

*This paper examines a variety of explanations for why some active groups are better represented in local bureaucracies than other active groups. An examination of 1397 group-agency relationships in 55 cities resulted in some tentative evidence supporting the following propositions: (1) The organizational structures of groups—their permanency, their cohesion, and their size—do not explain the level of group representation in local bureaucracies. (2) The behavioral characteristics of groups—"the public-regardingness" of their demands, the "effectiveness" of their leadership, and the "conventionality" of their style—partially explain variations in group representation. (3) Organizations composed primarily of blacks and especially of low-status citizens tend to adopt some ineffective behaviors—making private-regarding demands, using ineffective leadership, and adopting unconventional styles—which result in reduced representation. (4) The extent to which blacks are underrepresented in local bureaucracies is not fully accounted for by behavioral variables. Part of the underrepresentation of black groups may be due to continuing overt discrimination.*

## **GROUP REPRESENTATION IN LOCAL BUREAUCRACIES**

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**The assumption of pluralists** that American political systems are open and responsive to all legitimate interest groups (Dahl, 1956: 137, and 1967: 22-24) has been increasingly questioned by students of urban and local politics. Critical analyses of the policymaking process in American communities have often led to the conclusion that the openness of city councils and urban bureaucracies extends only to a nonrepresentative sample of "established interests," "clientele groups," or "long-standing groups" (see, for example,

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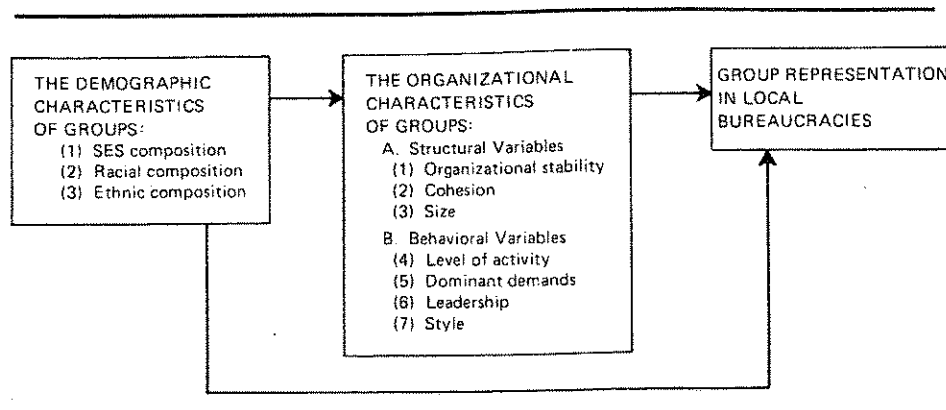
Gamson, 1968a; Lowi, 1969; Lipsky, 1970; Parenti, 1970; Bellush and David, 1971; and David and Peterson, 1973). Typically, these critics of pluralism present a view of urban policymaking which can be called the "dominance of clientele groups" model. This model stresses that the fundamental policy decisions for a community are made by career bureaucrats within a variety of local agencies. Moreover, these bureaucrats have developed close, symbiotic relationships with the leaders of a few clientele groups. Bureaucrats and the leaders of these privileged groups are portrayed in these analyses as engaged in an ongoing dialogue and search for common interests with the result that both come to hold similar goals and priorities, and both respond to the preferences and needs of one another. The problem with this posited pattern of urban policymaking is that, although agencies may be open and responsive to their clientele groups, other legitimate groups and interests are denied access and equal treatment by administrators. The result is a vast inequality of influence in urban politics between well-organized clientele groups and those who have been unable to penetrate this clientele group system (Schmidt, 1977).

Although this model of the urban policymaking process has served to identify a major weakness in the pluralist perspective on community politics, the dominance of clientele groups model can also be challenged for its descriptive oversimplification and its explanatory omissions. The most serious oversimplification is the dichotomous classification or description of political groups. Groups are described as either *within* the clientele group system—in which case they enjoy access, legitimacy, and influence, and obtain desired policy responses—or *outside* of this clientele group system—in which case their demands are viewed as illegitimate and they are denied access and influence, and win few policy concessions. This dichotomous approach fails to take into account significant variations among groups both within and outside of the "clientele group system." For example, welfare rights organizations and social workers' associations can both be viewed

as being "within" the pressure system surrounding social service agencies, yet the interests of the social workers and other professionals who deliver social services seem to be far better represented in the policy process than are the interests of welfare recipients (Piven, 1974). Similarly, agencies can be petitioned on an issue by a variety of ad hoc groups which are "outside" the clientele group system and be unequally responsive to these groups (Schumaker, 1975). These considerations suggest that instead of viewing groups as either within or outside of the clientele group system, it is more accurate to perceive that various groups are more or less well represented in an agency. In short, the degree to which groups are represented in agency affairs—where representation refers broadly to the amount of access and influence a group has with an agency—is a *continuous* rather than a dichotomous variable.

The major omission in the dominance of clientele groups model is that little or no attention is given to providing satisfactory *explanations* of why some groups are more successful than other groups at obtaining representation with agency officials. The pluralist model does provide at least some hypotheses in this regard. For example, organizational size, cohesion, effective leadership and control of various power resources are seen as crucial determinants of whether or not a group will obtain effective representation in a policy-making body (Truman, 1970; Dahl, 1961). While little or no precise evidence has been presented which verifies the importance of these factors as determinants of effective representation, pluralists and group theorists have at least directed attention to the search for explanations of differential group representation in policymaking arenas.

