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ONE PERSON, ONE LOBBYIST?
AMERICAN PUBLIC CONSTITUENCIES AND ORGANIZED REPRESENTATION

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Abstract:

What kinds of public groups generate extensive and active organized political representation? Are large, financially well-off, socially engaged, or politically extreme groups better represented in American national policymaking? I formulate a new approach to these old questions. Using a new dataset combining information on the activities of 1,710 advocacy organizations in Washington with information on the aggregate features of 140 of the public constituencies that these organizations claim to represent, I establish baseline correlations between the demographics, engagement and participation levels, and political views of American public factions and their levels of representation by organized advocates in Congress and the administration. I demonstrate that the concerns of some types of ethnic, religious, occupational, and ideological groups are more likely to be heard in the national political debate.

Critiques of American democracy often begin with the premise that some interests are unfairly overrepresented or underrepresented in national politics. Yet even in attempts to define ideal-typical democratic governance, some political factions, such as those with greater support in the electorate or more strongly held opinions, are said to deserve greater sway with policymakers (see Dahl 1963). Despite many empirical and normative theories of differential representation and influence, scholars have not fully described the types of political factions that are most actively represented in Washington. We have long endeavored to find out "who governs?" (Dahl 1961) by understanding "who gets what, when, and how?" (Lasswell 1958), but we have made only limited progress in understanding the first stage of the process: what kinds of interests get best represented in the political system?

Schattsneider's (1960) observation that political organization constitutes the "mobilization of bias" has encouraged scholars of interest groups to view their field as the natural home for testing theories of differential representation and influence. More than 1,700 advocacy organizations in Washington now claim to speak on behalf of a public constituency in American national politics. Washington features organizations representing hundreds of social, religious, ethnic, and occupational groups and supporters of ideological or single-issue political perspectives. This "advocacy explosion" raises the fundamental question of who gets represented by these interest organizations.[1] Yet scholars of interest groups have not offered a compelling account of the characteristics of public groups that are overrepresented by organized advocates, much less offered a theory to account for differences in levels of representation. In a review of the field's attempts to study this topic, Lowery and Gray (2004) argue that the differential mobilization and influence of some groups over others has been the primary concern of interest

[1] For reviews of the rise of organized advocacy, see Berry 1989 and Walker 1991.

group scholars but the methods used to assess bias in the interest group system have been inadequate. According to Lowery and Gray, most attempts have involved simple counts of categories of organizations in Washington with comparisons to the size of their public populations of supporters.

After a half-century of close study, the relationship between national organized representation and competition among public political factions remains unclear. Does the success of the National Rifle Association offer proof that gun owners have an edge in transforming their opinions into national policy? Does the prominence of organizations representing doctors and lawyers in national politics demonstrate that all small occupational groups will have their interests better represented than other large classes of workers? Do some ethnic or religious groups have similar inherent advantages in the political process? Are large, financially well-off, socially engaged, or politically extreme groups better represented?

I offer a new approach to these old questions. I compare the American public constituencies that correspond to sectors of interest organizations active in Washington. I analyze the relationship between the extent of a constituency's organized representation and their demographics, their levels of social engagement and participation, and their political views. For the first time, we can systematically describe the associations between the attributes of political factions in the public and their organized representation.

Previous scholarship on interest groups has concentrated on the factors that allow organizations to mobilize people and resources to survive and succeed (see Olson 1971; Walker 1991; Baumgartner and Leech 1998). The important organizational factors that these studies identify, such as staff size and budget, are often said to produce success independently of the claimed constituencies of these organizations. Yet the organizing process clearly benefits some

groups at the expense of others. To evaluate the functioning of the democratic system, we must learn which constituencies are best represented and why some groups have an advantage in the political process. The causal connections between constituency attributes and active organized representation are difficult to isolate, however, because the success of organized representatives may create feedback effects that change the character of their constituencies. Indeed, uncovering the full causal chain likely requires detailed observation of many political factions over an extended time-series with an analysis of their organizational mobilization. I cannot offer this type of data or the elaborate causal model that accounts for each step of this process.

The first step in generating this kind of explanation, however, is both important and achievable here. We can analyze the descriptive associations between constituency characteristics and their organized representation. With this analysis, we will know what kinds of public groups are well-represented. In and of itself, this descriptive information helps us understand the biases in the system of organized representation and it could be used to predict which types of interests will be promoted by political institutions and public policy. Descriptive analysis also provides the questions and the tools to promote future studies of how and why some types of political factions get better represented in the political system. Without an account of who is likely to be advantaged by organized representation, we cannot hope to uncover the causal story behind differential representation and influence in American politics.

Constituency Characteristics and Organized Representation

Political constituencies, in my analysis, are public subpopulations with a shared characteristic used by an organized leadership as the basis for representation. In Philip Converse's (1964) famous study of public belief systems, more than forty per cent of the

American population defined their partisan affiliation or voting intention primarily by associating the leaders they favor with a broad social constituency with which they identify. Many citizens therefore view their participation in politics as part of a group's effort to influence outcomes. As Truman (1951) outlines, most Americans are members of many political constituencies and may devote their energies to one or more efforts to mobilize political interests and ideas. Each group's character and social position, Truman argues, are likely to affect their potential and actual influence in the political system.

Constituencies vary along many dimensions, including whether their shared characteristic is an ethnic or religious tie, an occupation, a political viewpoint, or some other social quality. For example, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People represents African-Americans and the Sierra Club represents environmentalists. Instead of treating these types of constituencies as categorically distinct, however, I see both African-Americans and environmentalists as examples of political factions and I analyze their strengths and weaknesses for success in generating organized representation.

Case studies of the policy process in specific fields indicate that interest organizations representing many types of public constituencies often play a central role in defining political options and influencing government decisions. Baumgartner and Jones (1993), for example, provide evidence that organized scientists, anti-tobacco advocates, and environmentalists all had major effects on policy development. Melnick (1994) argues that organizations representing the handicapped, welfare recipients, and anti-hunger activists were instrumental in the development and enforcement of public policy. Skrentny (2002) profiles the success of representatives of ethnic groups and women in achieving fundamental policy change. Berry (1999) reviews the activities of "citizen groups" and concludes that they often direct the Congressional agenda. In

their meta-analysis of research on the influence of political organizations in sociology and political science, Burstein and Linton (2002) conclude that interest organizations have a substantial impact on policy outcomes in most studies, especially when they represent widely-held perspectives. According to Patashnik (2003), even in the high-profile cases where interest organizations reportedly fail to influence legislation, they alter the policy outcomes after debate moves to other policymaking venues. Research has shown that representatives of public groups are influential in the political process, therefore, but we do not know what kinds of groups are best represented.

