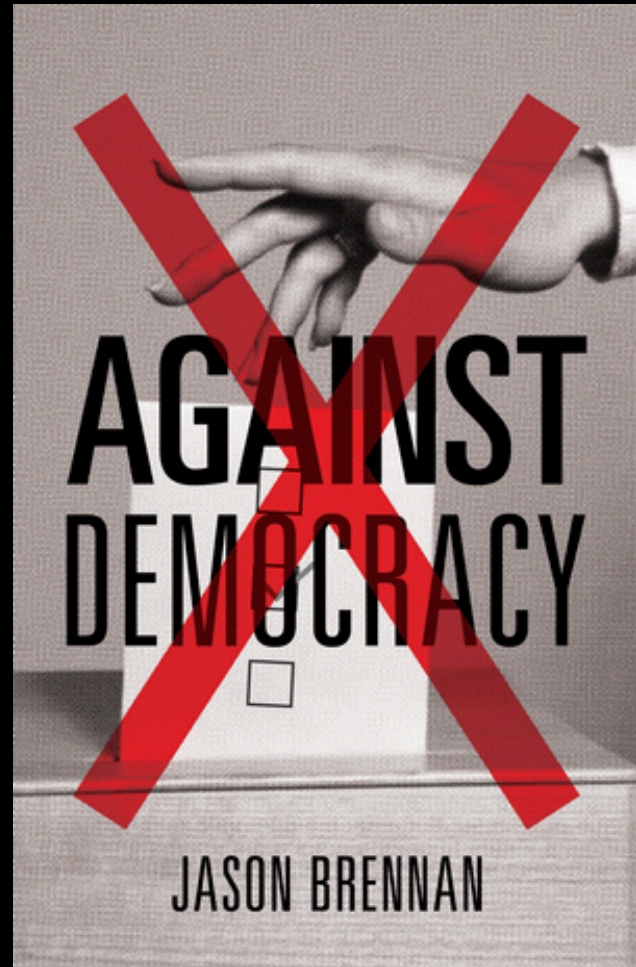
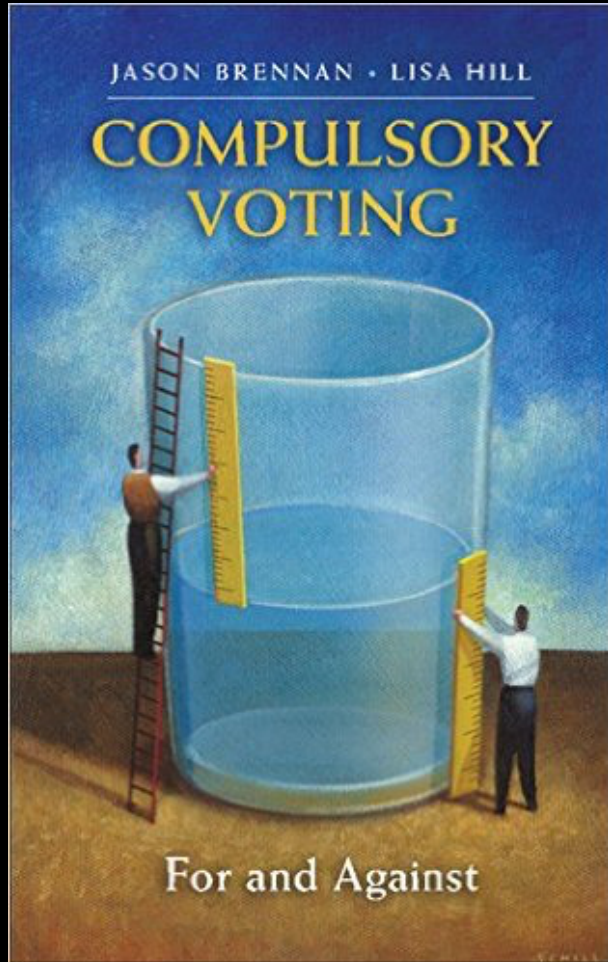
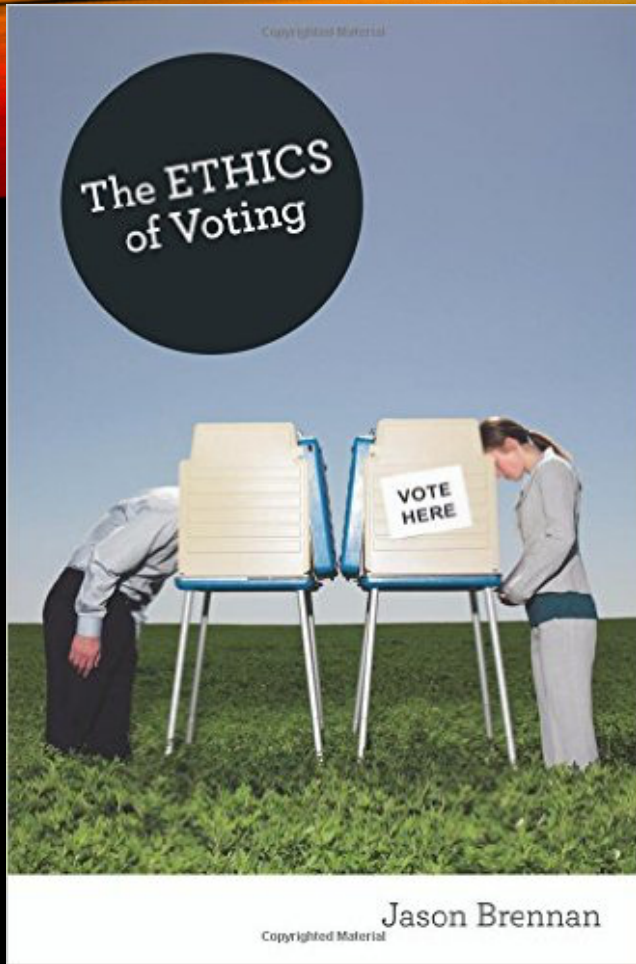


