

Hosted by the Department of Government Listening to One's Constituents? Now, There's an Idea

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THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE

*Listening
to One's Constituents?
Now, There's an Idea.*

Jane Mansbridge

London School of Economics

May 15, 2017

I. Crisis of **legitimacy**

- Where it came from and how to think about it.

II. Enter representation

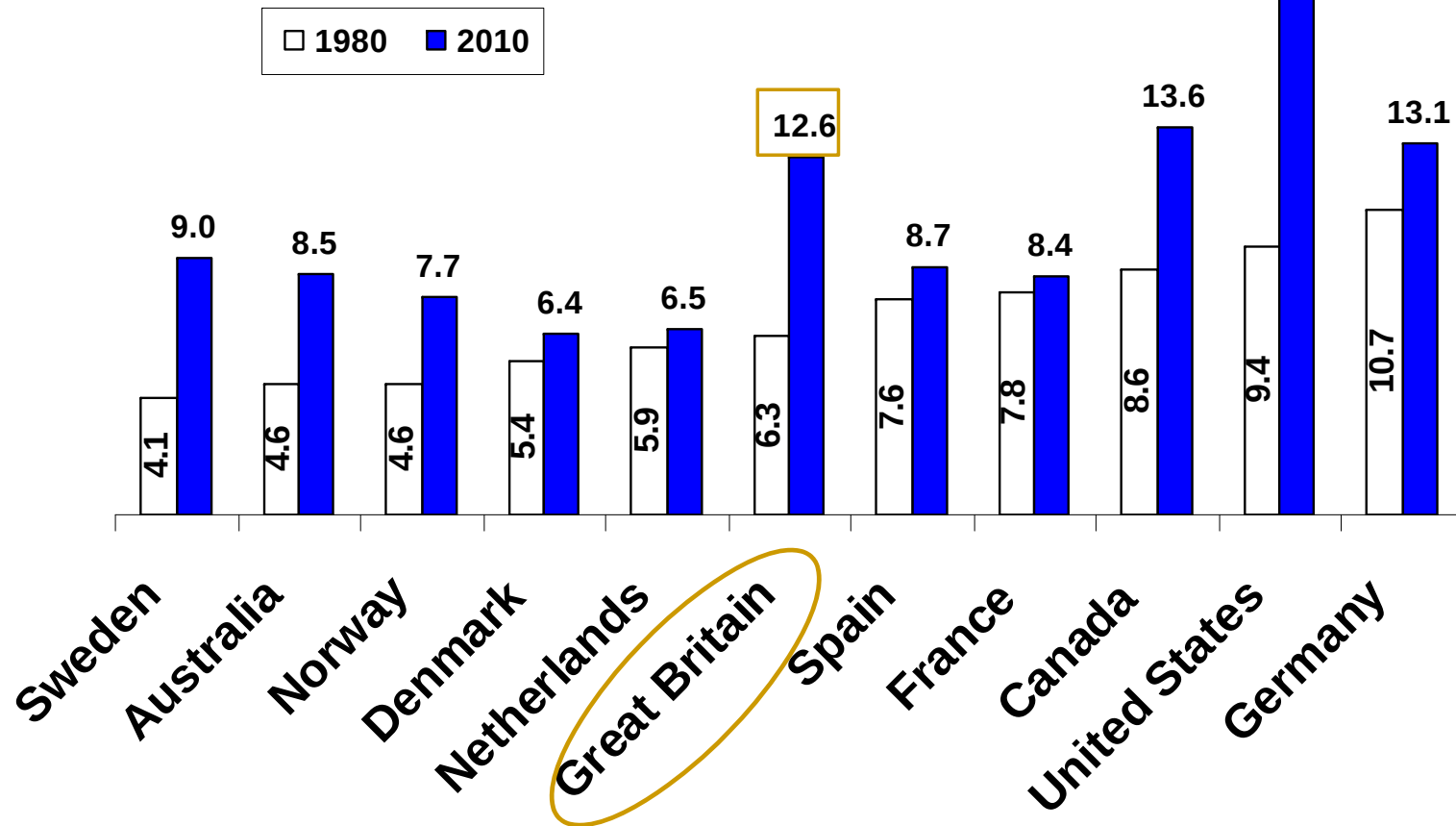
- The representative **as interlocutor**
Listen; hear; respond: change, or say why not; listen again
“**Recursive** communication.”
 - Adapting **deliberative criteria**
-