To make such an assessment, scholars face three theoretical hurdles. First, we need to define and measure the extent of organized representation provided for each political faction. The most common starting point for such an analysis is a count of the number of organizations and staff that lobby on behalf of each type of political interest (see Lowery and Gray 2004; Salisbury 1984). Some public groups, however, may be represented by a sector of organizations that is more prominent in national politics and more involved in important policymaking venues. To move beyond case studies of the success of particular political organizations, we need broad and comparable measures of organized representation in national policymaking (see Baumgartner and Leech 1998). In my conceptualization, the extent of a political faction's organized representation includes both the size of their representative sector of organizations and the involvement of that sector in the political debate and in the most active policymaking venues in Congress and the administration. I ask which constituencies have the most extensive and active organized leadership representing their interests in American national politics.

The second theoretical problem is to classify the public groups that serve as constituencies for each sector of interest organizations. Rather than attempt to assess whether

organizational leaders properly represent their claimed constituencies, I take the representative claims of the interest organizations at face value. If an interest organization claims to speak on behalf of an ethnic, religious, or occupational group or other social category, I conceptualize the organization as a representative of that public group. If an interest organization claims to speak on behalf of a particular ideological or issue perspective in national politics, I conceptualize the organization as a representative of the public group of supporters for that political perspective. If an organization claims to represent multiple types of public groups, I conceptualize them as representatives of more than one constituency. This approach leaves open the question of how well the interests of each constituency are expressed by its organized advocates but enables an evaluation of organized representation that does not rely on slippery researcher judgments of who represents whom.

The final theoretical hurdle of the analysis is to identify the attributes of a constituency that may affect their organized representation. Potentially important characteristics include aggregate descriptions of the distribution and central tendency of a constituency's resource levels, their degree of social engagement, their degree of political participation, and their political views. Social science literature offers surprisingly few predictions about which types of constituency characteristics could lead to more extensive interest representation in Washington. Despite the high level of interest in who gets represented, there is no scholarly literature that compares constituency attributes across American political groups with information on the extent of the interest representation of those constituencies. As a result, there are few studies that make direct predictions about the results of such a comparison.

Yet there is a large literature on the kinds of individual attributes that are likely to promote mass political activity. An individual's socioeconomic attributes, level of information

and engagement, and attitudes toward government all affect their political affiliation and behavior (see Zaller 1992). These individual characteristics, when aggregated to the constituency-level, may affect the mobilization of group interests. As members of a public faction develop the capacity and intention to become active in politics, the leadership of that faction should be more likely to expand their representative operations and to gain an advantage in policy discussion. Though most scholars look at how individual attributes promote individual political participation, similar attributes may promote the development and success of representative interest groups.

The first category of constituency attributes likely to affect interest mobilization is demographics. Democratic theory generally suggests that large groups should be represented more extensively than small groups (see Dahl 1963). Olson (1971) famously suggests that the opposite is more likely; small groups should find it easier to organize for collective action. Lowery and Gray (2004) also argue that smaller groups are likely to be overrepresented in Washington. Given our geographic system of legislative representation, where groups stand in the political process may also depend on where they live. Scholars of social movements (*e.g.* McAdam 1985) sometimes argue that geographic concentration promotes mobilization. Some scholars of the American Congress, in contrast, argue that regionally concentrated political factions often fail to generate political traction (see Sanders 1999). There is a more contentious debate over the degree to which the socio-economic status of different groups affects representation. Truman (1951) argues that the strategic social position of different political factions is one important factor in their ability to actively participate in policymaking. Neo-Marxist scholars, primarily analyzing local political activity (see Gaventa 1980), argue that upper class groups are the only likely participants in policymaking because they will prevent or

discourage organization by other groups. Though these elite theorists typically do not distinguish among occupational status, education level, and income when making their claims, all three of these attributes could affect organized political mobilization. Basic demographic factors may therefore account for differences in the political representation of public groups.

The second category of constituency attributes that likely effect mobilization is social and political engagement. Scholars of "issue publics" (*e.g.* Krosnick, 1990) argue that only public subpopulations that pay close attention to an issue will affect political decision-making. Zaller (1992) argues that general interest in and understanding of politics may promote increased connections to the political system, especially if citizens are attentive to the mass media. According to this analysis, the level of political interest, attention, and understanding within a public group could each promote mobilization. Scholars of individual political participation often find that feelings of high internal political efficacy may also encourage involvement. Groups that pay attention to public debate, understand policy issues, take an interest in politics, and believe that they have the capacity to participate are likely to have an advantage in democratic competition.

The level of civic and political participation within each political faction may also affect the extent of organized mobilization that arises to represent each group. Scholars of civic engagement (*e.g.* Putnam 2000) argue that membership in civic organizations helps promote political involvement. The willingness of potential constituents to become members of political organizations should also affect whether a public faction will build a strong representative leadership. In addition, there are many specific political activities that may affect a political faction's chances of gaining attention from policymakers, including voting, volunteering, contributing money, attending meetings or rallies, and contacting government officials. It seems

likely that the more that a political faction engages in these kinds of activities, the more likely they will generate extensive and active organized representation in Washington.

The final category of constituency attributes likely to be linked to organized political representation is political views. Public choice scholarship derived from Downs (1957) implies that the extremity of a group's political opinions will help determine their likely influence in the political system. Lowery and Gray (2004) similarly argue that groups "at the center of the distribution of opinions in society" will be overrepresented. Newer spatial models of party and interest group systems (*e.g.* Axelrod and Bennett, 1993) predict that the internal ideological cohesion of a group will also help determine its success. Alternative models of political participation argue that general social attitudes will be more important than ideological views. Putman (2000), for example, argues that interpersonal trust and confidence in government institutions will be critical to democratic participation. Dahl (1963) argues that, in order to participate, citizens must believe that the government is likely to respond to their concerns. If these beliefs about politics and society differ across political factions, they could promote different levels of organized mobilization.

Variations in political views, constituent resources, and engagement and participation levels are clearly not independent of one another. Many of these group attributes are also not exogenous to the level of organized political leadership that has arisen to promote a constituency's interest. Most interest organizations, for example, attempt to promote mass political participation, public engagement, and belief in government responsiveness. Even if these group attributes are associated with higher levels of organized representation, therefore, we cannot conclude that the attitudes and behaviors came prior to the organizational mobilization and influence. Without establishing baseline correlations between constituency characteristics

and organized political representation, however, we cannot begin to assess claims about how why some groups generate more representation than others.

