

The Impact of Formal Paths to Office on Descriptive, Symbolic, and Substantive Representation: Maori in the New Zealand Parliament

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Abstract

Pitkin (1967) identified four normatively valued aspects of representation. We theorize that because *formal* representation precedes the other forms of representation, it has the potential to influence the extent to which *descriptive*, *symbolic*, and *substantive* representation occur with fidelity. What is more, formal representation's impact on symbolic and substantive representation can be engineered to be direct, having an effect beyond its indirect effect through descriptive representation. Using the example of the Māori indigenous minority in the New Zealand parliament, we show that electoral rules can be designed to bring descriptively representative candidates to power at different rates, but that the formal route to power has an independent effect on how elected officials engage in symbolic and substantive representation.

Introduction

There are a variety of frameworks for trying to understand representation. In a now classic discussion, Pitkin (1967) sheds light on the concept by carefully scrutinizing the various ways in which the term had been used, highlighting examples of normatively valued characteristics. She suggests that there have been four characterizations or views of representation: *formal* representation, *descriptive* representation, *symbolic* representation, and *substantive* representation. Each view of representation entails not only a unique focus when trying to understand its meaning, but also distinct standards for assessing whether representation is faithfully being achieved.

The use of representation in the *formal* sense focuses on the institutional arrangements by which representatives gain office. Variants focus on the role of institutions in both the authorization of the representative (38) and then in the holding of the representative accountable (55). In terms of formal representation, “[e]lections are acts of ‘vesting authority’” (42). *Descriptive* representation is concerned with the extent to which the representatives resemble, broadly construed, those they have been chosen to represent. According to Pitkin, scholars interested in constituencies and apportionment, suffrage and party organization, and with electoral systems and voting often conceived of representation in terms of “reflecting without distortion” (60). *Symbolic* representation focuses on the meaning that the representative has for the represented. “To say that something symbolizes something else is to say that it calls to mind, and even that evokes emotions or attitudes appropriate to the absent thing” (96). Finally *substantive* representation draws attention to whether the representatives, as agents of the represented, are pursuing the outcomes, or policies, that serve the interests of those being represented. The issue here is “whether a particular legislature represents the people, the nation, or whether it ‘really’ represents special interests. And the same question is frequently raised about an individual representative and his district” (115).

Pitkin (1967) also left open by omission or explicitly pointed out many additional as-

pects of the study of representation that required further exploration and clarification. One such area was how we should understand the relationship *among* the features of representation that we might normatively seek. It is this relationship on which we will focus in this paper. In the next section, we will briefly place our paper in the context of the empirical literature motivated by Pitkin’s framework, and then we will offer the hypotheses we will test here. In short, we theorize that because for most elected officials formal representation comes first, preceding the other forms of representation in which they can engage, it can, therefore, influence how or even whether those other forms of representation get carried out. More specifically, electoral rules can be designed to achieve desirable and distinct outcomes in terms of the nature of representation. We will also show that formal representation’s impact on symbolic and substantive representation is direct, not relying solely on an indirect effect through descriptive representation to bring about symbolic and substantive efforts.

More specifically, we are interested in whether the formal channels by which members of parliament are elected have an effect not only on their descriptive representation of some constituency, but also whether, once elected, members chosen through different formal channels vary in their efforts to engage in symbolic and substantive representation of that constituency. Empirically, we examine the case of Māori Members of Parliament in New Zealand, the Māori being the largest of the country’s indigenous Polynesian minorities. Given New Zealand electoral law, there are three, distinct formal routes to power. The New Zealand parliament typically has about 120 members,¹ 5 to 7 of whom (increasing over the time under study) are elected in single-member districts (or electorates) by voters who, self-identifying as Māori, have chosen to register via the “Māori Roll” (MR-SMDP). An additional 63 members are also chosen in single-member districts but by voters on what we will call the “General Roll” (GR-SMDP) – voters (of any ethnicity, including Māori) not opting for the Māori Roll. Finally, 50 members come from party lists

¹The size of the parliament varies as “overhangs” and “underhangs” can occur due to inequities between a party’s victories in the single-member district tiers and its list vote.

fielded in a single-nationwide district with seats awarded by proportional representation (PR List) voted for by voters on both the Māori and General Rolls.

We will show that historically (prior to 1993) the “Māori Roll” SMDP (MR-SMDP) seats were the dominant mechanism for increasing descriptive representation of the Māori, though the percentage of MPs that were Māori never approached the percentage of the population that was Māori. However, the importance of the MR-SMDP seats for descriptive representation has declined under the Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) put in place in the early 1990s, with several Māori MPs winning seats in the list PR tier (PR List) of the MMP system (and some continuing to be elected in the General Roll SMDP tier (GR-SMDP) as well). Thus, the MMP system has improved the extent to which parliament “resembles” the electorate as a whole (is descriptively representative).

The MMP system has also improved the extent to which the diversity within the traditionally under-represented group, the Māori, is represented in parliament in both symbolic and substantive terms. We will show that Māori MPs elected by the Māori Roll (in MR-SMDP seats) are most likely to engage in distinct forms of symbolic and substantive representation. Māori MPs elected by the PR-List vote are usually distinguishable from their non-Māori counterparts but not at the rate or at the magnitude of the MR-SMDP MPs. Finally the representation carried out by Māori MPs elected in GR-SMDP districts is only rarely discernible from representation as it is carried out by non-Māori MPs. Taken as a collective, Māori MPs seem to represent all the points on a scale that ranges from, for lack of agreed upon terminology, supporters of assimilation to avid pursuers of biculturalism (Thomas and Nikora, 1992; O’Sullivan, 2008), and it is unlikely that this diversity would be reflected in Parliament without appropriately designed electoral institutions. In other words, the electoral tiers or formal routes to power vary in the likelihood they will bring groups of different sizes to power at a proportional rate, *and* they also vary in the extent they bring to power MPs who carry out distinguishable forms of symbolic and substantive representation.

The Views of Representation

The amount of empirical (not to mention theoretical) literature motivated by Pitkin's framework or at least adopting aspects of its vocabulary is far too voluminous to be reviewed here.² Rather than even try, we will simply point out two aspects of the existing literature in order to put our paper in context, showing the uniqueness of our contribution. While Pitkin's summation of the focused on representation generally, the first feature of this body of literature that stands out is that many of the empirical works on representation motivated by her framework focus on traditionally under-represented groups – women or racial or ethnic minorities.³

As we will explain in more detail below, New Zealand's use of multiple electoral rules for choosing its parliament – “Māori Roll” SMDP seats (MR-SMDP), “General Roll” SMDP seats (GR-SMDP), and a shared multimember Proportional Representation tier (PR-List) – give us a unique opportunity to sort out not only the relationship between formal representation and descriptive representation, but also whether the former has an effect on symbolic and substantive representation independent of the latter. In other words, the research setting allows us to determine whether descriptively representative candidates behave differently from one another in symbolic and substantive terms as a function of the formal routes by which they arrived in office. Very few other empirical works have been able to untangle this confounding connection because it is often the case that the formal route to power and membership in a group being descriptively represented are synonymous with one another.

On a related note, while Pitkin did much to clarify the many ways in which the disci-

²A search of the Social Sciences Citation Index for works motivated by Pitkin's framework, using the search string “Topic=(represent* AND (formal OR descriptive OR symbolic OR substantive))”, suggests that perhaps as many as 611 articles in the field of political science have taken her thinking as a starting point. Google Scholar, a relatively recent metric for gauging scholarly impact, indicates that at the time of writing *The Concept of Representation* had been cited 4,697 times.

³Within that original group of 611 articles, 215 of them dealt with women and politics. To the previously cited search string, we added “(gender OR women OR female OR gap)”. Another 114 articles explicitly focused on the politics of race and ethnicity. To the original search string we added “(race OR racial OR ethnic*)”.

pline had viewed representation, she spent very little time systematically discussing the relationship *among* the different views. It might be ideal, if the variants of representation covaried in such a way that whenever one was improving in quality the others were as well. At the very least, our theorizing would be made more simple if one version of representation did not improve at the expense of another. This seems to be implied by Pitkin's characterization of representation as a "single highly complex concept." However, Pitkin also makes clear that the views of representation are associated with distinct research questions and distinct, though often implicit, standards for evaluating the quality of representation. Given this variation, it seems possible that the quality of representation as evaluated from one view may be out of sync with quality of representation as seen from another view.

The second feature of the existing literature that becomes clear, then, is the relative lack of attention scholars have given to the relationships among Pitkin's aspects of representation, preferring instead to treat them in isolation. As Bird (2012) notes, Pitkin's ". . . multifaceted conceptualization of political representation is well known and often cited, in practice, researchers still tend to examine each of her four main dimensions independently. The connective tissue and complex configurations of representation deserve more attention, for there is a serious risk of misspecification when one looks at a single or even a pair of dimensions in isolation from others (Eulau and Karpis, 1977; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler, 2005)" (529).⁴ Our search yielded only 2 scholarly articles the topic of which was all four of Pitkin's original conceptualizations of representation.

First, Burnet (2011) discusses the impact of formal representation, gender quotas, on

⁴Bearing out her characterization, we sought to winnow the 611 articles we identified down to those that dealt with any pair of Pitkin's original four conceptualizations. Pairing the four conceptualizations into their six unique combinations (with order being unimportant) reduced our count of scholarly articles to 99. Social Sciences Citation Index search "Topic=(represent* AND ((formal AND descriptive) OR (formal AND symbolic) OR (formal AND substantive) OR (descriptive AND symbolic) OR (descriptive AND substantive) OR (symbolic AND substantive)))". Grouping the four conceptualizations into three unique groups of three, left us with only 10 articles (Social Sciences Citation Index search "Topic=(represent* AND (formal AND descriptive AND symbolic) OR (formal AND descriptive AND substantive) OR (descriptive AND symbolic AND substantive))").

descriptive, symbolic, and substantive representation in post-genocide Rwanda, with an emphasis on the impact of formal/descriptive representation on recent advances in symbolic representation. Her extensive ethnographic interviews show that Rwandan women have “found respect” (symbolic representation) as a result of the gender quotas (formal representation) that have brought more women into politics (descriptive representation). Unfortunately, in earlier work, Burnet (2008) concluded that while quotas had led to more political participation by women, the increased presence of women did not result in increased political power for women (power which could be used to exercise substantive representation). The increasingly authoritarian nature of the regime meant that “as their participation has increased, women’s ability to influence policy making has decreased” (363).

