THE THEORY OF THE PARTIAL POLITICAL SYSTEM

by

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Vancouver 8, Canada

Date May 11, 1966
Nonartists always look at the present through the spectacles of the preceding age.


When the Stranger says: "What is the meaning of this city? Do you huddle close together because you love each other?" What will you answer? "We all dwell together To make money from each other" or "This is a community"?

The problem of political systems wholly or in part contained within other political systems has not often been treated in the literature of political science. When the matter has arisen, it is characteristically been handled by a "closed system" and "sub-collectivity" model. That is, the larger polity has often been assumed to be composed of a number of closed collectivities. This model assumes that citizens will know more about, participate more vigorously in, and feel more strongly about, political systems which are physically "closer" to them.

But, in North America, Britain, and France, citizens vote at a much lower level in local elections than in national elections. Survey data from the Vancouver area indicate that secondary school students, at least, know much less about their community political systems than about regional, national, and "supra-national" systems. Fragmentary data from the United States and France tend to support these conclusions.

The local community polity has, however, some interesting infrastructural features. One of these is that its system of political communications is much inadequate to keeping its members informed about the local system; its stimuli are greatly outnumbered by political stimuli transmitted by "extra-systemic" "over-arching" media, and this is undoubtedly one of the major reasons for a low
level of local political cognition. Another feature is that citizens involved in local organizations and structures explicitly of the local system often show a greater interest in local political activity; these structures form the "residuals" or "skeleton" of a shrunken polity. A final feature, suggested by some data and much speculation, is that the local system is a "low-affect" system.

Finally a model is constructed which is believed to be a better representation of the observed reality than the traditional models discussed in an earlier chapter. This model is that of the "partial political system". A partial system is defined as one which does not contain within itself all the political life-experiences of the member units. The several propositions upon which this model is based have a number of ramifications for the structure and process of local politics.

The theory of the partial political system has several implications for other branches of political science: (1) comparative politics; (2) normative democratic theory; (3) international relations theory.
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PART I : THE PROBLEM : SYSTEMS WITHIN SYSTEMS
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Generalization and classification constitute the essentials of the scientific method. For, it is only by observing and ordering, perceiving and generalizing, that Man can derive meaningful beliefs about the confused universe around him.

If these statements are in some sense true, then it would not be entirely amiss to believe that the pursuit of a "universal science of politics", if not in fact chimerical, is fundamentally a problem of comparative politics. Only by comparing one political act with another can we abstract a generalization and make a meaningful statement about the political universe. At the macro-, or systemic, level, we can obtain true generalizations only by comparing one system with another. Political scientists since the time of Aristotle have intuitively realized this, and have used the comparative method.

Yet comparative politics has been slow to develop as a science. Until the nineteen-fifties it was little more than a study of 'foreign governments'. Recently, 'non-western' political systems have had a vogue with students of comparative politics, and broad theories applicable to both western and non-western polities have begun to appear in the literature.\(^1\) The study of the politics of totalitarianism and the Communist states has only just begun to enter these schemas.\(^2\) But, students of comparative politics have not yet been able to construct a set of theoretical statements that apply to all existing political systems, to say nothing of all possible political systems.
Moreover, comparative politics has proceeded from the assumption that polities are in fact differentiated from another so that a member-unit of one system may not be simultaneously a member of another system. It has, in short, assumed a universe of discrete, discontinuous political systems. Polity A is different from, and comparable to, Polity B. Country A is equivalent, in its systemic attributes, to Country B.

Behind all this may lie yet another dogma, unchallenged but assumed, that where there are goal-attainment institutions, practises or customs, there is a complete political system. Country A has goal-attainment institutions; so does Country B; thus, each has a separate and distinct political system. We may well have accepted unquestioningly a kind of crude "institutional determinism" about our choice of the unit of study. But can we legitimately infer the existence of a complete political system on institutional grounds alone?

I believe that this question has seldom before been raised in Political Science because we have failed to adequately study, adequately research, or adequately think about, political systems which have overlapping membership. By this phrase, I mean a situation in which the same actor plays roles in more than one political system. We have instead been transfixed by the notion of a "closed" political system. We have looked at a polity consisting of ABCDEF, and assumed it to be differentiated from a
polity made up of GHIJKL. We have seldom, if ever, contemplated the possible existence of ABCD and CDEF, and, by doing so, we have allowed the "closed" model to take over our observations of political systems. It is my hope that this essay will be a small contribution towards the reopening of this important question.

Alternatives to the "Closed" Model

But if not the "closed" model, then what? Essentially, we may posit the existence of two kinds of overlapping systems, two "overlapping" models. The first is of the type illustrated in the previous paragraph: ABCD vs. CDEF. It is a model which looks for member-units which function in two seemingly "different" political systems. Its chief importance is in the study of international relations, a sub-discipline which leans heavily on the "closed" model, in the form of "billiard-ball", atomistic theories of world politics. Because this overlapping model has been so little studied, we are unable to offer any meaningful generalizations relevant to the study of relations between the United States and the U.S.S.R. on the one hand, and the United States and Canada on the other. I shall turn to this question only in the latter part of the study.

The second type of overlapping systemic set may be described with a "concentric" model: ABC and BC. The question we ask here is: can we offer generalizations that apply to the polity formed of BC and equally to the polity formed of A, B, and C? In what sense, if any, are they comparable? This is the question with which
this study is chiefly concerned.

While this matter has not been systematically explored in the literature of Political Science, it has been examined in the cognate discipline of Sociology. Talcott Parsons, discussing the notion of the "self-subsisting social system", points out

A social system of this type, which meets all the essential functional prerequisites of long term persistence from within its own resources, will be called a society. Any other social system will be called a "partial" social system. It goes almost without saying that it is always of the greatest importance to specify what the system is which is being used as the object for a sociological analysis, whether or not it is a society, and if not, just how this particular partial social system is located in the society of which it is a part.  

Later, he notes that

...an actor may be a member of as many collectivities as he has roles - there is no inherent limitation to that number. With regard to personnel of collectivities it follows that while some may be completely separate with no overlap, others overlap, with some members in common, others not, while still others are related as more or less inclusive collectivities. Thus in this country, residents of a town or city are also residents of a state, and in turn also of the United States; they thus have the role of "citizen" in each of these three levels of governmental organization, that is, are members of all three collectivities. 

Parsons has also explicitly related this matter to the problem of power and politics within societies.

But what, in an operational sense, can we examine in order to study this problem? In the case of the first "overlapping" model, one obvious situation presents itself: that which obtains
between the United States and Canada. The reality of the relations between these two systems is much more than can be represented by a simple closed model of the political system. Although such a study is beyond the elementary scope of this essay, I shall allude to its theoretical importance in a later section.

An example of the second or concentric model is, however, more readily available for close scrutiny. In the developed world, and in North America in particular, the practise of creating several institutional levels of government has provided us with many examples of the concentric model in highly complex form. As Parsons has pointed out, the citizen, because of the practises of federalism and "local autonomy", is simultaneously a citizen of three or more legal polities. He is an actor, then, in several political systems.

The Search for a "Hinge"

In the nineteen-fifties, Robert Redfield took his fellow anthropologists to task for what he believed to be their shallow treatment of many primitive and peasant societies and cultures. In essence, he observed that they often committed the error of believing that peasant communities in, say, India or Yucatan, constituted cultural wholes in the same sense as did the primitive islanders of the Pacific or the legendary Eskimo tribe who, it is said, thought themselves to be the only people in the world until the arrival of white explorers. Redfield, believed that peasant socio-cultural systems could not be understood by themselves; they constituted only "part-societies". There was constant interplay
between the "little traditions" of the village and the "great tradition" of the civilization of which they formed a part.

Redfield stressed the importance of the societal "hinge" - the structural feature which connected the "little community" to the outside world. Sometimes it was the headman, priest or itinerant balladeer. In modernizing societies, it was often the schoolteacher, the man who had been educated in the district town, or an administrator appointed by the central government.

It would not be entirely incorrect to accuse the Political Science fraternity of having equally ignored the importance of the political "hinge". All too often, the national political system is treated with little or no reference to activity at lower levels of government. In the United States, "state and local government" is normally treated as an entirely different sub-discipline from "American government". Vastly more important, however, is the fact that regional and local polities are often examined with little or no reference to the larger society - they are treated as though they could be understood by themselves alone. Proof of this statement may be found by examining any of the contemporary "community power" studies. Even Robert Dahl's brilliant *Who Governs?* is, I think, marred by insufficient attention to boundary exchanges with the larger society. The vital "hinges" are, in short, ignored.

I do not deny that a study of the community alone can, in fact, give us many insights, not only for the operation of that political system, but for the operation of political systems in general. Nor do I deny that students of "community power" forget
about the enveloping society entirely; it could be plausibly argued that these authors assume implicitly the reader's attention to these factors. But what I am saying is that a fairly complete and moderately rigorous understanding of local politics demands more through study of the ways in which that local system is affected in its functioning by the presence of a larger society.