This paper is an attempt to synthesize the insights of both pluralists and their critics in order to provide more valid descriptions and explanations of variances in group representation in local bureaucracies. In part one, a model is presented which views group representation in local bureaucracies as a continuous variable which can be explained, at least



**Figure 1: The Effects of Demographic and Organizational Characteristics of Groups on the Extent to Which Groups are Represented in the Policy Process of Local Bureaucracies**

in part, by the demographic, organizational, and behavioral characteristics of the groups seeking access and influence with local agencies.<sup>1</sup> Also in this section, a number of specific hypotheses are developed which are directed at explaining why some groups achieve more effective representation than other groups in agency affairs. In part two, a data base enabling an empirical test of these hypotheses is described. The results of the empirical analysis are presented in part three.

### A MODEL OF GROUP REPRESENTATION IN LOCAL BUREAUCRACIES

The degree to which a variety of groups is represented in local bureaucracies is the dependent variable in this study. The explanatory or independent variables are aspects of two constraints: (1) the demographic characteristics of the groups, and (2) the organizational characteristics of the group. A conceptual framework showing the hypothesized relationships among these constructs as well as the specific variables used in this analysis is presented in Figure 1.

In this paper, the dependent variable, the degree of group representation, is defined so as to correspond with the concept of "substantive representation" as developed by Hannah Pitkin (1972: 207-240) and adopted in empirical research by Paul Peterson (1970: 492). According to Peterson, the level of substantive representation which a group achieves is indicated in two ways. First, the greater the group's *influence* over the policy decisions of bureaucrats, the greater the representation achieved by the group. When agency officials adopt policies which are positive responses to the overt actions and demands of a group, the group has influence (Gamson, 1968b: 59-61). Influence thus refers to specific actions undertaken by groups to change the policymaking behavior of agency officials. Peterson correctly notes, however, that substantive representation can occur without a group exercising overt influence over an agency. A second process by which representation is achieved involves the adoption by agency officials of an *orientation* toward policy which corresponds to that of the group. If agency officials have the same priorities and goals as a group, then the group is represented whether or not it engages in overt attempts to influence bureaucrats. Thus, the degree to which a group is represented in local bureaucracies is indicated by the degree to which agency administrators hold similar policy orientations as the group and/or by the degree to which the agencies respond positively to efforts by the group to influence agency policy.

As depicted in Figure 1, the extent to which a group is represented in local bureaucracies may be explained, in part, by two types of organizational characteristics of groups: (1) variables describing the *structural* aspects of the group, and (2) variables describing the *behavioral* characteristics of the group. With respect to the structural characteristics of a group, it is widely believed that organizational stability, group cohesion, and group size are important factors enhancing the degree to which a group is well represented in political systems (Truman, 1970). For example, if the advo-

cates of the dominance of clientele group model provide any explanation of differential group representation within local bureaucracies, this explanation is that one structural variable—organizational stability or permanency—determines whether or not a group is well represented in a local agency (Gamson, 1968a; Bellush and David, 1971; Lipsky, 1970). Permanent, well-organized groups are perceived as uniformly having close, mutually supportive relationships with agency officials while new, ad hoc groups are perceived as having little chance for penetrating these relationships.

Nevertheless, there is some evidence that the importance of organizational stability as a prerequisite to effective representation may be overstated. For example, in their study of the role behavior of city councilmen, Eulau and Prewitt (1973: 427) classified 32% of all councils as being primarily responsive to "ad hoc groups" and only 24% of all councils as being primarily responsive to "permanent interest clusters in the community." Organizational stability may be a much less important determinant of whether group interests are represented at the local level than at the state and national levels; for there is a great deal of evidence which suggests that both citizens and policymakers perceive ad hoc issue-specific groups as appropriate demand structures in local politics (Verba, 1970; Almond and Verba, 1963: 157; Prewitt and Eulau, 1969). For this reason, it is one of the major hypotheses of this paper that the critics of pluralism have overestimated the importance of organizational stability as a determinant of whether a group is well represented in local bureaucracies; instead, organizational stability is hypothesized to be, at most, weakly related to the level of representation. In city politics the reference publics of local bureaucracies include both permanent and ad hoc groups.

A second structural characteristic of groups which is viewed in the prevailing literature as a significant determinant of the level of group representation is organizational cohesion. For example, Truman (1970: 159) asserts that "cohesion . . . is a crucial determinant of the effectiveness with which the

group may assert its claims." Yet for two reasons, the level of the group cohesion is hypothesized to have little impact on the representative relationship between groups and agency officials. First, low cohesion is primarily an internal problem confronting groups; lack of internal cohesion may actually aid groups in their external relations with officials. Typically, internal conflict and differences prevent groups from making extreme demands which appeal to certain factions in the organization but which are unsupported by other factions. Thus, the claims which noncohesive groups make may be relatively moderate and responsible, which increases the legitimacy of the group in the view of agency officials. Second, low cohesion may simply indicate to officials that a group is widely representative of a broad cross section of the population and that it, therefore, speaks for broad community interests rather than narrow particularistic interests. For these reasons, group cohesion is hypothesized to not be a fundamental determinant of the extent to which a group develops a high level of representation in local bureaucracies.

The assumption of group theorists that group size is a key resource enhancing the level of group representation can also be challenged. Recent "exchange" theories of group behavior stress that group leaders must deal simultaneously with different audiences including the group's membership or constituency and the public officials who are targets of group demands (Olson, 1971; Salisbury, 1969; Lipsky, 1970; Wilson, 1973). From this perspective, group leaders who are most concerned with maintaining and enhancing the organization are less able to devote their energies to developing strong representational ties with public officials. Leaders of large groups have a particularly difficult time developing incentives for potential members to join and ongoing members to remain in the organization (Olson, 1971). Thus, the leaders of large groups may devote less attention and energy to representational activities. If so, group size may not be an important group resource. It is therefore hypothesized that group size

is not an important determinant of the extent to which a group is represented in local bureaucracies.