To our first point above, the nature of the formal mechanisms for assuring representation of women in Rwanda make it impossible for Burnet to gain any leverage over the question of whether formal mechanisms defining the path to office have any impact independent of their impact on descriptive representation. Given the institutional design, Burnet cannot distinguish women who have reached office through mechanisms other than those formal guarantees from women who have reached office by other mechanisms, the same mechanisms as male representatives. In Rwanda, only the former exist.

Second, Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler (2005) take a cross-national, multivariate approach to uncovering the linkages among formal, descriptive, symbolic, and substantive representation. Like Bird (2012), they note that “there are numerous and complex causal connections hypothesized in an extensive literature to exist among the several dimensions of representation. As a result, attempts to extract any one linkage from the network and examine it in isolation raise serious, though usually unrecognized problems of model misspecification.” (414) As we do, they first make the case that mechanisms of formal representation, the structure of the electoral system, are exogenous (or precede the other forms of representation) and have direct effects on descriptive, symbolic, and

substantive representation.⁵ They also deduce hypotheses positing direct links between descriptive representation and symbolic representation and between descriptive representation and substantive representation (see their figure 1 on p. 411 of their article for an intuitive depiction).⁶ In the end, based on structural equation models using data regarding the election of female representatives in 31 countries, Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler (2005) conclude that formal representation (proportionality) does indeed impact descriptive (women in parliament) and symbolic representation (citizen satisfaction) and that descriptive representation affects both symbolic and substantive representation (gender equality in political rights, gender equality in social rights, national maternity leave policy, and gender equality in marriage and divorce laws).

Our contribution, then, is that we develop and test hypotheses about the relationships among all of the four normatively valued aspects of representation identified in Pitkin's review. We also offer, below, a theory regarding symbolic representation's relationship to the other forms of representation, a conceptual definition of symbolic representation that we think better represents its use in the literature, and a distinctive measure of symbolic representation that does not rely on a proxy. Finally, the design of electoral rules in our re-

⁵They acknowledge that this claim is probably not sustainable if one were to consider the long run. It is possible that elected representatives themselves might engage in institutional reforms that alter the formal mechanisms by which they arrive in office, especially if they thought the descriptive, symbolic, and substantive goals for which those formal mechanisms were adopted had all been achieved.

As we will detail below, some practitioners in New Zealand made the case that the adoption of a mixed-member system, given its proportionality, meant that Māori Roll Electorates (MR-SMDP) were no longer necessary to allow for descriptive representation or the election of Māori MPs proportionate to the group's share of the population. We will show that they were correct in terms of descriptive representation but not in terms of symbolic or substantive representation.

⁶With one important distinction, we very much agree with the approach taken by Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler (2005). In theoretical, conceptual, and empirical terms, we handle symbolic representation quite differently. Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler (2005, 414) briefly motivate a link between substantive representation and symbolic representation, arguing that quality substantive representation will increase citizen satisfaction with government. We would not argue with this suggestion (though, they do not find empirical support for this line of reasoning), but we do take exception with the assumption that citizen satisfaction and symbolic representation are synonymous. We read the existing literature and Pitkin to suggest that citizen satisfaction might follow from symbolic representation (as well as following from a whole host of other things). A satisfied citizen is not an indicator of (symbolic or any other kind of) representation, but citizens might feel satisfied if they are receiving quality (formal, descriptive, symbolic, and substantive) representation. Because symbolic representation is an amorphous concept and has proven so hard to measure directly, many scholars have used citizen satisfaction as a proxy for it, both conceptually and empirically. We think this is a misstep.

search setting gives us an unusual opportunity to explore whether formal representation leads to symbolic and substantive representation independent of its effect on descriptive representation.

As we noted above, for parliamentary elections, New Zealand currently uses a mixed-member system to choose 120 members of parliament,⁷ with 63 members chosen by voters registered on the General Roll in single-member districts by plurality rules (we will refer to this tier of the electoral system as GR-SMDP). Voters have the option to self-identify as Māori and to register on the Māori Roll.⁸ They then vote for members of parliament chosen in single-member districts decided by plurality (we will refer to this tier as MR-SMDP), with the number of MR-SMDP districts determined by the proportion of the population registered on the Māori Roll.⁹ The candidates running for the Māori roll seats need not be Māori,¹⁰ but the voters for those seats must be. Finally, 50 members are chosen, by both voters on the General Roll and the Māori Roll, in a single district by proportional representation (we will refer to this tier as PR-List). Figure 1 illustrates the three tiers of the electoral system, or the three formal routes of representation.¹¹ In a sense it is the typical mixed-member system, with the important exception that it has two mutually-exclusive SMDP tiers that share a single PR tier.

Not surprisingly, we suggest that the seats to be elected by the Māori Roll (MR-SMDP) are the most likely to consistently select Māori members of parliament. In addition, we hypothesize that the proportional representation tier of the electoral system is likely to

⁷The parliament can have on occasion been slightly larger due to “overhang” seats, seats that result when a party wins more seats in the General Roll SMDP (GR-SMDP) or Māori Roll SMDP (MR-SMDP) tiers than its vote in the PR tier would entitle it.

⁸The number of voters opting for Māori Roll has been on the rise. Between 1997 and 2006, among already registered voters, more than twice as many voters opted to join the roll as voters who opted to leave it. What is more, 80% of the 41,000 new Māori voters who registered during that period opted for the Māori Roll (Taonui, 2006, 15).

⁹The number of MR-SMDP seats was 4 from 1868 to 1996, 5 for 1996, 6 for 1999, and 7 for 2002, 2005, 2008, 2011 and 2014. It was beginning in 1996 that the number of MR-SMDP electorates “floats” to reflect the percentage of the population that registers on the Māori roll.

¹⁰The Electoral Amendment Act of 1967 made it possible for Māori candidates to compete in “European” (General Roll) Electorates and for candidates of European descent to run in seats elected by the Māori Roll.

¹¹The maps used in figure 1 are adapted from <http://www.elections.org.nz/voters/find-my-electorate>.



Figure 1: Three Formal Routes to Power: electorates used in the 2008 New Zealand parliamentary elections

generate Māori MPs. Following Schwandt-Bayer and Mishler (2005) (and a great deal of additional existing literature), we reason that proportionality allows party leaders to put candidates from traditionally under-represented groups on their lists to draw support from voters for whom group membership is a salient feature of candidates without alienating voters for whom it is not (or for whom some group memberships might be a negative voting cue). What is more, the entire Māori population, including those who registered on the Māori Roll, has the right to vote in the PR-List tier in New Zealand, making them a reasonably sized constituency. Finally, we hypothesize that the single-member districts voted in by voters on the General Roll (GR-SMD)P are least likely to lead to the election of Māori candidates. Māori are approximately 14% of the New Zealand's total

population, and they are not the plurality of voters in any district voted on by voters on the General Roll. Given that only one seat is to be filled, party leaders cannot blend ethnic majority and ethnic minority candidates together on a single slate, and the ethnic minority status of a candidate is unlikely to serve as a positive voting cue for a decisive portion of voters, especially given that many Māori voters opt to vote on the Māori roll.

Hypothesis 1. *Mechanisms of formal representation affect descriptive representation. More specifically, the likelihood a Māori candidate is chosen will decrease across the MR-SMDP tier, the PR-List tier, and the GR-SMDP tier.*

Arguing that descriptive representation should affect symbolic representation is straightforward, especially in this case. We expect ethnic Māori MPs to behave in ways that are symbolically meaningful to the Māori people. We do not expect MPs who are not Māori to engage in such forms of representation (as frequently). Pinning down exactly what Pitkin (1967) meant when she said that representatives could serve as “flags” (92) or “living symbols” (93) and then measuring it systematically is challenging. In our case, what could an MP do to make citizens believe that he or she was behaving in such a way as to symbolize the Māori people? Speaking the Māori language, *te reo Māori*, in a place of political power where the language is relatively uncommon is a symbolic gesture in representation of the minority group as a whole.

According to the website of the New Zealand Parliament, only about 16% of Maori adults have medium to high fluency in the spoken language (though 63% have high listening comprehension).¹² The symbolic nature of speaking Māori on the floor is made especially sharp by the fact that all MPs fluent in Māori (during the period under study) are all perfectly fluent in English and, as noted above, many Māori citizens are more fluent in English than Māori. Thus, the MP’s choice of language is not typically one of necessity. While it might seem trivial that Māori MPs speak more *te reo Māori* on the chamber

¹²Historically, the Standing Orders of the Speaker of the House allowed MPs to address the chamber in *te reo Māori*. The MP or someone else then had to provide a translation/interpretation of their intervention.

The Māori language, *te reo Māori*, was not acceptable for legal proceedings until the adoption of The Māori Language Act of 1987.

floor than Pākehā, the Māori word for New Zealanders of European descent and more recently for any non-Māori New Zealander, MPs, our main interest is in whether Māori MPs elected by the Māori Roll in Māori Electorates (MR-SMDP), Māori MPs elected from the PR-List (PR-List), and Māori MPs elected by the General Roll in SMDPs (GR-SMDP) behave differently from one another.