I believe, therefore, that a study of what I have here called the concentric model can have a double payoff. First, it can help us to understand comparative politics a little better by bringing it to our attention that we have not begun to exhaust the possibilities of fruitful comparisons by merely looking at "Western" and "non-Western" polities; there is much to be learned by comparing on a new plane the myriads of political systems under our very noses. More specifically, I believe that a study of the concentric model can greatly assist us to understand more thoroughly the complexities of sub-national politics. The former question, rather than the latter, is my chief theoretical concern, especially as it relates to the study of world politics.

Organization of the Essay, Some Definitions, and An Apologia

The organization of this essay is perhaps a little unorthodox. I have chosen to present the facts, the observed phenomena, and the inadequacy of the traditional models before constructing an explanatory model which I believe to be a better representation of reality. The essay thus takes the form of several rather brief
chapters on some interesting aspects of the concentric model, followed by a "lengthier one on the explanatory model, the "theory of the partial political system" - a term shamelessly borrowed from Talcott Parsons' "partial social system". All of this tends to give the early parts of the work something of a hide-and-seek quality; I present some phenomena, pose some rhetorical questions, and beg the reader to wait until later chapters for a more rigorous explanation. I apologize for this stylistic quirk, but I believe that the general theory can be better developed if the phenomena are presented first, the loose ends tied up later.

A word should be said about the basic framework through which this writer views political life. The object of analysis is thought to be the political system or polity. Following Parsons, I shall define a polity as a goal-attainment subsystem of any social system or collectivity. The basic units of this system are thought to be political roles. Later, I shall find it convenient to differentiate these into roles which derive from behavioural relationships, roles which derive from perceptual relationships, and roles which derive from affective relationships.

I have frequently alluded to my "facts" and "phenomena". I should perhaps be more circumspect in these references. Local politics are, in most respects of interest to this study, very badly documented in any rigorous, quantitative fashion. The electoral statistics presented in Chapter 3, for instance, have had to be labouriously extracted, figure by figure, and year by
year, from municipal archives. What is even more distressing is that survey data on multiple systemic perceptions are almost non-existent. My own very limited data (Chapter 4) represent perhaps the first (and possibly the last) quite of their kind. Their limitations are entirely obvious and I shall not belabour the reader by pointing them out.

In any case, there are few "new" facts presented in this study. Most are, in fact, so commonplace that I confess embarrassment at presenting them in the elaborate fashion I do. What is new, however, is the novel interpretation I have put upon these facts, a theory which I believe to be the best explanation of the observed phenomena of local politics.

Unfortunately, facts often, if not always, contain a large subjective element. Frequently the most important aspect of any analysis is the facts that are not presented, and the subtle subjective lights that are thrown upon those that are given. I freely confess that my chief theoretical notions were well formed long before I began to investigate the question in any rigorous way. I have, however, been forced to modify that theory considerably in the light of inconsistent facts. I have completely abandoned, for instance, one major operational concept during preliminary examination of the survey data. But beyond the faith that the reader must bestow on the intellectual integrity of any researcher, I can offer no further guarantees.
Footnotes to Chapter 1: Introduction


4 Ibid., p. 98.


7 Ibid., pp. 43-44.

8 Robert A. Dahl, Who Governs?, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1961. Dahl is as cautious as he is brilliant: "...it might be said that the political system of New Haven is scarcely autonomous enough to furnish us with adequate explanations of its own stability, for stability may depend much less on the beliefs of citizens locally than on state and national institutions. There is much truth in this objection, but it does not altogether explain why some American towns, cities, and counties have at various times moved a good deal farther from democratic norms than New Haven has." p. 313.

This is the only mention of the "hinge" question that I can find in Who Governs? And, for his purposes, to discover the bases of democratic stability in New Haven, he is probably correct to dismiss the whole matter. However, I believe that much of the political history of New Haven, as presented by Dahl, can be better understood by reference to the changing patterns of relations between the inhabitants of New Haven and the larger society.

9 In so doing, I am assuming a sort of crude equivalence between the Parsonian "polity" (see Parsons, "'Voting and the Equilibrium ...") and the Eastonian "system" (See David Easton, A Systems Analysis of Political Life, New York, Wiley, 1965). On so doing,
CHAPTER 2: SOME TRADITIONAL MODELS OF CONCENTRICALLY-ARRANGED POLITICAL SYSTEMS.

In the last chapter, the problem of systems-within-systems was raised, and it was proposed that the structure of local, regional, and national levels of governments provided a number of examples with which hypotheses about the internal functioning of these systems might be tested. This phenomenon has not, of course, gone unnoticed in either academic or folkloric political science. Let us now examine some of the traditional models by which this problem has been handled.

The "Representative Democracy" Model

One model which closely relates to the present question is that of "representative democracy". The specific points of this theory vary widely, its exact interpretation often depending on the writer and the historical context. However, its basic propositions are reducible to two: (1) that the citizenry should choose from among their natural social groupings (usually territorial) someone who shall "represent" them at "higher" levels of government; (2) that these representatives should meet together, discuss, and come to common political decisions.

What is not often discussed are the assumptions which lie behind this model. Foremost among these is the idea that the whole socio-political system (that is, the "higher" level;) is composed of several more or less solidary collectivities. This assumption comes close to saying that the units of the total socio-
political system are the towns, cities, boroughs, and constituencies which choose representatives. Further, it is thought that the citizenry shall be more competent to select persons at this "level" - having greater familiarity with the candidates' policy stands, personalities, and so on. It is of some importance to recognize that this point further assumes that media systems are essentially local in structure, or, in the age of mass media, that more "personal" forms of political communications are predominant. So much is this the case that John Stuart Mill, probably the definitive pre-modern thinker on democratic government, seldom grapples with the problems that would be raised by not making these implicit assumptions.¹

This model probably attains its maximum validity today in the international system. Few would dispute the fact that, in this arena, the several nation-states choose leaders from among their own number, that the citizenries are probably more competent to make political choices within rather than without their national collectivities, and that national leaders negotiate with other national leaders on behalf of their constituents.*

But within the nation-state itself one indication that this model has not been an entirely satisfactory rendition of reality

*While making this point, I want to stress that this pattern may not always obtain in the modern world. Conditions under which it is not a valid model of the international system will be considered in a later chapter.
is suggested by the ancient controversy over the "instructed" versus the "uninstructed" delegate, (the former being called sometimes simply the "delegate theory of representation".)

This, of course, was the subject of Edmund Burke's celebrated statement to the voters of Bristol, in which he asserted that he was not merely their ambassador to the central government. This controversy, by no means dead in the present era, reflects a basic ambiguity about the nature of the double social system in which the representative operates: which is the "real" society to which he is obligated? Is it local or national in scope? It is probably significant that this question has seldom been raised in connection with the international system. We characteristically assume that the representatives from one nation to another are normally "instructed". The consequences of a national chief executive or international representative announcing to his constituents that he recognized a higher interest than the national one are not difficult to imagine or comprehend.

We know, however, that the assumptions of the "representative model" are seldom, in the developed countries at least, valid ones. In America, Britain, and Canada, to cite some concrete examples, the holders of local representative office are much less visible, even to their own constituents, than are political leaders at the national level. We know that, in the United States, purely Congressional elections elicit much less attention than those in which the Presidency is at stake. And we can feel safe in asserting
that, in most developed countries, the chief determinants of the vote for a single representative are normally framed in national rather than local terms.8

There is, of course, a sense in which the representative model is a normative theory rather than a model of reality. At the same time, it should be remembered that even a normative model must have roots in phenomenal reality. In later chapters we shall investigate the reality of the assumptions that underlie the representative model, considered either as a normative theory or a realistic model of the political world.

Integration, Goal-Attainment, and Bureaucracy

One interesting sidelight on this problem is shed by the historical and comparative study of public bureaucracies. Bert F. Hoselitz, using an explicitly Parsonian framework of functional analysis, has pointed out that public bureaucracies in Western Europe underwent a structural metamorphosis when they shifted from performing an essentially integrative societal function to undertaking a more explicitly goal-attainment role.9 In the earlier period the larger society was grappling with the problem of integrating itself - of dissolving its component collectivities, regional, feudal, and ethnic, and struggling to build a nation-state. Thus, when the integrative function was paramount, corruption, venality, nepotism and similar "non-rational" practises were tolerated because they were congruent with the integrative
function. But when the West European societies overcame their integrative problems, public bureaucracies became occupied with societal goals and changed their internal practises to correspond with Weberian traits of "efficiency" and "rationality". This is certainly the case in America also. And other writers have indicated, in the developing countries in general, and in India in particular, public bureaucracies strive to perform an integrative function. Fred Riggs, while using an entirely different conceptual framework, has argued that these considerations (here labelled "integrative") are an important barrier to realizing values of efficiency and rationality in these countries.