In summary, conventional wisdom has stressed the importance of the structural characteristics of groups—their permanency, their cohesion, and their size—as determinants of the level of access and influence a group has in administrative and political processes. The importance of these structural characteristics of groups is hypothesized to have been overestimated. In general, *the structural characteristics of groups are expected to be of only minor importance in affecting the degree to which a group is represented in local bureaucracies.* Rather than organizational characteristics, *the behavioral characteristics of groups are expected to be of most importance in affecting how well represented a group is.*

In Figure 1 four behavioral characteristics of groups are listed as the principal variables affecting group representation: (1) the level of group activity, (2) the character of group demands, (3) the effectiveness of group leadership, and (4) the conventionality of group style. Of these four variables, the level of group activity should have the most problematic effect on the extent to which a group is represented in local bureaucracies. A high level of activity by groups may result in high degrees of representation because it indicates to agency officials that active groups have high levels of interest with, and commitment to, municipal affairs. In this regard, Zisk (1973: 26) found that groups that were well represented and influential in city councils were quite “active and interested.” However, higher levels of activity by groups may not translate into group influence and effectiveness. Many urban groups are active precisely because they are attempting to thwart agency programs which are unresponsive to group preferences. Such groups have great difficulties attaining substantive representation with agency officials (Bellush and David, 1971). For these reasons little relationship is expected between the level of group activity and the extent to which a group is well represented in local bureaucracies.

Regarding group demands, Wilson (1973: 288) has written that “if there is any single factor that contributes to success . . .



it probably has to do with the perceived legitimacy of the demands being made." Precisely how one measures "the perceived legitimacy" of demands is unclear, but Wilson has suggested a scheme for classifying issues and demands which may be useful for explaining how well represented a group is in local bureaucracies. According to Wilson (1973: 331-337), issues raised by groups can be classified according to how widely or narrowly distributed the benefits and costs associated with the issue are. When a group makes demands for policies which would concentrate benefits narrowly among group members while distributing the costs of the policy widely among the remainder of the population, the group can be said to be making "separable," "segmental," or "private-regarding" demands (Wilson and Banfield, 1971; Froman, 1968). Conversely, when a group makes demands for policies which would distribute benefits broadly among most members of the community while the group incurs many of the costs of advocating and advancing the program, the group can be said to making "communal," "areal," or "community-regarding" demands. Our hypothesis is that the more "community-regarding" are the demands which a group makes, the more likely is that group to be well represented in local bureaucracies. This hypothesis is based on the observation that local bureaucracies, like all local governmental structures, have increasingly adopted the "good government" ethos which perceives "private-regarding" demands as relatively illegitimate (Banfield and Wilson, 1963). Professional administrators have been increasingly socialized to think in terms of "the public interest" and "community-as-a-whole." Thus, those groups which are effective at convincing administrators that their demands are "community-regarding" are more likely to be embraced by agency officials than are groups whose demands are perceived as "private-regarding."

A second behavioral characteristic of organizations which is likely to affect the level of group representation in local bureaucracies is the effectiveness of group leadership. In this study, the effectiveness of leadership refers to how skill-

fully organizational entrepreneurs interact with bureaucratic targets.<sup>2</sup> The ability to provide useful information, the ability to communicate, and the skill to negotiate with agency officials are aspects of effective leadership. In order to achieve a high level of representation in an agency—in order for symbiotic relationships to develop between group leaders and agency officials—group leaders must be able to offer local bureaucrats something which is useful to them. What bureaucrats want from group leaders is information—both of a political and technical nature—which they can use in making policy. Effective leadership possibly provides such information and thus develops mutually supporting relationships with agency officials. Thus, the extent to which a group possesses effective leadership is hypothesized to be a major determinant of the extent to which a group is represented in local bureaucracies.

A third behavioral characteristic of organizations which is likely to affect the level of representation concerns the group's predominant style. Style refers to the tactics and strategies which a group adopts in pursuit of its goals. Wilson (1973: 281-284) has differentiated between "bargaining" and "protest" organizational styles. On the one hand, bargaining represents the adoption of a relatively conservative and conventional strategy. A bargaining style involves commitments to negotiating one's demands with bureaucrats, to searching for mutually agreeable solutions, and to modifying the group's original positions. On the other hand, the adoption of a protest style involves a more radical or unconventional strategy. Rather than expressing group demands and preferences in private negotiation, protest styles involve "public display," "disruptive acts," and the use of "negative inducements" (Lipsky, 1970: 2; Wilson, 1973: 282). Of course, groups vary in their predominant styles. The more frequently a group utilizes coercion (rather than persuasion) and the more frequently it takes its grievances with local bureaucrats to external audiences (through public protest), the more "unconventional" is its style. Because unconventional, radical, or

protest styles are of questionable legitimacy to both the public and to city officials (Eisinger, 1974: 593; Schumaker, 1975), groups which utilize them are likely to be less well represented in local bureaucracies than groups adopting more conventional styles.<sup>3</sup>

In summary, the extent to which a group is well represented in a local bureaucracy is hypothesized to be more affected by the behaviors it adopts than by the structural characteristics which it possesses. Organizational stability, cohesion, and size are hypothesized to be insignificantly related to the level of group representation. Instead, group representation in local bureaucracies is hypothesized to be directly and positively related to (1) the effectiveness of the group's leadership, (2) the community-regardingness of group demands, and (3) the conventionality of a group's style.

Figure 1 also suggests that the extent of group representation may be a function of the demographic characteristics of groups. It is frequently asserted, for example, that groups that are well represented in the "pluralist system" are composed primarily of advantaged, upper class, citizens (Schattschneider, 1960; Verba and Nie, 1972). This suggests that groups composed of relatively disadvantaged citizens—those having lower socioeconomic status, blacks, and recent immigrants—would be poorly represented in local bureaucracies. In short, it can be suggested that local bureaucrats directly and overtly discriminate against lower class, black, and ethnic associations in the policy process.