I. Crisis of legitimacy

- **Where it came from**

- 1. Proximate causes**

Percent of personal income received by top 1% of families in 1980 and 2010

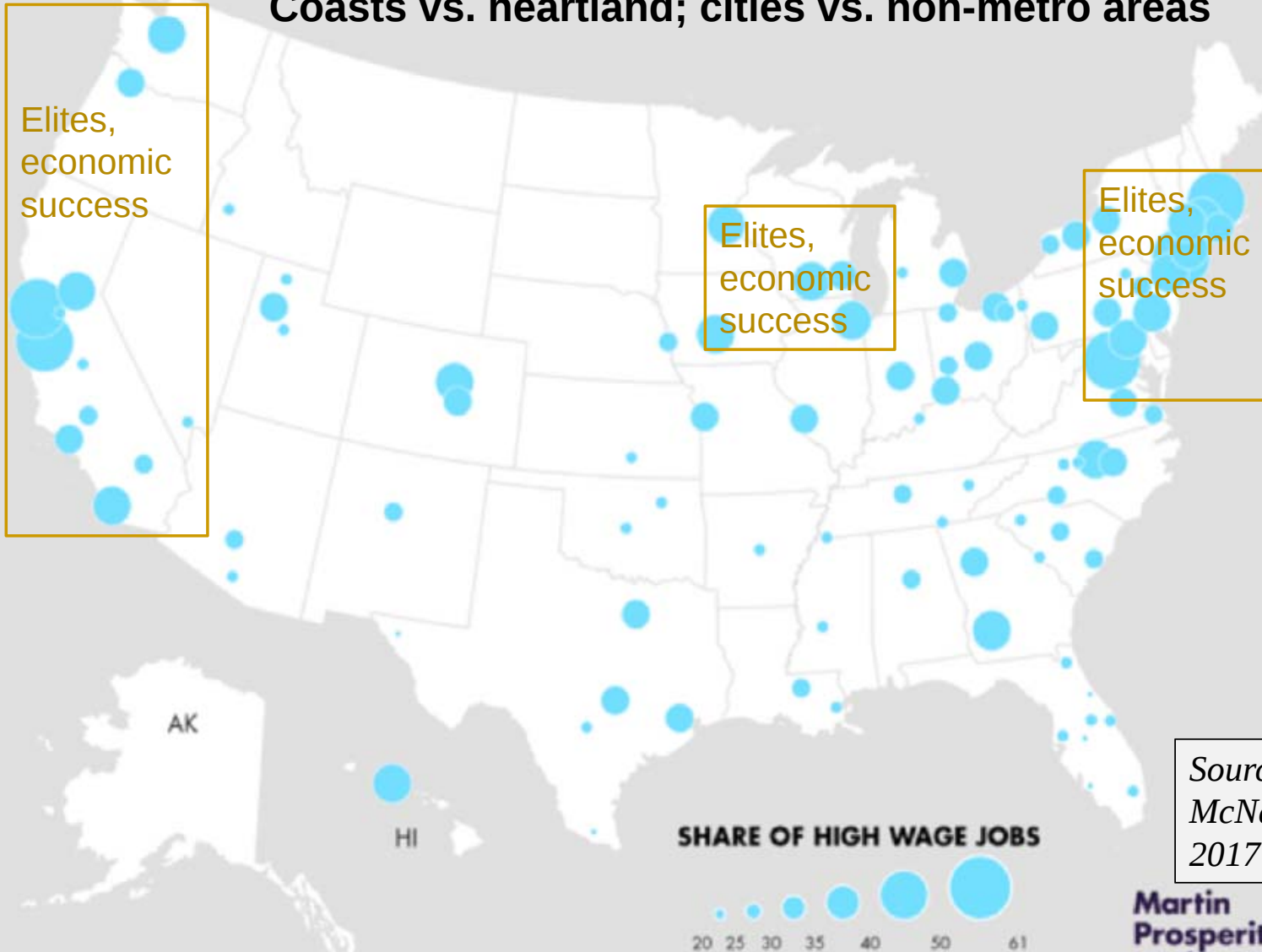


Economist Joseph Stiglitz on the U.S.:

“In the first three years of the recovery [from the Great Recession], **91 percent** of all **gains** went to the **top 1 percent.**”

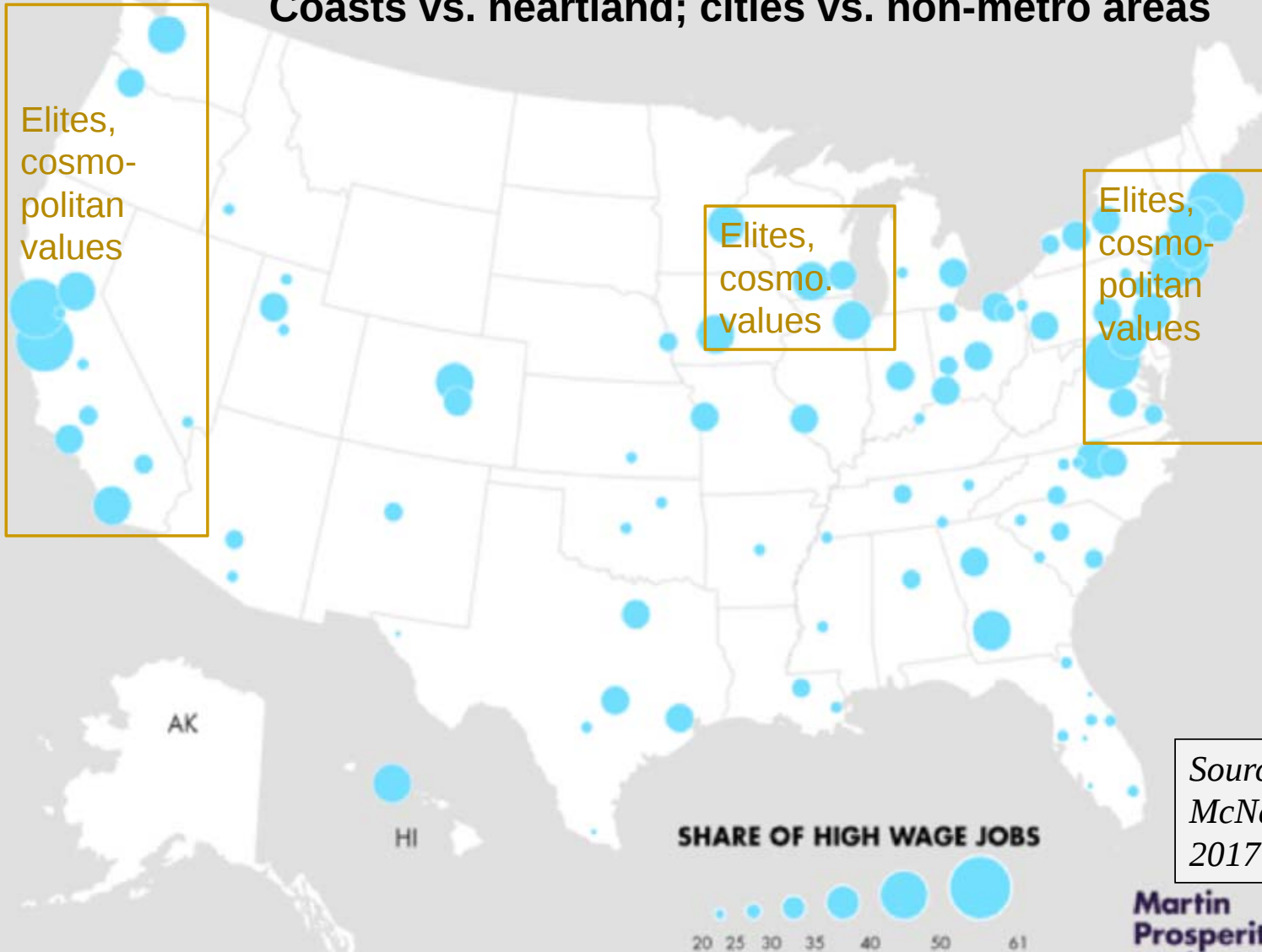
Source: Stiglitz 2016

Coasts vs. heartland; cities vs. non-metro areas



Source:
McNamara
2017

Coasts vs. heartland; cities vs. non-metro areas



Populism includes a struggle for
recognition

← perception of “**social contempt**”²

→ Rejection of elites (and
elite/cosmopolitan values) as
corrupt and uncaring.

²Honneth 1996, 2007

I. Crisis of **legitimacy**

1. Proximate causes

2. Macro causes:

- a. Why we need **state coercion**
 - b. We need **increasingly more** state coercion.
 - c. Our capacity to **legitimate** that coercion is decreasing.
-

a. Why we need *state coercion*



...because, in large anonymous societies, we need to solve **free-rider problems** (“collective action problems”) that derive from our need for **free-use goods**.

Free use goods = goods that, once produced, anyone can use without paying.¹

E.g.: Common defense, law and order, toll-free roads, clean air, clean water, fish in the sea.

¹The more common terms are “public goods,” technically inaccurate because it includes non-rivalry; and “non-excludable goods,” technically accurate because when the good is used up latecomers are excluded (Snidal 1979).

Free-rider problem exercise

-
- I endow you with £100.
 - You can **give me either £0 or £100** – nothing in between (for simplicity of calculation).
 - I am a **“doubling machine”**: I double everything I get and give it back to everyone here **equally**.

SO:

- If you give me **£100**, you will get back your **equal share** of what everyone gave me, doubled.
- If you give me **£0**, you will get back your **equal share** of what everyone gave me, doubled **PLUS** your **original £100**. I.e., you will leave with **£100 more** than everyone who gave £100.

THEREFORE:

- It **pays** you to give £0.

BUT

- If **everyone** gives £0, you completely **waste** the resource of the doubling machine.

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(If more than half of the people here give £0,
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(If more than half of the people here give £0,
you will leave with more than £100.)

No trick to this exercise.

Simply the logic of the free-rider problem
(collective action problem) discovered 1950-

65.

PLEASE WRITE **£0** OR **£100** ON YOUR
SHEET OF PAPER.

THEN PASS IT OVER TO THE AISLE AND
THEN UP TO THE FRONT OF THE ROOM.

