

Is a Picture Worth a Thousand Votes?: Aesthetic Representation and Democratic Ideals

by

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Abstract

Contemporary approaches to political representation tend to prioritize empirical observations of established institutions. These contributions to contemporary political theory can be complemented by the work of historian Frank Ankersmit. Ankersmit proposes an aesthetic view of political representation that raises questions about the understanding of subjectivity in political representation. I argue that, by drawing upon notions of aesthetic judgment, Ankersmit suggests possibilities for conceptualizing political art within political representation. In this way, theories of representation can be developed to include a greater selection of forms of non-democratic representation as observed in the field.

Keywords: aesthetic politics; democratic theory; political art; representation;

Dedication

For Jackson and Sasha.

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Chapter 1.

Introduction

Although they address individuals' subjective and inter-subjective interactions with political power, contemporary approaches to political representation tend to prioritize empirical observations of established institutions. Andrew Rehfeld, for example, has shown that the number of institutions that may be considered politically representative is much larger than the number of institutions that are considered democratic.¹ He even suggests that some symbols are acceptable political representations. Jane Mansbridge has also proposed a number of non-democratic forms of representation that are considered legitimate, suggesting that minority interests in a democracy are best served by surrogate representatives.²

These major contributions to contemporary political theory can be complemented by the work of historian Frank Ankersmit.³ Ankersmit proposes an aesthetic view of political representation that raises questions about the understanding of subjectivity in political representation. I argue that, by drawing upon notions of aesthetic judgment, Ankersmit suggests possibilities for conceptualizing political art - a pervasive, long-

¹Andrew Rehfeld, "Towards a General Theory of Political Representation" *The Journal of Politics* 68, No.1 (2006), 2

²Jane Mansbridge "Rethinking Representation" In *American Political Science Review* 97, No. 4 (2003), 522

³Franklin R. Ankersmit. *Aesthetic Politics: Political Philosophy Beyond Fact and Value*. (Stanford University Press, 1996), 45

established form of political expression - within political representation. In this way, theories such as those of Rehfeld and Mansbridge can be developed to include a greater selection of the forms of non-democratic representation that are observed in the field. Theories of representation can accommodate the rise in 'elite-challenging forms of civic action' by moving away from ideal theory and returning to examples of political action *in situ*, drawing examples from 'field studies' of representation as practiced by its 'represented'.⁴ I argue that political art is present in every society, giving it a universal status that cannot be attributed solely to voting or polling, nor to theocracy or despotism. As a form of political expression, the process by which a viewer interprets political art's significance shares characteristics with the interpretive process of accepting a political representation as accurate (in comparison to an implicit subjective state that is unknowable to any but the represented).

Furthermore, political art provides more than an outlet for otherwise under- or mis-represented subjects of politics. It can also provide a uniquely subjective view of politics for its most empowered agents, the politicians and bureaucrats who comprise government itself. The policy process frequently requires the 'breaking down' of complex problems in order to implement – or even consider - policy solutions. Modern mainstream politics tends to a reduction of problems before they are represented to the public or parliament. For example, the matter of expanding the capacities of tar sands extraction is reduced to an economic argument, effectively shaping debate into a standoff between those who favor economic growth versus those who do not. Because it is difficult to argue against economic growth, those who would oppose the development on other (moral, environmental) grounds are denied access to the policy process. When problems such as tar sands extraction are 'broken down' to series of policy proposals, 'objective' data are naturally preferred. It is most efficient to consider electoral results ('we're the party that proposed the project, and we're the party that got elected, we have

⁴ Ronald Inglehart, and Christian Welzel. *Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence*. (Cambridge University Press, 2005), 118 This rise is the corollary of a decline or stagnation of 'elite-directed forms of mass action, such as voting.'

the mandate to proceed'), economic costs and benefits, and 'quantifiable' environmental costs and benefits. Political art can provide - at least at the outset of the 'breaking' process - an equally efficient view of the subjects of that policy's interests. For example: a Lubicon nation sweat lodge constructed in the path of a proposed pipeline signals that nations' subjective view of their territory's spiritual or sacred nature.

This paper combines examples of political art with the instances of representative theory where their inclusion draws attention to the subjectivity of the participants. I begin with a consideration of accepted views on representation from early articulations in Thomas Hobbes and Edmund Burke through contemporary theories of Jane Mansbridge and Andrew Rehfeld.⁵ This review demonstrates a progression of theories along Sartori's 'ladder of abstraction'⁶ with the attempts by Hobbes and Burke to achieve a high level of abstraction, resulting in limited real-world applicability. I also examine Hannah Pitkin's conceptualization of representation, which demonstrates the partial nature of standard accounts.⁷ By identifying several aspects of these accounts of representation that are absent, or only present in part in early theories, her work has led to less-abstracted views. Concordant with Sartori's model, the approaches of Andrew Rehfeld and Jane Mansbridge have delved deeper into the actuality of political representation. By 'delving deeper', that is, descending Sartori's ladder toward more specific cases, these theories have become more applicable to specific situations, yet less capable of defining 'political representation' as a general condition of political life.

⁵ Jane Mansbridge "Rethinking Representation" In *American Political Science Review* 97, No. 4 (2003); Andrew Rehfeld, "Towards a General Theory of Political Representation" *The Journal of Politics* 68, No.1 (2006)

⁶ Giovanni Sartori, "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics" In *The American Political Science Review*, 64, No. 4 (1970): 1042

⁷ Hannah Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (University of California Press, 1967),

The second section of this paper will introduce Frank Ankersmit's critique of what he terms the 'foundational' approach of the theories examined above. By focusing on specific aspects of representation, particularly at the level of individual voters and representatives, Ankersmit claims that these theories miss an 'aesthetic' component of representation, that covers both the act of individual representation (between constituent and representative), and the act of representation in a collective assembly (between individual representatives and the representation of the society as a whole). Because political art can function as both individual and collective representation, it provides an avenue for bringing together theories that address only one of those dimensions, without negating any of their significant individual contributions.

The examples of political art that I discuss in this paper demonstrate the possibility that aesthetic representation might function between and beyond individual or collective representation. For example, Picasso's *Guernica* is an expression of the artist's individual subjective reaction to political violence in his home country. The painting can function as an individual representation of Picasso's political desires to see the war ended.⁸ If he showed it to only one person, and that person was then authorized as his political representative, that representative's behaviour could be judged by whether they advocated actions ending the political violence portrayed by *Guernica*. But in *Guernica* and other political art a wider audience is sought, beyond the artist's designated political representatives. It is the signification to a wider audience that makes political art *political* (as in the Aristotelian 'political animal' that signals its subjective state to others *via* language).

'No Pipelines' graffiti, in the context of current Canadian energy policy, calls the legitimacy of political representation into question. Canadians who are opposed to new pipeline construction have a handful of 'surrogate' representatives in parliament (only Elizabeth May, leader of the Green Party, belongs to a party that is fundamentally opposed) out of the hundreds of representatives active. The makers of 'No Pipelines'

⁸ It would be difficult to conceive of a viewer of *Guernica* who felt it was encouraging of political violence.

graffiti assert that their individual subjective response to this type of development is not formally represented. The subaltern character of graffiti also represents a critique of current norms of political inclusiveness, while simultaneously asserting a spontaneous collective response to their exclusion.

I also explore Joseph Beuys' *7000 Oaks: City Reforestation not City Administration*. It is an ongoing installation of 'environmental art' that critiques the progression of Green Party politics from radical grassroots direct democracy to a party that has accommodated itself to the *realpolitik* of party-centered parliamentary representation. Of the three examples of political art that are presented at the conclusion of this paper, the meaning of *7000 Oaks* is the most obscure. However, if it is considered in the context that Beuys intended for it, it is also the most revealing of the possibility that political art harmoniously blends elements of representative and deliberative politics. Beuys was a founding member of the German Green Party, which was the first to define itself as representative of 'nature', though he was forced to resign over strategic differences once electoral success led the party to adopt less radical forms of representation. *7000 Oaks* attempts to redefine political representation as individual politics - individuals represent themselves to one another - and imagines deliberation as a creative, collective undertaking informed by the individual creative process of self-representation.

