactionism derives its unusual name from its assumption that symbols, or meanings, emerge from processes of social interaction and serve as powerful forces in shaping behavior. Thus, roles are seen as sets of informal rules created and recreated through interactions, especially through "negotiations" between individuals and their associates (Handel 1979; Meltzer, Petras, and Reynolds 1975).

Symbolic interactionists concentrate so much on these social psychological negotiations that they have been criticized for being "psychologistic," that is, for making exactly the opposite error to that made by the structuralists—for neglecting the broader institutional contexts within which such negotiations occur (Biddle 1986, 71–72). It is striking, therefore, that this approach, which gives so much attention to how people construct the rules that govern their behavior, nevertheless still locks up its subjects in social cages; for symbolic interactionism does not adequately credit people with their own independent standpoints, with their own preferences and incentives outside the flow of interaction in which they are immersed at any given time.[9] The psychologistic cage, in fact, turns out to be sociologistic. Society produces individuals through role relationships that reshape them constantly. Compared with structural frameworks, these interactional cages are much smaller (encounters rather than institutions); but they are sociologistic cages nonetheless, not psychologistic.[10] Still, the chief contribution of the interactional approach remains its emphasis on the facts that individuals participate in defining their own roles, that these roles have many variations, and that they are usually undergoing change (Stryker and Statham 1985).

Interactional studies of politicians examine the negotiation and learning of roles in specific settings. Their ideal research strategy is participant observa-

tion or (if that proves difficult, as it often does in parliamentary settings) semi-structured interviews with manageable numbers of respondents. *The Power of the Purse,* by Richard Fenno (1966), builds a bridge between the structural approach and this interactional enterprise. It begins with a structural framework within which interactional themes are introduced. Thus, Fenno pays close attention to political symbols and meanings and to the negotiations through which they develop. He presents glimpses of negotiations over symbols that occur when committee members try to "project an image" that might help them to "exercise some control over House expectations" or when committee liberals work out the compromise between their political goals and the committee's budgetary conservatism. Huitt's (1961) famous case study of Senator William Proxmire's first year in the Senate builds a bridge, too, for it also begins with a standard structural framework. But Huitt's main goal is to criticize structural assumptions about the power of expectations, about the success of Proxmire's associates in compelling him to conduct himself as they believed he should. Huitt uses participant observation (he was Proxmire's legislative assistant) to reconstruct the negotiations through which Proxmire rejected the role that his fellow senators expected him to play and created for himself an alternative role that these colleagues eventually accepted.

By concentrating on the development of the role of the chair of the Committee on Ways and Means of the U.S. House of Representatives, John Manley (1965, 1969) reaches further into the interactional approach. On the basis of participant observation as a congressional fellow, and through lengthy informal interviews with committee members and staff, Manley reconstructs the negotiations between the chair and the members of his committee through which the chair's role is created and developed. This journey from the structural frameworks of Talcott Parsons to the interactional flows of Erving Goffman is completed with Fenno's (1978) strikingly interactional study of the roles that members of Congress play in their constituencies. Here, Fenno treats Goffman's dramaturgical notions about "the presentation of self" as the central component of representatives' interactions with their constituents. By traveling with members in their districts, he was able to observe this "home style" and to understand how representatives shape their roles to elicit trust, a relationship they renew continually through a flow of presentations. This is a study of negotiations about symbols that mean a great deal to members of Congress and their supporters.[11]

Perhaps owing to their lingering links with the structural tradition, none of these political applications misses the significance of institutional constraints. Nor do they exhibit the other major weakness of interactional approaches: underestimating individual preferences, incentives, and calculations. In his encounters with his colleagues, Huitt's Proxmire becomes obsessed with his institutional chains. In their encounters with their constituents, Fenno's congressmen are consciously guided by their goals.

The Motivational Approach

Unlike its counterparts, the motivational framework has not been unfolded in abstract theoretical discussions. It is instead found in empirical studies of politicians' roles and in the minds of the politicians themselves. I shall later return to this motivational approach to develop it theoretically as a synthesis of rules and reasons for the new institutionalism. For the present, three distinctive assumptions will suffice: (1) that the preferences and incentives that politicians use in adapting

to their institutions are generally acquired before they take up their posts, (2) that rationality is a dominant feature of the parliamentary institutions in which the roles of politicians are embedded, and (3) that an additional rationality in the outlooks of individual politicians affords them perspectives and agendas that are independent of their current interactions.