Hypothesis 2. *Descriptive representation and mechanisms of formal representation jointly affect symbolic representation. More specifically, the frequency with which the Māori people are invoked on the floor of parliament through the use of the Māori language will decrease across Māori MPs elected in the MR-SMDP tier, Māori MPs elected in the PR-List tier, Māori MPs elected in the GR-SMDP tier, and non-Māori MPs.*

An identical line of reasoning applies to the likelihood that MPs will engage in substantive representation of Māori interests. In Pitkin's terms, "standing for" the represented is distinct from "acting for others, an activity in behalf of, in the interest of, as the agent of, someone else" (113). We use the taking up of "Māori issues" during Question Time or as the subject of a Private Member's Bill as an indicator of seeking to substantively represent the minority group.¹³ Question Time is typically an opportunity to grill the government on its implementation of policy and whether it is being done without the interests of the Māori people in mind. In addition, of course, MPs can propose legislation of their own that deals directly with issues of particular interest to the Māori, and we will describe how that process works in New Zealand specifically below. According to our reasoning, descriptively representative MPs will be more likely to substantively represent Māori interests than Pākehā MPs, but among Māori MPs, again, we expect variation by electoral tier.

Hypothesis 3. *Descriptive representation and mechanisms of formal representation jointly affect symbolic representation. More specifically, the frequency with which Māori issues are taken up*

¹³We explicitly define our strategy for identifying "Māori issues" in greater detail below.

on the floor of parliament by posing a question during Question Time or by having one's Private Member Bill selected for discussion will decrease across Māori MPs elected in the MR-SMDP tier, Māori MPs elected in the PR-List tier, Māori MPs elected in the GR-SMDP tier, and non-Māori MPs.

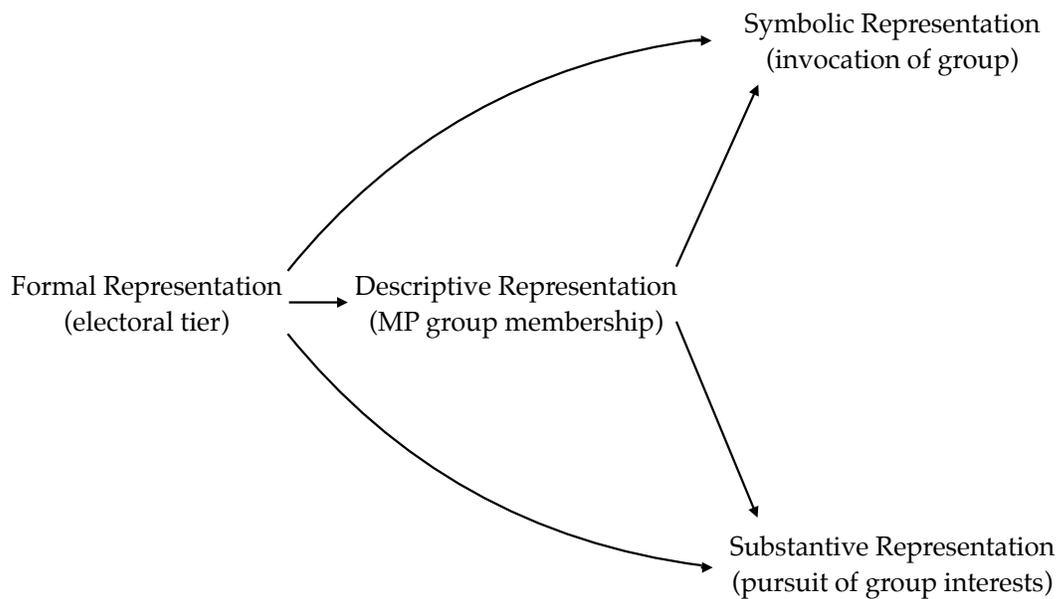


Figure 2: An Integrated Model of Representation

Figure 2 illustrates our integrated model of representation in an electoral democracy. Formal mechanisms of representation can be designed to increase the likelihood that groups in society, majority and minority, are descriptively represented in parliament proportionately to their size in the population. The size of these groups, or their level of descriptive representation, then affects both the extent to which groups are symbolically and substantively represented. Beyond this indirect effect of formal representation on symbolic and substantive through descriptive, we reason that formal representation has

an effect on symbolic and substantive representation directly. They can not only assure that groups are elected proportionately to their size but also that the group members will vary amongst themselves in ways that reflect the heterogeneity *within* the group.

In the subsequent sections we will test each hypothesis, first describing our indicators of each key concept and then explaining our approach to analyzing them before offering an interpretation of whether there is support for our hypotheses.

Descriptive Representation

According to Pitkin (1967), many thinkers, including many of those in charge of drafting constitutions, focus on descriptive representation, believing that true representation “requires that the legislature be so selected that its composition corresponds accurately to that of the whole nation; only then is it really a representative body” (60). American founding fathers, for example, used terms like “an exact portrait, in miniature” and “the most exact transcript of the whole society” (60-61). Pitkin frequently invokes terms like “resemblance,” “mirror,” “correspondence,” and “accurate reflection” (65). In a sense, the function of a representative assembly becomes a matter of yielding information about the composition of the population.

According to Statistics New Zealand, the official statistics website of the New Zealand government, during the period of focus here (1987 to 2011), the Māori population was relatively steady, hovering around about 14% of the total population, give or take a percentage point or two in either direction. Until 1967, Māori candidates could only compete for the seats elected by voters on the Māori Roll, and the number of seats was fixed at 4 (through 1993). In 1975, Rex Austin and Ben Couch became the first (self-identifying) Māori candidates to win election to parliament in a seat *not* chosen by the Māori Roll. In the five subsequent elections until the use of MMP, from 1 to 3 ethnic Māori candidates won General Roll seats. Given that Parliament during this period had 99 or fewer mem-

ber, this means that Māori MPs typically constituted about 6% of the legislative body, leaving the Māori under-represented in descriptive terms.

By 1993, each Māori Electorate had a population of 68,150 voters while each General Electorate seat represented a population of 33,457 (*The Origins of the Maori Seats*, 2009). After that, the number of seats elected by the Māori Roll has been tied to the proportion of the population that registers to vote via it. The percentage of Māori voters who register for the Māori Roll increased from less than 40% of Māori voters in 1993 to approaching 60%, with the number of Māori Roll seats (or Maori Electorates) climbing to 5 (1996), 6 (1999), and more recently 7 (2002, 2005, 2008, 2011, 2014) seats. While New Zealanders not of Māori descent can compete for these seats, these seats have always been won by candidates who self identify as Māori. Assuming this pattern of only Māori candidates winning Māori Roll seats continues, the floor on Māori descriptive representation has been raised from just over 3% to 6% (this also assumes that the percentage of voters on the Māori roll remains roughly constant).

Perhaps more momentous for Māori descriptive representation than tying the the number of Māori Roll seats (MR-SMDP) to the percentage of the population registering via it was the adoption of a mixed-member proportional representation electoral system, a reform not primarily motivated by a desire to enhance Māori representation at all.¹⁴ As we noted above, until 1993, apart from the 4 Māori Roll seats, parliament was elected from single-member districts decided by plurality and no more than 3 of those districts were won by Māori candidates in any given election.

Table , containing the ethnicity of MPs in the 42nd through 49th Parliaments,¹⁵ makes

¹⁴That the large magnitude of the PR-list tier, 50 seats, could lead to the election of more Māori MPs was recognized by those who proposed the reform. The Department of Justice's Royal Commission on the Electoral System, that brought forward the proposal to adopt an MMP system, originally advocated the abolition of MR-SMDP seats, reasoning that the Maori would receive higher rates of representation due to increased proportionality (*Report of the Royal Commission on the Electoral System: Towards a Better Democracy*, 1986). Between the original proposal and the adoption of the reform, the provisions for Māori Electorates were re-inserted and the tying of seats to the number of voters on the roll was included.

¹⁵We include here elections held under the purely SMDP, General Roll and Māori Rolls, held in 1987, 1990, and 1993 for the 42nd through 44th Parliaments. Given our interest in representation as carried out by Māori MPs across the *three* formal routes to power, we do not include these elections in our models

clear that the creation of a large magnitude (50 seat) district has put more Māori candidates in office than ever occurred under the exclusively SMDP system. In fact, the percentage of MPs who are Māori has increased by two-and-half fold during the MMP era. Some of that increase can be attributed to the institutional reform tying the number of Māori roll seats to the number of voters enrolled on it (12 more MR seats over 5 parliaments than would have been the case under the old system), but in terms of raw numbers, most of the increase has occurred because of the introduction of the PR-tier in the Mixed-Member system.

MP Ethnicity	General Roll SMDP Seats		Māori Roll SMDP Seats	Total
Not Maori	275		0	275
Maori	5		12	17
Total	280		12	292
% Maori	1.79%		100%	6.03%

MP Ethnicity	General Roll SMDP Seats	PR List Seats	Māori Roll SMDP Seats	Total
Not Maori	302	233	0	535
Maori	10	53	32	95
Total	312	286	32	630
% Maori	3.21%	18.53%	100%	15.08%

Table 1: Ethnicity of Members of the 42nd-44th and 45th-49th Parliaments (1987-2011)^a

^aThe Not Māori category is almost exclusively New Zealanders of European descent, but it also contains a very small number of MPs who identify as Asian or as non-Maori Pacific Islanders. The totals include members chosen in by-elections and those taken from a party's list during a term to replace a list-seat MP who could not finish his or her term.

With 100% of the Māori Roll seats being won by Māori candidates (not surprisingly), those electorates clearly have an impact on descriptive representation. As an increasing number of Māori citizens opt to register via the Māori Roll, the number of seats to be of symbolic and substantive representation. Elections for Parliament under the MMP system, for the 45th through 50th, were held in 1996, 1999, 2002, 2005, 2008, and 2011. We do not include the 2011 results (for the 50th Parliament) here as, at the time of writing, that Parliament is still in session. Thus, we do not have complete data for it in terms of symbolic and substantive representation.

elected by the roll rose to 7 and has remained steady. These seats also provided a niche for The Māori Party. Since its formation in 2004, the party has never polled enough list votes to clear the 5% threshold for representation in the mixed-member proportion of the system.¹⁶ However, any party that wins a single-member district, via the General Roll or the Māori Roll, is entitled to seats proportional to its list vote total. In 2005 and 2008 candidates from the Māori Party won 4 Māori Roll electorates.¹⁷ Its relatively strong showing via the Māori Roll led to the addition of “overhang” seats (1 in 2005 and 2 in 2008)¹⁸ to the parliament, as its Māori Electorate (MR-SMDP) victories gave it more seats than it would have been entitled based on its PR-List vote.