This is the “common pool” version of the free-rider problem.

The doubled money is a **free-use good**.

You *benefit* from it even when you *haven't contributed* to producing it.

Free-use goods → the free rider problem.

While the results are being counted, I will assume that 70% of you have contributed £100.

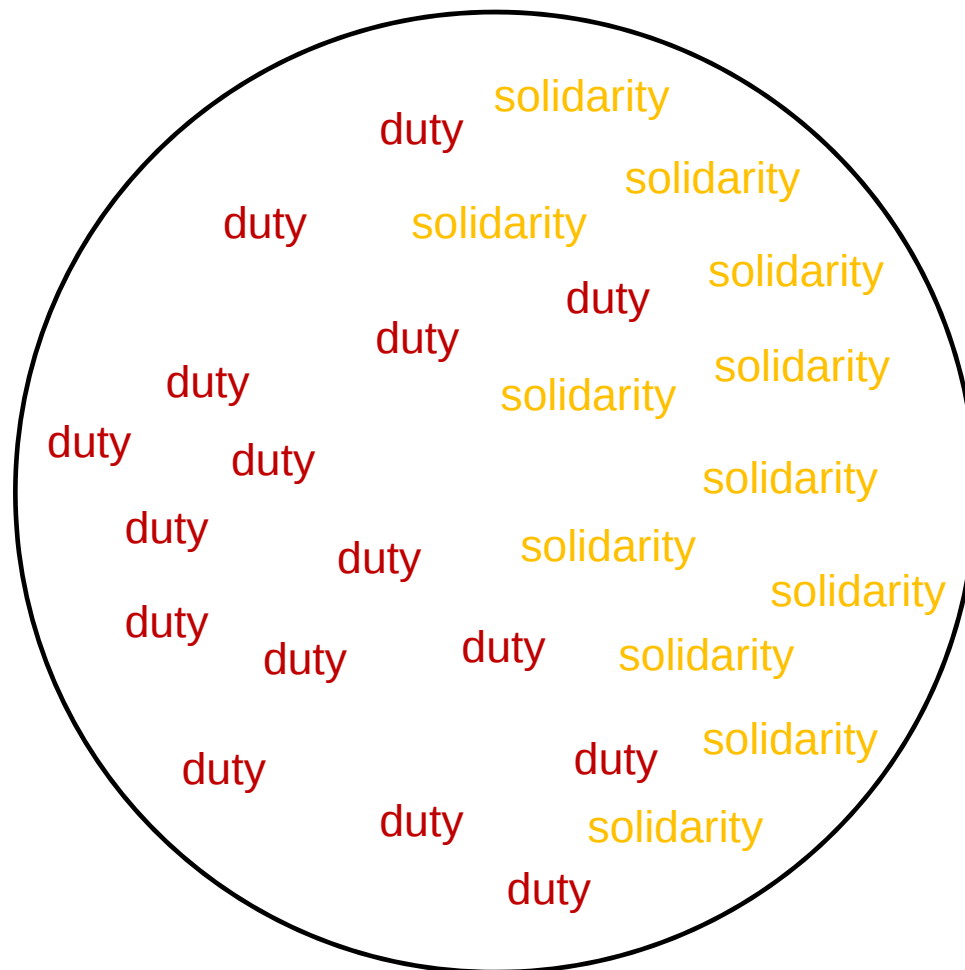
Why did you do this when you could have contributed £0 and walked out with £100 more than most of the others in this room?

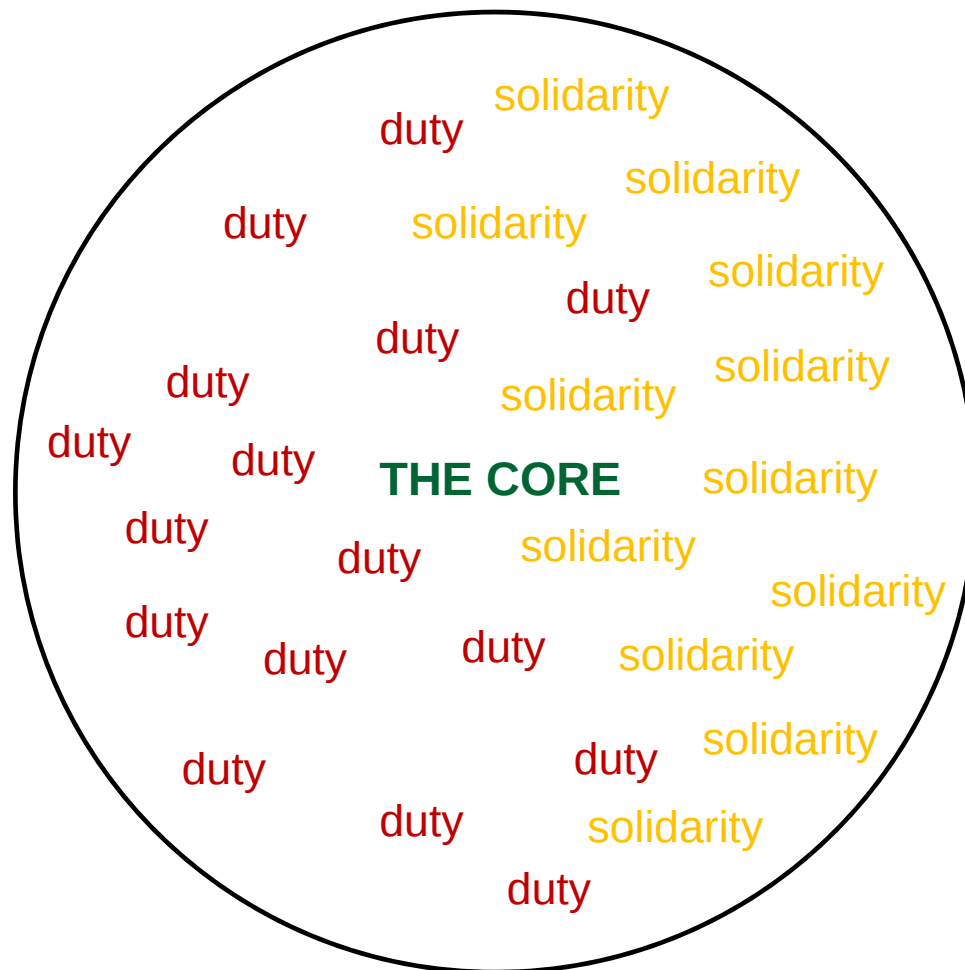
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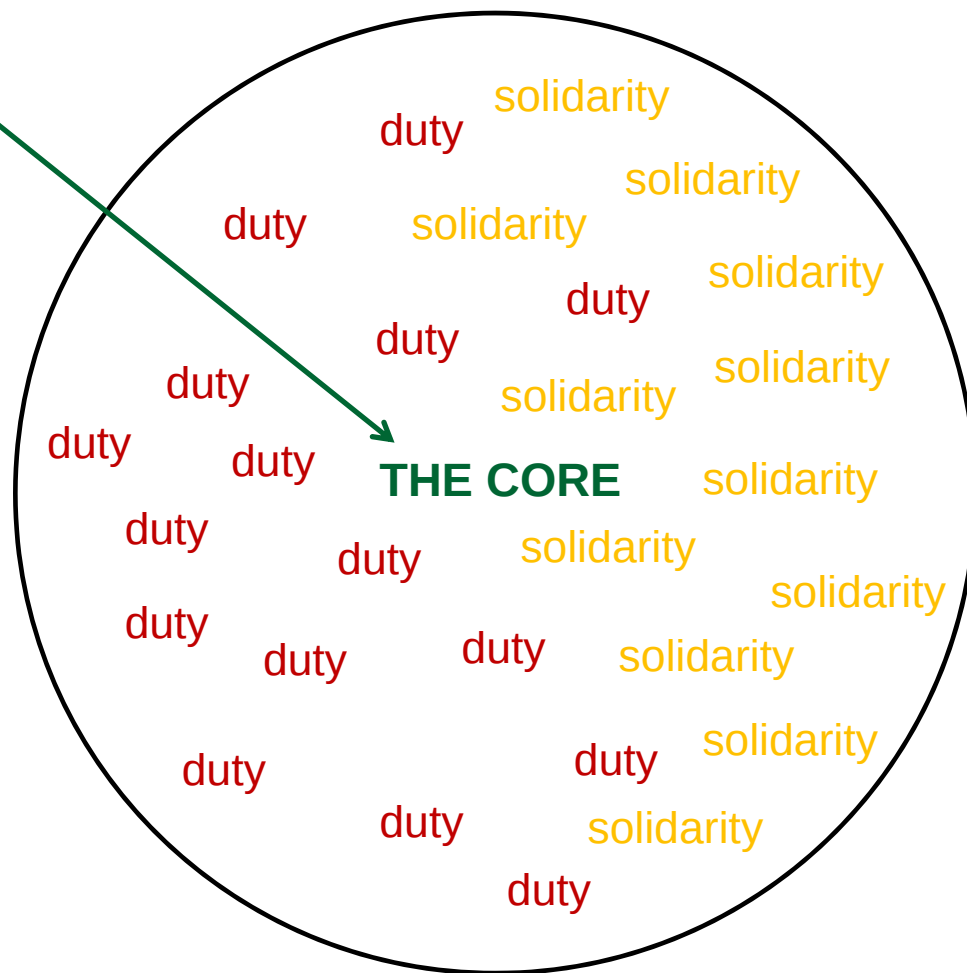
1) **“Duty”** – E.g., “What if everyone acted that way?” (everyday Kantianism) or just “I *should* contribute.” (**cognition**)