Although the possibility of such discrimination cannot be discounted, the biases against such disadvantaged citizens may be more subtle than overt discrimination. First, it is more difficult to mobilize "disadvantaged" citizens than "advantaged" citizens into political groups (this point is discussed in a particularly insightful fashion by Wilson, 1973: 56-77). From this perspective, disadvantaged citizens are underrepresented in urban bureaucracies because few lower-class and black citizens join groups, not because groups

composed of disadvantaged citizens receive differential treatment by local bureaucrats.

In addition, there is a second subtle form of bias against disadvantaged citizens which has not been clearly described by students of urban politics. In order to understand this form of bias, it is necessary to refer back to the previous discussion of the behavioral characteristics of groups which affect the level of group representation in local bureaucracies. There it was argued that groups having relatively ineffective leadership, making private-regarding demands, and adopting unconventional protest styles were unlikely to be well represented in local bureaucracies. If we add to this notion the additional hypothesis that relatively disadvantaged groups (particularly groups composed of blacks and lower SES citizens) are most likely to have these dysfunctional behavioral characteristics, a subtle form of bias against disadvantaged groups becomes apparent. As depicted in Figure 1, groups composed of relatively disadvantaged citizens are likely to be underrepresented in local bureaucracies because the following "developmental sequences" typically occur: First, groups composed of lower SES citizens, blacks, and immigrants are likely to have concerns and needs of a "particularistic" nature (Banfield and Wilson, 1963); yet administrators perceive these concerns as less legitimate than the more "community-regarding" demands of relatively advantaged citizens and are thus less responsive to them. Second, disadvantaged groups are likely to have relatively ineffective leadership, which results, in turn, in less representation of these groups in local bureaucracies. It is important to recognize in this regard that the ineffectiveness of leadership pertains to the relationships between groups leaders and bureaucrats, not to the relationship between group leaders and group constituents. There is good reason to believe that leaders of disadvantaged groups have greater organizational maintenance problems than leaders of more advantaged groups (Wilson, 1973: 56-77). Thus, leaders of these disadvantaged groups must engage in a variety of "expressive" behaviors—

including making nonnegotiable demands and impugning the motives and integrity of public officials—which serve the maintenance and mobilization needs of the organization while simultaneously increasing the hostility of agency targets (Lipsky, 1970: 163-182). In short, the “ineffectiveness of leadership” which so frequently characterizes disadvantaged groups is probably due to the organizational context in which black and lower SES leaders find themselves.

Third, disadvantaged groups are likely to adopt unconventional protest styles which result, in turn, in less representation of these groups in local bureaucracies. Again, it must be recognized that the adoption of such styles is frequently due to the context in which lower SES and black groups find themselves. Because these groups usually lack the conventional resources and skills which make conventional “bargaining” styles more effective, disadvantaged groups normally perceive that they have little choice but to use “negative inducements” (e.g., by creating a distasteful situation for bureaucrats by disruptive acts) in order to coerce agency officials to respond (Wilson, 1973: 282). The major point is that the behavioral styles available to disadvantaged groups are precisely those styles which the public and agency officials believe to be illegitimate. The result is that disadvantaged groups adopting unconventional styles are less well represented in local bureaucracies than advantaged groups which typically adopt conventional styles.

In summary, the final hypothesis concerning the demographic characteristics of groups which affect the extent to which groups are represented in local bureaucracies is a complex one. Disadvantaged groups (blacks, lower SES citizens, and perhaps immigrants) will be less well represented than more advantaged groups (whites, upper SES citizens, and Yankees). According to our hypothesis, this underrepresentation of disadvantaged groups is *not* due to the structural characteristics of the organizations of disadvantaged citizens (the stability, cohesion, and size of the organizations of the lower class and blacks are irrelevant if, as was

hypothesized earlier, these structural characteristics do not affect the level of group representation in local bureaucracies). In addition, the underrepresentation of disadvantaged groups may *not* be due to direct discrimination where local bureaucracies are unresponsive to disadvantaged groups simply because they are composed of black and/or lower status citizens. Instead, the underrepresentation of disadvantaged groups is hypothesized to be due to the behavioral characteristics which disadvantaged groups adopt.

## II. DATA

In order to test the hypotheses developed above, data were collected and analyzed on a wide variety of groups operating within the urban environment and making demands upon city officials. These data were collected by means of a mail questionnaire sent in the summer and autumn of 1975 to top-level administrators in ten urban observatory cities and in the 51 cities comprising the Permanent Community Sample (PCS) of the National Opinion Research Center (NORC).<sup>4</sup> The administrators who received the questionnaire headed agencies that are among the most important providers of community services including: (1) public housing; (2) public health; (3) environmental protection; (4) community development; (5) welfare; (6) schools; and (7) police. Of the 250 administrators who were contacted, 54% responded to the questionnaire providing data on 1397 types of groups and group-agency interactions in 55 different communities.<sup>5</sup>

In the survey, agency officials were asked to provide their perceptions of the demographic composition, organizational structure, leadership patterns, demands, and behaviors of a variety of types of groups in the community. In addition, the agency informants were asked to indicate how supportive and responsive the agency had been to the demands and interests of each type of group. For each question, informants were given choices of four or five closed-ended responses which formed an ordinal scale of the variables under consideration.

In order to present a parsimonious model, summary indices of many concepts in the model were created from questionnaire items that were conceptually and empirically related. For example, summary indices were created of the following organizational characteristics of groups: (1) organizational stability, (2) group cohesion, (3) community-regardingness of demands, (4) leadership effectiveness, and (5) unconventionality of style. In addition, the dependent variable in this analysis, the extent of group representation in local bureaucracies, was created as an additive index from questionnaire items concerned with (a) the extent to which agency officials shared the same policy orientations as the various groups and (b) the extent to which agency officials responded positively to group demands. The specific questions used in creating these summary indices, as well as the questions used to measure other variables in the model, are presented in Appendix A.