The motivational approach suggests that the best way to understand the roles of politicians is to try to see them as they do.[12] This is what Heady's (1974) study of the roles of British ministers was designed to capture: "A minister's-eye view of his job." Heady's semistructured interviews focused on recognizable outlooks and patterns of conduct. The first question he put to his ministers was, "What are the most important tasks a minister has to perform?" They told him about their "priorities" and "role conceptions."[13] Since this goal-oriented outlook is the way that politicians usually characterize their own roles, it should not be surprising to find the same tack being taken by many political commentators and historians (e.g., Morgan 1987; Richards 1972; Rose 1982). When Sir Lewis Namier (1968) constructed his influential account of the roles played by eighteenth-century members of Parliament, he paid very close attention to their motivations.

The roles in motivational studies are very much like the "purposive roles" of Wahlke and his colleagues (1962), roles driven by the politician's main purposes (see also Gerlich 1972; Johannes and McAdams 1987; Kim et al. 1983; Kornberg and Mishler 1976; Mishler and Mughan 1978; Cayrol, Parodi, and Ysmal 1971). These images of politicians as rational, goal-oriented actors are incorporated in role typologies and in the variables that underlie them. Matthews's (1960) study of U.S. senators, for instance, used the criteria of status and accomplishments to generate types, such as "patrician" and "agitator," with strong purposive characteristics. Jewell (1983) regards many of the examples I am characterizing as motivational (including work by Barber, Davidson, Wahlke and his colleagues, and Woshinsky) as leading examples of *purposive* studies. His inclusion of Woshinsky's (1973) and Barber's (1965) studies is particularly noteworthy because they are more explicitly motivational than the other two and demonstrate how purposive roles fit within a more fully developed motivational framework.

Reasons shape role choices and interpretations in Woshinsky's (1973) study of 50 French deputies. Woshinsky draws heavily upon Barber (1965), who also emphasizes that politicians shape their own roles. Indeed, one of the most striking characteristics of Barber's study is the artful way in which it focuses on the individual without losing sight of the institutional context. This was, indeed, the principal aim of his investigation: to examine how politicians with different individual characteristics adapt to legislative institutions. Barber's incentive-based study can be contrasted with the work of Richard Fenno, who has likewise paid close attention to motivations but has emphasized instead cognitive goals. This interest in goals was developed furthest in *Congressmen in Committees* (1973), where Fenno dismantled purposive roles to investigate the specific "personal political goals" within them, like "influence in the House" and "reelection."

The great strength of the motivational studies is that they try to take careful account of political reality as it is experienced by the politicians who construct it. Thus, they favor defining the role concept in ordinary language: *the part one plays in an event or process.* To reconstruct such roles satisfactorily, it makes good sense to try to understand them as they are understood by their players, as dynamic interactions between rules and reasons, between institutional constraints and individual preferences.

Consequences for Behavior

The third unconvincing reason behind the collapse of role research in political science is disappointment over the failure to connect role-related attitudes to behavior (Hedlund 1985, 326). Under the aegis of the structural approach, early studies introduced the role concept as a key that would unlock the door between institutional structure and individual behavior. But as it turned out, measures of the structurally defined roles of "delegate" and "trustee" (the two most widely studied roles in the literature) failed to yield the anticipated relationships. Most studies found no results (Friesema and Hedlund 1974, 413–17; Hedlund and Friesema 1972; Wahlke et al. 1962); and one study (Gross 1978) found that delegates were, paradoxically, much *less* likely than were trustees to vote their constituents' wishes. But the conclusion drawn (that roles are in general unrelated to behavior and are therefore trivial matters that need not be investigated) was wholly unconvincing because it was based on peculiar claims and peculiar concepts.

The claims were peculiar because they assumed that roles must be insignificant unless they are linked clearly to "motor" activities such as voting or putting down Questions, as opposed to, say, "mental" activities such as political thinking or political conversation (Converse and Pierce 1986, 681). Surely, mental constructs like roles can be politically significant without affecting how politicians vote. Still, it would be encouraging to see some impact on "motor" activities, too, on traditional measures of political behavior. But much of that was entirely missed because of conceptual problems in these tests. One difficulty was the failure to distinguish between *position roles* and *preference roles*. Another was to mistake the usual measures of "delegates" and "trustees" for measures of roles that exist in the minds of most politicians.