Very broadly construed, two dominant views of the relationship between liberal governments and their citizens are current in contemporary normative political theory: the 'deliberative' and a 'representative'. This paper is concerned primarily with a representative approach, and the views of the theorists discussed within are essentially the current state of representative theory. Rehfeld's attempts at a 'general theory' share motivations and characteristics with an alternative broad approach to the substance of representation proposed by Michael Saward, who argues for a 'basic shift in frame of reference' in the theory of political representation.⁹ Saward suggests that, beyond the 'form' of representation, our frame of reference must be shifted 'to explore what is going

⁹ Michael Saward. *The Representative Claim*. (Oxford University Press, 2010), 297

on *in* representation — its dynamics’ for ‘grasping what are the wellsprings of such roles’ as ‘trustees, delegates, politicians’ etc.¹⁰

‘Deliberative’ views of the relationship between people and government have been promoted by notable theorists such as Carol Pateman in her role as president of APSA in 2012. In her address to the annual meeting she points to numerous instances of ‘deliberative’ or ‘participatory’ decision making that have been employed at various levels of government worldwide. Deliberative democrats celebrate the qualities of participation that emphasize ongoing communication among citizens, and with their government, about solutions to political problems. Ideally such communication leads to a dynamic government that is far more responsive to citizens’ interests than one based upon infrequent opportunities to select a representative. However, despite enthusiasm for deliberative process among theorists, and attempts by government agencies to implement it, Pateman and others¹¹ have noted that the outcomes of deliberative experiments are typically interpreted by governments and bureaucracies that are not responsive to their input.

Political art exists between deliberative and representative theories. In its representations, political art includes representation as a part of deliberation, rather than representative theory’s position that deliberation precedes, or is integral to representation. This subtle, but significant, inversion opens a deliberative space within political representation that allows for assessment of a policy’s subjective elements by the representatives who shape it, and a broader base for representeds’ participation in policy decisions at all stages.

¹⁰ Michael Saward. *The Representative Claim*. (Oxford University Press, 2010), 298

¹¹ Carole Pateman. “Deliberative Democracy Revisited.” In *Perspectives on Politics* Vol. 10, No.1 (2012); Genevieve Fuji Johnson, *Democratic Illusion: Deliberative Democracy in Canadian Public Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, forthcoming).

Chapter 2. Standard Accounts of Representation

2.1. Thomas Hobbes

The notion that forms of representation may legitimate political power finds its earliest clear articulation in Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan*.¹² His approach begins with a distinction between 'natural' and 'artificial' persons, concluding that political representation creates a type of artificial person.¹³ Hobbes is primarily concerned with a security dilemma: his artificial person (a 'leviathan') is constituted as the sovereign representation of human capacities to exert 'dominion over others'.¹⁴ By collectively representing the power of one person over another, the (artificial) leviathan negates those powers as they are found in (natural) individuals. Hobbes' representative is 'enabled to form the wills of them all'¹⁵ Natural persons would be returned to their state of war without this unlimited authorization. Hobbes' model is handed down to us as the 'authorization view'.¹⁶ Though the view cannot distinguish tyrannical representation from responsible representation, it does embody a degree of responsibility on the part of the representative, in as much as the sovereign has been authorized to provide a specific security function. Deviating too greatly from that function delegitimizes the

¹² Hannah Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (University of California Press, 1967),14

¹³ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (London: Penguin Books, 1985[1651]) 217

¹⁴ Ibid. 223

¹⁵ Ibid. 227

¹⁶ Hannah Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation*. 35

representation.¹⁷ Thus, Hobbes has provided a basic, though partial, definition of representation. Later theorists have picked up from Hobbes' argument to expand on the nature of responsibility and authorization.

2.2. Edmund Burke

Edmund Burke's conception of representation approaches the question of authorization and responsibility within the framework of recurring general elections.¹⁸ It is the relationship between parliament and the electorate that concerns Burke and, more specifically, the role of individual members as the intermediaries between the two. Burke asserts a complex conception of 'interest', one that is 'unattached' from individual opinions and desires, but is present in the collective well being of the nation.¹⁹ The sovereign (Parliament) is authorized by the electorate to preserve and advance the (objective) national interest. Contesting and aggregating individual desires, either by voters selecting individual members at the district level or by individual members debating on their behalf at the parliamentary level, does not find the national interest.

The Burkean view suggests some problematic interpretations. The question of elections is raised: if individuals have no politically relevant interests, and the only interest that Parliament serves is of the objective national interest, then why must there exist an electoral connection between Parliament and the citizens? There is also a question about the supposedly objective nature of the national interest. In Burke's mind this interest is immutable as scientific fact, yet scientific facts are disclosed and verified by the logic of experimentation and observation. Little indication is given as to how one may empirically verify the objective nature of interests in this case. Neither does Burke

¹⁷ Hannah Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (University of California Press, 1967),33

¹⁸ Ibid 169.

¹⁹ Ibid.

adequately address the possibility of persuasive rhetoricians (like Burke himself) manipulating the Parliamentary debate for ends other than that of the national interest. Burke pays no heed to the suspicion of corruptible elites that underpins the Madisonian (Liberal) view of interests and representation

2.3. Hannah Pitkin

Hannah Pitkin's *The Concept of Representation* brings together 'snap shots' of the concept of representation, highlighting tensions and contradictions among them.²⁰ Of these tensions the dyad of 'substantive' and 'formal' representation appears as a recurring theme in her analysis. In Pitkin's view 'formal' representation is exemplified by the 'authorization' approaches of Hobbes. In cases of authorization, features such as the unique qualities of the representative as an individual are disregarded. In order to perform the function of acting-in-place-of, the authorized representative is freed from the usual responsibilities for their actions expected of them as individuals. Because this authorized freedom can be regarded as existing in perpetuity, authorization does not require elections. A hereditary monarch may be said to be authorized as the agent of the people, and their heir may be authorized as their legitimate continuation. Strictly formal views -- as conceived by Pitkin -- are hobbled by a 'restrictive assumption...stressing only the representative's capacity to bind others'.²¹

While authorization does lead to relationships that we may refer to as 'representative', it does not address all features of representative government that

²⁰ Hannah Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (University of California Press, 1967),11

²¹ Ibid. 49

satisfy our 'common' or 'folk' expectations of democracy.²² Formally, Pitkin suggests, we may counter authorization with 'accountability'. Representatives 'must be responsible to the represented', accountable representatives are bound to their represented(s).²³ Accountable representatives will only be re-authorized once they have been judged on the account of their actions following the previous election. Pitkin argues that this form of authorization is intended to induce responsible representation: 'One is held responsible in order that he may *become* responsible'²⁴. However, this function (responsibility) does not necessarily follow from the form (accountability): we cannot derive from this either what the representative *ought* to be doing, or whether what goes on between elections can be considered representation. To understand the substantive functioning of representation, Pitkin suggests two potential avenues: 'We may ask what a representative does, what constitutes the activity of representing. Or we may ask what a representative is, what he must be like in order to represent'.²⁵

Pitkin gives substantive 'standing for' representation two forms: 'descriptive representation' is concerned with the 'proper composition of a legislative assembly'; 'symbolic representation' extends the properties of symbols such as flags to all forms of

²² Andrew Sabl's paper attempts to enumerate and describe conceptual gaps between 'empirical' research and 'democratic theory'. He is particularly concerned with the prevalence of "congruence" or "responsiveness" approaches to normativity among empirical researches versus its absence among democratic theorists. He suggests that the "congruence" aspect assigned to democracy reflects a "folk or popular theory of democracy".