An examination of the distribution of scores regarding the extent of representation of various groups in local bureaucracies suggests the validity of our measurement instrument. Table 1, which presents the various types of groups examined in this study, rank-ordered by their average level of representation, reveals no major surprises. The bias in favor of advantaged citizens is revealed by the finding that civic groups (e.g., The League of Women Voters, service organizations such as the Rotary Club, the Kiwanis Club), business-oriented groups (e.g., The Chamber of Commerce), and professional organizations (e.g., the Bar Association) are most highly represented while neighborhood, labor, ethnic, and civil-rights groups are least represented in local bureaucracies.

The data used and reported in this analysis are not without their limitations. First, our units of analysis are "types of groups" (e.g., civic groups) rather than "specific groups" (e.g., the Rotary Club, the League of Women Voters). Our decision to seek data on types of groups was prompted by a desire to attain a level of generality consistent with other studies on the influence of groups in city politics (Clark,

**TABLE 1**  
**The Various Types of Groups Examined in this**  
**Analysis Rank-Ordered by Their Average Level of**  
**Representation in Local Bureaucracies**

	(N)
1. Civic groups ( e.g., The League of Women Voters )	135
2. Business - oriented groups ( e.g., The Chamber of Commerce )	134
3. Professional organizations ( e.g., The Bar Association )	126
4. Political organizations ( e.g., The Democratic and Republican Parties )	96
5. Producers of agency services ( e.g., associations and unions of teachers, policemen, social workers )	134
6. Consumers of agency services ( e.g., student - parent groups, welfare recipients, users of public health services )	127
7. Neighborhood groups	140
8. Ethnic groups	125
9. Unions in the private sector	105
10. Civil rights groups	122
	N= 1244
	(1397)*

\*Agency officials also provided information on an additional 153 groups which were in frequent interaction with their agencies but which we could not classify among the above types of groups.

1972; Morlock, 1974). However, because there may be considerable differences in the behavior, organizations, and levels of representation of specific groups of a similar "type," this decision has resulted in some measurement errors.

Second, we are relying solely on the preception of agency officials. Certainly the perceptions of these persons can be at odds with the perceptions of the groups under investigation and with reality. Nevertheless, these data remain useful



because they report the characteristics of groups which agency officials themselves find most represented in their bureaucracies. In a way, these data report the biases of agency officials both in favor of and in opposition to various types of groups, and these biases determine which type of groups are well represented and underrepresented in agency affairs.

### III. DETERMINANTS OF GROUP REPRESENTATION IN LOCAL BUREAUCRACIES: THE RESULTS OF SOME TESTS

In order to test the hypotheses developed in part one, the data regarding 1397 groups interacting with a variety of local bureaucracies were examined using correlation and regression analysis.<sup>6</sup> Table 2 presents data pertaining to the relationships among the organizational and demographic characteristics of groups and the extent to which groups are represented in local bureaucracies. Here we report both zero-order Pearsonian correlation coefficients and corresponding beta weights—which estimate the direct independent effect on the level of group representation of each organizational and demographic variable controlling for the other variables in the model. Table 3 presents data pertaining to the relationships between the demographic and organizational characteristics of groups. The zero-order correlation coefficients presented in Table 3 help illuminate the developmental sequence in which disadvantaged groups adopt those behavioral characteristics reducing their level of representation with local bureaucracies.

The data in Table 2 support the hypothesis that the structural characteristics of organizations—stability, cohesion, and size—are not fundamental determinants of the extent to which groups are represented in urban bureaucracies. Both group size and cohesion are unrelated to the level or representation. Organizational stability is positively associated with higher levels of representation ( $r = .21$ ), but when other organ-

**TABLE 2**  
**The Relationships Between Various Characteristics**  
**of Groups and the Level of Group Representation**  
**in Local Bureaucracies**

	Zero-Order Correlations	Beta Weights
<b>STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS</b>		
(1) Organizational Stability	.21	.09
(2) Index of Cohesion	.06	-.05
(3) Size of Group	-.04	-.04
<b>BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS</b>		
(1) Level of Activity	-.10	-.06
(2) Community - Regardingness of Demands	.24	.13*
(3) Effectiveness of Leadership	.18	.18*
(4) Unconventionality of Style	-.26	-.13*
<b>DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS</b>		
(1) Increasing SES Group	.20	-.02
(2) Increasing Blackness of Group	-.23	-.12*
(3) Increasing Ethnicity of Group	.06	.04

\*Indicates relationships that are significant at the .05 level because the unstandardized regression coefficients are at least two times their standard error.

izational characteristics are controlled in the multivariate analysis, there is almost no *direct* relationship between organizational stability and representation. Analysis suggests that it is not organizational stability per se which is important for groups; rather it appears that stable organizations are (a) more likely to have effective leadership (the correlation

**TABLE 3**  
**The Relationships Between Various Demographic Characteristics of Groups and Various Organizational Characteristics of Groups: Zero-Order Pearsonian Correlation Coefficients**

Organizational Characteristics of Groups	Demographic Characteristics of Groups		
	SES	Blackness	Ethnicity
Organizational Stability	.48*	-.39*	-.08
Index of Cohesion	.11	-.49*	.03
Size of Group	-.09	.19*	.12*
Community - Regardingness of Demands	.21*	-.11	.09
Effectiveness of Leadership	.21*	-.05	-.05
Unconventionality of Style	-.46*	.42*	.05
Level of Activity	-.20*	.23*	-.02

\*Correlations are significant at the .01 level.

between organizational stability and effective leadership is  $r = .33$ ) and (b) more likely to adopt conventional styles (the correlation between organizational stability and unconventionality of style is  $r = .34$ ). It is these behaviors adopted by permanent organizations, not the organizational structure itself, which increases the level of representation of permanent organizations in local bureaucracies.