These points suggest that public bureaucracies have at times performed representative roles - in eras when the larger society to which the bureaucracies were, or are, attached, was composed chiefly of a number of exclusive collectivities. When these exclusive collectivities melded into a larger system, the need for particularistic recruitment (i.e. representation) declined, and universalistic norms became paramount. The relatively easy transition from one style of administration to another may well be related to the fact that no elaborate, ideology of representation in public bureaucracies developed to justify and fossilize the particularistic system. But if the need for integration through representation has disappeared in the bureaucratic structure, can we legitimately think that other representative institutions have not been subject to the same broad forces?
"Levels of Government" and Political Folklore

The second model (or perhaps just the first looked at in a slightly different way) might be called the "levels of government hypothesis". This model follows from the practise of dividing powers between levels of government and posits that each citizen will be subject to the appropriate authorities for each function of government. Often embedded in this notion is the idea that "local people should take care of local matters" while higher levels of government should confine themselves to policies of wider significance. Thus, Mill wrote a century ago:

It is but a small portion of the public business of a country that can be well done or safely attempted by the central authorities; and even in our own government, the least centralized in Europe, the legislative portion at least of our governing body busies itself far too much with local affairs.\textsuperscript{16}

This idea has survived to the present day in popular folklore. The following excerpt is taken, not surprisingly, from the writings of Barry Goldwater:

Not only does it [the Constitution] prevent the accumulation of power in a central government that is remote from the people and relatively immune from popular restraints; it also recognizes the principle that essentially local problems are best dealt with by the people most directly concerned.\textsuperscript{17}

But more sophisticated observers have long since recognized that most problems are not local in scope and have reconciled themselves to the fact that local governments will continue to have only a minor share of all governmental powers. These commentators would attribute widespread political indifference to local governments -
a phenomenon which will be one of the central concerns of this study - largely to the relatively small impact of the municipal government on the citizen, it being assumed that political information, interest, and participation "go where the power is". Still, it seems to me a plausible argument that municipal authorities deal with those political problems which, in some physical and immediate sense, relate most intimately to the citizen: water, light, power, parks, and traffic. In the same vein, other observers might attribute political indifference to the nature of local government functions; these, it might be claimed, are inherently dull and trivial. This argument seems to me both tautological and simplistic in its causal interpretation. There is nothing inherently dull or interesting, trivial or important. Rather, it is the meanings which we read into them that are important. Such an explanation does not answer the question - what are the consequences of concentrically-arranged political systems? - but merely begs it.

But surely the most important point about the "representative model" and the "levels of government" hypothesis is that they are highly folkloric. That is, they are elements of political mythology and, as such, are perpetuated by the teachings of the quasi-academic world. Thus, one book on "community development" asserts

Traditionally, it has been assumed in America that a large degree of local autonomy is a prerequisite for strong communities, the basic unit of a democratic society. In practice, we have been growing increasingly centralized. Is the lack of active citizen interest in local government cause or effect?
The strength of this norm is suggested by Belknap and Smuckler's study of a mid-western city in the United States. There, a survey study of popular assessments of which levels of government were considered "important" and "interesting" showed a clustering of responses at the federal and local level, with few mentioning the state level. But, as we shall see, there is a wide gap between belief and behaviour. And, Alfred de Grazia, looking at similar data, has commented:

...only about ten per cent fewer people claim an interest in state and local elections than in national elections, contrary to the general belief that interest in state and local elections is much less than in national elections. How this finding can be reconciled with the great difference between participation in presidential and state level elections is hard to say....This puzzle must be left without any satisfactory theory to explain it.

This gap between belief and behaviour should not surprise us. As Stouffer has indicated, there will be many instances in which the widespread acceptance of cultural truisms bears little relation to actual behaviour. Nor should this fact be a cause of an academic condemnation of the ordinary citizen. For, as Almond and Verba have pointed out, the gap between one political myth (political participation is widespread and desirable) and the adjoining political fact (a low level of participation) may well play an important functional role in democratic stability.

But it is disturbing when professional students of political phenomena begin to accept as fact popular and folkloric models of the political system. That this has not infrequently occurred is
clear from the popularity of learned studies on "community power"; these implicitly assume the validity of the model which lies behind the "representative democracy" and "levels of government" theories. Even Robert Dahl has allowed this myth to permeate his work; defending the generality of his study of politics in New Haven, he observes

> It is, perhaps, not wholly accidental that the two political theorists who did the most to develop a descriptive political science were Aristotle and Machiavelli, who, though separated by eighteen centuries, both witnessed politics on the smaller, more human scale of the city-state.23

Much of what will be said in later chapters will deal with the inadequacies of this model in academic research.

### Some General Propositions

Let us now try to extract some general propositions of the traditional models of "systems-within-systems". Some of these have a political-attitudinal quality. First, the traditional models predict that citizens will feel more attached to those political communities which are physically and geographically closer. Second, it predicts that they will know more about the more localized polity; political cognition is therefore thought to be greater for local political systems.

A third proposition of the traditional models has a structural quality. Building on the first two ideas indicated above, it predicts that local politics will be more "intimate and human", while "higher" levels of government will be "remote" and
"relatively immune from popular control". Clearly, this point takes us into the murky waters of normative theory, areas which will be explored only in the final chapter.

In the chapters that follow, these and other aspects of the traditional models will be systematically examined, using as great a variety of data as is available. In the penultimate chapter I shall offer a fairly elaborate model which I believe to be a more faithful representation of reality.
Footnotes: Chapter 2

1 I do not think it is unfair to ascribe this general position to Mill. See John Stuart Mill, Considerations on Representative Government, New York, Harper, 1867. At times he did consider the closely related questions of educational qualifications, territoriality, and so on. See "Thoughts on Parliamentary Reform", in John Stuart Mill, Essays on Politics and Culture, (Gertrude Himmelfarb, editor), New York, Doubleday, 1962, pp. 327-358. The model, of course, is always implicit.


4 Mayo, loc. cit.; Verney, loc. cit.


6 David Butler and Donald Stokes, The British Voter (Forthcoming).

7 Infra, Chapter 4.


10 Paul Van Riper, History of the U.S. Civil Service, Evanston, Row Peterson, 1958, pp. 43, 48-49. As Carl Fish, the historian of American patronage has pointed out, "If Lincoln had made appointments for merit only, the war might have been shortened; on the other hand, he might not have preserved a united north to carry on the war". Carl R. Fish, The Civil Service and the Patronage, New York, Longman's, 1905, p. 170, cited in Van Riper, op. cit., p. 43.
For a discussion of the notion of "congruency" between administrative styles and administrative goals, see Amitai Etzioni, *Complex Organizations, A Comparative Analysis*, The Free Press, 1961.


This development is one of the major concerns of S.N. Eisenstadt's *Political Systems of Empires*, Glencoe, The Free Press, 1963.


PART II: SOME POLITICAL 'FAULT-LINES'
CHAPTER 3: DIFFERENTIAL LEVELS OF VOTING PARTICIPATION: LOCAL, REGIONAL, NATIONAL

The Functions of Voting

Voting is simultaneously the most and the least understood of contemporary political phenomenon. The enormous literature on voting behaviour\(^1\) has added much to our store of knowledge about the precise motivational content of the voting decisions, the forces that make for vote changes, and the historical consequences of certain patterns of voting behaviour. Much less is known, however, about the \textit{systemic functions} of voting. We do not know if the vote performs a necessary function for the maintenance of the polity over time. We do not know if voting plays this role only for certain types of political systems. (e.g. for those possessing a "participatory" democratic culture.) We do not know if the functional meaning of a vote is generalizable from one system to another.

It might, however, be possible to draw some inferences about the functional role of voting from voting behaviour research and the literature on "political involvement" and "political participation". Most students of voting behaviour have found that the vote is a probabilistic function of the individual's interest in politics, interests in the particular election, feelings of efficacy, political knowledge, understanding of topical issues and other variables generally believed to be related closely to his involvement in the political system.\(^2\) Donald Matthews, in his study of Negro political participation, has found that voting forms
part of a Guttmann scale of political participation. Voting can, therefore, be a crude indicator of the citizen's "involvement" with the political process - especially, or perhaps only, in North America. If this be true, then we might go one step further and infer that different levels of voting on the part of the same groups of people when they participate in elections for different institutional arrangements (i.e. different political systems imply different levels of involvement). If we make this inferential leap, then we may be able to draw some interesting conclusions about the nature of the 'local' political system.

Voting in Four Communities: Local, Regional, National

The results of such a study should surprise no one. Levels of voting participation in four communities in the Vancouver, B.C., metropolitan area, over a thirty year period, have been strikingly and consistently lower for local elections than for provincial and national elections. Much less complete information from Britain and America confirm our expectations that the same pattern would hold true there. There are, however, some interesting deviations from this pattern in more extensive cross-cultural studies; these will be alluded to in the latter part of this chapter.

Historical and analytical rigor suggest that the four cases for which quantitative data are available be examined in some detail. Two communities, for which we have some fragmentary survey data, will be studied with particular care. The cross-election
information is summarized in graphic form.