Parliaments are structured by networks of positions such as whip, parliamentary private secretary, and minister. Position roles are associated with positions that *require* the performance of many specific duties and responsibilities. Position roles are, in this way, clearly defined and highly constrained by the institution. Preference roles, by contrast, are associated with positions that require the performance of few specific duties and responsibilities. They are comparatively unconstrained by the institution and are therefore more easily shaped by the preferences of the role players.

Now it must seem obvious, once it is stated, that position roles, like the roles of whips, parliamentary private secretaries, and ministers in Britain are typically as chock-full of behavior as they are politically important. No one would suggest that links might not exist between position roles like these and traditional forms of behavior. As part of their roles, whips, for example, are required to roam the House and touch base with members, attend committees and take notes for the chief whip, and sit in the chamber and help the Speaker activate procedure. Parliamentary private secretaries are not required to do nearly as much. But no one would suggest that they do nothing. In the same vein, ministers vote a lot; for they are required to do so. They also answer Questions and make statements at the despatch box; they listen in committees; they seek support in corridors; and they drink with backbenchers in Westminster's bars. Surely the conclusion that roles are unrelated to behavior does not apply to position roles like these at all.

Instead, the conclusion could only conceivably be applied to preference roles associated with positions like that of the backbencher, positions where very little specific behavior is actually required of incumbents, where there are very few duties and responsibilities that incumbents *must* do but very many duties and

responsibilities that *might* (or might not) be done. Here, role players are freer to exercise their preferences, for the scripts are only partially written. Associated with the position of the British backbencher, for instance, are the preference roles of constituency member, parliament man, policy advocate and ministerial aspirant (which I discuss in more detail later). Many of the roles that have been examined in survey-based studies of politicians are preference roles like these. And they have as much to do with the individual reasons of the role players as with the established rules of the institution. These are the sorts of roles, presumably, to which the conclusion about the lack of connections between roles and behavior was intended to apply.

But did it? I don't think so, because the conclusion was inferred from data on delegates and trustees, from constructs that were not operationalized as roles that exist in the minds of politicians but were, instead, measures of a specific norm or decision rule. This work was done under the structural approach, which has a reductionist tendency to disassemble roles into specific normative components. Thus, the representational roles of delegates and trustees were measured from responses to a question about whether representatives should follow primarily their constituents or their own judgments. Now this norm may indeed be associated with the full-blown roles its name suggests. But in that case, the politicians who play it would be likely to associate the label not just with a single norm but, instead, with a package of motivations (goals and incentives), attitudes, and behaviors that might be regarded as typical of people who devote themselves to playing this part.

These representational roles of ours were at the time the most widely investigated in the discipline. Yet they may not have been *theirs*—they may not have corresponded to any roles the people we were studying typically conceived of (Price 1985). Nevertheless, even these roles were not unrelated to behavior. Later and closer looks suggested that the failure to connect them to behavior may have been due to the fact that other variables were involved in the relationships. Hence, one reaction to the negative findings was to reconceptualize the representational role concept (Alpert 1979). Another was to look more carefully for the relationships to behavior. Eventually, these links were found by focusing on salient policy issues where cues from the district were consistent. They were also found by taking account of the fact that the constituencies politicians think about may vary from issue to issue (Abney and Henderson 1982; Converse and Pierce 1986; Kuklinski and Elling 1977; McCrone and Kuklinski 1979). In sum, the overall empirical results do not look so disappointing after all. But they were disappointing at the time. And, coming on the edge of the march from sociological to economic models and on top of disenchantments with conceptual muddles, the early findings about this norm helped to lock up the study of political roles in the cupboard.

The motivational approach suggests that by directing our concepts and measures toward the roles that exist in the minds of politicians, we will be in the best possible position to explain the consequences of these roles for political behavior. It will be unnecessary to concern ourselves with position roles like the role of the minister, since I assume that by now no one would suggest that what ministers think about the parts they are playing has nothing to do with their conduct. Instead we shall focus our attention on preference roles—roles that are grounded as much in the preferences of the individual as in the rules of the institution.