The importance of the behavioral characteristics of groups is also indicated in Table 2. Earlier, we hypothesized that the level of group representation would be enhanced when groups exhibited the following behaviors: (a) making com-

munity-regarding demands, (b) having effective leadership, and (c) adopting conventional "bargaining" styles. All three behavioral variables are significantly related to representation as indicated by our hypotheses, although the relationships are not as strong as we expected. Still, it appears that the behaviors of groups rather than the structures of groups better explain and predict the level of representation which groups achieve within local bureaucracies.

The hypothesis that groups composed of disadvantaged citizens are underrepresented in local bureaucracies receives some support from the data presented in Table 2. The extent to which a group is composed of first or second generation Americans is only weakly associated with the level of group representation, which suggests that ethnicity may not be as important a variable in local politics as it was once thought to be (Banfield and Wilson, 1963; Dahl, 1961). However, the racial and class compositions of groups are significantly and suggestively related to representation. With regard to class composition, the data show that groups composed of higher SES citizens are better represented in local bureaucracies than groups composed of lower SES citizens ( $r = .20$ ). Two reasons exist for this relationship. First, lower SES groups are, in many instances, primarily black groups. When the racial composition of groups is controlled, the strength of the relationship between the class composition of groups and their level of representation is substantially reduced.<sup>7</sup> Second, lower SES groups tend to adopt those behaviors which have been revealed to reduce the level of group representation in agencies. Table 3 shows that lower status groups tend to make private-regarding demands, have ineffective leadership, and exhibit unconventional styles. When the racial composition of groups and the behaviors of groups are simultaneously controlled as in the multivariate analysis reported in Table 2, it is apparent that there is no *direct* relationship between the class composition of groups and the extent to which they are represented in local bureaucracies.

With regard to the racial composition of groups, the data in Table 2 show that groups composed of blacks are less well represented than groups composed of whites ( $r = -.23$ ). The question arises whether this relationship can be explained in terms of the behavioral characteristics of black groups. The data in Table 3 reveal that black groups are not substantially more likely than white groups to adopt the dysfunctional behaviors of making private-regarding demands and having ineffective leadership. However, groups composed of blacks are likely to adopt unconventional protest styles which reduce their level of representation in agency affairs. The fact that blacks tend to adopt such unconventional styles is *not*, however, a sufficient explanation for their underrepresentation in local bureaucracies. As revealed in the multivariate analysis reported in Table 2, the association between the racial composition of groups and group representation persists when controls for style and other behavioral variables are introduced. In other words, there is a significant direct inverse relationship between the number of blacks in a group and the extent to which that group is represented. This is interpreted to mean that local bureaucrats continue to exhibit some overt discrimination against black organizations.

### CONCLUSIONS

The analysis in this paper supported the following propositions: (1) The organizational structures of groups—their permanency, their cohesion, and their size—do not explain the level of group representation in local bureaucracies. (2) The behavioral characteristics of groups—the “public-regardingness” of their demands, the “effectiveness” of their leadership, and the “conventionality” of their style—partially explain variations in group representation. (3) Organizations composed primarily of blacks and, especially, of lower-status citizens tend to adopt some ineffective behaviors—making

private-regarding demands, having ineffective leadership, and adopting unconventional styles—which result in reduced representation. (4) The extent to which blacks are underrepresented in local bureaucracies is not fully accounted for by behavioral variables. Part of the underrepresentation of black groups may be due to continuing overt discrimination.

The proposition that there is continuing discrimination against predominantly black groups by city officials is, perhaps, controversial, but it is certainly not novel. Many urban blacks have perceived this finding to be the case for many years (Rossi, Berk, and Eidson, 1974).

The first and second propositions—which together suggest that the behavioral characteristics of groups are more important than the structural characteristics of groups as factors affecting group representation—may be disconcerting to political and organizational theorists. The bulk of the existing theory regarding interest groups has focused on the importance of structural characteristics rather than on behavioral characteristics of groups. If the results of this analysis are valid, reformulations in group theory which examine in more detail the effectiveness of various group behaviors seem required.

Perhaps the most controversial of the propositions supported by the analysis is that the underrepresentation of groups composed of black and lower-status citizens is due to their behaviors. This conclusion could be interpreted as suggesting that these disadvantaged citizens are themselves to blame for the fact that they are underrepresented in local bureaucracies. Such a conclusion is *not* warranted by any of the analysis presented in this paper. The analysis suggests that lower-status groups, but not black groups, tend to make “private-regarding” demands which reduce their level of representation. It must be understood, however, that the concepts of private-regarding and community-regarding demands are elusive ones. It is difficult to maintain that some demands are *in fact* “community-regarding” or “in

the public interest" while other demands are somehow more particularistic or "private-regarding" (Sorauf, 1962). All policies distribute benefits and burdens in an unequal fashion; even the so-called "community-regarding" demands of more advantaged groups are actually burdensome for some people in the community. All that can be maintained is that some demands *are perceived* by agency officials as more community-regarding than others, and that the demands of groups of lower-status citizens are often perceived as not being community-regarding. It may well be that agency bureaucrats simply share the same policy goals as upper-status groups while being hostile to many goals of disadvantaged citizens. Thus, bureaucrats may simply label upper-status goals as being "in the public interest" while labeling the goals of lower-status groups as being particularistic.

The analysis also suggests that lower-status groups, but not blacks, tend to have relatively "ineffective" leadership, which reduces their level of representation. Again, this finding should not be understood as a criticism of leaders of lower-status groups. "Effectiveness" and "ineffectiveness" have been defined from the point of view of local bureaucrats. Leaders of lower-status groups may be very effective at developing and maintaining their organizations. Indeed, what local bureaucrats may not perceive is that those behaviors of the leaders of lower-status organizations which they see as ineffective may be important and even necessary organizational maintenance activities. If lower-class organizations are to develop and represent disadvantaged citizens in the political arena, agency officials must tolerate the more "expressive-emotive" behaviors of the leaders of lower-status groups as well as the "instrumental-rational" behaviors, which they prefer, of upper status leaders.