In the thirty-seven municipal elections from 1928 to 1964, the municipality of Surrey, B.C., has experienced voter turnouts ranging from a low of 11.39 per cent (1942) to a high of 53.2 per cent (1931). The average turnout for this period is just over 30% of the registered eligible voters, and approximately 15% of the total population. With the exception of the three wartime elections (1942, 1943, 1944), there is no strong systematic variation by temporal sub-group. The twenty post-war elections (1945-1964) averaged slightly more than 26% turnout (i.e. approximately 13% of the total population). The earlier seventeen elections (1928-1944) averaged just over 33% of registered eligible voters participating, equivalent to approximately 16.5% of the total population.²

The city of Vancouver held thirty-two regular municipal elections in the period 1933-1964. The average turnout for the whole range of elections was approximately 36% of registered eligible voters. The highest level of civic participation was 54% (1934); the lowest, 21% (1941). In this instance, some comparable elections figures are available for both provincial and national elections. (See Table I)

Table I: Federal, Provincial, and City Elections in Vancouver

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligible Voters, City of Vancouver</th>
<th>1960 provincial election</th>
<th>1960 city election</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voters participating</td>
<td>257,034</td>
<td>243,253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>162,498</td>
<td>86,387</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Between 1942 and 1964, the Municipality of Burnaby, B.C., held twenty-three regular elections for the purpose of choosing a Council and Reeve. During this period the lowest level of voter participation was 12% (1956) while the highest was 46.6% (1946). The mean annual turnout was 27.7%. As in the case of Vancouver, the base figure, number of registered eligible voters, is roughly equivalent to that for provincial and federal elections. Thus comparisons with voter turnout in other elections are viable. Burnaby does not, by itself, constitute a federal constituency and provincial figures only are offered.

Table II: Provincial and Municipal Elections: Burnaby

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Provincial Election</th>
<th>Municipal Election</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Eligible Voters</td>
<td>56,241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number participating</td>
<td>41,669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td></td>
<td>43,208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12,949</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1 summarizes, in the form of a graph, the pattern of turnout in provincial and local elections, relative to number of registered voters for each, and relative to the total population.

The relevant statistics for the City of New Westminster, B.C., are less clear-cut than in the case of some other local communities we have examined. Because of the administrative practise of composing the list of electors from property-owner lists, there is
no base figure against which the relevant local, provincial, and federal levels of voter participation can be compared. There is moreover, no meaningful measure of the total turnout.

On a gross basis, however, it is possible to calculate a crude measure of average turnout over a twenty-three year period (1940-1962). During this time, the mean annual turnout at civic elections was, in absolute terms, 4,382 persons. Over the same period, the average population, as measured by

Table III: Voter Turnout in Provincial and Civic Elections, New Westminster, B.C., 1940-1962.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election</th>
<th>Civic Turnout</th>
<th>Provincial Turnout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>3,140</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>4,194</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>3,911</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>4,158</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>2,598</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>3,470</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>5,360</td>
<td>8,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>2,888</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>5,623</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>3,043</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>6,105</td>
<td>13,068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>4,823</td>
<td>14,795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>3,015</td>
<td>13,731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>6,295</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>3,782</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>4,184</td>
<td>11,592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>5,002</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>7,467</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>3,812</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>6,722</td>
<td>15,874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>3,750</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The city does not keep records of the total number of participating electors. My figures have been derived by following these decision rules: (1) Where a single office was at stake (Mayor, Police Commissioner, or Park Commissioner) or where there was a referendum, the total number of votes cast in that contest was used as the figure for voter participation; (2) Where there was no single office or referendum involved, aldermanic contests were used. The total number of votes for each candidate was calculated. This figure was divided by the number of aldermanic positions at stake. The estimate of voters participating is approximately 120 per cent of that final sum. This second rule was used for the elections of 1951, 1961, and 1962.

The censuses of 1941, 1951, 1956, and 1961, was 28,980. The "average turnout" calculated on this basis was, therefore, 15.1% of the total population. This figure approximates the mean turnout percentage for the total population calculated for Surrey Municipality. Comparatively, the levels of participation in local vs. that in provincial elections are summarized, in the form of a graph, in Figure 2 and Table III.

Similar low levels of voter participation in local elections have been observed in the United States. In his study of non-partisan civic politics in California, Eugene C. Lee has observed that voter participation tends to differ sharply between state and national elections on the one hand, and local elections on the other.

In the typical local election...40 to 50 per cent of the electorate (based on the general-election registration) will vote, as contrasted with a vote of 68-80 per cent in a state election. (p. 136)10

For the six cities he studied intensely, the exact figures are summarized in Table IV.
Table IV: Decline of Voter Turnout from 1954 General Election to 1955 City Election (Based on 1954 General Election Registration)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>% Turnout General Election</th>
<th>City Election</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chico</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresno</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pomona</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maywood</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Leandro</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berkeley</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Lawrence O'Rourke's study of voter participation in the cities of Los Angeles county, he observed a similar phenomenon. The forty-five cities of the county had a turnout of voters for state and national elections that ranged between 68.4% and 86.6%, the average for all cities being 77.2%. Voter participation in municipal election over the same period averaged 41.1%, with a range between 10.3 and 60.9.

Vidich and Bensman's study of a rural village and its surrounding township in upstate New York provide evidence of this same phenomenon in quite a different setting. They observe that between 15 and 35 individuals out of a potential electorate of 350-450 vote in a village election. In the certainty of a small vote, the board customarily contracts to print only 50 ballots. However, the voting in town elections is proportionally much greater in relation to the total potential electorate than is the case in village elections. Out of a town electorate of 1,600-1,700 as many as 500-700 actually vote in a typical election.
And, citing the turnout of 1,464 of 1,613 electors for the Presidential contest of 1952, they note

The apathy of village elections and the relative apathy of town elections, except in very special circumstances, stand in sharp contrast to voting interest in state and national elections.\(^{16}\)

They give no indication of what they believe to the general causes of this situation. They do, however, make some comments specific to the situation which we shall discuss shortly.

In another United States study, Arnold Rose, studying a small city in the eastern United States, observes

According to most of the community leaders, Easterntown's interest in state and national elections is fairly typical, but its interest in local politics, very low.\(^{17}\)

The same leaders, attributed this phenomenon to the fact that "things seem to be running smoothly", that "there is no corruption", and to a structural feature, the non-partisan charter.

Banfield and Wilson examine the average turnout for mayoralty and presidential elections in eighteen large United States cities for the period 1948-52.\(^{18}\) They find that only one of these (New Orleans) had a higher turnout for the mayoralty race (40.5%) than for the Presidential contest (38.5%), this deviation being explained by reference to the peculiar pattern of Presidential politics in the American South. The highest mayoralty turnout was only 51.5 per cent (Chicago) and many cities, especially in the predominantly non-partisan West, had more than twice as many persons casting a Presidential vote as a mayoralty vote.
A. H. Birch's study of Glossop, a town of 20,000 persons in Derbyshire, renders similar comparative data. Birch observes that

In the post-war national elections between 80 and 85 per cent of the electors have voted; in County Council elections in the same period the proportion has been just under 40 per cent; and in municipal election it has varied between 49 and 55 per cent.19

Generalizing, he points out that the figures for local elections are

...slightly above the average for boroughs of comparable size in England, but below the average for the north-west, where participation in local elections is higher than in any other region.20

This information should, once again, surprise no one; but there are exceptions to this general pattern. In one classic example, Laurence Wylie has noted that in the French village of Peyrane voter turnout was higher for local than for national elections.21 One analyst, Lee, attributes this effect to "different cultural conditions".22 But Francois Goguel, looking at turnout figures for the elections cantonales of 1964 observes that widely varying figures obtained for rural and urban areas.

Cette différence d'intérêt pour les élections cantonales entre citadins et ruraux paraît correspondre au fait que, dans les campagnes et les bourgs, le conseiller général est un notable, qu'on connaît personnellement, auquel on s'adresse volontiers, et auprès duquel les maires des petites communes cherchent conseils et appui dans l'exercice de leurs fonctions. Dans les villes, au contraire, le conseiller général est presque un inconnu et les électeurs n'ont pas l'impression que les délibérations de l'assemblée ou il siège puissent avoir des répercussions sensibles sur leurs conditions de vie.23
All of which suggests, of course, that the differences may well be social-structural rather than "cultural" as we normally understand that word.

These gross figures of voter participation leave much to be discovered. We do know that, for national elections, the participating electorate consists in the main of the same citizens, those possessing a minimum of sustained political interest. In local elections, where turnouts are so much smaller, we are unable to say with certainty that any single portion of the electorate consistently participate.24

Similarly, we are unable to say whether any of the conventional population sub-groups (e.g. status, income, educational groups) will predictably vote at differential rates. In Vancouver, there is some evidence to support the claim that higher income districts do in fact vote more heavily than do low income districts. In Burnaby, the only polling district which is homogeneously upper middle class and professional is believed to have a consistently higher rate of voter participation.