With an analysis of the types of political factions that are well-represented by interest organizations, we can understand who benefits from one important means of mobilizing to influence political outcomes. Yet I do not claim to assess all interest intermediation processes in national politics. The aggregation of factions into party coalitions and the representation of geographic constituencies through electoral competition, for example, are obviously critical aspects of the American political system. I focus on representative interest organizations because their activities offer an important view of the process of interest mobilization, not because organizations are always critical actors in factional competition. Different types of political factions may benefit from electing legislators or becoming integrated in the coalitions of the national parties. With thousands of interest organizations working on behalf of political factions in Washington, however, it is important to ask who gets represented by this form of political mobilization. The focus on organized representation does not offer a full analysis of factional competition in American politics but any analysis of political representation that did not include interest organizations would also be incomplete.

Data and Method

To analyze the relationship between the characteristics of public factions and the extent of their organized representation in Washington, I combine data on the size, prominence, and activity levels of sectors of interest organizations with data on the demographics, public engagement, civic participation, and political views of the constituencies that they claim to represent. I include all organizations with an office in Washington that aspire to represent a

section of the public broader than their own institution, staff, and membership. I therefore combine the study of the organized representation of ethnic, religious, demographic, and occupational groups with the study of the organized representation of particular ideological or issue perspectives. Individual business policy offices, trade associations, charities, and governmental units are not included in the population.

The primary methodological approach of my analysis is data compilation with content analysis from reference sources and organizational Web sites. With two research assistants, I used the *Washington Representatives* directory and organizational Web sites to identify all Washington organizations that seek to represent public social groups or issue perspectives in national politics.[2] We identified 1,710 organizations. Using a content analysis of reference text descriptions and organizational Web sites, we categorized these organizations into 170 sectors that correspond to the constituencies that they seek to represent. Many organizations were included in more than one sector. In a reliability analysis, our categorizations were consistent for more than 90 per cent of the organizations. Where available, we compared our categorizations with those used by scholars of sectors of the interest group universe (*e.g.* Hertzke 1988; Hofrenning 1995; Berry 1999; Shaiko 1999; Hays 2001).[3]

[2] If an organization's Web site was not listed in reference text descriptions, we searched for the organization's site using *Google*. If we found no indication that the organization was still in Washington, we attempted to contact the office.

[3] Our categorizations were also consistent with those used by other scholars for more than 90 per cent of organizations.

For each organization, I recorded the number of internal political representatives on their Washington staff.[4] To assess prominence in the Washington political debate, I recorded the number of times that each organization was mentioned in *Roll Call*, *The Hill*, *National Journal*, *Congress Daily*, *The Hotline*, *Congressional Quarterly*, and *The Washington Post* as recorded in the *Lexis-Nexis* index from 1995-2004. This Washington political media reports on the important activities of the national political community. To assess organizational involvement in policymaking venues, I used one measure for Congressional committee hearings and another for administrative agency rulemaking. In analyses of particular issue domains, measures of organizational participation in these venues are common (see Hays 2001; Laumann and Knoke 1987; Berry 1999; Holyoke 2003; Salisbury 1984). To assess involvement in Congressional committee hearings, I searched for organizational names in the sections describing those who gave testimony from 1995-2004 in the database of *Federal Document Clearing House Congressional Testimony* maintained by *Congressional Quarterly*. Appearances in Congressional hearings indicate that Members of Congress are soliciting the views of an organization when considering current policy issues. To assess organizational involvement in administrative agency rulemaking, I searched for organizational names in the database maintained by *Lexis-Nexis* that contains the Final Rules and Administrative Decisions issued by over 100 executive branch decision-making bodies from 1995-2004. Interest organizations commonly appear in these rules and decisions if administrators are responding to their written comments submitted in a public review of proposed rule changes or public comment period. We collected complete information on 1,454 organizations out of 1,710 in the population.

[4] I use the number of political staff reported in *Washington Representatives* (2004).

To assess the representation of each constituency, I aggregate this organizational data for each sector. I record the number of organizations in each sector, the number of political staff representing each constituency, the number of times that the Washington political media mentioned an organization in each sector, the number of times that someone from an organization in each sector testified before Congressional committees, and the number of times that the organizations in each sector were mentioned in administrative agency final rules.[5] This provides a comprehensive assessment of the aggregate level of organized representation for each constituency, their prominence in Washington, and their activity level in two important policymaking venues.

This type of data compilation, like all research methods, has its strengths and weaknesses. The primary strengths are the breadth of analysis and the reliance on measures of behavior rather than self-reports of success. The primary weakness is the reliance on only publicly available data. Yet this research strategy compares favorably to others pursued in the field. In their review of the literature, Andrews and Edwards (2004) argue that the survey-based research common in the field has had the benefit of large samples but has offered a poor indication of influence whereas most other interest group studies have been too narrow. Baumgartner and Leech (1998) also argue that the small-scale of most interest group research has been a major limiting factor in the accumulation of knowledge and in the ability of scholars to create and test theories of interest group success. The five indicators of the extent of organized political representation used here constitute the widest collection of data yet collected on interest organizations representing public factions in national politics.

[5] All data on organizational prominence and activities cover the period January 1, 1995 through December 31, 2004. All sectors include more than one organization.

To describe the characteristics of each constituency for these organizations, I use pooled public opinion survey data from the General Social Survey (GSS) from 1972-2004. I use the cumulative GSS to isolate a sufficient number of constituency members among the 45,803 total respondents to the survey.[6] As a result, I can record the aggregate features of 140 of the constituencies, including 14 ethnic groups, 8 religious groups, 43 occupational groups, 11 ideological groups, 48 groups of supporters for single-issue perspectives, and 16 other social categories. To identify ethnic, religious, ideological, and demographic constituencies in the survey data, I use respondent self-reports. To identify occupational constituencies, I use my coding of the International Standard Occupational Codes used by the GSS. To identify single-issue constituencies, I use strong supporters of the sector's issue position where the GSS contained relevant questions. For some organizational sectors, I had to construct scales of multiple questions to identify the relevant group of supporters.[7]

For each constituency, I record data on their demographics, their mean levels of public engagement, their rates of political participation, and their political views. The demographic information includes the group's population size, mean socioeconomic status (SES), mean education level, mean income, and level of geographic concentration.[8] The information on public

[6] GSS data is weighted to exclude oversamples of African-Americans and non-respondents.

[7] For example, I constructed the pro-choice and pro-life constituencies by identifying the group of respondents who were in favor of or opposed to legalized abortion in each of four different circumstances.