Finally, it has been found that both lower-status and black groups tend to adopt "unconventional" protest styles which reduce their level of representation. This finding should not be interpreted as meaning that we think groups of disadvantaged citizens should simply change their styles in

order to attain more representation. Disadvantaged groups adopt unconventional styles because they frequently do not have the resources to use conventional bargaining strategies effectively. Again, officials in local bureaucracies should understand that when they are less responsive to disadvantaged groups, because they question the legitimacy of their styles, they are exhibiting a class bias which results in the underrepresentation of black and lower-status citizens in local bureaucracies.

### NOTES

1. The extent of group representation in local bureaucracies is also partly explainable in terms of the organizational and behavioral characteristics of the bureaucracies which are the targets of group demands (Thompson, 1967; Thompson, 1975; Perrow, 1970). A complete model of group representation within bureaucracies would thus include both group variables and target variables. Because we lack data concerning target variables and thus exclude these factors from our analysis, the ideas and findings reported here constitute a partial model of group representation in local bureaucracies.

2. Another aspect of leadership effectiveness certainly pertains to intraorganizational maintenance skills (Wilson, 1973). An implication of recognizing that effective leaders must both interact with *external* targets and *internal* constituents is developed below.

3. The alternative hypothesis—that the lack of group representation in local bureaucracies causes groups to adopt unconventional styles—is an interesting and plausible one. See Schumaker (1974) for an effort to deal with the reciprocal relationship between group style and representation.

4. The urban observatory cities are described by Fowler (1974), and the Permanent Community Sample cities are described by Clark (1971).

5. Four aspects of our sample can be clarified. First, the number of communities equals 55 (rather than 61) because three urban observatory cities (Boston, Milwaukee, and Atlanta) are also in the PCS and because we attained no responses to our mail questionnaire from officials in three other PCS cities (Birmingham, Alabama; Tyler, Texas; and Waukegan, Illinois).

Second, because all municipalities do not provide services or have agencies in each of the seven areas listed above, we sent questionnaires to between three and seven administrators per community.

Third, administrators were asked to provide data on each of ten specific types of groups which are usually active in community affairs (see Table 1). However, the groups for which we requested information varied somewhat from agency to agency. Data were sought regarding the specific client groups or consumers of the services of each agency. For example, in the questionnaire sent to school superintendents, we inquired about "parent groups," while in the questionnaire sent to welfare



agencies we inquired about "groups of welfare recipients." Data were also sought regarding the specific provider groups or producers of the services of each agency. For example, in the questionnaire sent to school superintendents, we inquired about "teacher groups," while in the questionnaire sent to the welfare agency we inquired about "social worker associations." In addition to the ten types of groups listed on each questionnaire, space was provided for administrators to give data on two other types of groups which were not listed on the questionnaire but which were active in agency affairs. Thus some administrators provided data on 12 groups and 12 group-agency interactions.

Fourth, the administrators who responded to the questionnaire were often unable to provide complete information regarding the various groups listed on the questionnaire. Because of the "missing data" problem, there are only 1073 cases for which measures were obtained for *each* of the variables in the analysis. Thus, in the multiple regression analysis reported below, the effective N equals 1073, not 1397. The N for the zero-order correlation coefficients reported in Tables 2 and 3 varies between 1100 and 1350.

6. Because of our concern with developing *broad* theoretical propositions about the determinants of representation of various community groups, we have treated the various types of group as part of a single sample. Of course, it is possible to ascertain the determinants of group representation for various subsamples of groups (e.g., for civic groups, for neighborhood groups). Readers wishing information about specific types of groups are invited to request this data from the authors.

7. In a separate analysis not reported in our tables, it was found that the first-order partial correlation coefficient relating class composition to group representation controlling for the racial composition of groups is .11.

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## APPENDIX A

### MEASURES OF VARIABLES IN THE ANALYSIS

In this appendix, the specific survey items used to measure the variables and summary indices analyzed in this study are presented.

#### THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE: GROUP REPRESENTATION

*The Index of Group representation in local bureaucracies.* This index of substantive group representation measures the degree to which agency administrators hold similar policy orientations as various groups and the degree to which agencies respond positively to efforts by groups to influence agency actions and policy. This index was created by simply adding the scores provided by agency informants to the following three questions.

- (1) Approximately how often does each type of group voice agreement with the viewpoint of your agency on matters under your jurisdiction?
  - (1) it agrees less than 10% of the time
  - (2) it agrees from 10% to 40% of the time
  - (3) it agrees about 50% of the time
  - (4) it agrees from 60% to 90% of the time
  - (5) it agrees more than 90% of the time
- (2) Overall, how would you rate the relationship of your agency with each type of group?
  - (1) the group and agency are very hostile toward each other
  - (2) the group and agency are somewhat hostile toward each other
  - (3) the group and agency share some support and some hostility toward each other
  - (4) the group and agency are somewhat supportive of each other
  - (5) the group and agency are very supportive of each other
- (3) Which of the following best describes the action which your agency has taken on the requests that each group has made of your agency in the past five years?
  - (1) the agency has almost never acted favorably on the group's requests
  - (2) the agency has acted favorably on a minority of the group's requests
  - (3) the agency has acted favorably on about half of the group's requests
  - (4) the agency has acted favorably on a majority of the group's requests
  - (5) the agency has almost always acted favorably on the group's request

The inter-item zero-order correlations of these three indicators are as follows:  $r_{12} = .33$ ;  $r_{13} = .20$ ; and  $r_{23} = .31$ .

### THE ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF GROUPS

*The index of organizational stability* is concerned with the extent to which groups possess well-developed and permanent organizations. Responses to the following two questions were summed to provide this measure.