However, John Bollens' extensive survey of the St. Louis metropolitan area revealed that the least educated group was just as likely to have voted in local elections, or to have claimed to have voted, as any other educational group, including the highest. In the 1956 Presidential election, however, the most highly educated group was much more likely to have voted than was the least educated group.25 Studies of metropolitan referenda in St. Louis
and Miami indicate no consistent relationship between voter turnout for the referendum and social rank. The evidence, to say the least, is both fragmentary and inconclusive.

Nor do we know very much about the differential voting behaviour of two sub-groups which we might think to be important in this context: property-owners and tenants. Since property-owners can be plausibly believed to be more affected by the activities of municipal governments, it would not be surprising to find that they sustain a higher level of interest in the local polity than do persons renting their residences. In Vancouver, there does appear to be some difference in the turnout rates of districts largely composed of private homes and those made up chiefly of apartment dwellers. However, even if it were true that all participating voters in Vancouver civic elections were property owners (a most unlikely proposition), the mean annual turnout for the period 1946-1964 would still only reach a value of 62.2 per cent - not an impressive figure by itself, and almost certain to be smaller if the true distribution were known. Moreover, Surrey and Burnaby, where tenants are much fewer in number, could still only reach modest levels of participation even if it were true that property-owners constituted a constant and involved electorate. We can, therefore, safely dismiss the owner-tenant dichotomy as being the whole explanatory variable for the phenomenon of voter indifference to local politics.
Some Explanations

A number of other explanations, both systematic and un-systematic, have been offered to account for this phenomenon. One is some version of the "conspiracy theory", represented in this section by the Vidich and Bensman study. These authors imply, at various points that "apathy" to village elections can be attributed to the machinations of the Republican Party Committee (p. 119), the moribund status of the Democratic Party (p. 119), deliberate disfranchisment of part of the electorate through manipulation of the polling times (p. 120), domination of village and township politics by local businessmen (p. 115 and passim), and the inactivity of both village and town councils (p. 156).

Although the conspiracy theory is a favorite theme with "community power" specialists, it can I think be safely dismissed as a rigorous explanation of public indifference to local elections. It is difficult to believe that an oppressed and manipulated citizenry suddenly throws off the shackles of the local elites when state, provincial, or national elections are in progress. It is quite clear that the same population who permit domination of local affairs by businessmen, merchants, and Republicans do not allow themselves to be "delivered" in any meaningful sense to the national party tally. It would certainly be ludicrous to suggest that anything like this occurs in the four Canadian communities we have examined. If any simple causal chain is to be postulated, it would seem rather more reasonable to attribute clique dominance
to public indifference than the other way around.

Akin to this last notion is the "alienation" theme: it is sometimes believed that citizens fail to participate in their local political community because they are "alienated" from it. As is the case with so many intuitive theories, the validity of this hypothesis must inevitably be deeply concerned with the choice of an operational definition for the concept in question. If "alienation" is taken to mean a state of negative affect, the theory becomes most implausible. In Bollens' survey of metropolitan St. Louis (which included many towns and cities in the area) nearly 90 per cent in all socio-economic and residential categories rated their municipal government as 'good' or 'fair' (about evenly divided on both items). In my own study of high school students in Burnaby and New Westminster, almost all of 237 respondents rated "the leaders of Burnaby (New Westminster)" as "good" or "fair" on a four point scale. If, however, "alienation" is defined to mean "disinvolvement", a more neutral term, a different story may emerge. Unfortunately, it raises a host of infinitely complex problems; a full discussion of this matter will, therefore, be deferred to a later chapter.

Converse to the alienation theory is the belief that "people are basically satisfied" with their local governments. Once again, much hinges upon the operational definition adopted. If "satisfaction" is defined as a state of positive affect, one set of theoretical consequences follows; if satisfaction is taken to mean "disinvolvement"
or "indifference", quite a different model must be used. Once again, a thorough examination will be postponed.

It is sometimes thought that lack of partisan conflict is largely responsible for popular indifference to local elections. Yet, both Vancouver and Burnaby have had periods of bitter competition between locally-based partisan groupings; the experience does not seem to have raised voter participation to anything approaching that obtaining at provincial and national levels. Moreover, British municipal Councils are elected on a nationally partisan basis, a feature which, as Birch observes, does little to raise the level of turnout in Glossop and elsewhere.

A more sweeping explanation of the phenomenon examined here is that the electoral units (cities and municipalities) do not constitute "real" socio-political units and that large megalopolitan complexes are the entities around which institutional structures of local government should be built. This is the central belief of those who put their faith in "metropolitan government" schemes. If this were a true belief we might expect that the citizens of these less-than-metropolitan units would rush at the first opportunity to dissolve their local units and create one overarching structure of local government. Such has, it is hardly necessary to say, not been the case. In the United States, where referenda on metropolitan government have been frequently been held, the proposals have not only been often rejected, but have been greeted with an indifference appalling to the advocates of metropolitan schemes.
Figure 1: Voter Turnout in Provincial and Municipal Elections, Burnaby, B.C., 1941-1963.
Figure 2: Voter Turnout in Provincial and Civic Elections, New Westminster, B.C., 1940-1962.
Another school of thought holds that the populace is "really" interested in its local government, but that it simply does not express its interest by voting. This notion, it should be pointed out, denies the assumption that voting has the same meaning in one political system as another. In its reduced version, this theory is not entirely implausible - but it does fly in the face of other relevant information (e.g. low levels of cognition of local political elites, probable absence of affect-laden attitudes about local issues, etc.) which we shall examine in later chapters.

A final explanation is even grander than the "metropolitan community" theory. As Birch expresses it,

...the main reason for the growth of apathy is almost certainly that the local community is not the focus of interest that it was. The greater mobility of the population, the enormous growth of the population, the enormous growth of suburbanization, and the national press and radio have all contributed to this.33

In essence, he argues that the "focus of interest" has gravitated to the national community. The conclusion is not an unusual, nor a particularly insightful one.

But, if the local community is not what "it was", then we are entitled to ask: what is it now? How has this change from one state to a very different one affected the internal functioning of the local political system, and all other polities which resemble it? Are we justified in using the old model of the local community as "it was" when perhaps quite different conditions prevail? It is,
I believe, by asking these more fundamental questions that we can arrive at an answer for the vexing problem of what appears to be considerable indifference to that political system which is alleged to be "closest" to the citizen.
Footnotes: Chapter 3


3 Donald B. Matthews, "Negro Political Participation in the South", paper presented at the meeting of the Western Political Science Association, Victoria, B.C., May 1965.

4 Figures taken from *Minutes of the Surrey Municipal Council*, Office of the Municipal Clerk, Surrey, B.C.

5 Figures taken from "Election Returns", unpublished, unofficial typescript, Office of the City Clerk, Vancouver, B.C.


7 Figures taken from "Municipal Elections", mimeographed, Office of the Municipal Clerk, Burnaby, B.C.


9 Figures taken from *Minutes of the City Council of New Westminster*, Office of the City Clerk, New Westminster, B.C.


12 Lawrence O'Rourke, *Voting Behavior in the Forty-five Cities of Los Angeles County*, University of California, Bureau of Governmental Research, 1953. Cited in *Ibid.*, p. 137. O'Rourke's turnout figures use the spring roll as a base. The spring roll is constructed by eliminating from the general roll all those who failed to vote in the previous fall general election. As Lee points out, his turnout figures would be considerably lower if the fall roll were used as the base.

14 Ibid., pp. 120-121.

15 Ibid., p. 156.

16 Ibid., p. 205.


20 Ibid.


22 Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 137.


24 Officials in Burnaby and Vancouver believe that some districts have consistently higher turnouts than others. Lawrence O'Rourke concludes that "The evidence leads one to believe that there is a small core of citizens in each city who sustain municipal government." Cited in Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 137.


27 Floyd Hunter must be considered the dean of the conspiracy theorists. See his *Community Power*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1953.
It might be relevant to observe that the inability of local elite figures to transfer their "popularity" to provincial and federal arenas is almost legendary in Canada. In 1962-1965, seven municipal councillors have attempted to make this leap in the four communities studied here. Five of these attempts ended in failure.

Bollens, op. cit., p. 434.

It is worth noting, however, that the 1963 Reeveship contest in Burnaby, a closely fought battle between the Non-Partisan Association and the Burnaby Citizens' Association, saw an almost unprecedented turnout of 40.9 per cent.

Birch, op. cit., pp. 113-114.

See Schmandt, op. cit., pp. 52-53; and Sofen, op. cit., p. 77.

CHAPTER 4: DIFFERENTIAL LEVELS OF POLITICAL COGNITION: LOCAL, REGIONAL, NATIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL

Political cognition is clearly an important variable in the study of comparative politics. Almond and Verba use it as a discriminator between non-overlapping nation-state political systems, and some of their most interesting findings relate to the differential levels of political cognition in Germany, Great Britain, Italy, the United States, and Mexico. Could it also be used as a discriminator between the "concentric model" of overlapping polities?