2) **“Solidarity”** – E.g., “I don’t want to let everyone else down.” (**emotion**)

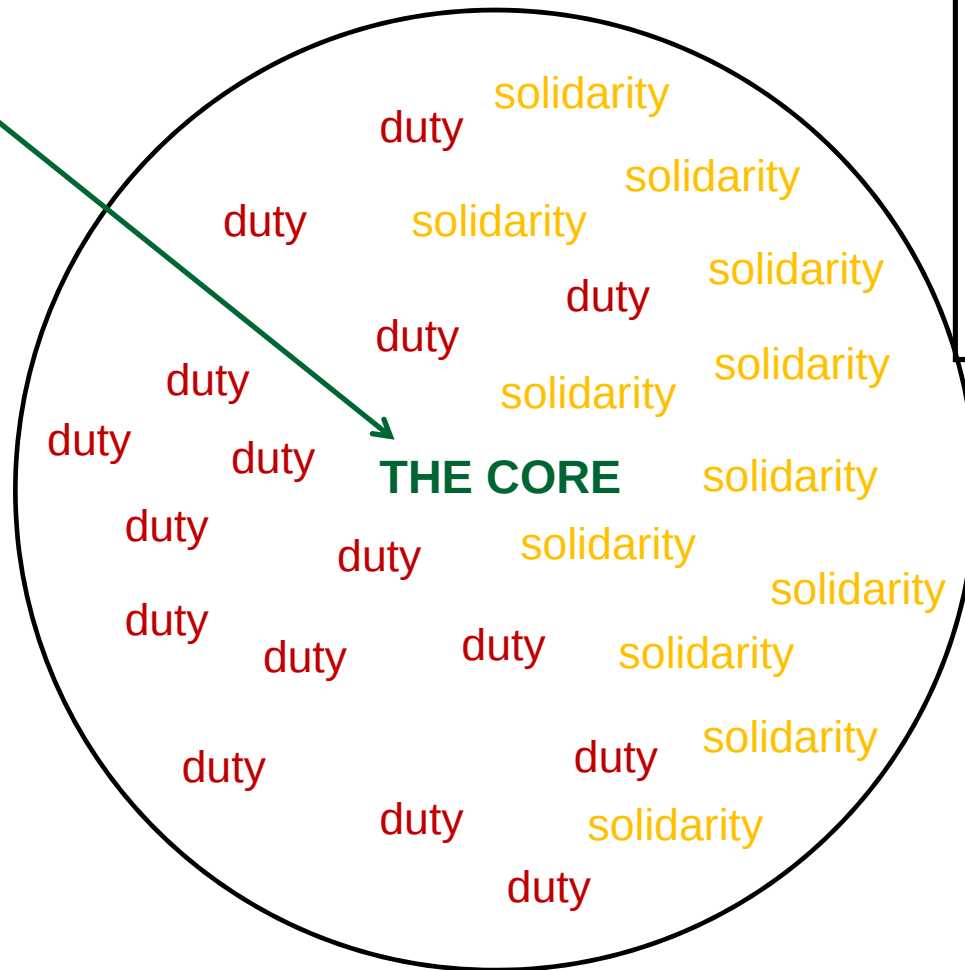




70%

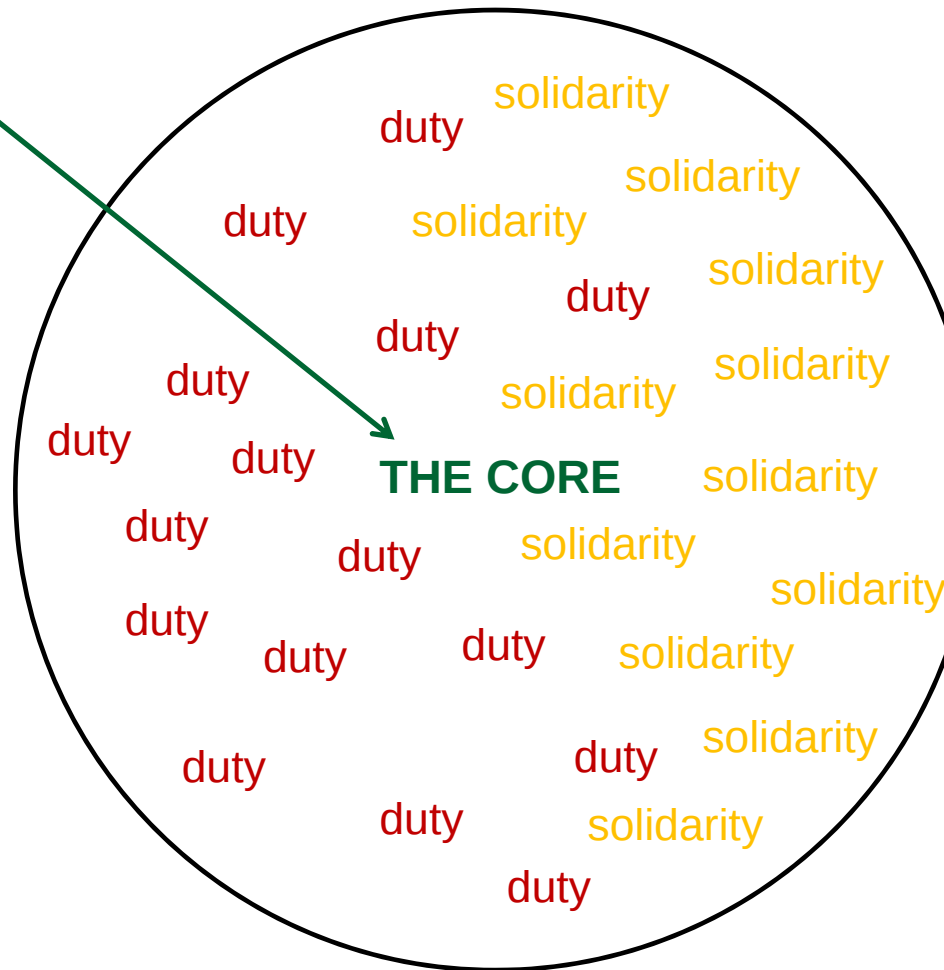


70%



What will happen if we run the exercise again?

70%



What will happen if we run the exercise again?

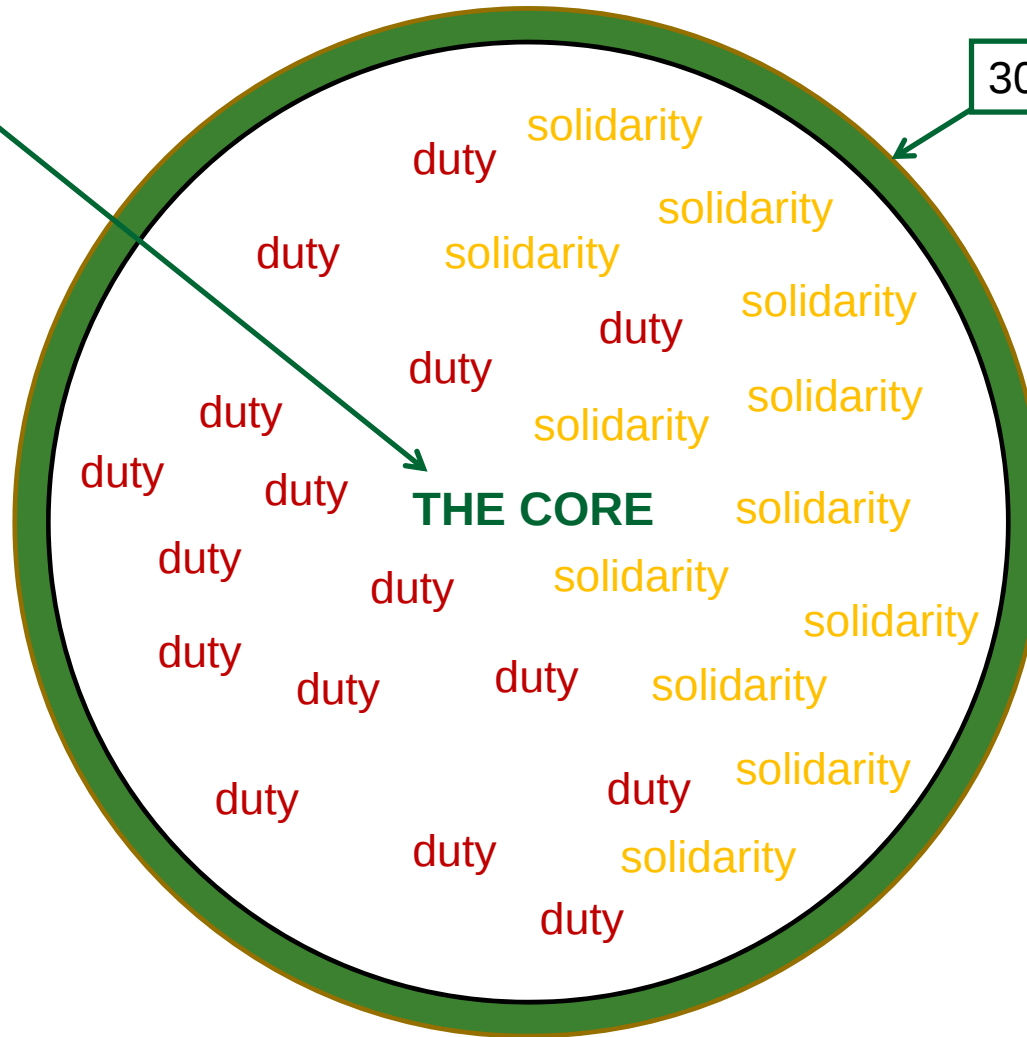
The giving will probably "unravel."