We do not have data on the ethnicity of all candidates running for parliament, before or after the reform, so we cannot say with certainty whether the addition of a PR tier means that parties are nominating more Māori candidates or if the number of Māori candidates has remained constant while their odds of winning has increased, though the former seems *much more* likely. As Māori MP Metiria notes, given that voters have diverse motivations “. . . what people are looking for in MMP leads to a desire [on the part of party leaders] for a broad and diverse list” (Turei, 2010, p. 161). As we developed above, the 50-seat PR tier allows parties to nominate Māori candidates (in winnable list positions) without forcing voters to face a choice where candidate ethnicity is a stark cleavage. For example, if a party’s list contains both non-Māori and Māori candidates, voters can perceive themselves to be voting Labour *and* voting Māori (as the party has several Māori candidates on its list), they can perceive themselves to be voting Labour *and* to be voting Pākehā, or they can perceive themselves to be voting Labour and to be voting without concern for candidate ethnicity.

So, regardless of whether a given voter is pursuing descriptive representation, the out-

¹⁶Analysis of Electorate level returns suggests that many Maori Roll voters vote for the Maori Party with their electorate vote and for Labour with their party-list vote, strategically avoiding wasting their list vote on a party that will not receive PR List seats.

¹⁷In 2011 it won 3 Maori-roll electorates.

¹⁸The addition of one overhang seat was necessary in 2011 as well.

come is that the combination of the PR-tier in and (the increasing number) of Māori Roll seats has led to near parity between the percentage of the population that is Māori and the percentage of the parliament that is as well. From the perspective of Māori MPs, their seems to be acknowledgment that formal routes to power matter. MP Simon Bridges, himself elected in the single-member district plurality tier by general roll voters (GR-SMDP), writes that given “the rarity of Māori in general seats . . . provides a strong justification for the retention of Māori seats, accepting that MMP party lists also provide an avenue for Māori into Parliament”(Bridges, 2010, p. 217).

Symbolic Representation

Pitkin’s depiction of representation in symbolic terms is probably the most amorphous of her conceptualizations, and the scholarly literature has struggled with how to capture it empirically. Those not motivated by her work, or only tangentially so, often use the term “symbolic” representation to signal what Pitkin would consider low levels of descriptive representation (Segal, 2000). However, it is clear that Pitkin did not conceive of symbolic as synonymous with “tokenism.” Others have opted to use an observable implication of high quality symbolic representation in order to proxy for it empirically. Pitkin repeatedly points out that if symbolic representation is being successfully carried out, the represented will feel an affective sense of loyalty or satisfaction (92-111) (Barnes and Burchard, 2013). As a result, some researchers have used regime approval ratings to capture whether a government is somehow symbolically representative (Lawless, 2004; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler, 2005).

Pitkin uses monarchs (with only ceremonial powers), flags, coats of arms, and national anthems in efforts to clarify her own meaning. The stress is on affect and emotions. Thus, citing De Grazia (1951), she argues that the monarch serves as symbol not by looking like his subjects or even acting on their behalf (in fact, this could undermine his symbolic

role), but by engaging in “acts of expression.” The challenge is how to observe someone symbolizing or being symbolic.

Interestingly, symbolic representation is supposed to be an integrative act for those being represented, but it may only function as a symbol if it is observed by an audience it is not intended to represent (Pitkin, 1967, 105-106). It is in this sense, that we reason that use of the Māori language (te reo Māori) on the floor of the parliament is an ideal indicator of engaging in symbolic representation.¹⁹ The speaker invokes the presence of the Māori people and encourages listeners to ponder *Māoritanga* or “Māoriness” – and pointedly, for most listeners, their *lack* of Māoriness.²⁰ It is clearly a symbolic act in that, if anything, it obfuscates the content of the speech for most listeners.²¹ As MP Te Ururoa Flavell, a Māori Party candidate elected from the Māori Roll single member district (MR-SMDP) of Waiariki, recounts, the first words spoken during the 48th Parliament, by MP Hone Harawira also a (then) Māori Party member elected in an MR-SMDP (Te Tai Tokerau), were in Māori. He also noted that most Māori MPs gave their maiden speeches in Māori and that it “. . . sent the system into a bit of spin . . .” (Flavell, 2010, p. 221). According to Stephens (2010, p. 221), use of the Maori language on the floor of parliament is a “. . . a type of political theatre whereby Māori Members seek to create a ‘theatre of memory’ whereby those same Members, using te reo Māori in that space, (re)connect

¹⁹This is not to diminish issues surrounding the use of the Māori language that are anything but symbolic. Language barriers confronting speakers for whom te reo Māori is a primary language can have detrimental consequences for rights as fundamental as receiving proper health care or legal services.

A Māori language week was established in 1975 and other efforts have been made to promote the use of the language. In 2004 Rawiri Taonui, head of Maori and Indigenous Studies at the University of Canterbury, reported in *The New Zealand Herald* that the number of adult te reo Māori speakers had doubled in a 20 year span and that youth speakers had tripled during that same time period Taonui (2004).

²⁰A post with the title “King of the Māori” has existed since the 1850s and is now largely symbolic. The current holder of the title, King Tuheitia, has come under fire for a variety of reasons but one characteristic that has been singled out is his inability to speak the Māori language fluently. In other words, his fitness to claim the title is being called into question because he cannot symbolically represent his “subjects.” <http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/5107893/The-King-of-Huntly-perhaps>.

²¹Simultaneous translation or interpretation of Māori to English in parliament began in 2010. Prior to that, MPs either translated their own interventions or interpreters provided a loose translation for non-Māori speaking members. Telecasts of parliamentary sessions added simultaneous translation in 2013. In our online appendix, we provide models of symbolic representation that drop observations for the period after the implementation of simultaneous translation – in case the technology provoked an increased use of *te reo Māori*. The results from those models support the findings presented here in the body of the paper.

with one another and reinforce connection with those people who have passed on.”

From a variety of on-line resources, we gathered digital copies of floor minutes for the period 1996 to 2011. We obtained a dictionary of common Māori words,²² and then used machine reading technology to identify and count the Māori words being spoken in the minutes. Given the systematic formatting of the minutes, we were able to write code that was capable of identifying the speaker of all speeches. In the end, then, we are able to get a raw count of the number of words spoken by each member of parliament per parliamentary period, distinguishing between English and Māori words, and a measure of Māori words spoken by each individual MP.²³

In table 2, we provide several models testing hypothesis 2 regarding the impact of formal representation (election tier) and descriptive representation (MP ethnicity) on symbolic representation (use of the Māori language) by members of the 45th through 49th Parliaments, including, for each dependent variable, a baseline model and a model with controls. We controlled for features which might increase or decrease a member’s willingness to or incentives to symbolically represent any particular constituency, and sometimes a Māori constituency in particular. Critical Mass is a count of the total number of Māori MPs in that Parliament. Critical mass has been widely used in the gender and politics literature to determine whether female representatives behave differently as their total number increases. Māori Party is an indicator of whether the MP belonged to the only party elected during this period whose manifesto was almost exclusively about how policy impacted the Māori population. We also control for MP Seniority, reasoning that secure, senior Members of Parliament might feel less need to engage in symbolically representative acts. Finally, we control for whether an MP’s party was in government. Being in government typically reduces the role of individual MPs and puts greater emphasis on party discipline and pursuit of the government’s policy program. We do not discuss

²²We eliminated words that had the same spelling as English words from this list and used a list 934 words.

²³Some MPs never used te reo Māori. The maximum observed value was an MP for whom more than a quarter of words he spoke were in te reo Māori.

the substantive impact of the controls at length below as their inclusion or exclusion has no effect on the impact on our variables capturing the concepts of greatest theoretical interest.²⁴

Models 1 and 4 are logistic regressions of the probability that any given word spoken by a member is a Māori word. Model 2 and Model 5 are negative binomial regressions of the count of the number of Māori words spoken by a member (in a term). Model 3 and Model 6 are logistic regressions of whether any given intervention was likely to have significant (greater than 5% of words) Māori content. Standard errors are reported in parentheses.²⁵ These are robust standard errors clustered by an identification number for each Member of Parliament over the life of his or her career under the assumption that language-word choice is not independent across words spoken by an individual.²⁶

Regardless of the dependent variable used to capture the concept of symbolic representation, we find a consistent story regarding the impact of formal and descriptive representation, alone and in interaction, on symbolic representation. It is *not* the case that Māori MPs, regardless of electoral tier, are more likely to engage in symbolic representation of the Māori than non-Māori MPs.²⁷ More specifically, Māori MPs elected in

²⁴Critical Mass is positive, as suggested, and is sometimes statistically discernible. The same is true of membership in the Maori Party. MP Seniority was negative, as predicted, and only occasionally statistically discernible. Being an MP of a Party in Government was usually, but not always, negative, and it was signed as expected when it was statistically discernible.

²⁵In a sense, we have the population, rather than a sample, of Māori words spoken. So, standard errors are superfluous. We report them here as it the convention and because it is possible to argue that our observations are a sample of the Māori words that *could have* been spoken.

²⁶We ran the same models clustering standard errors by parliament in the event that some time-serial variation in the parliamentary agenda prompted more or less use of the Māori language. The results reported here are generally robust to the change in specification with the following exceptions. In model 3, GR-SMDP is no longer statistically significant, and in model 5, GR-SMDP becomes statistically significant. Models with with this alternative specification are in and Appendix made available, with replication code and data, via the lead author's website.

²⁷As reported here, all models portray the effect of ethnicity and electoral tier of Māori MPs compared to all non-Māori MPs, regardless of the tier from which the non-Māori MPs were elected. Our results are robust to the inclusion of an indicator for non-Māori MPs elected in the PR tier of the mixed-member system, making only non-Māori MPs elected by General Roll voters the excluded category. The statistical significance of the indicator for non-Māori MPs elected in the PR tier varies across model specifications, but it is always positive and usually substantively smaller than the coefficient for Māori MPs elected in an SMDP district by General Roll voters. This fits with theoretical expectations where non-Māori MPs elected in an SMDP district by the General Roll are least likely to engage in symbolic representation. See the on-line appendix for details. Again, see the on-line appendix for details.