²³ Hannah Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (University of California Press, 1967), 55

²⁴ *Ibid.* 57

²⁵ *Ibid.* 59

representation.²⁶ As she states, '[symbolic] representing, too, can be taken as central and definitive, and all other kinds, including political representation, can then be interpreted in terms of it'.²⁷ Pitkin's understanding of symbolic representation involves her most explicit consideration of the subjective nature of all forms of representation. 'Symbolizing' is conceived of as separate from 'representing'. In her example a fish cannot *represent* Jesus, it cannot be substituted for the man any place his particular action is sought, it cannot 'act for' Jesus. The symbol may 'stand for' Jesus, particularly where a representation of Jesus would be inappropriate. Since symbols cannot 'act for', they are rejected by Pitkin as useful metaphors for political representation.

Pitkin frames her understanding of descriptive representation in terms of the information about the represented ('what he *is* or is *like*') deemed necessary for a 'true' representation.²⁸ This information underlies a notion of 'correspondence' between represented and representative whose terms of correspondence will vary based on the ideal of just representation in the particular system examined. There is an element of subjective judgment required by the represented in determining the acceptability (on strength of correspondence) of the selected representative. Descriptive representation does not tell us what actions the representative *ought* to perform that follow from the representativeness implied by the selection criteria. Defining a representative by their actions falls to a different view, the 'acting for' 'analogy'.

The previously examined views cannot capture the activity implied by representation as an 'acting for others, an activity in behalf of, in the interest of, as the

²⁶ Hannah Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (University of California Press, 1967), 60.

²⁷ *Ibid.* 92

²⁸ *Ibid.* 88 (emphasis in original)

agent of, someone else'.²⁹ That the activity is *implied* by these approaches allows Pitkin to draw our attention to the fact that an 'acting for' definition of representation has not been explicitly proposed. When we ask of these approaches 'By what criteria is the representative defined?' we must extract from them 'adverbial expressions' relating to 'analogies, also intended to illuminate the activity of representing'.³⁰ We find nothing decisive: adverbial expressions besides 'acting for another' range from acting 'in behalf' to pleasing or satisfying the represented. The analogies also range widely, likening to or defining a representative as 'an agent, an ambassador' to less politically loaded 'tutor' even 'vicar'.³¹ These analogies cannot be substituted for 'representation' and still yield a concept of representation that applies to political life.

The actions of a political representative that distinguish them from a literary agent representing an author, for example, are often considered as falling on a spectrum between delegates with explicit mandates and trustees selected to act independently. The formal distinction of delegate/trustee is not possible without knowing what, precisely, is being delegated or entrusted. Pitkin favours the formulation 'interests' to examine the 'what' of representation.³²

Pitkin's analysis offers two broad categories of interest: one view proposes a collectively held interest 'unattached' to individual opinions and desires; the other suggests that there is no collective interest that is objectively removed from individual

²⁹ Hannah Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (University of California Press, 1967), 113

³⁰ *Ibid.* 119

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.* 156. Interests are "ubiquitous in representation theory"

opinion and therefore we must speak of interests as integral to each individual.³³ Burke's 'Letters to the Gentlemen of Bristol' exemplifies the unattached view, in which he asserts the ascendancy of Parliament (a 'deliberative assembly of one nation') over the 'hostile interests' or 'local prejudices' that individual members could bring to bear on behalf of their electors.³⁴ Parliamentary deliberation is not a proxy contest between the wills of various constituencies, but is closer to a whittling away of the superfluous opinions obscuring the 'fact' of the one true national interest³⁵.

While proponents of the unattached view of interests posit an objective interest for the state, which must be uncovered by a parliament convened for that purpose, proponents of 'liberal' representation view the national interest as being either nonexistent or as discoverable only via the (electoral) amalgamation of individuals subjective interests. Regardless of whether interests are 'unattached' or originate in personal affect, an 'objective' interest is imputed at some stage of representation. The representatives in a liberal parliament bridge an individual's interest to the actions (they may be unaware of) that will lead to its best possible conclusion. Representatives 'act for' when the individual will is unable to guide correct action itself.

Pitkin concludes that representation is an inherently fluid concept. This does not render it immeasurable; but it does caution against conceptions that attempt to fit its dynamic parts into a static model. Pitkin's analysis of the concept of representation considers 'the way in which we ordinarily use [representation] when we are not

³³ Hannah Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (University of California Press, 1967), 168

³⁴ Quoted in: Hannah Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (University of California Press, 1967), 171

³⁵ Pitkin (180) proposes that Burke viewed interests "as we today see scientific facts", once uncovered, there can be no grounds for doubt, and therefore no grounds for electors to object to the results of the deliberations.

philosophizing'.³⁶ This approach produces a story of the subjective difficulties inherent in such a nebulous concept. If every example in her book represents a phenomenon that can be called 'representation', but not every 'representation' can be regarded as appropriate to every political situation, then how can any society arrive at a functional representation that suits their needs?

2.4. Jane Mansbridge and Andrew Rehfeld

Within the last decade, a number of theorists have attempted to reunite empirical and normative approaches along conceptual lines. Most notably Mansbridge and Rehfeld have engaged in a dialogue aimed at clarifying the relationship between theoretical distinctions and observed instances of political representation.³⁷ By clarifying these relationships these authors hope to arrive at a 'general theory of representation' that would 'narrow the gap' between empirical and normative observations of representation.³⁸ Their exchange, in many respects, represents the state-of-the-discipline in contemporary theories of political representation.

Mansbridge begins her enquiry into representation with models she claims have been derived from empirical observation: 'anticipatory', 'gyroscopic', and 'surrogate' representation; categories that are additional to what she claims is the 'traditional' model of 'promissory representation'. Mansbridge suggests that the behaviour sanctioned in the 'traditional' promissory model constitutes a standard for 'democratic accountability',

³⁶ Hannah Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation* (University of California Press, 1967), 6

³⁷ Jane Mansbridge "Rethinking Representation" In *American Political Science Review* 97, No. 4 (2003). Rehfeld responds: 2009 Mansbridge replies: 2011

³⁸ Jane Mansbridge "Rethinking Representation" In *American Political Science Review* 97, No. 4 (2003), 515

which other models will need to meet on their own terms.³⁹ By describing the normative correlation for each of the empirically derived models she presents, Mansbridge provides a 'spectrum' of 'regulative ideals' for assessing the legitimacy of diverse democratic forms.

Promissory representation follows the principal-agent format. The problem engendered by this model involves the principal keeping control of an (often distant) agent. Both mandate and trustee models of representation are covered by promissory norms. Promissory representation takes place over a simple linear timeframe: at election time (T1) the voter selects a representative whose promised actions (either mandated or entrusted) the voter believes best align with his or her own interests. This promise constitutes the voter's opportunity to exercise power over the representative during the governing period (T2). By focusing on the authorizing election at (T1), promissory representation implies particular voters who: have self-identified interests that they want to express directly through their representative, are 'forward looking [in] intentionality', and sanction representatives at (T3) in order to increase the possibility of their interest being satisfied during the governing period.⁴⁰ This 'traditional' view may break down at (T3) if the voters choose sanctions less on the basis of promises made than on the basis of actions taken during (T2). This leads to Mansbridge's first contemporary category of representation, 'anticipatory'.