THE PERIPHERY

70%

30%

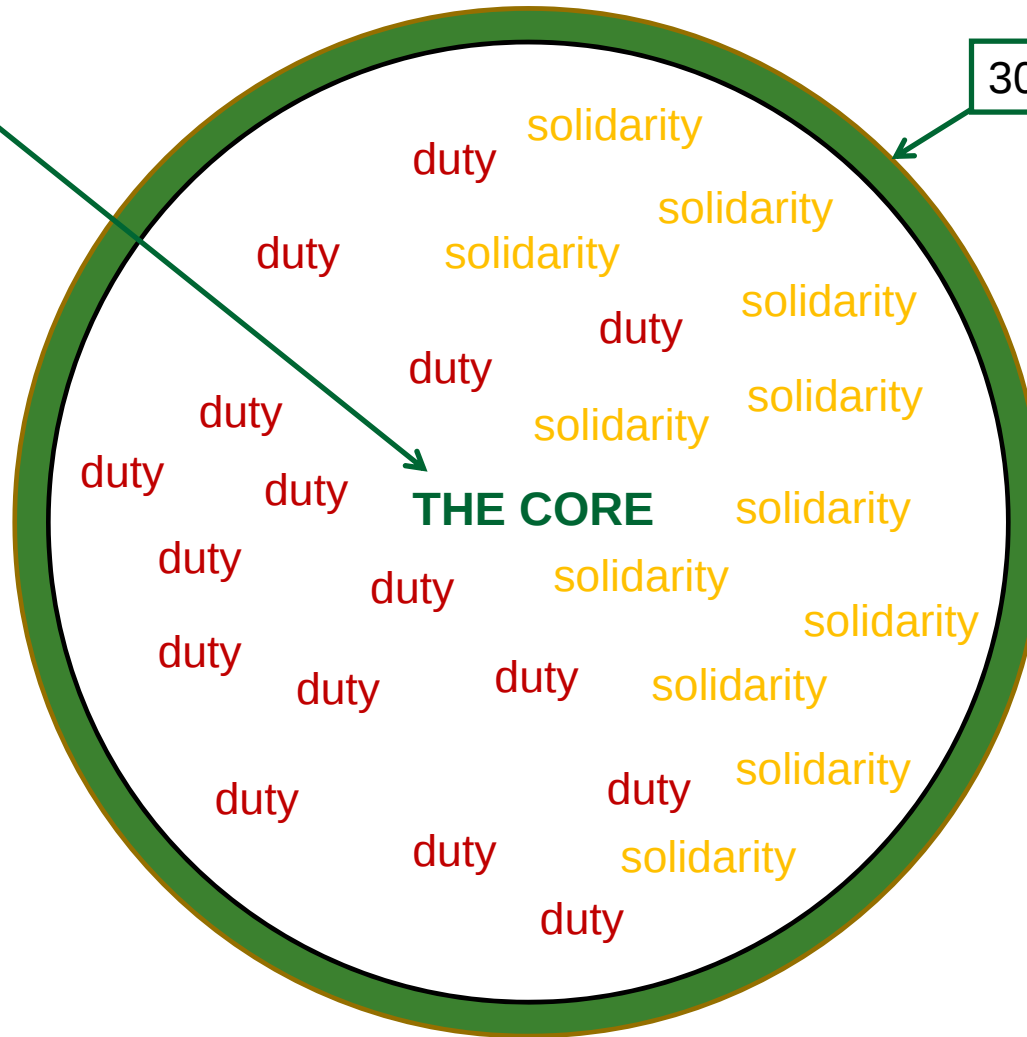
Minimum
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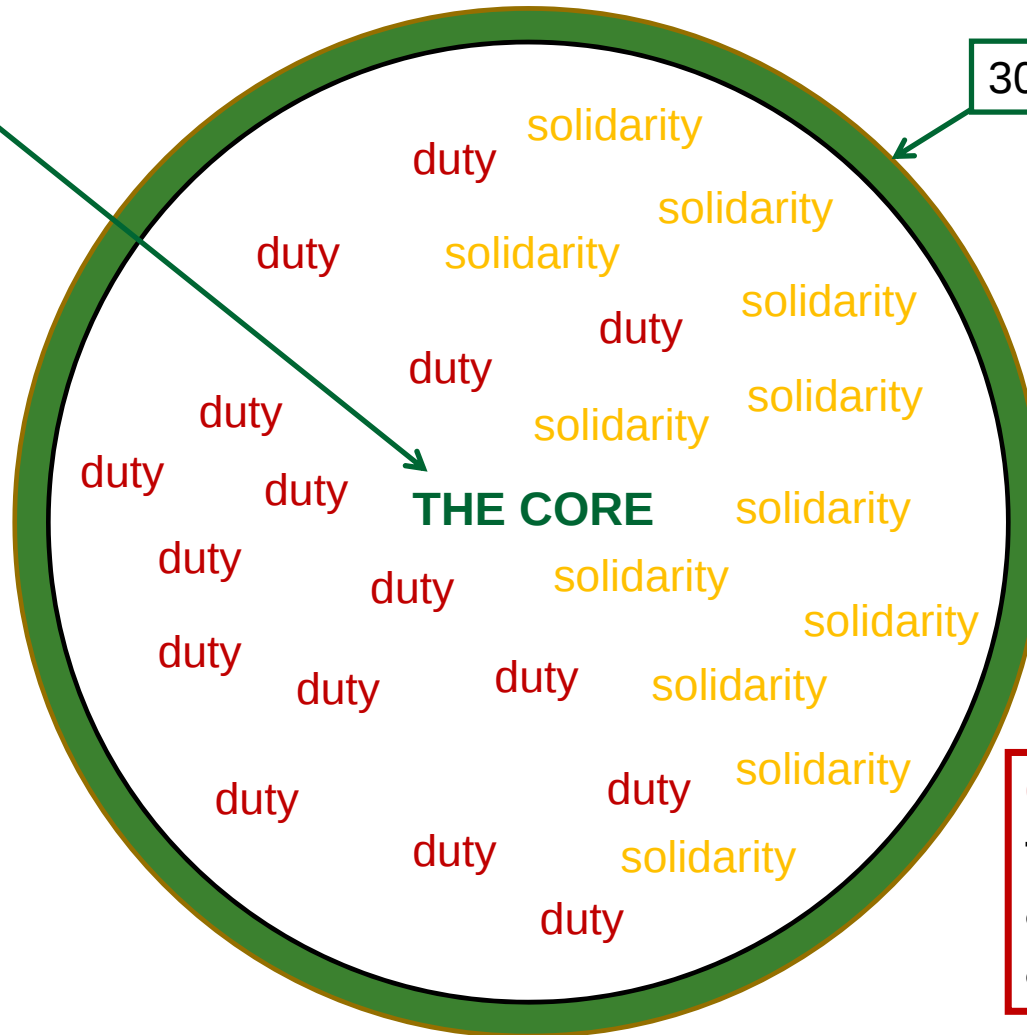
Minimum **coercion** needed to keep duty and solidarity from unraveling

"Ecological niche" for duty and solidarity to flourish.

THE PERIPHERY

70%

30%



Minimum **coercion** needed to keep duty and solidarity from unraveling