GR-SMDP districts are typically *not* discernible from their non-Māori colleagues, with the exception of models 3 and 6 on the likelihood that any given intervention into floor debate will have a substantial amount of *te reo Māori* content. In these instances, Māori MPs elected in GR-SMDP districts are more likely than non-Māori MPs to engage in symbolic representation (and, as expected, the coefficients on the Māori GR-SMDP candidates is substantively smaller than that for Māori MPs elected in other tiers). What is more, as we expected, Māori MPs are distinguishable from one another based on the electoral tier in which they were chosen. Among Māori MPs, those chosen by the General Roll in SMDP districts engage in the least symbolic representation, and those chosen by the Maori Roll in SMDP districts engage in the most, while those elected by both General Roll and Maori Roll voters from a PR-list slot neatly in between.²⁸

In figure ?? we portray the results of Models 1 through 3 in an intuitive manner. They show the increase in symbolic representation across MPs based on their ethnicity and formal route to power. As an example, based on panel (a), there is about a .08% chance that a word spoken by a non-Māori MP will be in Maori and about a .09% chance that a word spoken by a Māori MP elected in a General Electorate SMDP district will be in *te reo Māori* (these two are not statistically distinguishable from one another). The percentage increases to almost 5.6% for a Māori MP elected in a Māori Roll SMDP district. Falling in between, there is a 1.4% chance that a word spoken by a Māori MP elected from the PR-list will be *te reo Māori*.²⁹

Looking at panel (b), the average non-Māori MP will speak about 85 words in *te reo Māori* during the course of a parliamentary period, and a Māori MP elected in a General Electorate SMDP district will speak about 92 words in Māori (again, the difference between the two is not statistically significant). A Māori MP elected from the PR list will

²⁸As we noted above, we also dropped all observations from 2010 and 2011 because during this period simultaneous translation was in place. We wanted to assure that any encouragement of the use of Māori because this technological advance was not driving our results. Again, all results hold. See the on-line appendix for details.

²⁹If we set the controls in model 4 at their mean and modal values, these percentages are .09% non-Maori, .12% Maori GR-SMDP, 1.42% Maori PR-List, and 3.49% Maori MR-SMDP.

Table 2: Models on Symbolic Representation

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
	Individual	Total	Intervention	Individual	Total	Intervention
	Maori Word	Maori Words	in Maori	Maori Word	Maori Words	in Maori
(Intercept)	-7.0920*	4.4373*	-5.7426*	-7.0709*	3.4116*	-6.0788*
	(0.0760)	(0.0809)	(0.0862)	(0.7072)	(0.3924)	(0.5826)
Maori	0.1203	0.0861	0.3450*	0.2639	0.2360	0.5932*
GR-SMDP	(0.1289)	(0.4545)	(0.1589)	(0.2078)	(0.4655)	(0.1890)
Maori	2.8468*	2.5827*	2.4661*	2.7305*	2.5016*	2.2747*
PR-List	(0.2764)	(0.2370)	(0.2791)	(0.2851)	(0.2370)	(0.2701)
Maori	4.2602*	4.0571*	3.9041*	3.6489*	3.3006*	3.2298*
MR-SMDP	(0.2796)	(0.4216)	(0.2858)	(0.2392)	(0.2029)	(0.2422)
Critical				0.0123	0.0645*	0.0426
Mass				(0.0366)	(0.0192)	(0.0286)
Maori				0.6404	1.4892*	0.9669*
Party				(0.4864)	(0.5411)	(0.4001)
MP				-0.1065	-0.0330	-0.1379*
Seniority				(0.0574)	(0.0401)	(0.0440)
Party in				0.1844	-0.3107*	-0.0215
Government				(0.2071)	(0.1104)	(0.1294)
<i>N</i>	62, 106, 544	627	378, 842	62, 106, 544	627	378, 842
AIC	224886.91	7360.89	5489.59	203760.99	7324.84	4891.11
BIC	224957.96	7449.71	5560.64	203903.10	7484.72	5033.22
log <i>L</i>	-112427.45	-3660.44	-2728.79	-101848.50	-3626.42	-2413.56

Robust standard errors in parentheses

* indicates significance at $p < 0.05$

speak almost 1119 Māori words, and a Māori MP elected in a Māori Roll SMDP district will speak 4887 words in Māori.³⁰

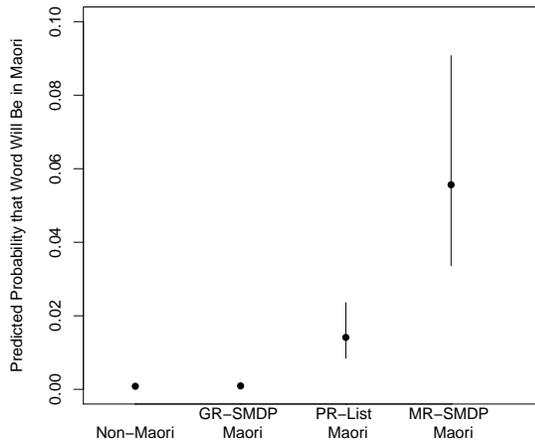
Finally, looking at panel (c), we see a very similar pattern when we look at the number of interventions that have significant *te reo Māori* content. In the nearly 379,000 individual interventions into debate that we observed, there is a nearly 14% chance that a speech by a Māori MP elected by the Māori Roll will have significant Māori-language content, while that percentage drops to .45% for a Māori MP elected by the General Roll in an SMDP district. Again, Māori MPs from the PR-List fall between these two (at 3.64%) .³¹ As MP Te Ururoa Flavell, speaking about Māori Party candidates elected from the Māori Roll single member districts, explains “. . . the real point is that we say what Māori say and

³⁰If we set the controls in model 5 at their mean and modal values, these counts are 71 non-Maori, 90 Maori GR-SMDP, 869 Maori PR-List, and 1, 933 Maori MR-SMDP.

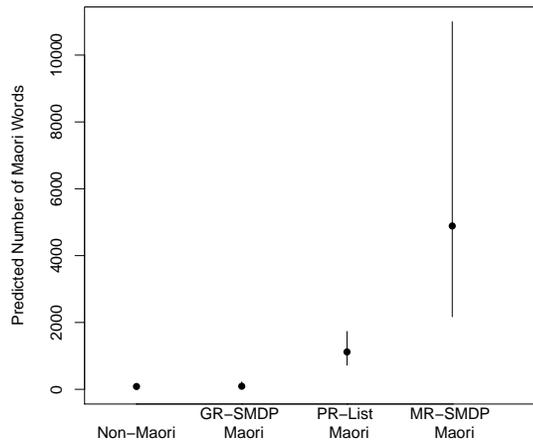
³¹If we set the controls in model 6 at their mean and modal values, these percentages are .34% non-Maori, .61% Maori GR-SMDP, 3.19% Maori PR-List, and 7.90% Maori MR-SMDP.

not what Labour says, not what National says. We say it in Māori language. We say it in ‘our speak’ that is not swearing. We say it our way. All of our speeches are about our stories and our people, identifying them as such” (Flavell, 2010, p. 184).

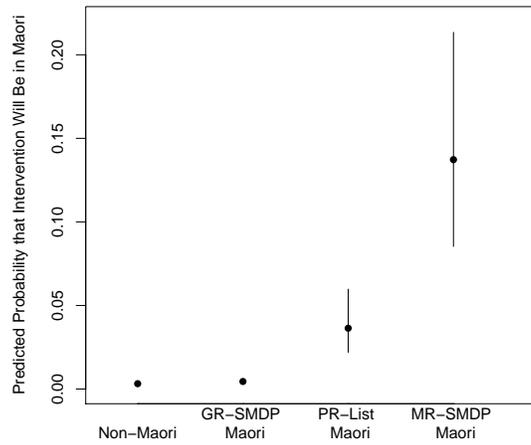
In sum, we find very consistent support for our line of reasoning about the roles of formal and descriptive representation in fostering symbolic representation. Māori MPs from the PR-list and from MR-SMDP electorates are regularly more likely than their non-Māori counterparts to make an effort to symbolically evoke the presence of the Māori people in the house of parliament. However, Māori MPs are not all equal. Those who are chosen by General Roll voters in single-member districts engage in relatively little symbolic representation, acting more like non-Maori MPs than Maori MPs elected through other formal routes. MP Simon Bridges, a Māori MP elected in a GR-SMDP, writes that “ . . . Māori in general seats may tend to play down their Māori-ness, and more often than not have not been fluent in te reo”(Bridges, 2010, p. 216). As we noted in the previous section, the PR-tier of the mixed-member system has led to a fairly dramatic increase of the number of Māoris in parliament. While these members engage in more symbolic representation than non-Māori MPs or Māori MPs chosen by the General Roll, they do not engage in symbolic representation at the rate that Māori MPs chosen in Māori Electorates do.



(a)



(b)



(c)

Figure 3: Predicted Values of Symbolic Representation, with Confidence Intervals, based on Models 1-3

Substantive Representation

Pitkin (1967) states that substantive representation means “*acting for*” the represented. “In this sense a man represents what (or whom) he looks after or concerns himself with, the interest that he furthers” (116). For the representative “the test of representation is how well he acts to further the objectives of those he represents” (116). The principal-agent paradigm is very much in evidence during her discussion. This is the sense of representation that is almost certainly most common when the academic literature focuses on the actions of elected officials, especially members of parliament. Writing about members of the legislative assembly in particular, Pitkin notes that if someone in the visitors’ gallery points to an individual member and asks his neighbor who that man represents, he may be expecting one of many responses. He may be expecting the name of a geographic district or the name of a political party. While she says that these are the kinds of responses a “tourist” might be seeking, she says that “. . . if the questioner and his neighbor are political scientists, the appropriate answer may be, ‘Oh, he represents the natural gas boys’” – a reference to whose interests he looks after (115).