[8] For size, I report the per cent of survey respondents in each constituency. For SES, education level, and income, the group mean is compared to the overall mean in the American population among respondents to the same set of surveys. The SES indicator is the standard measure of occupational status used by the GSS. The education level indicator measures the highest year of school completed. The income indicator measures the inflation-adjusted annual income of a respondent's household. For geographic concentration, I report the total difference between the population per cent among all respondents and the group population per cent in the nine geographic regions identified in the GSS.

engagement includes the group's mean level of attention to the news media, mean level of interest in politics, mean level of political efficacy, and mean level of political understanding.[9] The information on civic and political participation includes the group's mean level of civic membership along with their rates of membership in a political club, voting in the previous election, volunteering in charitable ventures, contributing monetarily to a social or political cause, attending a meeting or rally for a political cause, and contacting a government official.[10] The information on political views includes a scale of the extremity of the group's mean opinions about policy on the environment, health, education, welfare, and the military, the level of ideological cohesion within the group, the group's rate of interpersonal trust, the group's mean

[9] For attention to news, I use a five point scale measuring the frequency with which respondents read a daily newspaper. For interest in politics, I combined two similar scales used in different years to create a four point scale of the respondent's self-reported level of interest. For political efficacy, I combined two similar scales used in different years to create a five point scale of the respondent's belief that people like them have a say in government actions. For political understanding, I combined two similar scales used in different years to create a five point scale of the respondent's self-reported level of understanding of political issues. For all categories, I use the difference between the group mean and the overall mean in the American population among respondents to the same set of surveys.

[10] For civic membership, I use the mean number of organizational memberships reported by respondents. For political membership, I use the per cent of respondents who report belonging to a political club. For voting rate, I use the per cent of respondents who report voting in the previous Presidential election. For volunteering rate, I use the per cent of respondents who report doing volunteer charity work (using two questions used in different years). For contributing rate, I use the per cent of respondents who report contributing money to a political or social cause (using two questions used in different years). For meeting attendance rate, I use the per cent of respondents who report attending a political meeting or rally (using two questions used in different years). For all categories, I use the difference between the group mean and the overall mean in the American population among respondents to the same set of surveys.

level of confidence in government, and the group's rate of belief in government responsiveness.[11]

For each constituency attribute and each measure of the extent of organized representation, I report the bivariate Pearson correlation coefficient along with an indicator of the results of a two-tailed significance test. In order to illustrate important relationships, I also provide several bivariate scatter plots with labels for exemplar constituency sectors. Though the intention is only to describe relationships and encourage further analysis, rather than to identify causal mechanisms, I attempt to point out any spurious or inconsistent associations.

Results

There are many important relationships between constituency characteristics and organized representation in Washington. The results do not provide clear across the board support for any theoretical perspective, but they illustrate that the demographics of public factions along with their degree of public engagement, level of mass participation, and political views are associated with the extent and prominence of their organized representation. Constituency characteristics are most commonly correlated with the number of representative

[11] For opinion extremity, I use the sum of the absolute value of the difference between the overall mean and the group mean on three point scales of respondents' preferences regarding the appropriate level of spending on five problem areas. For ideological dispersion, I use the difference between the standard deviation of the public's reported ideological position on a seven point liberal-conservative scale and the standard deviation within the group. For personal trust, I use the difference between the per cent of group respondents who say that you can trust other people most of the time and the per cent of all respondents. For government confidence, I combine two three-point scales of the respondent's level of confidence in the legislative and executive branches of government to create a five-point scale; I use the difference between the group mean and the overall mean on this scale. For government responsiveness, I use the difference between the per cent of group members who believe that the government is interested in the average man and the per cent in the total population.

organizations and political staff generated by each constituency, however, rather than direct indicators of their aggregate prominence or policymaking activity. This suggests that other organizational attributes and policymaker interests complicate any direct connection between a constituency's success in mobilizing organizations to speak on their behalf and the prominence and policymaking activity of those organizations.

Table 1 reports the correlations between demographic factors and the organized representation of public constituencies. The per cent of the U.S. population that a constituency includes is not significantly related to any measure of their organized representation and the sign of the coefficients is inconsistent across different indicators. Larger constituencies do not appear to generate more extensive organized representation. The mean socio-economic status of a constituency, in contrast, is significantly correlated with the number of organizations and staff representing it; this correlation does not result, however, in a significant relationship between socio-economic status and the prominence or activity level of their organized representation. The mean education level of a constituency is only significantly correlated with the number of organizations that a constituency generates whereas the mean income level of a constituency is significantly correlated with the number of organizations and staff that represent a constituency and their aggregate level of participation in administrative rulemaking. The geographic concentration of a constituency is not significantly related to any measure of organized representation, though the sign is consistently negative; if there is any relationship, it is most likely that regional geographic dispersion promotes representation.

[Insert Table 1]

Figure 1 illustrates the lack of significant association between population size and the number of representative organizations for each constituency. Small constituencies such as

doctors and scientists are very well-represented in Washington, as are large constituencies such as environmentalists and women. Being a large group does not guarantee a large representative sector; automobile drivers, for example, have not produced a large number of representative organizations despite their size. Figure 2 illustrates that there is a relationship between the socio-economic status of a constituency and the size of their representative sector. I include a line of best fit to show this positive relationship. Well-off constituencies such as Jews and lawyers are well-represented whereas groups that are less well-off than average, such as service workers and supporters of restrictive immigration policies, are not as well-represented.

[Insert Figures 1 & 2]

Table 2 reports the correlations between factors related to constituency public engagement and organized representation. A constituency's mean level of attention to the news media is positively and significantly related to the number of organizations and political staff that represent them and the number of times that their representatives testify before Congressional committees. The mean level of interest in politics for a constituency is unrelated to their organized representation but the sign of the coefficients is consistently positive. A constituency's mean level of political efficacy is significantly related to the size of their representative sector and staff of political representatives along with the number of times that their representatives testify in Congress. The mean level of political understanding reported by constituency members is not significantly related to any measure of their organized representation. Whereas a constituency's interest in or understanding of politics is uncorrelated with their representation, therefore, their level of attention to news and their political efficacy predict greater levels of organized representation.

[Insert Table 2]

Figure 3 illustrates the relationship between the mean level of internal political efficacy for each constituency and the number of times that their representatives testify before Congressional committees. Constituencies with higher than average political efficacy, such as government professionals and farmers, have higher levels of Congressional testimony whereas representatives of constituencies with low levels of efficacy, such as college students and the non-religious, testify less often. Many organizational sectors with average levels of efficacy in their constituency do not testify very often. The relationship between efficacy and testimony is interesting because testimony was not significantly related to constituency demographics; as a result, the relationship between efficacy and testimony remains significant even after controlling for socio-economic status. Yet the relationship could be a product of reverse causality. Public constituencies may accurately measure their effectiveness in politics; government professionals, for example, may be more efficacious because their concerns are heard more often by policymakers.