The anticipatory model, which is compatible with the mandate/trustee distinction involves sanctions at (T3). The principle difference between the two arises from the assumed behaviour of the representative during the governing period: anticipatory representatives will enlist a variety of means to engage with their electors during (T2) in order to *anticipate* their desires at (T3). By placing an emphasis on the representative's actions during (T2), the attention of both voters and representatives is shifted into a non-

³⁹ Jane Mansbridge "Rethinking Representation" In *American Political Science Review* 97, No. 4 (2003), 515

⁴⁰ Ibid. 516

linear 'deliberative' temporality. Voters are cast as having 'outcome' preferences rather than 'policy' preferences': they can be communicated with and 'educated' by any number of groups - 'parties, interest groups, media' etc., even by the representatives themselves.⁴¹ Representatives may also be educated during (T2): they may consult opinion polls, media reports, town halls, etc., in order to better anticipate outcomes that will be rewarded with re-election. This process closely parallels the functioning of consumer markets: a toy manufacturer may reasonably anticipate sales of an action figure based on a blockbuster movie. However, that anticipation is partly based on the 'educating' that the film's marketing department directed towards that toy's target market.⁴² So too do anticipatory representatives both respond to, and form, constituent's preferences during (T2) in the hopes of a blockbuster result at (T3). Traditionally, the constituent is 'statically conceived' in the sense that their preferences are assumed to be stable during (T2). Thus, judging the performance of the representative is a relatively simple comparison of promise to action.⁴³ An anticipatory representative could potentially anticipate the preferences of voters at (T3) without any deliberative exchange. However, because it is in the representatives' best interest to maintain an engagement with their constituents during (T2), in practice representatives will initiate such contact. To evaluate the accountability of an anticipatory representative the quality of that 'mutual communication' should be assessed: 'how well the entire representative system contributes to ongoing factually accurate and mutually educative communication'.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Jane Mansbridge "Rethinking Representation" In *American Political Science Review* 97, No. 4 (2003), 517

⁴² In the case of action figures, children become representatives of the product by 'educating' their parents about the desirability of that particular chunk of PVC.

⁴³ Jane Mansbridge "Rethinking Representation" In *American Political Science Review* 97, No. 4 (2003), 517

⁴⁴ Ibid. 519

In the gyroscopic model, representatives 'are not expected to relate to their constituents as agents to principals'.⁴⁵ Rather, voters select a representative to best represent their interests, which may take 'acting for' (e.g. lowering taxes) or resembling (sharing characteristics with a candidate).⁴⁶ The point of gyroscopic representation is not to force candidates to align with constituents, it is rather to encourage constituents to choose a representative who is self-motivated to advocate for their interests

Perhaps the most normatively problematic (from the perspective of accountability) of Mansbridge's contemporary models of representation is contemporary representation. This concerns 'This concerns models of representation is from the perspective of accountability'⁴⁷ Mansbridge gives an example of a fairly ideal instance of this type: Barney Frank, an openly gay representative from Massachusetts, views (with the approval of his y idealconstituents) his legislative and advocacy responsibilities as representative of LGBT interests throughout the nation. This example is unproblematic from an acting- or standing- for perspective: many LGBT voters live in constituencies where majorities are not sympathetic to their particular concerns. Barney Frank provides a voice in Congress that these individuals would not otherwise gain through their local electoral contests. It is problematic from an accountability perspective, however: with the exception of LGBT voters in his home district, there is no sanctioning mechanism available for LGBT voters who do not feel adequately represented. Furthermore, if Rep. Frank misrepresents his home constituent's preferences on non-LGBT issues, he may be ejected from office at (T3) thus leaving all LGBT voters without representation. The picture for Rep. Frank changes slightly if he is supported by funding that comes from wealthy LGBT voters outside of his constituency, in which case he could be held to

⁴⁵ Jane Mansbridge "Rethinking Representation" In *American Political Science Review* 97, No. 4 (2003), 522

⁴⁶ Ibid,

⁴⁷ Ibid.

account by wealthy donors who feel their interests (as members of the broad LGBT community) were being misrepresented.

For groups of marginalized individuals, with the limited economic resources often implied by marginalization, accountable surrogate representation is far from a secure notion. By substituting economic resources for electoral resources (i.e. voter support at (T1) or (T3)) accountable surrogate representation may favour groups who have been electorally marginalized due to restrictions around their franchise. Corporations and large interest groups (lobbies, trade groups, etc.) are not enfranchised as individuals; they are (especially in the U.S. post-*Citizen's United*) permitted to provide considerable economic resources to representatives who behave in line with their interests. Thus, we may have the situation where candidates in rural Arkansas wish to represent the interests of constituents whose wells risk contamination from natural gas extraction, but in which their rivals may be willing to receive campaign contributions from resource extraction companies in Houston. To the extent that money wins elections, the well-funded pro-extraction candidates will sit in Congress 'representing' rural districts skeptical of gas companies of gas ovide considerable economic resources to represent *de facto*, of Houston's oil and gas concerns, and will be (economically) accountable to those interests.

A complicated matrix of criteria are required to assess the role of surrogate candidates normatively or empirically. Mansbridge attempts to indicate the norms she feels constitute surrogate representation:

surrogate representation must meet the criteria for proportional representation of interests on relatively conflictual issues (an aggregative criterion) and adequate representation of perspectives on matters of both conflict and more common interest (a deliberative criterion).⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Jane Mansbridge "Rethinking Representation" In *American Political Science Review* 97, No. 4 (2003), 524

Normative assessment of a surrogate candidate requires an in-depth examination of each case. The assessment must be able to identify the interests of all of the surrogate groups that are possibly represented by a single representative, and weigh the representation of these interests against those of the 'home' constituents. A view of the complex interactions required by an outside researcher attempting to assess a single surrogate representative is daunting. The assessment must be able to identify the inter

Neither 'gyroscopic' nor 'surrogate' representation employ forms of accountability that are accessible to every member of a polity. Given the elite history of theories of representation (e.g., Hobbes and Burke), perhaps it is no wonder that Mansbridge's own elite status⁴⁹ blinds her to this possibility. In the 'surrogate' model marginalized individuals may enjoy representation they were unable to vote directly for if a sympathetic representative is selected somewhere, on criteria largely unrelated to the marginalized individuals they will 'represent' as surrogates. That marginalized group can only hold their representative objectively accountable in the form of economic incentives. This is fine for a large (though still marginalized in many districts), dispersed, and diverse group, such as the LGBT population, that has enough members in the economic elite to make that possible. But this form of representation is problematic for localized, homogenous groups, such as rural tenants in oil fields. In terms of accountability, representing the plurality of group interests in a polity via surrogacy, it is not clear how it can be a reliable corrective for the deficiencies of majoritarian politics.

The 'they will 'represent' as surrogates. That marginalized group can only hold their representative objectively accountable in the instructions about how to do so. They maintain their legitimacy by engaging deliberatively with their constituent) based on their capacity to do so. This is also posited as the primary site of accountability since the representative is constantly giving 'time-outs' of their actions in this deliberative process. This model also favours a certain elite: those with resources to invest in the ongoing deliberation. Economic elites are likely to form a large portion of this elite, since they can

⁴⁹ Able-bodied, educated, property owning, of Western European descent, teaching at, and presumably living near, Harvard.

afford time away from their quotidian activities to monitor their representative, or they may be able to engage paid proxies to maintain their interest in the representative's behaviour.

Some marginal groups can also benefit from a 'gyroscopic' representative: seniors, unemployed, and disabled may be able to dedicate considerable time towards monitoring and deliberating with their representative - though the small economic contributions they make to the representatives next campaign could reduce receptiveness to their input. Lower income households will be shut out from the process except on election day, where a 'promissory' or 'anticipatory' model is equally (and historically) apt. There are simply not enough resources available to households whose income comes from long hours at low-wage jobs to maintain a constant monitoring of their representative. And, which representative are those marginalized meant to be monitoring? Should a Latino household, subsisting on marginal employment, be monitoring the white billionaire that was elected as representative of their district, or should they monitor their 'surrogate' representative, a Latino labour organizer from a Mexican border district? What if their son is also gay?

The point of these queries, to be developed later in this paper, is that it is not clear whether the marginalized voters in any of Mansbridgein models would not be just as well represented by a Diego Rivera mural, or a Banksy graffiti stunt. These artistic representations are as accountable to the plurality of interests in a polity as Mansbridge s representatives. Her analysis reduces to a typical elite defence of democracy as the only legitimate form of political representation: legitimate for all - accountable to the few.