Pitkin is explicit about the fact that the “*acting for*” of substantive representation is very different from the “*standing for*” of both descriptive and symbolic representation. Regarding the former, she concludes that “[t]he fact that a man or an assembly is a very good descriptive representation does not automatically guarantee that they will be good representatives in the sense of acting for, that their activity will really be representing. In the realm of action, the representative’s characteristics are relevant only insofar as they affect what he does” (Pitkin, 1967, 142). Distinguishing symbolic from substantive, she notes somewhat glibly, “[n]o matter how enthusiastic we might be about Miss California, few of us would want to elect her to Congress” (Pitkin, 1967, 142). Our task, then, is to capture who is “*acting for*” Māoris in Parliament³² and to determine how their ac-

³²In some sense, every issue is a Māori issue. What is more, even if we take a narrower view, the Māori people are an internally heterogeneous group, further complicating the identification of “their” interests. We return to these themes in the conclusion.

tions are related to the formal mechanism by which they arrived in office (electoral tier) and their descriptive attributes (ethnicity). As we noted above, to capture substantive representation, we will examine both question time and private member bill proposals.

Given the dominance of the government over the parliamentary agenda, an ideal means of determining for whom individual MPs are acting is to examine the questions they pose to that government. “Question Time” is a time-honored practice in most parliaments, giving MPs, in a comparatively unregulated milieu, an opportunity to pursue the interests they hold most dear. While questioning the government is often a tool of the opposition, in New Zealand, MPs can pose questions to other MPs. We observed 303 MP-terms outside the government, and 284 of those MPs posed at least one question for oral answer. On average, MPs from opposition parties asked 29 questions per term. While the opposition dominates, more than $1/3rd$ of questions posed were posed by MPs while serving in government. More precisely, 5,157 out of 14,033 questions in our dataset were asked by MPs from the parties in government.

In New Zealand, questions for oral answer can be (and are) included on the floor’s agenda every day parliament is in session.³³ Each morning (between 10:00 and 10:30 a.m.) that parliament is in session, members can submit questions to be answered orally during the day’s session, and 12 of those questions are placed on the agenda. MPs questions are selected proportionate to the size of their parties in parliament.

In order to determine whether a question was substantively representing Māori interests, we built two indicators to capture a question’s focus. Most simply, we coded every question that included the word “Māori” or that was addressed to the Minister of Māori Affairs as being concerned with Māori substantive interests (Basic Indicator). Secondly, the New Zealand National Library provides Index New Zealand (INNZ), which catalogs articles in over 1000 newspapers and journals. We used these news articles to identify

³³The Standing Orders allow for both Questions for Oral Answer and Questions for Written Answer. The latter are more numerous, but the parliament only has on-line records of them dating back to 2002. Thus, in order to cover the entire period under study, we report in the text models based on the more than 14,000 questions posed for oral answer between 1996 and 2011.

128 issues of particular importance to Māori.³⁴ We coded all questions for the presence of these key words or phrases (the terms are provided in an on-line appendix at the authors' websites). As a result, our second indicator of substantively representing Māori interests is any question that contains the word Māori, was addressed to the Minister of Māori affairs, or that includes a reference to one of these 128 subject matters (Detailed Indicator).³⁵

In table 3, we report baseline models and models including the controls used above for the likelihood of engaging in symbolic representation for similar lines of reasoning (standard errors are clustered by MP).³⁶ Models 7 and 11 are logistic regressions of the determinants of substantive representation as captured by whether the question included the word "Māori" or was addressed to the Minister of Māori Affairs (Basic Indicator). Models 8 and 12 are negative binomial regressions using the same coding scheme (Basic Indicator) but summing to the number of questions by an MP (in a given term). Models 9 and 13 are logistic regressions of the determinants of substantive representation as captured by whether the question included any of the key terms identified in our search of newspaper articles, included the word "Māori", or was addressed to the Minister of Māori Affairs (Detailed Indicator). Models 8 and 12 are negative binomial regressions using the

³⁴More specifically, for the period 1987-2011 we searched newspaper article titles and synopses for the word "Māori," identifying 13,372 articles. We then filtered that population by searching for the subject "Politics, Practical," one of the predefined subject filters provided by the database. That resulted in a set of 286 articles with synopses, and we culled those for terms that could be considered Māori interests, generating a list of 128 terms or phrases.

For example, someone unfamiliar with New Zealand politics might not recognize that a question about the "foreshore and seabed" was a question about Māori substantive interests. In 1997, the Māori Land Court was asked to declare the foreshore and seabed Māori customary land. Various levels of the New Zealand court system were then engaged to determine which court had jurisdiction over such an issue. The Labour government of the time forced through legislation defining the foreshore and seabed to be public (government) property (Venter, 2004a). The legislation was sufficiently controversial to lead to a split in the party, including Māori MP Tariana Turia resigning her seat and then winning the by-election under the banner of her newly created Māori Party (Venter, 2004b; Welham, 2004; Dewes, 2006; Watkins, 2006).

³⁵In our on-line appendix we also report results with each of these characteristics – contains the word Māori, was addressed to the Minister of Māori affairs, or that includes a reference to one of these 128 subject matters – serving individually as the dependent variable. The results generally support the findings reported here.

³⁶We ran the same models clustering standard errors by parliament in the event that some time-serial variation in the parliamentary agenda prompted more or less Questions regarding Māori issues. The results reported here are generally robust to the change in specification. See the on-line appendix.

same coding scheme (Detailed Indicator) but summing to the number of questions by an MP (in a given term). They tell a consistent story similar to our findings regarding the determinants of symbolic representation.³⁷

Māori MPs elected in single-member districts by General Roll voters (Māori GR-SMDP) are very rarely discernible from non-Māori MPs. When they are, the substantive magnitude of the effects shows they are least different relative to Māori MPs elected in other tiers. Māori MPs elected from PR-Lists and Māori MPs elected in single-member districts by Māori Roll voters (Māori MR-SMDP) are always discernible from non-Māori MPs, and the substantive size of the differences is as expected with MR-SMDP MPs most likely to engage in substantive representation, however operationalized.³⁸

In figure 5 we portray the results of Models 7 through 10 in an intuitive manner. Clearly, they all depict similar patterns. Māori MPs elected by the General Roll in SMDP districts are indistinguishable or virtually indistinguishable from their non-Māori counterparts. Anecdotally, while pointing out that it was noteworthy that ethnic Māori candidates Paula Bennett and Shane Jones had won GR-SMDP seats, MP Metiria Turei, a Māori PR-List MP from the Green Party, qualified “[b]ut neither would I say that those two candidates have been fierce advocates of core and difficult Māori issues. So it’s not just about necessarily being Māori” (Turei, 2010, 164). Māori MPs chosen from PR-Lists – by both General Roll and Maori Roll voters – are always discernible from non-Māori MPs. Depending on how we capture substantive representation, when a question is posed by a Māori PR-List MP the probability it will entail substantive representation of Māori in-

³⁷Regarding our control variables, being in government always had the expected effect of decreasing substantive representation through Question Time. Being a member of the Māori Party is only statistically discernible in one model, and it has the expected effect of increasing representation. MP seniority is only statistically discernible in one model, and it has the unexpected effect of increasing representation. A finding that requires further research is that Critical Mass is associated with fewer questions about Māori interests. For models of the count of questions by MP (per term), this may indicate that any one Māori MP can ask fewer questions about Māori issues as the number of Māori MPs asking such questions increases. However, without further research we do not have an interpretation for the models about the focus of individual questions.

³⁸Our results are robust to the inclusion of an indicator for non-Māori MPs elected in the PR tier of the mixed-member system, making only non-Māori MPs elected by General Roll voters the excluded category. The findings reported here are robust to the change See the on-line appendix for details.

Table 3: Models on Substantive Representation - Questions

	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10	Model 11	Model 12	Model 13	Model 14
	Individual	Number of	Individual	Number of	Individual	Number of	Individual	Number of
	Question	Questions	Question	Questions	Question	Questions	Question	Questions
	(Basic Coding)	(Basic Coding)	(Detailed Coding)	(Detailed Coding)	(Basic Coding)	(Basic Coding)	(Detailed Coding)	(Detailed Coding)
(Intercept)	-3.5233*	-0.1708	-3.1181*	0.2202	-0.3635	1.5572*	-0.4771	1.4342*
	(0.1491)	(0.1651)	(0.1395)	(0.1589)	(0.8361)	(0.6693)	(0.7323)	(0.5851)
Maori	-0.0701	0.5073	0.2457	0.8094	0.1496	0.6809*	0.4148	0.7033*
GR-SMDP	(0.2194)	(0.5828)	(0.2905)	(0.6612)	(0.2809)	(0.3144)	(0.2461)	(0.3425)
Maori	1.5836*	1.1402*	1.5021*	1.0260*	1.8694*	1.3992*	1.7778*	1.4147*
PR-List	(0.3872)	(0.2947)	(0.3514)	(0.2597)	(0.4073)	(0.2544)	(0.3711)	(0.2496)
Maori	2.6830*	1.9385*	2.9015*	1.9392*	3.3803*	2.5789*	3.1237*	2.2981*
MR-SMDP	(0.2306)	(0.2548)	(0.3100)	(0.2792)	(0.3557)	(0.2349)	(0.4222)	(0.2738)
Critical					-0.1382*	-0.0833*	-0.1144*	-0.0610
Mass					(0.0492)	(0.0390)	(0.0430)	(0.0346)
Maori					-0.0213	0.5979	0.6550	0.9012*
Party					(0.4346)	(0.4089)	(0.4858)	(0.3708)
MP					-0.0448	0.0744	-0.0335	0.0912*
Seniority					(0.0589)	(0.0458)	(0.0521)	(0.0442)
Party in					-1.6387*	-1.6436*	-1.3626*	-1.3975*
Government					(0.2233)	(0.2352)	(0.1793)	(0.2239)
<i>N</i>	14,033	489	14,033	489	14,033	489	14,033	489
AIC	1816.13	1275.70	2317.31	1510.21	1563.56	1218.63	2041.00	1460.37
BIC	1883.21	1359.55	2384.38	1594.05	1697.72	1369.56	2175.16	1611.30
log <i>L</i>	-892.06	-617.85	-1142.65	-735.10	-749.78	-573.32	-988.50	-694.19

Robust standard errors in parentheses

* indicates significance at $p < 0.05$

terests ranges from .13 (basic coding) to .17 (detailed coding). Similarly, looking at panels (b) and (d), PR-list Māori MPs ask 3 times as many questions about Māori issues as non-Māori MPs do. Finally, as expected, when a question is posed by a Māori MR-SMDP MP the probability it will entail substantive representation of Māori interests ranges from .30 (Basic Coding) to .45 (Detailed Coding). In terms of counts per MP, Māori MR-SMDP MPs ask more than twice as many questions about Māori issues as even Māori PR-List MPs and 7 times as many as non-Māori MPs.