[Insert Figure 3]

Table 3 reports the correlations between the civic and political participation of constituency members and the extent and prominence of their organized representation. The average number of civic organizations to which constituency members belong is consistently and significantly related to all measures of their organized representation. The rate of membership in a political club within each constituency, in contrast, is significantly and positively related only to the number of organizations and staff that represent the constituency in Washington. The rate of voting turnout in a constituency is significantly related to the number of organizations and staff that represent the group and the number of times that their representatives are mentioned in the Washington media and testify before Congressional committees. Constituency voting rate is

not related, however, to a representative sector's level of activity in unelected administrative agencies. A constituency's rate of charitable volunteering is only significantly related to the number of organizations that represent them. Both a constituency's rate of contributing financially to a social or political cause and their rate of attending a meeting or rally for a cause are significantly and positively related to the number of organizations and political staff that represent their interests in Washington. The rate of contacting government officials within a constituency is not significantly related to their organized representation, though the sign of the coefficients is uniformly positive. The results indicate that civic membership and voting rate are the only types of constituency participation that are consistently related to active organized representation but that most forms of constituency participation are correlated with the number of organizations and staff that represent a constituency.

[Insert Table 3]

Figure 4 illustrates the relationship between a constituency's mean number of memberships in civic organizations and the number of times that their national representatives are mentioned in the Washington print media. Constituencies with high levels of civic membership, such as law enforcement and teachers, are prominent in reports on Washington policymaking. Constituencies with low civic participation, such as Asian-Americans or supporters of criminal justice reform, are not as prominent in these reports. Civic membership and voting rate are the only constituency characteristics in any category that are significantly related to organizational sector mentions in the Washington print media. The results could be a product of reverse causality, however, given that constituency members could mention their organized representatives when naming memberships in civic groups. Since a constituency's rate of participation in a political club is not significantly related to Washington media prominence,

however, the results may also provide support for the claims of some scholars (*e.g.* Putnam 2000) that local civic engagement is critical to generating public political advocacy.

[Insert Figure 4]

Figure 5 illustrates the relationship between constituency voting rate and the number of political staff that represent each constituency in Washington. Constituencies with high voting rates, such as non-profit workers and economic conservatives, generate more extensive representation. Constituencies with low voting rates, such as supporters of public housing expansion and manufacturing workers, generate fewer political representatives. Given that representative organizations attempt to encourage voting among their constituents, we cannot necessarily conclude that the high voting rate preceded the development of organized representation. Voting is the most common type of political participation, however, and may offer a signal of constituency importance, especially for elected officials. Yet the relationship between organized representation and voting rate does not seem to be a product of simple rational calculation of the expected votes from a constituency gained by granting access to its leaders. In another analysis, the interaction between voting rate and constituency size, which is a measure of expected votes from a constituency, is not significantly related to any measure of organized representation.

[Insert Figure 5]

Table 4 reports the correlations between factors related to constituency political views and organized representation. The extremity of a constituency's mean opinions on political issues is not significantly related to the extent of their organized representation. The ideological cohesion among a constituency is also unrelated to organized representation and the coefficients are inconsistent with respect to direction. The rate of generalized social trust among a

constituency, however, is significantly related to the number of organizations and political staff that represent their interests in Washington. Yet the mean level of confidence in government within a constituency is unrelated to any measure of their organized representation. The belief in government responsiveness to ordinary citizens, however, is positively and significantly related to the number of representative organizations and political staff that a constituency generates. The results do not provide much support for a spatial theory of politics that relies on extremity of opinion and ideological cohesion to produce organized representation but they do provide some suggestive evidence for a civic engagement theory that emphasizes interpersonal trust and beliefs about responsiveness.

[Insert Table 4]

Figure 6 illustrates the relationship between the rate of belief in government responsiveness within a constituency and the number of political representatives that arise to represent their interests. Constituencies who believe that government responds to ordinary citizens, such as scientists and civil rights supporters, generate extensive organized representation. Constituencies with a low level of belief in government responsiveness, such as supporters of animal rights and supporters of progressive taxation, generate less extensive organized representation. This relationship could again be a product of reverse causality: constituencies with organized representation may believe that the government is more responsive because they have people representing their interests in Washington. Alternatively, those who believe that government responds to citizen concerns may be more likely to organize to influence government based on their high expectations of success.

[Insert Figure 6]

The results clearly indicate that many categories of aggregate constituency characteristics are associated with the extent of their organized representation in Washington. Socio-economic factors, media attentiveness, political efficacy, civic engagement, mass participation, and beliefs about other citizens and government are all associated with the extent of organized representation for public groups. These factors are all worthy of future research on their potential effects on political mobilization and influence. Yet the null findings may be just as important. First, the size of a constituency does not appear to be a key factor in determining the extent of its organized representation, despite the important role of this variable in theories of collective action and in normative democratic theory. Since many small groups do not generate any organized representation, there may still be some minimum size necessary for generating extensive representation. Yet the striking lack of association between size and representation among the 140 groups analyzed here may be devastating for some theories of democratic competition based on rule by the many rather than rule by the few. Second, the extremity and cohesion of a group's opinions does not seem to have a direct relationship to the extent or prominence of their representation. This suggests that spatial models of political mobilization as well as popular theories of 'special interest' politics may be incomplete. Both extreme and moderate views are well-represented in Washington. Third, even when constituency characteristics are related to whether a constituency generates organizations and political staff to represent their interests, they are not necessarily related to the relative prominence or policymaking activity levels of their representatives. There are some important relationships between constituency characteristics and organized representation, therefore, but we should not discount the important organizational and institutional factors that likely mediate the causal effects of constituency character on organized policymaking activity.

Conclusion

By understanding who is advantaged by the "mobilization of bias" in the political system, we can help move forward in the long-standing struggle to discover "who governs?" The system of organized representation in national politics does not come close to meeting a "one person, one lobbyist" standard. Some political factions generate substantially more extensive and active representation in Washington. In this analysis, the mobilization of bias in the interest group system favors constituencies that are socio-economically well-off, attentive to the media, politically efficacious, civically and politically engaged, trusting of others, and convinced that the government is responsive. In contrast to judgments by some commentators, the process of organizing political representation does not necessarily favor the large or small, the concentrated or dispersed, the extreme or moderate, or the cohesive. We cannot yet draw conclusions about why some groups gain advantage over others, but we can conclude that organized representatives do not arise and succeed independently from their claimed constituencies. Some types of groups are represented by more extensive organized representation. The differences involve the demographics, public engagement, participation, and political views of the public constituencies for interest organizations.

Some constituency characteristics, including media attentiveness, political efficacy, civic membership, and voting rate, are also associated with the extent to which Congressional committees and administrative agencies consult the concerns of a public group as expressed by their organized leadership. These differences do not necessarily result in greater influence on policy outcomes, however, because many other factors affect the resolution of policy conflict. Yet if the views of some leaders and some groups are better represented in the policy debate,

citizens are justifiably concerned that some interests may be advantaged over others in the political system. The vast array of organized advocates that serve as intermediaries between the American public and its national political institutions are more likely to speak on behalf of some concerns than others. The advantages conveyed by the system of organized representation are not adequately explained by any current model of political competition.