“Ecological niche” for duty and solidarity to flourish.

Goal: to make that **coercion** as **legitimate** as possible.

Solidarity: Fellow-feeling, “we-feeling,” “in-group bias.”
(emotion) (Fast decisions, intuitions → cooperation)

Duty: Conscience, “right thing to do.” (cognition)

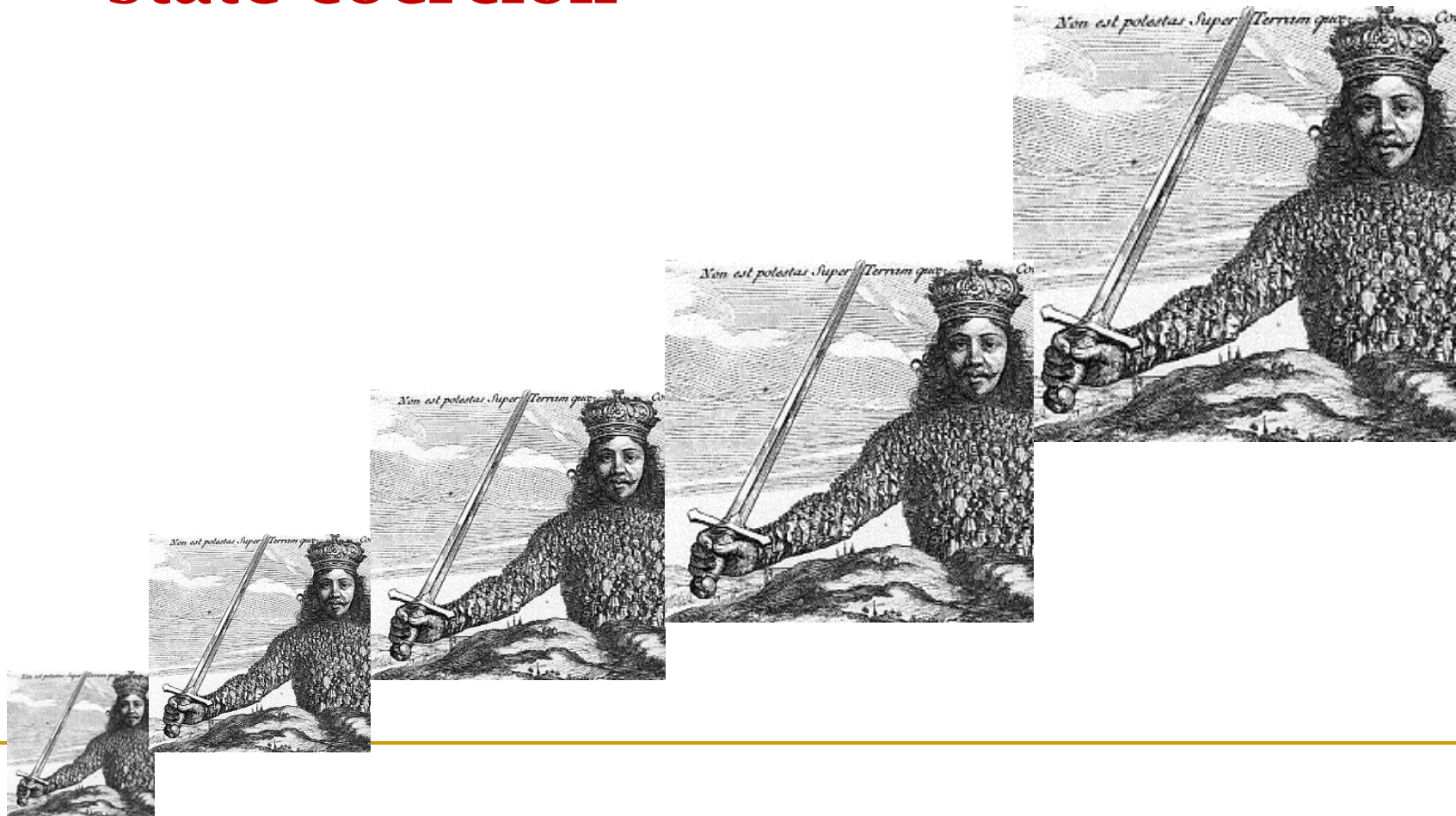
Other intrinsic motivations: E.g., Wikipedia: fun.