Beyond Question Time, initiating legislation that protects the interests of some subgroup is another means of engaging in substantive representation. Unfortunately, in most parliamentary systems the legislative agenda is dominated by the government, and the bills it sponsors can rarely be attributed to individual MPs. The situation is exacerbated in New Zealand. All private and members' bills are listed on a "ballot", and only every other Wednesday (Members' Day) can up to eight bills be selected randomly from that ballot to be put on the floor's agenda (Order Paper) (Spindler, 2009). The parliament's website does not make available the titles of all the bills placed on the ballot (including those not selected for discussion) prior to the 49th Parliament – the last in the period under study (and bills for one year of that parliament appear to be missing). However, for the entire period under study, we were able to obtain bill titles for all the bills randomly selected from the ballot and actually put on the floor's agenda. Not surprisingly there were far fewer private and member's bills discussed, 329, than questions posed, 14,033.

We coded those bills for whether they were instances of engaging substantive representation of Māori interests using decision rules similar to those we used for coding questions. We could not use "posed to the Minister of Māori Affairs", as bills are not directed to particular ministries. Given that we are working with only two coding rules – "contains the word Māori" and "contains a term found in news articles via *findNZarticles*" – and so few bills, we will not use a basic and detailed coding scheme, instead coding as substantive representation of Māori interests any bill title that met either criteria. In ta-

ble 4, as with parliamentary questions, we report baseline models, with only covariates regarding MP ethnicity and electoral tier, and models with the same sets of controls justified above. We include logistic regressions of the likelihood any given bill is a bill dealing with Māori interests and negative binomial regressions of the count of Māori interests bills per MP per term.³⁹

Table 4: Models on Substantive Representation - Bills

	Model 15	Model 16	Model 17	Model 18
	Individual	Number of	Individual	Number of
	Bill	Bills	Bill	Bills
(Intercept)	-3.5482*	-3.1884*	-9.8276*	-8.4733*
	(0.5505)	(0.5479)	(2.5788)	(2.2105)
Maori	1.4687	1.5790	1.5087*	1.2675*
GR-SMDP	(1.1307)	(0.9295)	(0.7550)	(0.6104)
Maori	0.7150	0.7035	0.7641	0.6898
PR-List	(1.2282)	(1.1248)	(1.2936)	(1.1003)
Maori	2.4496*	2.1768*	3.2648*	2.4088*
MR-SMDP	(0.7161)	(0.6374)	(0.6228)	(0.5613)
Critical			0.2787*	0.2414*
Mass			(0.1150)	(0.1103)
Maori			-0.6346	-0.3680
Party			(0.8865)	(0.8060)
MP			0.2672*	0.1983*
Seniority			(0.1047)	(0.0850)
Party in			-0.5293	-0.3746
Government			(0.7579)	(0.6398)
<i>N</i>	329	222	329	222
AIC	101.22	106.68	99.67	107.34
BIC	155.67	174.74	208.55	229.83
log <i>L</i>	-34.61	-33.34	-17.83	-17.67

Robust standard errors in parentheses

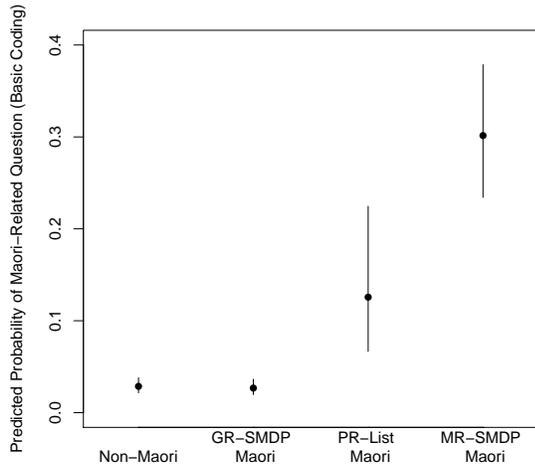
* indicates significance at $p < 0.05$

The models in table 4 consistently support the conclusion that the only Māori MPs who are distinguishable from their non-Māori colleagues in terms of bill initiation are those elected in the Māori Roll single member districts (MR-SMDP).^{40,41} Using the base-

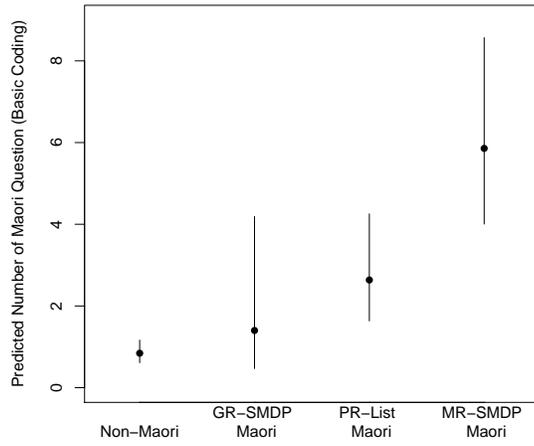
³⁹We ran the same models clustering standard errors by parliament in the event that some time-serial variation in the parliamentary agenda prompted more or less Bills regarding Māori issues. The results reported here are generally robust to the change in specification. See the on-line appendix.

⁴⁰The only control to obtain statistical significance was MP seniority. We expected that more senior MPs might “rest on their laurels”, but, instead, it appears that seniority might be associated with the skill set to draft legislation.

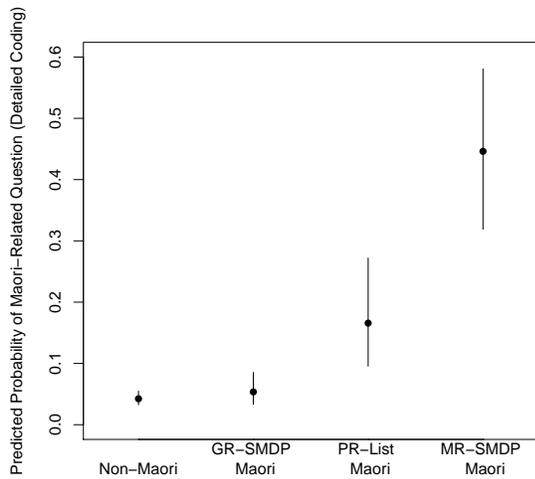
⁴¹Our results are robust to the inclusion of an indicator for non-Māori MPs elected in the PR tier of the



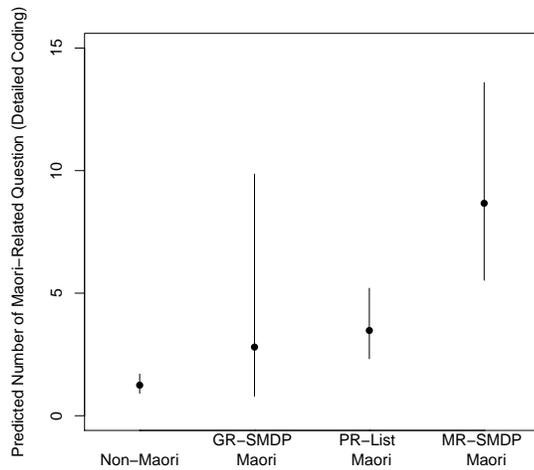
(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)

Figure 4: Predicted Values of Substantive Representation - Questions, with 95% Confidence Intervals, based on Models 7-10

line models reported in table 4, in figure 5 we depict the impact of electoral tier and ethnicity on bill initiation patterns. When a Māori MR-SMDP MP initiates a bill there is just over a .25 probability that it will deal with Māori issues. For GR-SMDP and PR MPs, the probabilities are about .11 and .05, respectively, and they are not distinguishable from one another. Our models also indicate that the average Māori MR-SMDP MP has over .36 Māori-issue bills selected for discussion each term.⁴² This number is relatively small; however, it should be seen in the context of the fact that the average MP has about 1.48 bills on *any* topic selected for discussion per term. Hence, our models suggest that about one in every four bills sponsored by an MR-SMDP MP selected for discussion is dealing with Māori issues.

Māori MP Georgina Beyer from Labour nicely captures that both ethnicity (or other descriptive characteristics) and formal electoral tier are always at play and that MPs serving together in Parliament face distinct sets of incentives. She says that, despite her ethnicity, running for a Māori Roll SMDP seat did not feature in her thinking (Beyer, 2010, p. 205). In terms of substantive representation, she says she did not mind letting a Māori Roll SMDP MP with an overlapping district utilize some of her office space to meet with constituents, but when it came to resources designated to serving “her” constituents, it was another matter – even for an MR-SMDP *from her own party*. Regarding the possibility of sharing financial resources or her personnel’s time, she notes “. . . I became very hard-nosed about that, and said ‘look, if my constituents were to ask me “are we getting our full budget allocation?” then I’d have to say, “no, you’re not”’ ” (Beyer, 2010, p. 207). The Treaty of Waitangi, signed with the British Crown in 1840, has been referred to as the Magna Carta of the Māori people. The Treaty is often referenced in debates over all manner of Māori substantive interests. It would be difficult to overstate its roll in contem-

mixed-member system, making only non-Māori MPs elected by General Roll voters the excluded category. The findings reported here are robust to the change See the on-line appendix for details.