To the extent that the current literature offered specific predictions about which constituencies would generate more extensive and active organized representation, the literature's hypotheses achieved at best mixed results. The claims made by Olson (1971) and Lowery and Gray (2004) about the importance of small group size were not confirmed. The claims of elite theorists about the importance of status and class fared better in the analysis. Yet socio-economic factors were mostly related to the size of a group's organized representation rather than the prominence of their representative activity. To paraphrase Schattsneider's (1960) famous statement, the heavenly chorus of organized representatives does sing "with an upper class accent" but it is not clear that policymakers and reporters are more likely to listen to those with the strongest intonation. Despite scholarly interest in the geography of social groups, I also found no clear association between the dispersion or concentration of a group and its organized advocacy.

There was more suggestive evidence in favor of the emphasis on attentiveness, efficacy, and public engagement in the literature on mass political behavior. As Zaller (1992) and Krosnick (1990) suggest, public attentiveness to politics and the media seems important for political groups. As Putnam (2000) suggests, social trust and membership in civic organizations also seems to track political mobilization. Mass beliefs about public political efficacy and the responsiveness of the political system may also be important in promoting mobilization and

representation. Most traditional measures of mass participation, such as voting, attending meetings, or contributing monetarily, also seemed to go hand-in-hand with elite organized political advocacy -- only a high voting rate, however, was related to attention from policymakers and the media.

Models that rely solely on spatial positioning and the ideological characteristics of groups, in contrast, do not seem to offer much leverage for understanding the relative mobilization and policymaking prominence of public constituencies. The claims made by Lowery and Gray (2004) and some public choice scholars about the importance of moderate views are largely inconsistent with the null results presented here. The descriptive correlations that I offer cannot invalidate any theory of political mobilization or competition. Yet the results suggest that models of organized advocacy that emphasize the traditional correlates of mass participation and the role of civic engagement in organizational life are more likely to bear predictive insights than models of collective action or spatial competition.

Truman's (1951) original claims about how some political factions gain advantage over others, though vague, are largely consistent with my results. The strategic social position of a group appears to be reflected in their organized representation, as he and others suggested. Yet as he also suggested, the internal characteristics of groups, such as their engagement and participation levels and their beliefs about government institutions, may affect their organized representation and its activity in policymaking. In any theory of the relative influence of political factions in American policymaking, Truman's broad categories of important variables need to be supplemented with current theories. Scholars cannot yet offer a predictive theory of how and why some groups will benefit more than others in political competition, but insights from research on mass political behavior, civic participation, and organizational structure and

development appear to offer important building blocks for a comprehensive theory of the differential influence of some public factions in American national politics. Though scholars cannot yet claim to fully understand the dynamic processes of interaction among public factions, organized representatives, and policymakers, this analysis offers some hope for future research. Using data sets that combine mass survey data with data on elite activities offers a path toward knowledge about political mobilization and influence and a method of testing common ideas about who is advantaged by the political system.

A research program design to study interest mobilization can inform perennial debates about how democracy does and should function. As James Madison recognized in Federalist 10, the problem of factions is fundamental to democracy's justifications and its operations. My analysis can only offer a revised perspective on these old questions. By re-focusing attention on central theoretical questions while investigating the behavior of a large category of political actors and their relationships to public groups and political institutions, I hope to provide a starting point for further study. If the causes of faction are "sown in the nature of man" and the effects are seen in the "necessary and ordinary operations of the government," as Madison argued, an understanding of factional mobilization and competition is essential for a coherent view of democratic government.

Figure 1: Constituency Population Size and Number of Representative Organizations

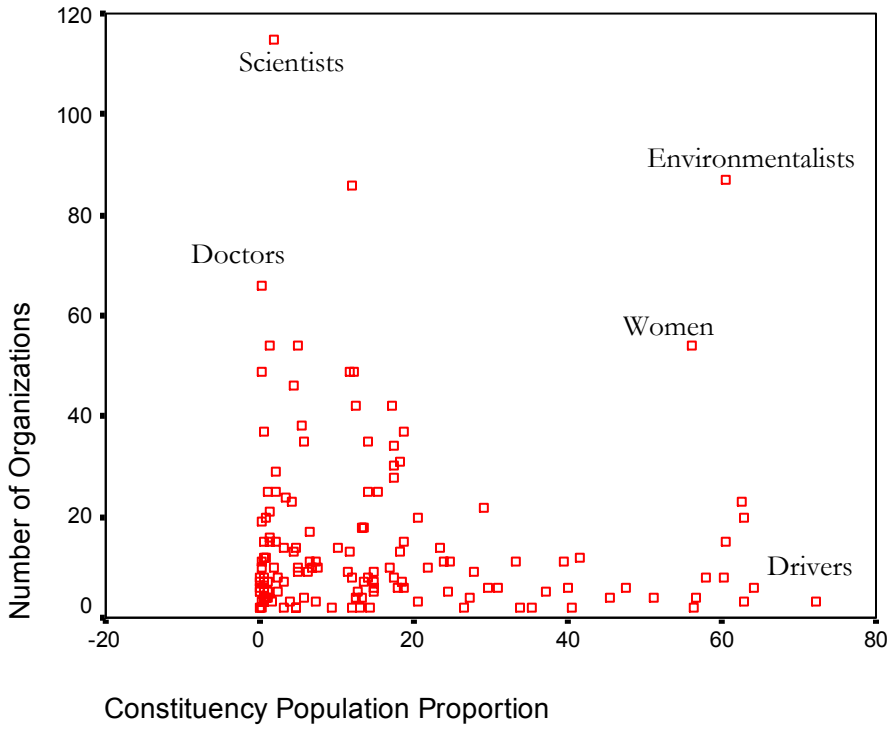


Figure 2: Constituency Socio-Economic Status and Number of Representative Organizations