Rehfeld, in his project toward a 'General Theory of Representation', intends to explain how nondemocratic representatives may be included in accounts of political representation.⁵⁰ It replaces specific rules of legitimacy with more general 'rules of recognition' that an audience uses to judge which person(s) it accepts as a

⁵⁰ Andrew Rehfeld, "Towards a General Theory of Political Representation" *The Journal of Politics* 68, No.1 (2006): 4

representative. He takes Pitkin's 'standard account', which weds 'representation with the conditions that render it legitimate', as his point of departure.⁵¹ Empirical, 'value free' research equates 'legitimacy' with public opinion; its evaluative criteria are oriented toward testing the strength of the relationship between public opinion and policy outcomes. 'Legitimacy' cannot be used to evaluate instances of representative claims when a formal democratic process is absent in spite of, in many cases, the 'sociological legitimacy' ascribed to such claims.⁵²

Rehfeld's theory addresses the formal nature of a political action. He asks: 'Is it representation?'.⁵³ For Rehfeld, the response depends on the goal of the particular case of representation. The theory must then address the substantive concern: 'What kind of representation is it, and how well is it being achieved?'.⁵⁴ This assessment is intended to adjust the expectation of legitimacy to the particular case in hand. In the case of a hereditary prince representing an Emirates' security interest at the UN, democratic norms of representation would inappropriately deny the prince the legitimacy he enjoys in this particular instance. In another case, the same prince could be correctly classified as illegitimate. This would occur, for example, if the prince faced demands for democratic reform at home and chose to ignore them.

Standard representation, in Rehfeld's terms, is an application of a he enjoys in this par⁵⁵ In his theory, the Emirate prince above is also given a representative status

⁵¹ Ibid. 3

⁵² Ibid. 3 In footnote (7)

⁵³ Ibid. 19

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Andrew Rehfeld, "Towards a General Theory of Political Representation" *The Journal of Politics* 68, No.1 (2006): 4

model assumes conflict between constituents and representatives, the constituent's interests, in this case, are guarded by the possibility of rewards or punishments in a subsequent election.

The selection model appears to be oriented toward substantive representation: its electors are seeking out a representative who most resembles them in important dimensions of policy. This view, however, requires that the constituents are able to recognize in themselves their own interests, they must be able to articulate these interests to a sufficient degree that, come election time, they are able to reach a (electorally mediated) consensus on the candidate who will represent those interests in Congress.

Problems of subjectivity raise questions about the certainty constituents have of their own interests. Ankersmit points out that not only are constituents in conflict with one another, but also that they will likely be conflicted within themselves regarding their interests. This paradox is common in modern politics. Voters desire efficient individual transportation; however, a roadway clogged with individuals in their cars may result. The selection model could accommodate this paradox, but it depends on candidates who can represent a *juste milieu*, that is, the judgment that takes place in the space between access to transport and making that transport sufficiently effective. This approach calls for representatives who are not necessarily concerned with accurately presenting their constituency's interests, aiming at as near to a 1:1 correlation as possible. Instead, the aesthetic approach favours representatives who adopt views that are removed enough from their interests (as they conceive them) to present an acceptable compromise. By taking on the task of seeing beyond constituents' interests, he or she embraces a certain exceptionalism that resembles an 'acting for' rather than 'standing for'. This drift away from 'standing for' is unproblematic for aesthetic theorists. An aesthetic representative may choose to combine elements of 'standing' and 'acting for', where both are components of a representation that aims at bringing subjective aspects of its represented into the political arena, where they must be contested in a process that ideally leads to compromise. The following section introduces the criteria outlined for aesthetic politics in Frank Ankersmit's political theory.

Chapter 3. Frank Ankersmit's Aesthetic Political Theory

3.1. Classical versus Romantic theory

Ankersmit identifies a problem in the above theoretical approaches to representation: they are reliant on a 'classical' 'input - output' view of political action.⁶⁰ He argues that important aspects of actual political life are carried out outside of empirically observable conditions. The more appropriate model for considering political action is 'aesthetic'. The aesthetic view is embedded in political action: the activity of politics - the 'how' of representation. Empirical models focus on the 'what' of representation, that is, is a representative actually representing 'what' they claim to represent? If representative A accurately represents what his/her constituent X want, what happens when representative A must contest with representatives B through Z? Empirical models answer the second question based on the outcome - if representative B attains the outcome that constituent B desires then representative A has failed to represent constituent X.

Ankersmit's aesthetic theory prefers a response in which none of the representatives, as individuals, is able to achieve constituents' aims. This is because aesthetic theory is more interested in the combined (deliberative) work of representation that takes place in collective assemblies. Aesthetic theory argues that the aspects of political life that are represented by individuals are the equivalent of 'graphemes' — individual paint deposits on a canvas — in art theory: the entire picture of representation

⁶⁰ Franklin R. Ankersmit. *Political Representation*. (Stanford University Press, 2002.),137

is only apparent when a sufficient number of aspects are combined. According to Ankersmit normative assessment of aesthetic representation depends on the harmony or discordance of the combined aspects. Within the context of parliamentary politics, normative assessment of harmonious representation can be undertaken using established empirical approaches. For example, in a legislature without a majority, a high number of coalition bills failing to pass would indicate a discordant failure of aesthetic representation — the representatives are not reinterpreting (or re-presenting) their constituent's interests into a collective good.

The aesthetic theory breaks down at this point in the analysis, however. This is because Ankersmit cannot give evidence that this approach provides us with any analytical insight that could not be gained from accepted approaches. Ankersmit may point to an analytic method, but the results of his analysis must depend on subjective notions of harmony. For theorists interested in analyzing representation at the parliamentary level, Ankersmit is best viewed as a provocateur of novel approaches, rather than as a furnisher of such approaches. Despite these limitations, Ankersmit can provide several important insights with which to complement and nuance more standard accounts of representation.

Ankersmit's claims are rooted in refutation of the view that 'there is a measurable political reality that should be the basis and starting point of all reflection on politics'.⁶¹ This view holds that there is direct and intimate connection between this political reality and the subjective view we hold of its outcomes. A 'measurable political reality' is present in the approaches to representation discussed above. In Rehfeld's recognition rules, for example, even if the case in question does not involve the 'objective' measurement provided by elections (i.e. the case of the Emirate prince), there is still a 'political reality' where the prince is 'recognized' objectively as a representative. Subjectively, the prince could utterly fail to be representative of his kingdom in the eyes

⁶¹ Franklin R. Ankersmit. *Political Representation*. (Stanford University Press, 2002.),137

of his subjects - they may only 'recognize' his political authority under threat of violence, or he may only represent his family's interest to the U.N.

Ankersmit evocatively refutes the claims of such analytically inclined theorists with an example from musical aesthetics. Analytically inclined theorists must take the empirical data⁶² as their only criteria for assessment; whereas aesthetically motivated theorists will also consider the subjective processes at work as representation is interpreted into political action. In order to highlight the poverty of the empirical method he draws an analogy with a piece of music composed by Schumann, *Humoreske*, that was intended to suggest a melody that was not actually being played. The pianist only plays the two staves that accompany the melody, which is heard but forbidden to be played. This melody, which Schumann termed *innere Stimme*, 'inner voice', 'has its being within the mind and its existence only through its echo'.⁶³ For enthusiasts of classical music, the melody is a mere illusion, a clever trick, which has made them believe they heard what they could not have possibly heard. Observers of representation who encounter unexpected or inexplicable outcomes for their theorizing are analogous to the classical listeners of Schumann – the results were not part of the 'sheet music' implied in the inputs.