In the last chapter we observed how a comparison of voting participation in four communities near Vancouver, B.C., together with fragmentary data from the United States, Great Britain, and France, pointed to a gap between levels of participation at the local and non-local levels of government. We saw that there was clear evidence of a "fault-line" which separated the citizenry's involvement (as measured by voting participation) with the several political systems of which he is a member. Is there a similar "fault-line" with respect to political information? In this chapter, we shall examine some data taken from a study in two of the suburban communities whose voting participation was examined in Chapter 3, and compare it with data from studies made in the United States and rural India.

Political Cognition in Burnaby and New Westminster

43
Our own data was obtained from questionnaires distributed to 236 secondary school students in Burnaby, B.C., and New Westminster, B.C.. Most of the cognitive data in this chapter (all of that from which the several Indices are constructed) are drawn from the 210 questionnaires that were fully completed. Details of the questionnaire and other items relating to the methodological technique are to be found in the Appendix. For purposes of analysis, the New Westminster and Burnaby data are, in most cases, presented separately.

One of the simplest means by which an individual's level of political information about the various systems in which he participates can be inferred is to ask him to identify or name members of the system elite - public officials at various levels of government. This was the measure used throughout this study, not only because of its simplicity, but also to facilitate comparative analysis with other studies.

Of the chief executives at local, provincial, and national levels, it is fairly clear, in the Burnaby data at least, that the Reeve is somewhat less well-known than either the Premier of British Columbia or the Prime Minister of Canada. He is, in fact, less-known in this group than three foreign figures: the late John Kennedy, President Johnson, and President DeGaulle. Of 113 students responding (Burnaby data) to a question asking them to identify the persons occupying several offices, all correctly
identified Lyndon Johnson as President of the United States, 110 correctly identified the Prime Minister as Lester Pearson, and 109 W.A.C. Bennett as Premier of British Columbia. A "break" occurs, however, in the case of the Reeve, the chief executive of Burnaby municipality: only 94 could correctly name the holder of this office.

Some readers may find my use of "only 94" as an exaggerated reading of a small difference. However, as Table V indicates, when figures of "knowing the Prime Minister" and "knowing the Reeve" are plotted against one another in a simple table, and a chi-square test of significance applied the difference is found to be statistically significant well beyond the .001 level. Thus, there is only a very small chance that this difference could have occurred from chance sampling fluctuations. It is, then, a "real" difference, in a statistical sense. It remains to be seen whether it is a sociologically significant difference.

Table V: Knowledge of the Reeve vs Knowledge of the Prime Minister

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Knows</th>
<th>Does not Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prime Minister</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reeve</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

chi-square = 12.88  
\( p \) .001

The data allow, however, the use of slightly more refined indices of political information discriminable by system. Each respondent was asked to identify, by public position, a fairly long list of political figures, including members of the local, provincial,
national, and international elites. On the basis of these data, each respondent was then assigned a score on four indices tapping knowledge at each of these levels. Details about the items contained in each index, and justification for including persons in them can be found in the Appendix.

Because each index contains different numbers of items, there is an astonishing variety of ways in which these data can be presented. In the "raw", or unweighted form, however, the differences between obtained scores on each index are most striking. (Table VI and VII) In Tables VI and VII, a "Low" score on all indices means identifying no items correctly, "Medium-Low" on all indices means identifying one item correctly; "Medium-High" on all indices means identifying two items correctly; "High", however, means identifying three items correctly on the local and provincial indices, but two or three additional items on the national and international indices.

Table VI: International, National, Provincial, and Local Indices of knowledge of System Elites (New Westminster data only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>International</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Provincial</th>
<th>Local</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium-High</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium-Low</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>46.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total N=118</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table VII: International, National, Provincial, and Local Indices of knowledge of System Elites (Burnaby data only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>International</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Provincial</th>
<th>Local</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>89.1</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium-High</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium-Low</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>76.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total N=92 100% 100% 100% 100%

Note: In this table, for the New Westminster data, Low means no figures correctly named in all four indices; Medium-Low means one item correct for all four indices; Medium-High means two items correct on all four indices; High means three items correct on the Local and Provincial index; High means three, four or five items correct on the national index; high means three or four items correct on the international index. For the Burnaby data, Low means no items correctly named on all four indices; Medium-Low means one item correctly named on all four indices; Medium-High means two items correct on all four indices; High means three items correctly named on the local and provincial indices; high means three, four, or five items correct on the international index; high means three, four, five, or six items correct on the national index.

The data may, however, be manipulated so that each respondent must name more items on the national and international indices than he must name on the provincial and local indices in order to be considered in the same category. Thus, those knowing no items on the local index are still considered as scoring low, but those scoring none or one correct on the national and international indices are also scored as "low". In this way, we can make it "more difficult" for the respondent to obtain a high score on the national and international indices, "less difficult" to get a high score on the local index. These adjusted or "weighted" scores are compared in Tables VIII and IX.
Table VIII: Weighted International, National, Provincial and Local indices of knowledge of system elites. (New Westminster only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>International</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Provincial</th>
<th>Local</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>66.9%</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium-High</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
<td>53.3%</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium-Low</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total N=118</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table IX: Weighted International, National, Provincial and Local indices of knowledge of system elites. (Burnaby only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>International</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Provincial</th>
<th>Local</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>43.4%</td>
<td>39.1%</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium-High</td>
<td>36.9%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>36.9%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium-Low</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
<td>76.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>.9%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total N=92</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: In the weighted international and national indices, more items are required to be answered correctly for a respondent to be placed in the same score category as on the provincial and local indices. Details about the weighting are to be found in the Appendix.

These indices are, at best, crude measures of differential political cognition. The variability in scores between testings is one weakness, although this effect partially results from the use of different items in the two test cases. Thus, the use of five items on the Burnaby international index (as opposed to four in the New Westminster case) clearly has the effect of discriminating more finely between knowledge categories (see column 1, row 1 in both tables).

Furthermore, the manipulability of data of this type does tend
to detract from its general validity. However, I believe that its presentation here in this form does no harm whatsoever to the sense of the data. Moreover, no amount of manipulation can possibly disguise the essential message of these pieces of information: respondents in both test groups quite clearly know considerably more about elite personnages in political situations far removed from themselves than they do about persons in roles ostensibly "closer" to them. Geography seems completely irrelevant. In fact, if anything, a reverse geographical effect seems in evidence: the closer the elite figures are, the less is known about them.

It may be, of course, that the effects observed here are some simple construct of the test: in building the local index, I may have quite accidentally selected the three least-known local political figures. This is, in the main, implausible since this index consisted of (in the Burnaby case) Reeve Emmott, another municipal councillor widely believed to be one of the most prominent leaders of the Burnaby Citizens' Association (the dominant "party") and another councillor who had sought the reeveship in 1963 as the candidate of the powerful Burnaby Non-Partisan Association and who was again seeking that position in municipal elections to take place one week after the study was completed.

However, when another index of local political knowledge is substituted for the initial one, little changes. The figures in column 4, Table X, are derived from the responses to the item:
"Name some members of the Burnaby Municipal Council".* Table X is identical in every other way with Table IX.

Table X: International, National, and Provincial indices of knowledge of system elites compared with a new index of local knowledge: "Name the Members of the Burnaby municipal Council". (Burnaby data only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>International</th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Provincial</th>
<th>Local</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>43.4%</td>
<td>39.1%</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium-High</td>
<td>36.9%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>36.9%</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium-Low</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
<td>61.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>.9%</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total N=92</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Low means "named none"; Medium-Low means "named one"; Medium-High means "named two"; High means "named three or more". (Local index only)

Thus, the use of this "open-ended" local index does permit many respondents to move into a higher category, but does not change the essential pattern of the data. Such is, however, not the case when the same index of local knowledge is used for the New Westminster data (i.e. the responses to "Name the members of the New Westminster City Council"). There, the modal category for local scores becomes "Medium-High". This alteration reflects, I think, both the greater cohesiveness of New Westminster as a political unit and the generally higher level of political cognition at the local level. But it also reflects the fact that two members of the City Council are on the teaching staff of the secondary

* This index gives more freedom to respondents to "find their own level" of knowledge.
school in which the testing was conducted (the effects of this point will be examined in a later chapter). It becomes very difficult, therefore, to factor out the contaminating effects of this presence.

This information may also be organized in another way, in order to extract still more meaning. If the indices are plotted on a graph, as in Figure 3, some interesting effects can be observed. It will be noted that the local index has a much sharper slope than the others. The International Index remains at a high level for the three best-known figures (John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, Charles DeGaulle), then plunges slightly for the remaining figures. Similar, but steeper curves are obtained for the National and Provincial Indices.

The graph is a cumulative distribution of scores. In the case of the International Index, it means that all 92 respondents scored 3 or better; 74 scored 4 or better, eighteen being "lost"; 40 scored 5 or better. For the Local Index, it means that 80 respondents scored 1 or better; only 10 scored 2 or better, seventy being "lost" along the way. The extension from the last (most right-hand) non-zero point to the zero point is a mythical extension (i.e. the number of items in each index is indicated by the last non-zero point crossed by each line).