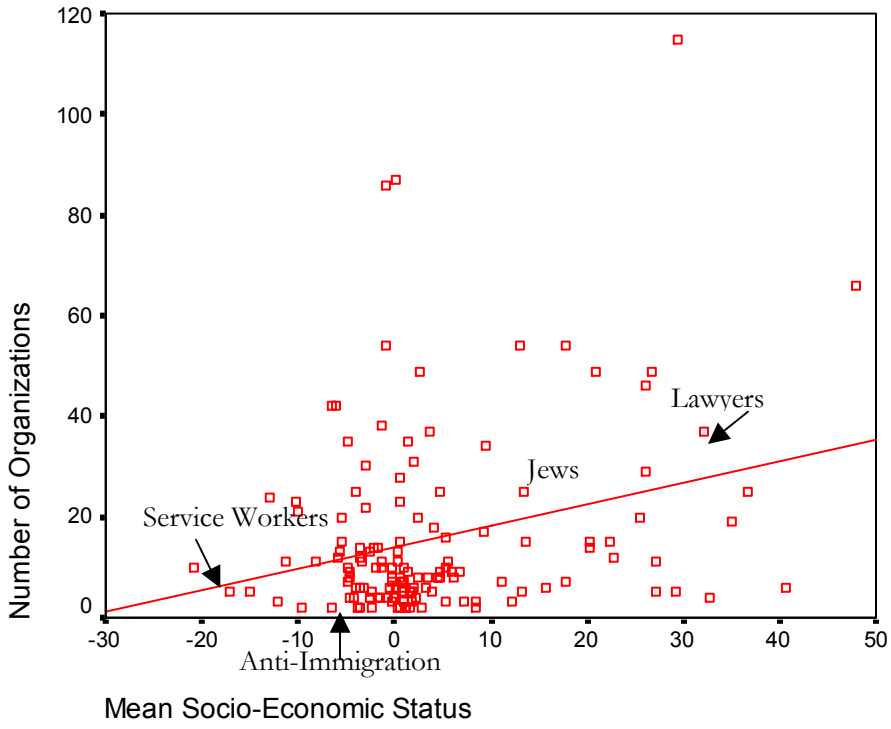


Figure 3: Constituency Political Efficacy and Organizational Testimony in Congress