⁴²The average number of bills selected for discussion per MP-term between years 2003 and 2011 is only .52. In the models reported here, we restrict our analysis to those MPs who had at least one bill selected for discussion.

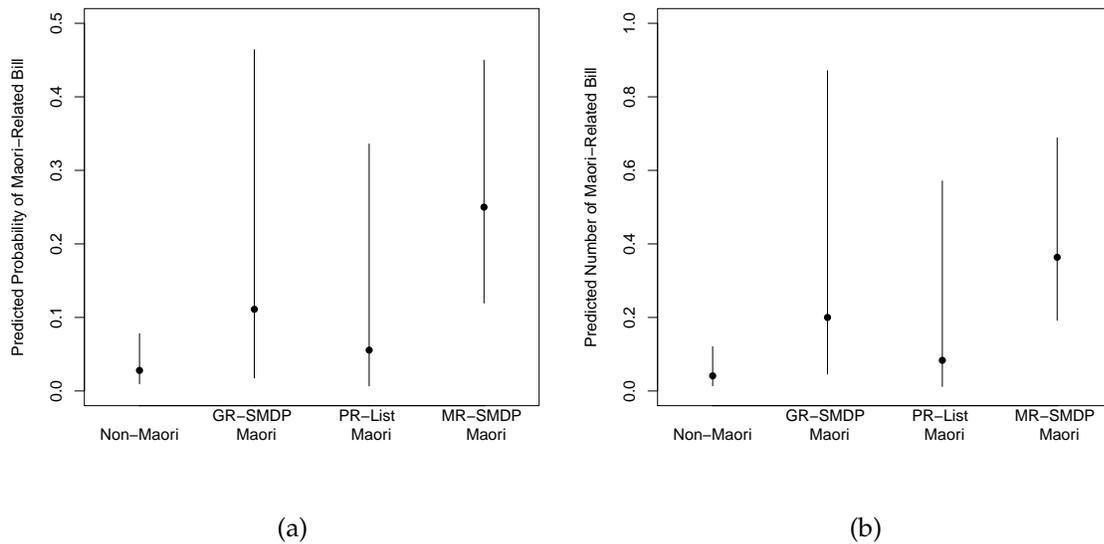


Figure 5: Predicted Values of Substantive Representation - Bills, with Confidence Intervals, based on Models 15-16

porary Māori politics.⁴³ However, as (Beyer, 2010, 208), from the perspective of a Māori MP in a GR-SMDP electorate, puts it, when “my staff time is being more consumed by Treaty stuff . . . and my constituents are starting to lose out a bit, then I’ve got to be a bit selfish and pull it back . . .” Beyer was later elected from Labour’s PR List. Despite her strong feelings about the appropriate type of representation to be carried out by a GR-SMDP MP, Beyer (2010, p. 212) noted that “[m]y experience as a list MP was that yes, I clearly had a constituency, but it didn’t interfere with the sensibilities of my general seat electorate anymore, so I could quite happily go out and champion things that a strict electorate didn’t let me champion, if you know what I mean. Obviously, I had significant minorities who I could claim to be a constituency – gender minorities, just as one example, and there are many others.”

⁴³Interpretation of the treaty even figured prominently in National Party Leader Don Brash’s speech on *Nationhood* to the Orewa Rotary Club on 27 January 2004 where he strongly staked out the party’s opposition to any legal provisions that privileged or singled-out Māori citizens, including reference to what he called “the Treaty grievance industry” (Brash, 2004).

Conclusion

Pitkin (1967) made clear that the concept of representation has multiple facets. She also left open that those facets, while related to one another, may not move in unison. Given our interest in legislative assemblies, we have focused on the central role played by formal representation as the institutions that define the route to power in electoral democracies because they typically precede the opportunity to engage in the other types of representation. We argued that electoral systems could be designed to influence the degree to which a legislative body descriptively represented the population, especially historically excluded (or constrained) minorities. We then made the case that both the formal route to power *and* the descriptive attributes of the elected official were likely to influence the extent to which an official would undertake forms of symbolic and substantive representation. Descriptively representative officials may arrive – at differential rates – in office through more than one route, but they will not all behave the same, in symbolic and substantive terms, once they have arrived in parliament. We tested these ideas with data from New Zealand’s electoral system and the representation of the Māori ethnic minority.

The challenge many previous scholars have been unable to overcome is how to distinguish whether the mechanisms of formal representation (electoral laws) have an effect on symbolic and substantive representation beyond some indirect effect through their impact on descriptive representation. Most existing works have had to be content to test the idea that formal mechanisms affect descriptive representation and that descriptive representation, through mechanisms like “critical mass,” then affects the symbolic and substantive forms of representation. This limitation in terms of research design (and often, theorizing) is unavoidable where different groups of representatives arrive in office through mutually exclusive sets of formal mechanisms of representation. For example, where reserved seats or quota systems are used, group identity and formal route to power are often synonymous and therefore impossible to untangle empirically. The fact that Māori MPs are elected to the New Zealand Parliament across three electoral tiers

(and two electoral rolls) allowed us to untangle this knot.

We found that formal mechanisms of representation were systematically related to levels of descriptive representation. While the Māori roll electorates (MR-SMDP) elect a small fraction of all MPs, they have thus far universally brought Māori candidates to power. We were also able to show that the relatively proportional PR-List tier of the MMP system has been instrumental in bringing Māori candidates into Parliament. While the proportion of PR-List winners who are Māori is far smaller than the proportion chosen in MR-SMDP seats, it far exceeds the rate (and raw frequency) at which Māori candidates win general roll single member electorates (GR-SMDP). The sheer magnitude of the PR-List tier means it is now the preponderant route through which Māori arrive in power.

We also found support for the impact of descriptive representation on symbolic and substantive representation. Most Māori MPs are more likely to symbolically and substantively represent the Māori ethnic minority than non-Māori MPs, almost all New Zealanders of European descent. One could conclude that, by omission, these non-Māori MPs are faithfully representing the ethnic majority. Beyond this, while Māori MPs are typically distinct from non-Māori MPs, we were able to systematically show that formal mechanisms of representation – electoral tiers and voter rolls – have a direct effect on symbolic and substantive representation independent of their effects on descriptive representation. Māori MPs elected in the GR-SMDP electorates, despite being descriptively representative of Māori, are frequently indistinguishable from their non-Māori counterparts.

Interviewed by the *Evening Post* Māori MP Mahara Okeroa encouraged voters to opt for the Māori Roll. While more than half of Māori voters had already opted out of the General Roll, Okeroa argued that an even greater proportion was needed. Okeroa “. . . believes the seats guarantee Maori a voice, a voice that is stronger when it is backed by an electorate” (Berry, 2001, 5). His sense is borne out by our empirical findings. MR-SMDP electorates (probably attract and) elect Māori candidates who are more likely than Māori MPs from the PR-List and Māori MPs from the GR-SMDP electorates to engage

in distinctive patterns of symbolically and substantively representing the Māori people. Māori MPs from the PR-List form a distinct middle ground. They engage in discernibly more symbolic and substantive representation than Māori MPs from the GR-SMDP and discernibly less than Māori MPs from MR-SMDP electorates.

Māori Members of Parliament are acutely aware of the fact they are diverse and that the type of representation carried out by a Māori MP in one tier will be almost necessarily different from the representation carried out by a Māori MP from another tier. Māori MP Simon Bridges, a member of the National Party elected in a GR-SMDP, writes that “. . . Māori in general seats are different to Māori in Māori seats. We, I think as a general rule, want to be different, but even if we didn't want to be, we have to be. I think the nature of general seats is such that we have to do things differently. . . . We've been selected by all ethnicities in our electorate. . . . In Māori seats one can run as being solely or mostly for Māori interests. Such a position is impossible in general seats where you represent everyone. . . . [B]y having both, we ensure all Māori across the spectrum are represented. . . .” (Bridges, 2010, pp. 214-216).

Electoral rules provide many opportunities for founders and reformers to incentivize particular outcomes, including descriptive representation, and forms of behavior in office, including symbolic and substantive representation. The proportionality of electoral outcomes are influenced by district magnitude, thresholds of representation, and seat allocation formulas. High levels of proportionality may be necessary to assure that groups in society are accurately reflected in the composition of the legislative assembly. Beyond mere numbers, proportionality means that MPs who reflect the interests of even a subset of some group can carry out representation in ways that make them stand out from the crowd.⁴⁴ Beyond permissive levels of proportionality, electoral rules can be more explicitly proactive by including quotas, reserved seats, and multiple voter rolls (and electorates/districts). While any of these institutional choices can encourage descriptive

⁴⁴High levels of proportionality can also lead to a fragmented parliament, including MPs representing extremists.

representation, optional voter rolls seem the most likely to bring to power MPs who will stand out in symbolic and substantive terms. Voters' decisions to exercise their right to enroll via an optional roll is almost certainly a signal that whatever defines the nature of the roll is a politically salient cleavage for them. It is not surprising then, that many of these voters would share an interest in electing candidates who are distinct from those being chosen by the majority roll.

In summary, multiple formal routes to power can clearly be designed to lead to distinct forms of symbolic and substantive representation, even across descriptively representative MPs. In the case of New Zealand, one group of voters is allowed to self select onto a distinct electoral roll, and it seems reasonable that those opting to utilize this formal path are not likely to share preference distributions (or even policy dimensions) with those who do not exercise this option. The "optional" electoral roll often brings to office candidates from parties who are not proportionately selected at the same rate in the other tiers of the electoral system. While we do not have data on all candidates for office, it seems likely that even within a given party those candidates who stand in the optional electorate have different priorities and styles than those who stand for the same party in other tiers. What we have shown here in some detail is that not only are MPs from an ethnic minority often distinguishable from their ethnic majority colleagues but also that among ethnic minority MPs, the electoral tier through which one arrives in office is clearly related to the activities undertaken in pursuit of being symbolically and substantively representative.

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