Ankersmit prefers the view of a romantically inclined listener who would accept their impression of the melody, and who would reject disbelief that what they heard was simply not possible. The melody is a fact. Analogously, by looking for rules and analytic categories, conventional political theorists miss the *innere Stimme* of politics, which is where the subject of representation resides. Without this view it becomes too tempting to reduce politics to election or poll results, as has been suggested above, as these outlets for political expression are subject to the framing effects of politicians and bureaucrats.

⁶² Ranging from simple election returns to comprehensive survey results over multiple polities and elections

⁶³Franklin R. Ankersmit. *Political Representation*. (Stanford University Press, 2002.),136

In the case of tar sands exploitation, if the political preference is to frame the issue as economic, then analysis of the policy trajectory from voter to policy will focus on whether the economic interests of voters in tar sands exploitation are served by the policies their representatives enact. In our musical example, the economic interests of voters resemble the staves played by the left hand; the actions of government as the right hand staves. A perfectly harmonious result could be imputed from the coordination of the two hands. Nevertheless, a melody may be present – say, of the objections of indigenous bands– that cannot be recorded in the notation for the two hands (is not part of the official debate). This melody, this *innere Stimme*, may constitute a significant expression of the interests of voters that is not framed by the economic argument. Political art representations of tar sand exploitation can highlight additional subjective (but indisputably present) aspects of voters’ interests. These subtle aspects deserve as much attention from theorists who are interested in legitimacy as those that are presented in the official, quantitatively accessible relationship between voters and policy.

3.2. Interpretation and Aesthetic Politics

The dominant theories of political representation, although divergent, are concerned with a descriptive relationship between representation or representative and the represented. Formal models seek to describe the best institutional arrangement for enabling political representation. Substantive models seek to describe the best individual(s) for enabling political representation. However, representation differs from description by its resistance to propositional truth claims. Descriptive presentation takes the form of ‘A is B’ type statements. A ‘refers to’ (picks out uniquely) an object, B is (proposed) as a property of A. If A can be identified (by proper name or unique identifying feature, for example, ‘first man on the moon’) then we can ask if B is in fact one of its properties. If yes, then the statement is true: Neil Armstrong (A) is “first man on the moon” (B).

According to Ankersmit, representation is different. In a portrait, one cannot distinguish between spots of paint that ‘refer’ to the sitter and spots that attribute specific properties to the sitter. ‘Thus pictorial representation is essentially different from

description'. History is the same: in a book about the Red River Rebellion, one cannot separate the passages that refer 'exclusively' to the Rebellion and those that 'exclusively' attribute certain properties to it.

Representations cannot be true or false. *Statements* about representations can be (propositionally) true or false. Ankersmit refers to several of Napoleon's portraitists each of which is, naturally, a representation. Each representation must refer to its own specific represented, otherwise each portrait would be identical in style and the differences would only be attributable to the temporal-spatial differences between the different sittings. Jacques Louis David's portrait cannot be evaluated on the truth of its likeness to Napoleon, it is to be evaluated by its success in conveying to us the motivations of the artist (the representative). The differences among portraits are not accidental peculiarities. The differences distinguish description from representation - attempts at perfect description would result in nearly identical portraits, and any differences would be accidental peculiarities.

In this way, representation precedes interpretation: a caricature depicting a tyrant astride Europe, and a portrait depicting a noble general astride his trusted steed can both be considered representations of Napoleon. It is then our interpretation that leads us to conclusions about the sort of man Napoleon was. A representation is an *aspect*, the caricature represents the sinister facets of Napoleon's nature, the portrait his noblest facet, etc. We should avoid identifying the person depicted with that portrait's represented, it is merely an aspect of the person portrayed. Representation is a three-place operator: 'a *representation* (1) offers us the *presented*, or *aspect* (2) of a *represented reality* (3)'. Caricature (1) presents sinister aspect (2) of Napoleon (3).

Each theorist that has been examined presents a particular aspect of representation. As Mansbridge presents the 'gyroscopic' aspect of representation, so I present the subjective aspect of representation. Political art is wide open to the three place operation suggested above, especially in terms of presenting subjective understandings of political problems. Each example of political art serves our understanding of the subject in its own uniquely embedded way.

Chapter 4. Political Art

Following from the notion that interpretation first requires a representation as the object of interpretation, political representation begins with a subjective judgment on the part of the representative. Before making themselves known as a representative (or as a candidate for that role), the individual or party in question must have formed a judgment about what is relevant politically to the audience for their representation. Regardless of how the information about the audience (constituents) is received - opinion polls (deliberation), previous election results (sanction), media coverage, etc. - the representative's own internal, subjective view of the situation is what will determine the representation they make.

Explicitly political art has been created for as long as there has been a notion of political representation. I do not refer here to 'official' political art, such as portraits of rulers, representations of battles, etc. I refer to spontaneous representations made by the subjects of political power, from ancient Pompeii's famously graffitied walls to the rash of 'No Pipelines' graffiti on contemporary Vancouver walls. I should note, at this point, that I am restricting my operational definition of political art to visual entations made by the subjects of political pperformative political art have been analysed by critical theory schools, and would require an examination of the results of those critiques before inclusion here. Political art is a representation of some one, or some group's, political interest. Yet it has not been approached theoretically by political science with the same rigor as other forms of representation.

All forms of representation invoke a particular action-at-a-distance⁶⁴: political representation makes possible the act of informing collective action, even at a great distance⁶⁵, or while otherwise engaged making widgets, etc. Aesthetic representation can convey the action of Provencal wind in a *Wheat Field with Cypresses*, the chaos of *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, or the smell of coffee and cigarettes in *Nighthawks at the Diner*.⁶⁶ Icons form a special set of aesthetic representations that invoke the intercession of a deity. Dreams are often believed to represent the actions of subconscious thought, or of supernatural daemons such as night-mares. As often as representations make some thing present, they also incur the actions that that thing brings about. The cases below are examples of political art that make certain interests present, while also calling into being the actions required to transform those interests into political reality.

4.1. Pablo Picasso's *Guernica*

Guernica is perhaps one of the best known examples of contemporary political art. Picasso created the painting in response to newspaper reports of *Luftwaffe* bombing of the Basque town Guernica during the Spanish Civil War. The bombing resulted in significant civilian casualties, and was considered by both its perpetrators and its victims as the dawn of a new and terrible application of air power. The bombing took place April 26 1937. By June of that year – at the behest of the Republican government – Picasso

⁶⁴ Andrew Rehfeld, "Towards a General Theory of Political Representation" *The Journal of Politics* 68, No.1 (2006), 7 "Representation always denotes some kind of activity"

⁶⁵ NASA has occasionally enabled American astronauts living in space to cast absentee ballots on the second Tuesday of November – effecting political action from beyond Earth's atmosphere.

⁶⁶ Van Gogh's *Cypress* series, Woodville's painting and Tennyson's poem, and Hopper's iconic painting, are the respective aesthetic representations referred to here.

created and presented the work at the Spanish Pavilion of the Paris International Exposition.

The painting is monumental and grim, its restricted palette of black, white, and grey mimicking the newspaper photographs and text that brought to Picasso the news of the massacre. The colours also convey the mourning and hopelessness of the scene – the victims, in particular, are painted ‘bathed in bright light’ drawing our attention to the central human drama.

Picasso chose a life of exile over accommodation to Franco’s Spain, and insisted on the same fate for *Guernica*. It toured internationally and was not brought back to Spain until after Franco’s death. There also exists one authorized reproduction of the painting: a tapestry commissioned by Nelson Rockefeller in 1955, on display at United Nations headquarters in New York since 1985⁶⁷. Like the original, the display of the tapestry has been subject to political currents. At the UN, the tapestry was hung at the entrance to the Security Council, where large press conferences were held. On February 5th 2003, American Secretary of State Colin Powell appeared at the General Assembly to make the case for bombing (and subsequent invasion) of Iraq. When the time came for the U.S. delegation to announce that it would proceed with the bombing campaign, its press handlers had the tapestry covered by blue curtains before the press conference.⁶⁸ The work’s unambiguous condemnation of war – particularly indiscriminate air power – appears to have been too much of a challenge to the American’s righteous swagger.