WHAT KIND OF VALUE DOES POLITICAL EQUALITY HAVE?

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THREE KINDS OF VALUE



BAD GOVERNMENT IS OUR FAULT

- Not just corporations, special interest groups, corrupt, politicians, etc.
- What if the median voter would fail ECON 101?



WHAT ARE CITIZENS LIKE: THE VARIABLES

- How strongly they hold opinions
- How consistent their opinions are
- How much information they have
- How they process information
- How they respond to those with whom they agree
- How much they participate

HOBBITS



HOOLIGANS



VULCANS



VOTERS ARE

1. Nice, but
 2. Ignorant, and
 3. Irrational
- Voters measure up well in *motivation*
 - But not in *cognition*

IGNORANCE

- Most Americans cannot identify any congressional candidates from their district
- Right before 2004 election, 70% of Americans did not know that Congress had added prescription drug benefit to Medicare a year earlier.
- Bush II v Gore
- Brexit

RATIONAL IGNORANCE



HOW KNOWLEDGE AFFECTS POLICY PREFERENCES

- Althaus: the “enlightened public” prefers:
 - Pro-trade, pro-immigration
 - More equality for homosexuals
 - Pro-choice
 - Tax increases to offset deficit
 - Significantly less punitive measures on crime
 - Less hawkish military policy
 - School reform

DOES DEMOCRACY EMPOWER INDIVIDUALS?



THE SYMBOLIC VALUE OF THE EQUAL RIGHT TO VOTE



AUBERON HERBERT

- “The instinct of worship is still so strong upon us that, having nearly worn out our capacity for treating kings and such kind of persons as sacred, we are ready to invest a majority of our own selves with the same kind of reverence.”

THE RED SCARF STORY



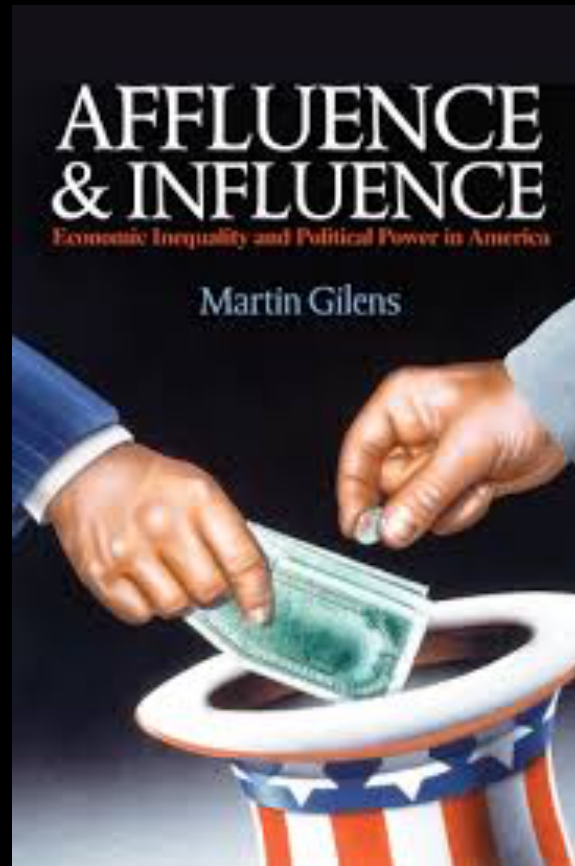
INVIDIOUS COMPARISONS



SUBJECTING SYMBOLISM TO COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS



DOES DEMOCRACY WORK BECAUSE IT DOESN'T WORK?



BOTTOM LINE

- Political equality has significant *instrumental* value
 - Democracies do a pretty decent job delivering just results, as judged by procedure-independent standards
 - But perhaps an alternative political system might do better
- But democracy probably not an end in itself
- Symbolic arguments for democracy, and policy in general, are bad