In large measure, this effect reflects the much greater visibility of the chief executive at all levels and corroborates what both Greenstein\(^2\) and Easton and Hess\(^3\) have noted: that the
Figure 3: Cumulative Distribution of Scores on Four Cognition Indices (Burnaby data)
role of the chief executive, at all levels, is learned more quickly and sooner than those of his "helpers". The present data suggest, however, that this effect may occur in more exaggerated form in the local political system than in other polities.

Other Studies

These data appear, however, to be in conflict with Fred I. Greenstein's remarkable study on the socialization of children in New Haven. In that study very nearly 100% of children in grades four through eight, at all socio-economic levels, knew both the President and the Mayor, while considerably fewer (on the order of our differences between the Prime Minister and the Premier on the one hand, and the Reeve on the other) knew the name of the Governor. He concludes that "Children clearly are first aware of federal and local government." On the basis of this data, he tentatively concludes

...it is possible not only that children learn first of executives and of federal and local government because adults takes these institutions seriously, but also that adults are attentive to these institutions, in part, because these were the first about which they learned.

I am, however, somewhat inclined to doubt the universal applicability of Greenstein's findings on the visibility of local government. First, I think it is quite clear from Robert Dahl's study of New Haven Mayor Lee's first three terms of office that he was no ordinary local official. Second, there is some information
in the Greenstein study which is more like the present data in its general implications (Table XI). It is clear that, in New Haven, the roles of the Congress and the State Legislature are substantially better understood than is the role of the Board of Aldermen. Finally, Greenstein reports that "In East Haven, a neighbouring community, pre-test findings were that only 40 per cent of the fifth graders (in contrast to over 95 per cent of New Haven fifth graders) knew the city executive's name." Referring to the Hess and Easton studies of political socialization, he also notes that "Chicago children, unlike New Haven children, knew little about city officials". I have, however, been unable to find supportive information for this point in any of the published reports on the Hess-Easton research.

Table XI:

Children's "reasonably accurate" knowledge of the Congress, the State Legislature, and the Board of Aldermen (New Haven, Connecticut): Upper Socio-economic status only (lower SES differs in no important way).  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Legislature</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bd. of Aldermen</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: % entry in each cell mean "% having a 'reasonably accurate' knowledge of that body."

It could, be plausibly argued that adolescents (my study) and pre-adolescents (Greenstein's and Easton and Hess's research) are not the most suitable subjects for assessing the cognitive importance of various levels of government. This argument would discount
Greenstein's suggestion of the importance of "early learning" and stress interest in local politics as a function of growing older, "settling down", buying a home, etc. However, the sociologist Scott Greer, studying four urban areas in Los Angeles discovered that only 37% of their adult respondents could name one or more Los Angeles civic leaders. In a later study, Greer found that in a sample of adults in suburban St. Louis only 48% could name even one municipal official.

Finally, it is worth noting that there is one fragmentary morsel of cross-cultural information that would seem to support the relation obtained in the Vancouver study between the International and National Indices. Administering a test of political information to young people in France, Lapierre and Noizet report that their respondents appear to have more knowledge about broad international problems than about the purely domestic politics of France. Arguing against the dépoltisation thesis, they conclude:

N'est-ce pas le signe d'un déplacement dans l'intérêt pour la politique plutôt que de son affaiblissement? ... Il semble que le cadre d'attention s'élargisse. que les centres d'intérêt se déplacent: les questions strictement nationales sont moins familières et plus mal connues que les questions d'importance continentale ou mondiale.

A Guttman Scale?

Let us now return to the Burnaby-New Westminster data. It would be of some interest and significance if these cognitive data could be found to possess the attributes of a Guttman scale.
Unfortunately, the way in which the data have been collected and stored means that they do not lend themselves to a strict application of Guttmann scaling techniques.

It is possible, however, to remark that much of this data has Guttmann-type qualities. Thus, in the Burnaby data, there were nineteen respondents who could not name the Reeve; but all nineteen could name the Prime Minister and the Premier, as well as President Johnson. In short, if these items were arranged in a Guttmann order, it is found that the 110 knowing the Prime Minister are completely contained within the set of 113 knowing the President; the 109 knowing the Premier are completely contained within the set knowing the Prime Minister; the 94 knowing the Reeve are completely contained within the set knowing the Premier. In this way, if we know that a respondent correctly named the Reeve, we also know that he correctly named the Premier, the Prime Minister, and the President. Of course, the very small differences between the first three items, and even the fourth, suggest the possibility that this effect is in some sense an artifact of the study.

However, the four index scores, more complex measures with finer grades of distinction, also possess these Guttmann qualities to a limited degree. From Table XII it will be observed that in the New Westminster data (the Burnaby data have too few cases in the High Local category to be meaningful), a high score on the local index is invariably predictive of a high score on the International Index. Fully 90% of the cases ranking high on the local
index, attain the very highest rank on the International Index, while only 65% of the total group reach this score on the International Index.

Table XII: The Local Index as a Predictor of Scores on the International Index (New Westminster data only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of items correctly named on International</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The converse, however, does not hold true. That is, a high score on the International Index is not at all predictive of either a high or a low score on the Local Index. This is suggested by the manner in which the per cent entries in the bottom two rows, except for those in the last column, are very close numerically to the entries in the totals column. Thus, a high scorer on the International Index may end up at any position on the Local Index, while high scorers on the local Index tend to also be high scorers on the International Index. The relationships between the other indices do not attain anything like this degree of "clarity".

Part of the difficulty with these data results, I think, from the way the indices combine knowledge of chief-executive figures and their "helpers" (Greenstein's term) which, if Greenstein's observations about the cognitive differentials between these two
types is correct, should in fact confound the results. Since, as we have observed, it may be that knowledge of the chief executive's "helpers" falls off at different rates for different polities in which the individual participates, the issue is further complicated.

I have the impression, therefore, that these two sets of public figures - chief executives and their "helpers" - may fall into different, but related, cognitive scales. That is, I believe that much of the present ambiguity may come from the squeezing of two Guttmann scales on to one artificial construct. Imagine two linear scales, one for chief executives, one for their "helpers".

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale A</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(chief executives)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale B</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(&quot;helpers&quot;)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If we assume that these scales have more or less the same intervals, we may read it something like this: knowledge of international "chief executives" (Scale A, point 1) precedes both national "chief executives" (Scale A, point 2) and international "helpers"; (Scale B, point 1) local "chief executives" (Scale A, point 4) follow both provincial "chief executives" (Scale A, point 3) and provincial "helpers" (Scale B, point 3). I caution the reader that this is highly impressionalistic and very speculative (although I doubt that any caveat is really necessary; the defects are obvious). Nevertheless, I am altogether certain that an arrangement of this type does no harm at all to the sense of the data.

Some data which partially fit this model may come from the responses to the open-ended question, "Name some people you know or
may have heard about who are involved in politics or government."

In a sample of twenty of the 210 fully completed questionnaires, it was found that thirty-six figures were mentioned a total of 162 times. Ten figures account for 114 of these mentions: Prime Minister Pearson (19), Opposition Leader Diefenbaker (18), Premier Bennett, (17), New Democratic Leader Douglas (16), the local MP (10), the Mayor/Reeve (9), President Johnson (8), B.C. Highways Minister Gaglardi (7), Creditiste Leader Caouette (5), Senator R. Kennedy (5). The dominant impression that emerges is that, over the whole sample, there is a tendency to mention the chief executive at one level, then, on the other dimension, his "helpers", then the chief executive at the next level, then his "helpers", and so on. The chief deviation from the expected pattern occurs in the lack of international responses to this question. This effect, largely inconsistent with the other cognitive measure used, may result from the particular associative net related to the stimulus "politics and government".

Among the ranks of the "helpers" should be included the representatives of the local area in the Parliament and Provincial legislature. The relative invisibility of representatives has long been observed in the United States. Some recent data suggests, not surprisingly, that the same effect occurs in Great Britain. Thus, in the study of Burnaby and New Westminster students, only 57% of the latter, and 58% of the former could name their Member of Parliament (many less than could name any chief executive,
suggesting that the M.P. lies, on the B scale, to the right of point 4 on the A scale. Approximately the same number in both samples, incidentally, could name the provincial Attorney-General or the U.S. Vice-President). However, only a handful of one sample (Burnaby), and less than a third of the other (New Westminster) could identify their member of the provincial legislature. Thus, the greater visibility we have noted here for national rather than provincial elite figures may be generally applicable to the local representatives for each of the systems. It should be remembered, on the other hand, that both studies were made only a few weeks after a federal election.

Some Explanations

Why should all this be so? Why should citizens have significantly less knowledge about the political system which is ostensibly "closer" to them, than about more "distant" systems? One facile answer would, of course, be simply to pin the whole blame on the "mass media", and this point shall be taken up in a later chapter. I have the impression, however, that other variables may well be at work.