I have elsewhere identified three such preference roles in the British data as *constituency member*, *generalist*, and *special-*

ist (Searing 1985, 1987). The role of constituency member is focused on the process of looking after constituents. Our measure for this backbench role is based on responses to five interview questions. One very important aspect of the behavior of backbenchers is the amount of time they spend in their constituencies. And the role of the constituency member is strongly related to this (see Halligan et al. 1988). Backbenchers who think of themselves as constituency members spend much more time in their constituencies than do those who do not think of themselves in this way (tau c = .18, gamma = .34 [.01]). Furthermore, the relationship is strengthened considerably by taking account of the constituency's distance from London and therefore from the Palace of Westminster.[14]

Skepticism about connections between informal roles and behavior makes it desirable to look at the role of the constituency member more closely and in association with other independent variables that might be related to the time spent in the constituency. This has been done in the regression reported in Table 3. Here it can be seen that among the independent variables, only role and length of tenure have a significant impact on the *time spent in the constituency;* and that the role variable outperforms all the others including standard workhorses such as electoral security (marginality) and political party. Should this particular behavior seem too much a part of this particular role to count as a robust test, other less obvious probes are possible. Thus, Conservative constituency members might be predicted (unexpectedly) to be more likely to *cross-vote* than Conservative nonconstituency members. They are, in fact, twice as likely to do so (tau c = .18, gamma = .42 [.01]).

Generalists and specialists also have distinctive behaviors that are politically important but not integral parts of their roles. Generalists construct preference

Table 3. Regression of Time in Constituency on a Selected Set of Independent Variables

Independent Variables	Beta	*t*-ratio
Role	.230	3.38**
Tenure	-.182	-2.63*
Marginality	-.083	-1.17
Party	.079	1.07
Distance	-.023	-.033
Value-security	.008	.14
R	.326	—
R^2	.106	—
Adjusted R^2	.080	—

*$p \leq .01$.
**$p \leq .001$.

roles around influencing the influential by pursuing a variety of concrete political issues. Their scattergun approach stands in contrast to the role of the specialist who likewise seeks influence but, instead, selects two or three topics to pursue quietly behind the scenes.

Putting oral and written Questions to ministers is an important activity in the British parliamentary system. Table 4 reports regressions of the number of oral and written Questions asked on a selected set of independent variables, including a role measure that distinguishes generalists and specialists. Before considering the results, we should note that the range in this behavior is considerable: some backbenchers put down no Questions at all while others are responsible for hundreds. Moreover, generalists are twice as likely as specialists to ask many oral and written Questions—which produces correlations for written Questions on the Labour side that run up to tau b = .53, gamma = .90 (.001). Table 4 shows that the only independent variables with substantial effects upon this behavior are role and attendance. But the most striking fact is that again, the measure of a preference role outperforms all the other variables, in-

Table 4. Regressions of Oral and Written Questions on a Selected Set of Independent Variables

Independent Variables	Oral Questions		Written Questions	
	Beta	*t*-ratio	Beta	*t*-ratio
Role	-.218	-2.18*	-.218	-2.99**
Attendance	.210	1.78	.265	2.39*
Marginality	-.109	-1.04	.020	.10
Tenure	.049	.45	-.108	-1.04
Party	.035	.33	.052	.54
R	.355	—	.478	—
R^2	.126	—	.228	—
Adjusted R^2	.081	—	.188	—

*$p \leq .05$.
**$p \leq .01$.

cluding electoral security and political party. When we investigate the roles that are actually in the minds of our politicians, we readily find the anticipated links with their behavior.

It would be possible to review dozens of similar examples of relationships between such preference roles and behavior. I hope, however, that enough has been said to render this third reason for the eclipse of interest in political roles as unconvincing as the first two. Still, it is not sufficient simply to counter the chief objections. What is needed is a new agenda that will help us to build on what was done during the 1960s and early 1970s and also to improve upon it.

Discussion: The Motivational Approach

The motivational approach offers a synthetic framework with which to proceed. Its chief recommendation is that it encourages the reconstruction of political roles as they are understood by their players. Moreover, it builds on studies of purposive roles by articulating what has been implicit in such studies and by adding the elements that are necessary to give them their proper due.