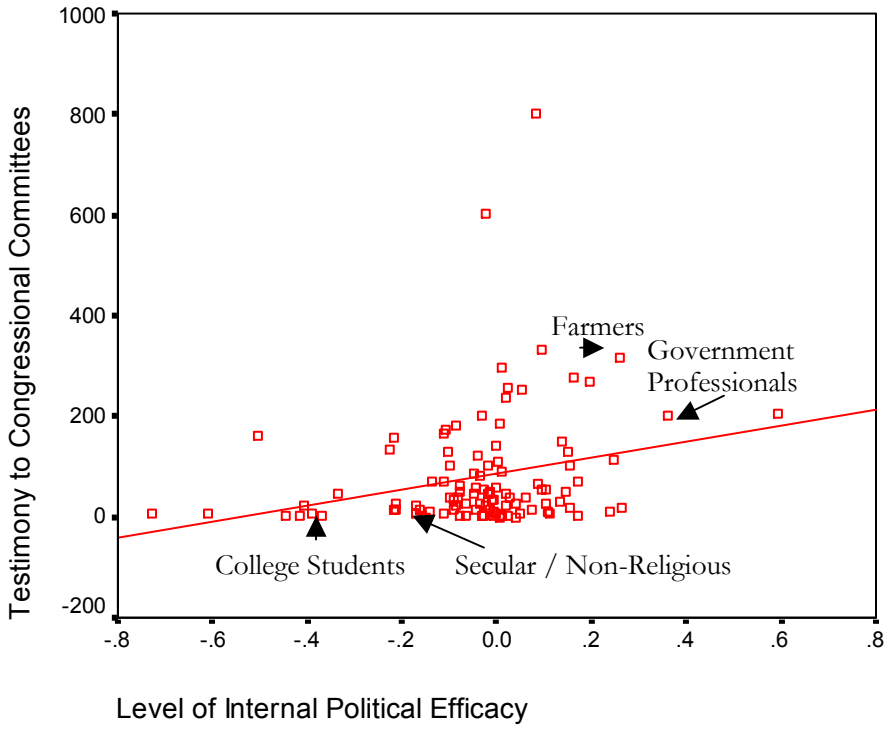


Figure 4: Constituency Civic Engagement and Washington Media Mentions

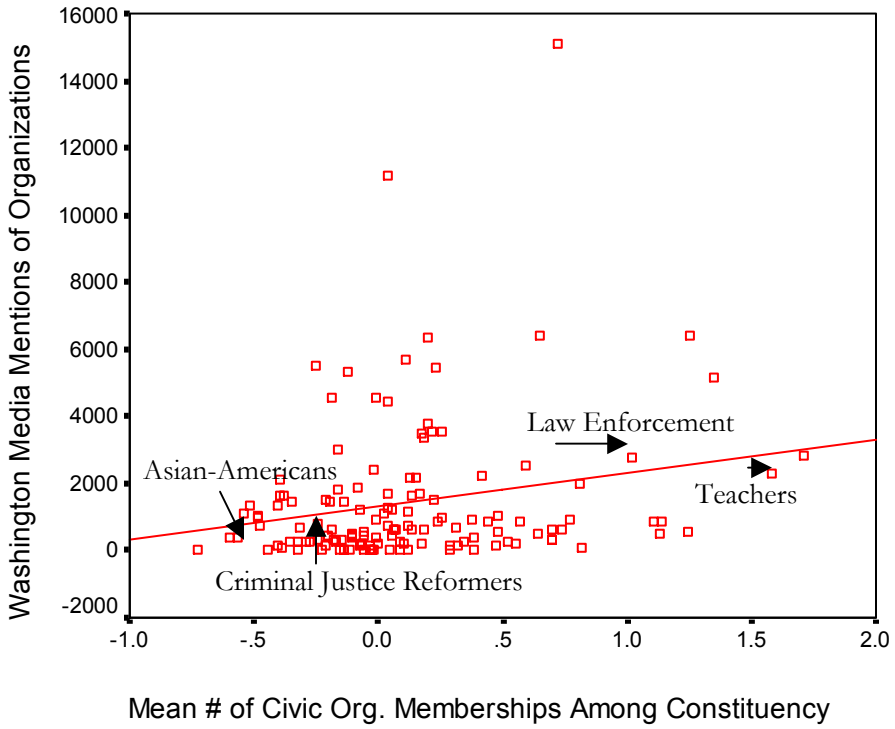


Figure 5: Constituency Voting Rate and Organizational Political Staff

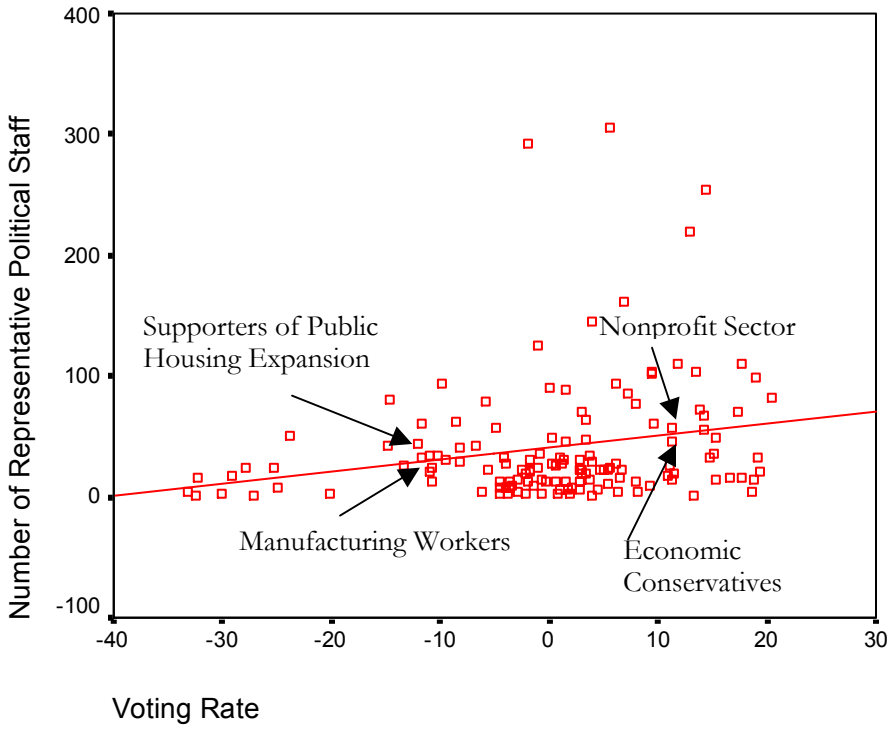


Figure 6: Constituency Belief in Government Responsiveness and Organizational Political Staff

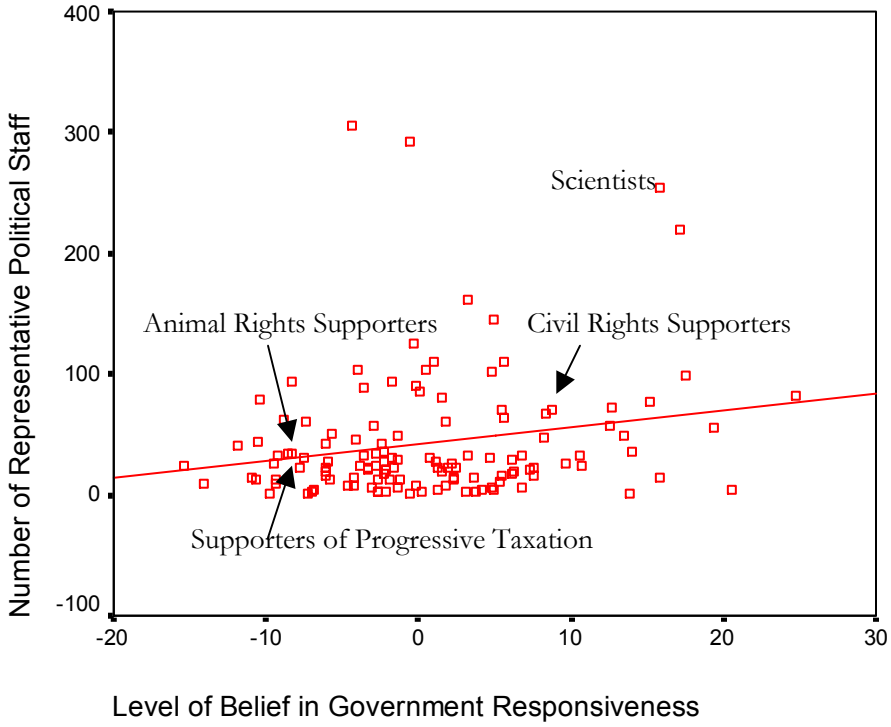


Table 1: Correlations between Constituency Demographics and Organized Representation

	Extent and Prominence of Organized Representation				
Constituency Demographics	**# of Organizations**	**# of Political Staff**	**Mentions in the D.C. Media**	**Testimony in Congress**	**Agency Rule Mentions**
Constituency Population Size	-.046	-.006	.128	.087	-.088
Mean Socio-Economic Status	.280***	.221**	.044	.051	.148
Mean Education Level	.249**	.202	.061	.026	.143
Mean Income	.173*	.201*	.081	.106	.245**
Geographic Concentration	-.131	-.153	-.126	-.130	-.045

*Table entries are bivariate Pearson correlation coefficients without any controls. ***p<.001; **p<.01; *p<.05 (two-tailed).*

Table 2: Correlations between Constituency Engagement and Organized Representation

	Extent and Prominence of Organized Representation				
Constituency Engagement	**# of Organizations**	**# of Political Staff**	**Mentions in the D.C. Media**	**Testimony in Congress**	**Agency Rule Mentions**
Mean Media Attentiveness	.190*	.211*	.132	.171*	.157
Mean Interest in Politics	.175	.182	.131	.185	.059
Mean Level of Political Efficacy	.301**	.277**	.190	.248**	.149
Mean Political Understanding	.125	.113	.092	.088	.042

*Table entries are bivariate Pearson correlation coefficients without any controls. ***p<.001; **p<.01; *p<.05 (two-tailed).*

Table 3: Correlations between Constituency Participation and Organized Representation

	Extent and Prominence of Organized Representation				
Constituency Participation	**# of Organizations**	**# of Political Staff**	**Mentions in the D.C. Media**	**Testimony in Congress**	**Agency Rule Mentions**
Mean Level of Civic Membership	.346***	.336***	.213*	.224**	.247**
Rate of Political Membership	.216*	.223**	.150	.151	.108
Voting Rate	.195*	.230**	.186*	.196*	.129
Volunteering Rate	.253*	.187	.052	.051	.100
Contributing Rate	.272*	.228*	.148	.138	.063
Meeting / Rally Attendance Rate	.269*	.243*	.197	.175	.077
Rate of Gov. Official Contacting	.180	.196	.149	.138	.067

*Table entries are bivariate Pearson correlation coefficients without any controls. ***p<.001; **p<.01; *p<.05 (two-tailed).*

Table 4: Correlations between Constituency Political Views and Organized Representation

	Extent and Prominence of Organized Representation				
Constituency Political Views	**# of Organizations**	**# of Political Staff**	**Mentions in the D.C. Media**	**Testimony in Congress**	**Agency Rule Mentions**
Extremity of Opinion	.038	.039	.034	.012	-.081
Ideological Cohesion	-.100	-.059	.051	-.015	-.084
Rate of General Trust	.183*	.206*	.100	.123	.146
Mean Confidence in Government	.054	.026	-.024	-.009	-.012
Belief in Gov. Responsiveness	.241**	.202*	.055	.047	.066

*Table entries are bivariate Pearson correlation coefficients without any controls. ***p<.001; **p<.01; *p<.05 (two-tailed).*

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