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978-1-107-07572-6 - Representing the Advantaged: How Politicians Reinforce Inequality

Daniel M. Butler

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## Representing the Advantaged

Political inequality is a major issue in American politics, with racial minorities and low-income voters receiving less favorable representation. Scholars argue that this political inequality stems largely from differences in political participation and that if all citizens participated equally we would achieve political equality. Daniel M. Butler shows that this common view is incorrect. He uses innovative field and survey experiments involving public officials to show that a significant amount of bias in representation traces its roots to the information, opinions, and attitudes that politicians bring to office and suggests that even if all voters participated equally, there would still be significant levels of bias in American politics. Butler's work provides a new theoretical basis for understanding inequality in American politics and insights into what institutional changes can be used to fix the problem.

Daniel M. Butler is an associate professor of political science at Washington University in St. Louis. His work has been published in such journals as the *American Journal of Political Science*, the *Journal of Politics*, *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, *Political Analysis*, and the *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*. Butler is a cofounder and co-organizer of the Symposium on the Politics of Immigration, Race, and Ethnicity (SPIRE), a regular meeting of scholars doing research in race and ethnic politics in the United States, and the founder and director of the Laboratories of Democracy ([labsofdemocracy.org](http://labsofdemocracy.org)), a network of academics who collaborate with nonprofits and public officials to design and conduct randomized experiments aimed at maximizing policy effectiveness. He earned a PhD in political science from Stanford University, where his research was supported by a graduate research fellowship from the National Science Foundation.

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## *How Politicians Reinforce Inequality*

DANIEL M. BUTLER

*Washington University in St. Louis*



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