The motivational approach incorporates insights from both the sociological (structural and interactional) and the economic traditions. It integrates these two traditions by recognizing that the roles of politicians are embedded in institutional contexts while at the same time treating the role players as purposive actors with independent standpoints. This integration of sociological and economic perspectives reflects, therefore, a recognition that political roles both constrain their actors and enable them (Hollis and Smith 1986, 272). Thus, the motivational approach brings *homo sociologicus* and *homo economicus* into a flexible framework suitable for studying *homo politicus*.

The image of people as conformists, the image of *homo sociologicus*, is surely needed in some form to account for the fact that roles do greatly constrain their actors. Systems of constitutional and other formal rules specify the principal positions around which roles develop. The positions of whip, minister, and backbencher exist in the British Parliament, for example, because formal rules create them. The politicians who take up such positions, however, help to create the corresponding roles which then become part of the institution's informal

structure. Such roles vary greatly in the degree to which they are determined by the institution's formal structure. The most highly determined are the position roles—constructed around positions that require the performance of many duties and responsibilities.

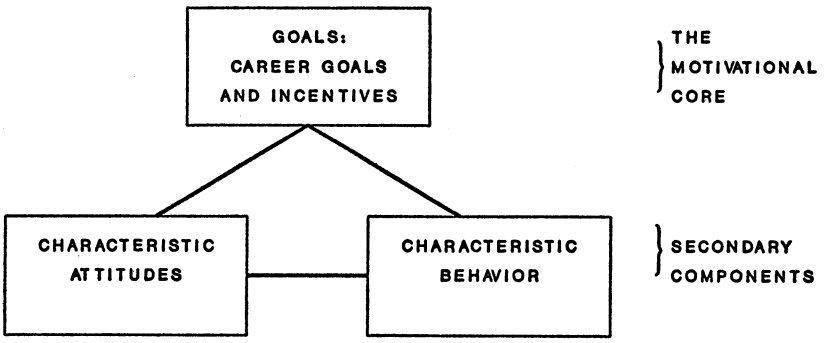
Preference roles, by contrast, allow considerable scope for individual preferences to shape role interpretations. Thus, a number of distinct types of roles can be tethered to these institutional positions. Notice, however, that even on the Westminster's back benches, where the formal rules specify few duties and responsibilities, the number of distinct roles created by individual preferences is far smaller than the number of backbenchers involved. In fact, only four obvious preference roles are associated with the position of the backbencher, each framed by one of Parliament's principal tasks: checking the executive (policy advocates); institutional maintenance (parliament men); making ministers (ministerial aspirants); and, redressing grievances (constituency members). Formal rules may not always determine informal rules, but they always affect them and thereby constrain role choices and role interpretations.

Still, roles also enable their players. The motivational approach makes room for rationality and also takes account of it by providing for an independent standpoint, for a quiet place within the bustle of interaction where the actors' own preferences can shape their role choices and interpretations. Here it draws upon economic models, for these are the models that more than any others in the social sciences, recognize the autonomy of the individual self in individualistic cultures like our own and thereby afford actors independent standpoints (MacIntyre 1984, 31–33). Yet, as Hollis and Smith (1986, 278) point out, the economic definition of rationality is too narrow for the study of political roles; simply having *homo economicus* do the calculations for *homo sociologicus* will not give us what we need. If the new institutionalism is to be truly a synthesis, it needs something more like rationality as understood in ordinary language: rationality as the exercise of reason in the service of desire. Hume taught us that reason by itself can never be a motive for action. Only desire can supply the motivation for which reason seeks paths to satisfaction. The difficulty with economic rational choice models is that their overly cognitive assumptions about self-interest tend to obscure and dismiss the wide variety of desires that shape and reshape our goals—and also our judgments about which courses of action will be most effective for satisfying these goals.

This view of reasonable people adapting to the rules of institutions is very much the way that politicians themselves think about their roles.[15] They think about them as patterns, as configurations of *goals, attitudes,* and *behaviors* that are characteristic of people in particular positions. This conception of political roles provides the basis for the synthesis we have been pursuing between reasons and rules; for this is a conception of reasonable actors pursuing preferences in roles shaped by institutional structures (see Figure 1). It is fortified by the interview transcripts from the British data, which suggest that politicians (1) use the term *role* to refer to the part one plays in an event or process and (2) conceive of these parts as "gestalts"—patterns composed of sets of characteristics.