Coordination: Sweden moved from driving on left to driving on right. (Incentives built-in)

Nudges: “Choice architecture”: Make pro-social choices the default option. (Paint fly on urinal.)

Need **solidarity** and **duty**
and *legitimate*
coercion on periphery
to provide an “ecological niche”
for **duty and solidarity to survive and thrive.**

b. Why we need *more and more* state coercion



Increasing need to solve free-rider problems

1. Increasing interdependence

Increasing need to solve free-rider problems

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“The story of life on Earth is the story of increasingly complex social cooperation.”¹

¹ *Cohen 2115, 59*

Increasing need to solve free-rider problems

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“The story of life on Earth is the story of increasingly complex social cooperation.”¹

Trivial: **Blueberries** on the table in winter.

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Increasing need to solve free-rider problems

1. Increasing interdependence

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Requires a host of **free-use goods**.

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Immense: **Climate stability**

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Increasing need to solve free-rider problems

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Trivial: **Blueberries** on the table in winter.

Requires a host of **free-use goods**.

Immense: **Climate stability**

Is a **free-use good**.

¹ Cohen 2115, 59

Increasing need to solve free-rider problems

2. Using up nature's provision

Clean air

Clean water

Any water

Fish

Forests

Climate stability

All of these are **free-use goods**.

Summary so far:

1. **Free-use goods cause free-rider problems.**
2. **To solve free-rider problems in large anonymous societies, we need state coercion.**
3. **The number of free-use goods we need is increasing.**
4. **Therefore: The amount of state coercion we need is increasing.**

c. Our capacity to **legitimate** that coercion is decreasing.



Legitimacy: Having the “right to rule” (i.e., the “right” to use state coercion*)

- 1) **Normative** legitimacy: The claim to legitimacy stands up to critical scrutiny. (Not manipulated)
- 2) **Perceived** legitimacy: The affected population (the coerced) perceive the coercion to proceed from a rightful source.

Both normative and perceived legitimacy are decreasing.

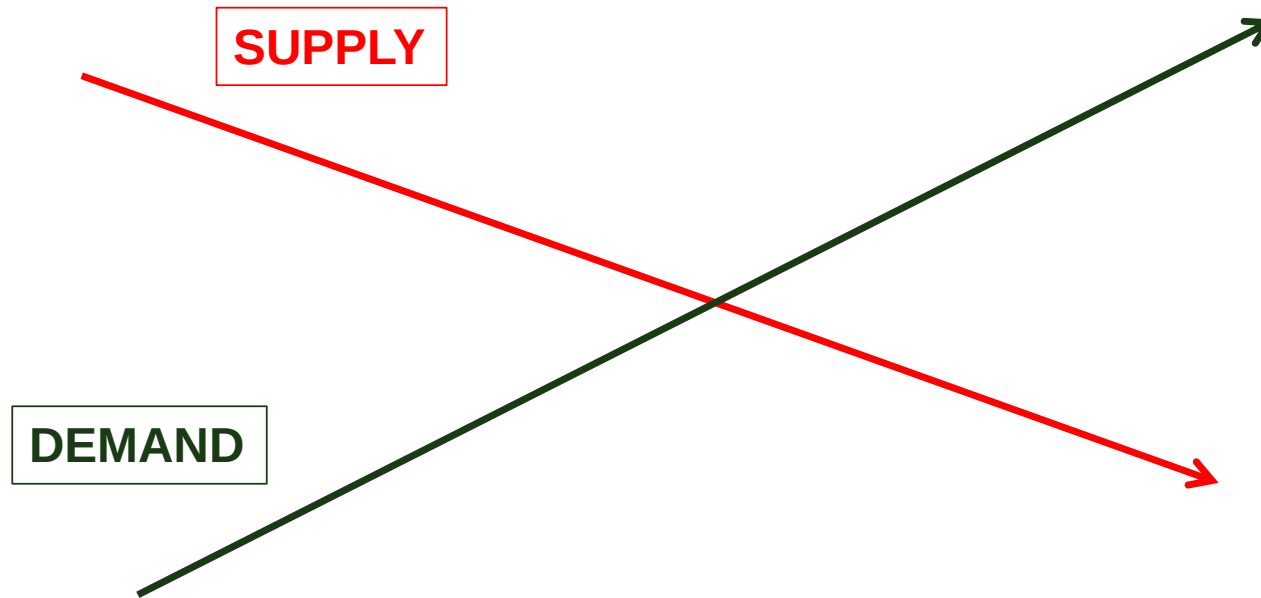
*Coercion = threat of sanction or use of force

Why is the supply decreasing?

- 1. Post-materialist society***
(“Question Authority”)
- 2. Recent history***
(Hitler, Stalin, Pol Pot)
- 3. Increasing power of the state**
(National Security Agency: Mass surveillance. Very need to solve increasing # free-rider problems)

**Thanks to Claus Offe*

What happens when the demand for legitimate coercion increases just as its supply* decreases?



The **price** of each **ounce** of legitimacy increases.
(It becomes more *precious*.)

**Thanks to Claus Offe*

II. Enter representation

- Preface: *One* factor
- The representative **as interlocutor**

Listen; hear; respond: change, or
say why not; listen again

“Recursive communication.”

- In electoral, administrative,
societal realms
 - Adapting **deliberative criteria**
-

Preface: One factor among many.

To make **state coercion** more **legitimate**:

- Make it *minimal*.
- Retain *intrinsic* motivation.
- Eliminate *money* in politics
- Introduce the *representative as interlocutor*
- Increase *recursive communication*
- Attend to representation in all three sectors
- Think deliberatively, include negotiation

With **better communication**, would the representatives have convinced their constituents that a **Remain vote better served their interests**?