Guernica presents an aspect of war that is anathema to official political discourses about the just application of violence. Typically these debates accept political violence as necessary, and the interests of voters are expressed in terms of which

⁶⁷ Peter Campbell. "At the New Whitechapel" *London Review of Books* 31(8), 30 April 2009.

⁶⁸ David Cohen. "Hidden Treasures: What's so controversial about Picasso's *Guernica*?", *Slate*, 6 February 2003.

conditions, and which forms make that violence politically acceptable. The suffering of victims does become part of the debate, but only as a rhetorical ally of the degree to which it must be accepted as a regrettable necessity. The painting and tapestry, however, present war and suffering as unconditionally unacceptable. The anguished mother holding the broken body of her child (the leftmost figures of the composition) are unbounded from our notions of political expedience. Only the truly psychotic would suggest that mothers grieving for their children is less than a universal truth.

4.2. East Vancouver Resistance *No Pipelines*

The expansion of tar sand exploitation in northern Alberta is a fractious political issue across Canada. Particularly the proposed ‘Northern Gateway’ pipeline, which would transport unrefined output to a coastal tanker port, has been seen a symbol of the push to expand the project without concern for the social and environmental consequences. Opposition to the project enjoys a broad base of support in many communities, Vancouver’s Eastside being a notable example. Groups such as the Dogwood Initiative have gathered signatures on petitions, and there have been several anti-pipeline rallies. Despite the success – in terms of numbers of supporters – these actions have had, there appears to be only one group (or possibly individual) that is concerned with maintaining awareness of the opposition to the pipeline.

The creator of ‘No Pipelines’ graffiti has scrawled this blunt message in spray paint over hundreds of walls in East Vancouver. The message is hard to miss: it has been sprayed on prominent walls such as the entrance to the government liquor store on Commercial Dr. It has also raised the ire of otherwise sympathetic citizens by being repeatedly sprayed over a beloved mural.⁶⁹ As an example of political art it is aesthetically uncomplicated: its straightforward literalism is far removed from Picasso’s rich symbolism or Beuys’ intentionally ambivalent installation. However, it is an

⁶⁹ <http://news.nationalpost.com/2014/06/10/anti-pipeline-anarchists-bizarrely-vandalize-anti-pipeline-mural-over-and-over/>

expression of a diverse group's interest – one that, as a group, has been denied by the official processes of representation and accountability.

Despite being ugly, obvious, and somewhat boring, the 'tag' serves the aesthetic representation of opposition to tar sands development in its whole and diverse entirety more than any symbol proffered so far. Aesthetic politics promotes a holistic view of the messy problems of politics. In the case of tar sands extraction, representative government has provided very narrow frames within which to debate the costs of the project. Official consultations focus on particular constituencies concerns: of First Nations groups whose territory is affected, of environmentalists protecting specific ecosystems, of businesses meeting their shareholders expectations, etc. If one does not belong to the officially recognized interests, one's only official means of representation is via their MP or MLA. Only the Green Party is committed to a total moratorium on tar sands development, and at present that party lacks the political capital to influence Parliament. Furthermore, these official means only apply if one is enfranchised in Canada. As a massive extraction project, the tar sands produce environmental and economic effects that reach beyond Canadian borders. The oil shipped through the pipeline will be destined for Asia. Residents of polluted Chinese cities have an interest in preventing more fossil fuels from being burned in their country and 'No Pipelines,' in part represents that interest. Canadian environmentalists are concerned about possible leaks and spills; Alaskan coastal peoples are affected by the same risk. 'No Pipelines' reflects that concern. Canadian youth and landed immigrants will be affected in same way as fully enfranchised citizens; and many more groups and entities, all have stakes in a 'No Pipelines' position regardless of their specific concerns.

Political art, in instances such as this, can mimic the transnational power of the economic players involved. Individual Canadians have a deep interest in pipeline development policy. They are not formally connected, however, to individuals in other polities that have a similar interest in that policy. This is a disadvantage in comparison to the transnational corporations that have interest in these policies. These corporations can influence policy in nearly any country in which they have a base of operation - a company with offices in both Canada and the U.S. can influence U.S. foreign policy to favour deals promoting pipeline development. By representing any pipeline dissenter,

political art underscores the global ramifications of proposed pipeline policy. Policy must eventually reduce the interests of those it serves in order to be implemented. However, the current approach reduces the interests it considers before the process has even begun. Aesthetic politics makes a mass representation such as 'No Pipelines' meaningful, it forces acknowledgment that compromise is not going to be easy, it also acknowledges that such a compromise is the only legitimate conclusion of representation.

4.3. Joseph Beuys' 7000 Oaks: City Reforestation not City Administration⁷⁰

Joseph Beuys' monumental project, *7000 Oaks: City Reforestation not City Administration*, marked the maturity of the political ideals he conveyed through his work. The work consists of both a performative phase and an installation phase. The project began as a part of the *documenta 7* arts fair in Kassel, Germany. This was the performative phase: at the beginning of the fair Beuys arranged 7000 basalt columns (roughly 60 - 70cm in height) in an arrow-shaped pile on the plaza in front of Kassel's city hall. The arrow pointed to a single oak sapling. Beuys gave the instruction that each column may only be removed if it was paired with a tree sapling (mainly of oak) that was planted within the city of Kassel. The planting was accomplished by volunteers over the five years between *documenta 7* and *8*. Although Beuys died before the completion of the project, the final tree was planted by his son to mark the opening of the eighth fair. The work continues to persist as an installation spread throughout most of Kassel. Beuys conceived of the installation lasting for 300 years, though some of the trees have already perished.

I suggest *7000 Oaks* functions as an experimental inquiry into forms of aesthetic representation. Beuys had an innate sense of the challenges of political representation: his political life was centred on enacting direct democracy; but it was also informed by

⁷⁰ Carin Kuoni, ed., *Energy Plan for the Western Man. Joseph Beuys in America: Writings by and Interviews with the Artist*. (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1990) 109; Stefan Körner, and Florian Bellin-Harder "The 7000 Eichen of Joseph Beuys – Experiences After Twenty- Five Years". In *Journal of Landscape Architecture*, 4:2, (2009) 6

the notion that direct democracy is impossible. His ouster from the Green Party, of which he was a founder, was predicated on his disregard for the *realpolitik* of German party politics. Work on *7000 Oaks* began in the period immediately following his parting of ways with the political party.

7000 Oaks is an aesthetic embodiment of 'green' political philosophy. Direct democracy and modern German parliamentary democracy do not provide conditions for Beuys's ideal of representation. Conceived within a romantic idiom, each instantiation of the project, each individual oak with accompanying basalt column, is an invitation to self-representation. Beuys connected the political power of these oak/basalt pairings to the 'Druids' who, he claimed, gave their laws to one another from amidst the branches of their sacred oak trees. The modern application of this ancient political system is intended to remind contemporary citizens of their own power to draw upon natural law (in the Romantic rather than Enlightenment idiom) to govern themselves. This representation transcended the fractious contestation of direct democracy by connecting the present to a continuum of social and biological presence that converges upon the user. The installation provided seven thousand opportunities for the citizens of Kassel to become their own lawgivers.

Chapter 5. Conclusion

Representation, in spite of challenges from deliberative and direct democrats, appears to be a feature of democracy for the foreseeable future. This paper has examined subjectivity as an under theorized variable in approaches to representation. By using the example of political art to stand in for individual or collective subjectivity in representation, I have sought grounds where current theories may be enhanced or complimented by an aesthetically informed understanding of their subject. Each theorist I have examined has contributed to a multi-dimensional model of representation that gains descriptive, if not proscriptive, utility with each addition.