The goals or preferences in Figure 1 are the core of the roles because they concern the motivational drive. They include both cognitive career goals and emotional incentives. For example, a cognitive career goal in the role of the constituency member is "to look after one's constituents." An emotional incentive in this same role is "the desire for a sense of competence." In shaping roles, the cognitive

Figure 1. The Motivational Approach: Principal Components of Politicians' Roles



career goals are usually dominant. Nevertheless, the emotional incentives, which exist before the career goals, structure their selection and also their interpretation and application. These two motivational elements are intertwined in the role's core. Next, we turn to relationships between this motivational core and the role's secondary components, the characteristic attitudes and behaviors that politicians typically associate with the role. To continue with the constituency member as an example, a characteristic attitude would be the belief that "the redress of grievances is extremely important." A characteristic behavior would be "spending a great deal of time in the constituency." Like the relationships within the motivational core, the relationships between the core and these attitudes and behaviors should always be regarded as subject to investigation rather than as fixed by definition. They should also be expected to vary in strength from one role to another and from one individual to another, notwithstanding that the total gestalt defines the role. Specific behaviors are included as integral parts of the roles because that is how politicians themselves see it.[16]

Let us consider further the motivational core. Max Weber suggested that the best way to understand phenomena like roles is to look first to cognitive goals and then, secondarily, to emotional incentives (1947, 92–95). For instance, the role of the policy advocate is played by people who say that their principal goal is "to check the executive." This helps us to understand how they interpret the role and how the role is interpreted generally in the world at Westminster. But they also speak about emotional incentives such as "rectitude and hubris," which, when folded into the cognitive goals, deepen our understanding of the politicians' purposes and performances. The emotional incentives are ancillary but nevertheless essential (Heiss 1981; Payne et al. 1984). The cognitive career goals dominate our thoughts about these roles; yet they are not sufficient by themselves to explain the dynamics involved. The links between a role's objectives and its attitudes and behaviors cannot be properly understood without understanding how these relationships are driven not just by career goals but also by emotional incentives.

Now let us consider further the relationships between the motivational core and the characteristic attitudes and behaviors. Here, too, the motivational approach assumes the likelihood of independent standpoints and rationality. It

assumes that the roles politicians construct around their objectives are usually constructed reasonably. This is ensured, in part, by the rationality that is built into structural constraints. It is reensured by the role players themselves, who assess and reassess their preferences and adopt attitudes and behaviors appropriate for pursuing them. They evaluate the outcomes of their performances and, in this light, adjust both their preferences and the attitudes and behaviors associated with these preferences. These adjustments are constrained by institutional structures that restrict greatly, even for informal roles, the range as well as the interpretations of the roles that will be developed. These adjustments are created by rational actors who are motivated by more than self-interest and who are more familiar to the philosopher than to the economist.[17] In sum, the roles of politicians are dynamic and adaptive patterns of goals, attitudes, and behaviors.

Two steps are involved in the analysis of motivational roles. One is a mapping operation to identify the major position and preference roles in a political organization. The position roles are comparatively easy to see, for they are closely tied to, and highly defined by, prominent positions in the institutional structure. The preference roles are more difficult to extract and are best discovered through interviews that probe the topic with a number of open-ended questions. Ideally, these discussions should be tape-recorded for careful analysis and coding. Both types of roles require an interpretative analysis, a reconstruction through interpretative understanding and, wherever possible, through quantitative probing of the interpretations as they develop. This is largely a descriptive enterprise; and much role research in political science has been criticized as insufficiently analytic and explanatory (Jewell 1985, 104; see also Biddle 1986, 69). Nevertheless, the roles of politicians must first be understood as the politicians themselves understand them before they can be explained successfully.

The second step, then, is explanatory. It addresses puzzles about connections among the components of political roles, puzzles that are part of larger puzzles about the consequences of these roles and about their origins. Explanatory puzzles about consequences involve (1) relationships between the motivational cores and the characteristic attitudes and behaviors and (2) relationships between the full-blown roles and other attitudes and behaviors with which they are not typically associated but to which they may be related (e.g., cross-voting among constituency members). Explanatory puzzles about the origins of political roles include (1) How are a role's major emotional incentives related to its cognitive career goals? and (2) What are the sources of role choice in the structure of opportunities and preferences? Why, in short, do people take up one role rather than another?