Or would the constituents have convinced the representatives that some of their **basic interests were being ignored**?

(Or were the representatives powerless in the face of larger forces?)

Not much empirical political science on representative/constituent communication.

Not much **normative theory**.

The representative as interlocutor

- Electoral
- Administrative
 - Policy- making level
 - “Street level” point of application
- Societal
 - *Elected* representatives (unions)
 - “*Self-appointed*” representatives
 - *Randomly* selected representatives

The representative as interlocutor

- Electoral : What do citizens want?

- Talking with constituents.

C. Grill (2007): 28 constituents, 1997-98 in upper New York State: the main thing they wanted from their representative was **communication**.

R. Fenno (1978):

“Responsiveness, and hence, representation, require **two-way communication**. Although the congressman can engage in this kind of communication with only some of his supportive constituents, he can give many more the assurance that two-way communication is **possible**....

“Access and the assurance of access, communication and the assurance of communication – **these are the irreducible underpinnings of representation**.”

The representative as interlocutor

- **Contact + deliberation:** Neblo et al. (APSR 2010)

Random samples of citizens from 13 congressional districts offered an opportunity to participate in an **online deliberative forum** with their member of Congress to discuss immigration policy.

65% agreed to participate in principle. Of those:

34%* showed up for the discussion. Education, income, race, gender *not* significantly related to participation; having young children in home and being unemployed *was* significantly related (→ time at computer).

The politically cynical were *more* willing to deliberate.

Follow-up studies:

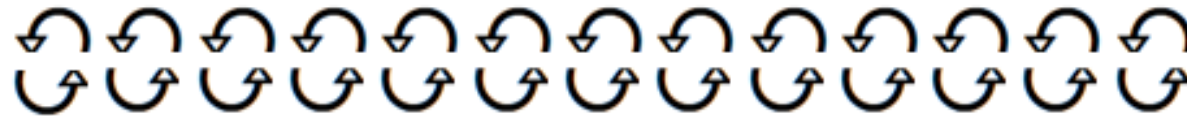
- * **2-step communication:** Talk to others; they talk to still others.
 - * About 1/4 of voting-eligible constituents every 6 years could deliberate with their Congressional representative. < 2 hrs/wk for each member; <\$100,000 a year for Congress. **Problem: Two-way?**
-

Standard model:

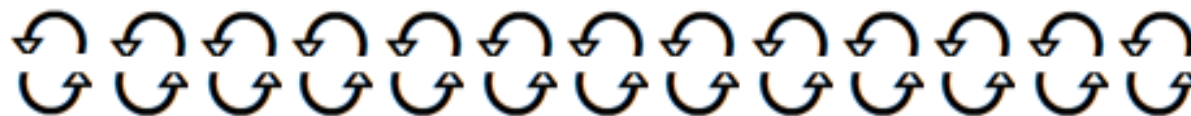
Voter → Representative → Administrator → Citizen

— . - -

Citizen ↔ Rep ↔ Admin ↔ Citizen



.....Non-electoral Reps.....



...Citizens (and organizations/movements)...

Elected, administrative, societal

- **Recursive deliberation: Elect/Admin/Soc**
 - **Example of EU “experimentalism”** (Sabel & Zeitlin 2010)
 - a) **Elected representatives** give broad mandate.
 - b) **Administrative (appointed) representatives** i) consult with experts;
ii) negotiate among themselves;
 - c) **consult recursively** with **societal stakeholder** groups;
 - d) cycle back to **elected** representatives.
 - Problems:** 1) excessive influence of **business/capital**;
2) **stakeholder** groups often “self-appointed”¹ and non-recursive;
3) few **citizens** involved; 4) by the time they cycle back to the **elected representatives**, usually hard to change.
 - Good:** “**Dynamic accountability**”: goal changes as well as means.

¹ Montanaro, “The Democratic Legitimacy of Self-Appointed Reps” JOP 2012

Societal:

**“Self-appointed representatives”
Recursive deliberation not a norm.**

**Forms of communication with societal
“constituents” relatively unstudied.**

Little research on communication in electoral, administrative, and societal representation

- Empirical
- Normative: What is **good** recursive communication?

■ Adapting deliberative criteria

Evolving standards for good deliberation¹

First generation

Respect

Absence of power

Reasons

Aim at consensus

Common good orientation

Equality

Second generation

Unchallenged, unrevised

Unchallenged, unrevised

Relevant **considerations**

Aim at both consensus and
clarifying conflict

Orientation to both common
good and **self-interest**
constrained by fairness

equal **opportunity** for
influence; inclusion, equal
respect

¹Baechtiger, Dryzek, Mansbridge & Warren forthcoming *Oxford Handbook of Deliberative Democracy*, Intro.

■ Adapting deliberative criteria

Evolving standards for good deliberation¹

First generation

Publicity

Accountability to
constituents
("giving an account")

Second generation

In many, but **not all** conditions
(e.g., **negotiations** when
representatives can be
trusted)

For non-elected representatives,
accountability to **other citizens**

Add **recursivity**?

¹Baechtger, Dryzek, Mansbridge & Warren forthcoming *Oxford Handbook of Deliberative Democracy*, Intro.

Deliberative negotiation

<i>Agreement-seeking procedures</i>				
<i>Pure deliberation</i>	<i>Deliberative negotiation</i>			<i>Pure bargaining</i>
	<i>Integrative</i>		<i>Distributive</i>	
Common interests, in which all gain, with identical or overlapping benefits, for example, in greater understanding	Full mutual advantage, in which each party gains but with distinct benefits; no losses	Partial mutual advantage, in which each gains but with trades to add value	No mutual creation of value, with fair offers, based on reasonableness, in which each gains, each loses	No mutual creation of value, with strategic demands, in which each aims at maximum
Informed consensus or clarified and structured conflict	<u>Fully integrative agreement</u> , in which no party loses	<u>Partially integrative agreement</u> , in which parties have traded lower for higher values; at least one bears some loss	<u>Fair compromise</u> , in which each has sacrificed something of value	Power-based compromise, in which each loses something of value or capitulation, in which one side appropriates all the surplus

Example: Brexit Remain vote

Media

False and inflammatory advertising
Machinations in Parliament

Representative/constituent listening?

Representative as **interlocutor**

Recursive communication

Negotiation of solutions that meet
most important needs

Hypothetical example of negotiation:

May: “Britain will remain in EU if EU adopts more restrictive immigration policy.”

Does this meet the demanding
constituents’ **most strongly felt needs**?

Can the pro-immigrant citizens **live
with it**?

How would we know?

Intermediate institutions?

Parties

NGOs

Media

Representative/constituent listening?

Recursive communication

Representative as interlocutor

Negotiation of solutions that meet
most important needs

“[W]e should **evaluate** the process of representation according to the **character of the relationship between the representative and the constituents**. The representative will inevitably be separate from the constituents, but should also be *connected* to them in determinate ways.

...Representation systems sometimes fail to be sufficiently democratic not because the representatives fail to stand for the will of the constituents but because they have **lost connection** with them. In modern mass democracies it is indeed **easy to sever relations** between representatives and constituents, and **difficult to maintain** them.”

-- Iris Marion Young (2000)

The goal:

Make **recursive communication** more
central to the representative
relationship

...in all its spheres.

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