- (1) Which of the following statements best characterizes the organizational structure of each type of group?
  - (1) almost all organizations for this type of group are of a temporary, issue-specific nature
  - (2) most organizations are temporary and issue-specific
  - (3) some organizations are temporary while others are permanent
  - (4) most organizations are of a permanent nature
  - (5) almost all organizations for this type of group are of a permanent nature.

- (2) In your judgment, how well organized is each type of group?
- (1) poorly organized
  - (2) fairly well organized
  - (3) well organized
  - (4) very well organized

The zero-order correlation of these two indicators ( $r_{12}$ ) is .63.

*The index of group cohesion* is a measure of the extent to which a group votes as a block and exhibits unity regarding its goals. The index was created by adding the scores on the following two items for each group:

- (1) To what extent would you say that the members of each group vote as a single bloc in municipal, state, and/or national elections?
  - (1) never
  - (2) rarely
  - (3) occasionally
  - (4) frequently
  - (5) almost always
- (2) On the basis of your communications from various group spokesmen, how would you characterize each group in terms of its unity or lack of unity regarding group goals?
  - (1) the group is usually divided regarding basic goals
  - (2) the group is sometimes divided regarding basic goals
  - (3) the group is only occasionally divided regarding basic goals
  - (4) the group is never divided regarding basic goals

The zero-order correlation of these two indicators ( $r_{12}$ ) is .37.

*Group size* was measured by the following survey item:

- (1) About how many citizens in your city would you estimate are active members in the organizations of each type of group?
  - (1) 25 or less
  - (2) 26 to 100
  - (3) 101 to 500
  - (4) 501 to 1000
  - (5) more than 1000

*The level of group activity* was measured by the following survey item:

- (1) About how frequently does each group contact your agency?
- (1) almost never
  - (2) on 1 or 2 occasions a year
  - (3) about once a month
  - (4) about once a week
  - (5) almost every day

*The index of "community-regarding" demands* is intended to measure the extent to which each group is perceived as making essentially private-regarding or community-regarding demands. The index was constructed by adding the scores on the following three items:

- (1) Which of the following statements best describes the nature of the goals of each group?
  - (1) the group seeks goals that would benefit only its members
  - (2) the group seeks goals that would benefit its members and non-members having a similar social condition
  - (3) the group seeks goals that would benefit its members and many other persons in the community
  - (4) the group seeks goals that would primarily benefit persons who are not its members
- (2) Which of the following best describes the extent to which the goals of each group would burden others if implemented?
  - (1) the group seeks goals which would have relatively major costs for most people in the community
  - (2) the group seeks goals which would have relatively major costs for some people in the community
  - (3) the group seeks goals which would have relatively minor costs for most other people in the community
  - (4) the group seeks goals which would have relatively minor costs for some other people in the community
  - (5) the group seeks goals which would have few, if any, costs for others
- (3) In your judgment, which of the following statements best describes the contribution of each group and its leaders to the community?
  - (1) the group puts much less into the community than it gets out of it
  - (2) the group puts somewhat less into the community than it gets out of it
  - (3) the problems which a group brings about are about balanced by its contributions
  - (4) the group puts somewhat more into the community than it gets out of it
  - (5) the group puts much more into the community than it gets out of it

The inter-item zero-order correlations of these indicators are as follows:  $r_{12} = .18$ ;  $r_{13} = .40$ ; and  $r_{23} = .21$ .

*The index of leadership effectiveness* is a measure of the perceived value of the information obtained by the agency from communication with the group leadership, and the general level of competency of group leadership in representing group concerns. The index was constructed by adding informant responses to the following items:

- (1) In your judgment, how well do the spokesmen of the various groups present the group's concerns to your agency?
  - (1) poorly
  - (2) not very well
  - (3) fairly well
  - (4) very well
  - (5) exceptionally well
- (2) How useful are your communications with each group in terms of obtaining information useful for agency decision-making?
  - (1) the group typically provides no new information or suggestions which aid in making decisions
  - (2) the group typically provides little such information or suggestions
  - (3) the group typically provides some such information or suggestions
  - (4) the group typically provides quite a bit of useful information or suggestions
  - (5) the group is typically highly informed or makes excellent suggestions

The zero-order correlation of these two indicators is .41.

*The index of unconventionality of style* is designed to measure unconventionality in a group's philosophical orientation and tactical methods. The index is comprised of the sum of the following survey items:

- (1) In general, how would you classify the philosophy of each type of group?
  - (1) very conservative
  - (2) moderately conservative
  - (3) moderately liberal
  - (4) very liberal
  - (5) radical
- (2) Within the past five years, on how many occasions have some members of each type of group engaged in militant action (e.g., use or threat of violence, boycotts, sitins, and other forms of disruptive behavior) in an effort to achieve group goals?
  - (1) never
  - (2) on 1 or 2 occasions
  - (3) more than twice, but less than 10 times
  - (4) 10 to 25 times
  - (5) more than 25 times

The zero-order correlation of these two indicators is .39.

**VARIABLES USED AS INDICATORS OF  
GROUP DEMOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION**

*Socioeconomic status, racial composition, and ethnicity* are the three demographic factors considered in this study. These three variables were measured for each group by the following three survey items respectively:

- (1) What would you say is the social class to which most members of each group belong?
  - (1) lower class
  - (2) lower-middle (working) class
  - (3) middle class
  - (4) upper-middle class
  - (5) upper class
- (2) About what percentage of each group's membership is composed of black Americans?
  - (1) none
  - (2) less than 5%
  - (3) 6% to 20%
  - (4) 21% to 50%
  - (5) more than 50%
- (3) About what percentage of each group's membership is composed of first or second generation Americans?
  - (1) none
  - (2) less than 5%
  - (3) 6% to 20%
  - (4) 21% to 50%
  - (5) more than 50%