The successful pursuit of this research path presupposes that it is possible to develop from what politicians tell us a reasonably accurate reconstruction of their viewpoints. This presupposes, in turn, that they themselves understand their roles reasonably well. Of course, most of us most of the time are only vaguely aware of why we do what we do (Weber 1947, 111–12). Yet, politicians reflect self-consciously on their principal political roles because such roles are the frameworks of their careers. Most politicians are, in fact, extraordinarily articulate about these roles and are prepared to talk about them with interviewers just as they talk about them with their colleagues. What they have to say is a rich and subtle source of data. It draws attention to a rule that all of us who study politicians would do well to stencil on our briefcases, namely, if one wants to know why politicians do something, the most sensible way to begin the investigation is

to ask them and listen carefully to what they say.

What they say should be enough to convince us that the synthesis proposed by the new institutionalism is much too good an idea to leave to rational choice theorists who seem eager to stuff it into the procrustean bed of their utility maximization models. Lord Wigg (1972) is the only real politician I know whose strategic exploitation of *informal* rules resembles anything like the images conjured up by their models—and he was regarded by his colleagues as an eccentric, whose machinations they dubbed "Wiggery-Pokery." March and Olsen (1989) have clarified the discipline's long march from the formal rules of *homo politicus*, to the informal rules of *homo sociologicus*, to the "unruled" *homo economicus*—from one form of tunnel vision to another. These alternative images of political actors were built into paradigms that led us to study particular subjects and to think about those subjects in particular and sometimes peculiar ways. Each time, we have survived the distortions and learned much more about the political world than we knew before. Still, the time seems long overdue for the sort of synthesis that March and Olsen have suggested, a genuine synthesis of rules and reasons that recognizes the importance of understanding the interactions between them. The political roles of politicians constitute a subject where these interactions can be seen with special clarity, a subject that points directly to motivational frameworks that, compared to their alternatives, are more rational, less muddled, better oriented to behavior, and well suited for investigating how rules and reasons interact to create political roles that are much too important to continue to be overlooked.

Notes

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1. These members of Parliament (N = 521) were interviewed during 1972 and 1973, the middle years of the Conservative Health government. A response rate of 83% applied to ministers and backbenchers alike. Reacting to a combination of open- and closed-ended questions, they discussed their roles at length in the context of tape-recorded interviews about parliamentary careers, political institutions, and political values. Since this is not a probability sample, conventional significance tests are not strictly appropriate. Nevertheless, they will be reported in order to give a general sense of the strength or weakness of the associations we observe; and given the very large proportion of the population sampled, these tests will be extremely conservative indicators.

2. More irritating still for rational choice models is the fact that many informal rules are actually designed to encourage people to behave some of the time as though they are not rational egoists (e.g., Elster 1989; Jackson 1987).

3. Selective recruitment is the most obvious alternative explanation for the greater voting cohesion on the Conservative and Labour front benches than on their respective back benches. This explanation would suggest that those recruited to the front benches are mainly members of Parliament who either agree with their party leaders or are psychological conformists, or both. However, further analyses of the respondents' political values and policy preferences show that within each party, the distribution of opinion on the front benches resembles the distribution of opinion on the back benches. This is perhaps not surprising, at least after the fact, because each party needs, for the sake of party unity, to represent on the front bench most of its significant parliamentary groups and factions. The front benches also include their share of difficult characters, for they have long taken in potential troublemakers to silence them under the collective responsibility rule.

4. Some of the worst muddles were resolved early on. But these efforts had little impact on subsequent research. See Neiman and Hughes 1951 and Gross, Mason, and McEachern 1966. In the last section of this essay, I shall argue for the general (though certainly not exclusive) utility of a "politician-focused" definition of roles as configurations of goals, attitudes, and behaviors that are characteristic of people in particular positions.

5. Stryker and Statham (1985, 331). Structural-functional analysis proposed to study the polity, economy, and society as vast blueprints of roles with each of these "basic units" (roles) clearly specified and with each individual associated with a series of basic units.

6. (Biddle 1986, 70–71). The tendency of the structural approach to create "oversocialized" images of people in worlds of homogeneity and conformity was corrected somewhat by Robert Merton's (1957, 1963) observation that the expectations established for a role often involve inconsistencies. Recent structural research has built on these observations and now takes it for granted that some confusion and inconsistency is the usual state of affairs rather than a departure from normality (Handel 1979; Heiss 1981).