Briefly, these are the dimensions of representation that have been contributed by the authors covered in this study, and the complimentary information about their subjects that political art uncovers. Pitkin considers the problem of the subjectivity involved in representation throughout her book, and even considers the role of art as an instance of 'symbolic' representation. However, she is dismissive of art's place in political representation because it merely 'stands in' when a more active form of representation is unavailable. In my examples, I hope to have shown that 'merely' standing in can complement, though not replace, many active forms of representation. It is difficult - usually impossible - for representatives to act or stand for their constituents *tout court*: art such as *Guernica* can 'stand' alongside other representations of constituents' subjective interests, giving representatives a broader impression of interests that they must carry forward into political action.

Andrew Rehfeld breaks down the black box of audience judgement in representation into a process of 'recognition'. Here, although he follows Pitkin in his treatment of art as 'symbolic' representation, his treatment appears more generous than does hers: because he does not restrict his theory to democratic representation, he will accept representations that are 'recognized' by their audience as such. *No Pipelines*

graffiti complement (or for some may even replace) rhetorical representations of tar sands policies, as long as there is an audience that recognizes it as representing them.

Jane Mansbridge tacitly endorses Pitkin's restrictive view of democratic representation as the only legitimate venue for political representation. By dispensing with the trustee/delegate model in favour of 'anticipatory', 'gyroscopic', and 'surrogate' representation, her approach highlights the discursive dimensions of representation. Each of these modes involves multifaceted communication between representatives and their constituents. In each case, I suggest, a representative could legitimately consider political art among the modes of communication bridging their activity and the subjective interests of their constituents. A piece of political art can signal the interests of groups or individuals whose numbers ensure a minority status in even the most sympathetic polities. This is so particularly in the case of her problematic 'surrogate' representative, here the representative must rely on information about the group whose subjective interest is represented without regard for their electoral representation. The example of the AIDS memorial quilt is particularly apt in this case: someone who wanted to stand in parliament as a surrogate representative for AIDS patients and their friends and families can find the empirical information they have about this population significantly complimented by the subjective impressions presented by the makers of the quilt.

The theorists discussed above aim for analytic refinements that will lend greater accuracy to research into the legitimacy of representative claims. I have also included the work of Frank Ankersmit, a historicist, because he addresses political representation in a conceptual framework that places problems of subjectivity in its core. Initially I considered that his theories of 'aesthetic representation' would complement the analytic work of political theorists by clarifying the aesthetic dimension of subjectivity found in their work. This is not the case. However, by examining the aesthetics of political representation Ankersmit has posed several questions that should motivate future attempts at analytic theory. Particularly, how should political representation be considered at scales larger than the relationship between constituents and their individual representative? He re-opens the issue of Burke's famed 'letter', and asks whether it is the national interest represented in parliament, or whether parliament is a venue for representatives to contest the interests they represent individually. Ankersmit

presents a compelling account of representation as 'aesthetic' that challenges analytically inclined approaches to specify the levels of representation they intend to address. He also uses the aesthetic view to provoke questions about the foundations for representative theory. His view denies a 'third' Platonic element to representation, one that both the represented and the representation share in origin. This suggests that assumptions about a representation's accuracy correlating with legitimacy could be grounded in faulty reasoning. However, his approaches to understanding representation conceptually, i.e. aesthetically, do not contribute to an analytical approach that brings a greater scope to the question of subjectivity in political representation.

This project has considered the role of political art within political discourse as an instance of representation. The natural affinity of artistic and political representation drew my attention to this approach. Political art is a pervasive feature of political culture, and could be studied in alternative approaches to political theory. As the main concern of this paper has been the place of political art in democratic theory, I wish to acknowledge the possibility of considering political art as a 'text' within deliberative approaches. Aesthetics transcends the dichotomy of representation - deliberation, bringing something of each into the other. Teasing out the implications of this triadic relationship may prove to be a useful avenue of future democratic theorizing.

In conclusion, by examining contemporary examples of representative theory alongside contemporary examples of political art I have drawn attention to the complimentary relationship between them. Political art can serve as a supplementary 'text' where questions of subjectivity (or of the intersubjective relationship between representatives and representeds) are begging. By providing an aesthetic view of constituent's interests, both observers and participants in a variety of representative political arrangements can consider political art alongside more traditional empirical data.

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Appendix A.

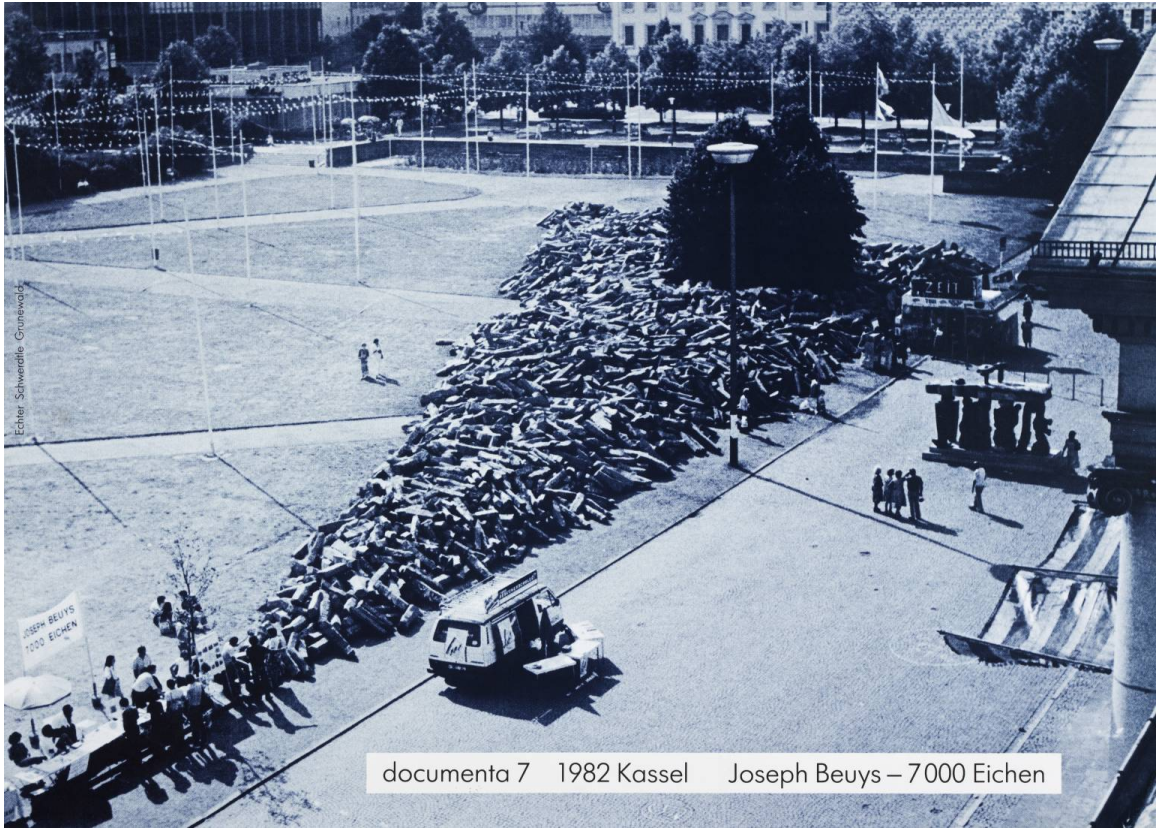
Artworks Surveyed



Pablo Picasso, Guernica. April 26, 1937–June 1937, 3.5 m x 7.8 m. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid



Unknown, *No Pipelines*, Photo by Andrew Bruce. August 29, 2014



documenta 7 1982 Kassel Joseph Beuys – 7000 Eichen

Joseph Beuys, 7000 Oaks, 1982, Installation View. In <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/images/work/AR/>