7. Thus, in his study of British and Italian members of Parliament, Putnam interpreted as roles several specific rules for cognition (focus on technical matters or on national interests) (1973, 124–25). Both sorts of definitions are also found in Davidson's (1969) study of roles in the U.S. House of Representatives and in Jewell and Patterson's (1977) review identifying roles that concern job conceptions and fit politicians' understandings of the role concept (broker, committee man) and other roles that concern very particular cognitions and norms (e.g., "executive-oriented"). This tendency to reduce the role concept to one or two norms, such as the proper attitude toward pressure groups, was carried furthest by Newton (1974) in his survey of Birmingham council members.

8. Certainly, we have learned a great deal about legislative behavior by studying trustees, delegates, and politicos. And certainly we, as analysts, may find it valuable to continue to characterize these as roles. But let us be clear that a few specific norms do not usually make a role in the minds of the politicians we study, a point made quite effectively by Converse and Pierce (1986) in their study of French deputies.

9. Mead (1934) argued that social interaction produces a person's mind, as well as self, in an on-going process. From this viewpoint, even the personality becomes no more than a set of social roles that the individual is currently playing.

10. Interactional approaches reject the assumption that behavior is determined by the external force of established norms. Instead, they argue that it is determined by the on-going flow of interactions with one's associates. The individual's basic goals and emotional incentives are, however, frequently overlooked in the interactionists' empirical accounts, which are typically sociologistic and depict people far more as social products than as social producers (see Stryker and Serpe 1982). This tendency to submerge the rational individual in the flow of interaction has been corrected by attributing motivational significance to "chance desires" (Turner 1976) and by attributing conditioning effects to institutional contexts (Handel 1979; Stryker and Statham 1985, 313). Yet neither corrective has been carried far enough to secure for the individual a convincing autonomous viewpoint.

11. Following in Fenno's footsteps, Cain, Ferejohn, and Fiorina (1987) traveled with British members of Parliament in their constituencies. Compared to Fenno, however, they spent less time analyzing the social psychological exchanges and more time analyzing what their subjects actually did and why they did it. This study does examine interactions, but it is perhaps best interpreted as a bridge between the interactional enterprise and the motivational approach.

12. The methods used by motivational studies have been varied, but the most successful has usually proved to be the semistructured interview, an alternative between the structuralists' detailed questionnaires and the soaking and poking of the interactionists. The numbers of individuals studied is frequently in between, too, since convincing motivational accounts require substantial samples, whereas the need for elaborate discussions makes it difficult for these samples to become very large.

13. In the same vein, when Budge et al. (1972) examined the roles of councillors in Glasgow, they, like their respondents, interpreted this subject to mean "the question of what councillors should do." The role types they produced were therefore constructed around career goals. See also Mitchell 1985 and Clapp 1963.

14. In East Anglia, the South East, and London, the correlation rises to tau c = .29, gamma = .73 (.001).

15. Their thinking is used as the point of departure here, because although ignoring it may be necessary for certain theoretical purposes, such strategies often create role concepts that have little to do with the political behaviors we seek to explain. In particular, it seems desirable to avoid definitions of roles that include only observable behavior, since politicians understand the concept to mean far more than that (see Biddle 1979, 58). Politicians want to know what is going on in the *minds* of their associates—and so do we. This politician-focused perspective also suggests that although the alternative rational choice strategy of using unrealistic assumptions about politicians' motivations as theoretical premises (the "as if" strategy) may help to predict events or clarify normative claims, it is usually ill-suited for constructing satisfactory *explanations* of *empirical* phenomena. Empirical explanations are unlikely to be convincing when their basic theoretical premises are presumed to be incorrect (McKeown 1986, 45; Moe 1979).

16. The motivational approach does not ignore questions about relationships between role attitudes and role behaviors. These linkages must be shown empirically to exist in order for specific items to

count as part of the definitions of specific roles.

17. As Hollis and Smith put it, this rationality involves much more than the calculation of expected utilities for means to achieve ends that remain unquestioned: "Our actors *interpret* information, *monitor* their performance, *reassess* their goals. The leading idea is that of reasoned judgment, not of manipulation" (1986, 283).

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