It is fairly clear, for instance, that local leaders are, across both samples, thought to be considerably less important than other political figures. Thus, in Tables XIII and XIV, we may observe that, for the Prime Minister, Premier, and Reeve/Mayor, there is substantial agreement on a hierarchy which places them in
that order. In both tables, incidentally, the only clear deviation from this pattern occurs in the dyad Prime Minister-President of the U.S., strong testimony to the persistence of the nation-state frame of reference. In both studies, more than half of the respondents gave indication of using a consistent Prime Minister-Premier-Mayor/Reeve hierarchy.

If this general agreement on the place of local government is related to low scoring on the Local Index (and there is no evidence that it is, other than the appearance of the two effects within the same two studies), the problem might be analyzable in terms of the theory of cognitive dissonance.\textsuperscript{17} "I know little about this thing, therefore it must not be important." Alternatively, it could be that the citizens reasons: "This is not very important, therefore, I will not learn much about it."

Table XIII: "Importance" rankings of the U.S. President, the Prime Minister, the Premier, and the Reeve (Burnaby)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>President</th>
<th>Prime Minister</th>
<th>Premier</th>
<th>Reeve</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President more important than</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prime Minister &quot; &quot; &quot;</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premier &quot; &quot; &quot;</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reeve &quot; &quot; &quot;</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ambiguous dyads ("About equal" or "Don't know")

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>President-Prime Minister</th>
<th>Prime Minister-Premier</th>
<th>Premier-Reeve</th>
<th>President-Premier</th>
<th>President-Reeve</th>
<th>Prime Minister-Reeve</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table XIV: "Importance" rankings of the U.S. President, the Prime Minister, Premier, and Mayor (New Westminster)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>President</th>
<th>Prime Minister</th>
<th>Premier</th>
<th>Mayor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President more important than</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prime Minister</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premier</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayor</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ambiguous dyads ('About equal' or 'Don't know')

- President-Prime Minister: 51
- Prime Minister-Premier: 26
- Premier-Mayor: 17
- Prime Minister-Mayor: 13
- President-Premier: 12
- President-Mayor: 10

Method: Each respondent was asked to rank each public office against the other in a series of six paired comparisons. Each comparison also offered the option "about equal" and "don't know".

It may also be that the motivation for learning about political systems differs from system to system. I have the impression that "politics" in our culture has a strong emotive or affective content to it, and that this quality acts as one incentive for the citizen to learn about politics. Such a formation would be consistent with psychological learning theories about the role of emotion in learning.

There is some evidence in the present data that these respondents view municipal politics in a different light than they see politics in other arenas. Thus, when provided with four items, three relating to municipal, provincial, and national government, and a fourth relating to United States government, and asked to strike out the "one that does not belong with the others", about two-thirds, quite naturally, chose the obvious alternative
and struck out the American item. However, nearly all the remaining respondents opted to strike out the municipal government item. This, I think, is fairly clear evidence that these respondents were cognizant of "something different" about local politics. These results are summarized in Table XV.

Table XV: "Something different" about local government.
(Combined Burnaby and New Westminster data)

A. Which one does not belong?
   No response 3%
   Reeve/Mayor 29%
   U.S.President 66%
   Premier 1.5%
   Prime Minister .5%

B. Which one does not belong?
   No response 4%
   City/Municipal Councillor 31%
   U.S.Senator 62%
   MLA 1%
   MP 2%

   N = 236

The large number of respondents who see "something different" about local government may, however, simply be thinking that these local symbols are "close" to them, while the others are more "distant". Or more correctly, they may be respondent to the norm or myth that it is so, since their responses to the cognitive questions appear to reveal that they think otherwise.

One suggestive bit of information concerns these groups' response to the open-ended question, "Name some people you know or may have heard about who are involved in politics or government."
These responses are summarized in Table XVI.

Table XVI: **Open-ended naming of political figures**  
(Combined data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Named 4 or less but no local leader</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Named 5 or more but no local leader</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Named one local leader</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Named more than one local leader</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Named no local leader but mentioned MP or MLA</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong> = 236</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question: Name some people you know or have heard about who are involved in politics or government.

We can see, then, that 41% of the total respondent group did name one or more local government leader. Yet, nearly as many mentioned no local figure, and the model response category consists of those who named more than five, but no local personnage. This suggests to me the possible presence of a feeling that local politics to these people is not "really politics", caused perhaps by a non-affective tone to this class of political activity. Such an hypothesis would certainly be consistent with the widespread faith, not only in Canada but in the United States as well, in "non-partisan" local government, and the slogan "There's no Republican or Democratic way to collect garbage." Finally, it is worth noting that there was not one single case in these data of naming only local figures. In other words, every respondent consistently mentioned world, national, or provincial figures, but only a minority of those mentioned local leaders.
These last data, regardless of what they say about the subjective interpretations of politics in a systemic framework, remind us once again of the Guttmann-type qualities of all this information on political cognition. This point may have considerable significance.

"Localism" and Political Cognition

More than twenty years ago Robert K. Merton introduced the "local-cosmopolitan dimension" into the study of community politics. Observing influence patterns in a medium-size town, he observed that local leaders could be usefully classified into those who were "local" in their orientations, and those who were more "cosmopolitan". Williams Dobriner, using an attitudinal scale to tap this attribute, has found that "localism" - conceived in attitudinal terms - may be related to length of residence and ethnic grouping. Dye has discovered that attitudinal localism was, for sixteen communities he studied in the Philadelphia area, related to attitudes on metropolitan government. One difficulty with measuring localism in strictly attitudinal terms, however, is that, instead of tapping localism, the scale may be touching adherence to "dead norms" or "cultural truisms". No behavioral inference is possible.

In this study, a question asking respondents to select their preferred place of residence when they finish their education was used as a measure of localism. About 75 per cent indicate they intend to leave their home community. But 83 per cent of those scoring
low on local political knowledge, and only 65 per cent of those scoring high on local political knowledge have such an intention. There is also a very crude tendency for persons high on the index of local political knowledge to have been born in the locality, and to have lived there for some time. Thus, if localism is defined in these terms, it may be thought to have an impact on local political knowledge.

But these data should be interpreted cautiously. They are clearly not evidence for believing that two rigid types exist: "locals" with a knowledge only of local affairs, and "cosmopolitans" with a knowledge only of non-local affairs. They only suggest that length of residence and preferred place of future residence may bring about a gradual accretion of local political knowledge. And the Guttmann qualities of the whole array of cognitive data remind us that there is a strong counter-tendency for local political knowledge to be simply a function of greater overall political knowledge. It would, then, not be amiss to think that interest in local politics (as measured by the cognitive data) to be a joint function of greater political interest and "localism" variables, with rather more emphasis on the first than the second.

Geography and Cognition: the Indian Case

Earlier we remarked on the peculiar manner in which political information in the Vancouver area data remained independent of,
or even reversed, the influence of geography; mere proximity was no guarantee of a high level of cognition. In stark comparison to this stands a study of political information made in rural India in the early nineteen fifties. These data, summarized in Table XVII clearly indicate quite the reverse of the North American case: geographical distance is a central determinant of the level of knowledge. Further more, the more distant a village is from the urban centre, the less likely it is to have knowledge about provincial and national leaders, and facts about the international scene. Although the researchers do not explicitly examine the problem of local political information, it is clear from the text of their report that, expectedly, nearly all respondents were fully cognizant of local leaders, problems, etc.

Table XVII: Political Communication in Rural India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village and Distance in Miles from Poona City</th>
<th>A(0)</th>
<th>B(11)</th>
<th>C(24)</th>
<th>D(26)</th>
<th>E(20)</th>
<th>F(80)</th>
<th>G(72)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. leaders known</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-provincial</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-national</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Division of world into two camps</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. know world leaders</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>b*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. heard of America</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a = many people in the village knowing the item
b = some people in the village knowing the item

* In the text, Damle discloses that this entry derives from one person who had heard of Churchill, Pakistani Prime Minister Mohammed Ali, and "Isenhover".
This pattern has been more or less confirmed by other research; it is a characteristic pattern of political information in rural areas of developing countries - although probably the effect of geographic distance is exaggerated in the Indian case because of the inadequate state of mass media development in India at the time. This phenomenon is, of course, one of the chief burdens of Daniel Lerner's landmark work, *The Passing of Traditional Society*.27

**Summary**

In this chapter, we have examined the comparative patterns of political cognition which obtain for overlapping political systems in the "concentric model". We have observed, from both data collected especially for this study and data collected by other researchers that, in the developed world, a low level of cognition of the local polity is characteristic. This attribute may well relate to low levels of voting participation observed in the first chapter. We have also noted that, in these countries, information about the local polity is normally much less than for other polities in which the individual participates. Finally, we have seen that the reverse pattern appears to hold true in less-developed regions of the world. At this point, we may well begin to wonder if the same model can be used to explain local politics under both conditions. This question will be systematically examined in a later chapter.
Footnotes: Chapter 4


5 Ibid., p. 60.

6 Ibid., p. 81.

7 Ibid., p. 63.

8 Ibid., p. 62.

9 Adapted from Ibid., p. 58.

10 Ibid., pp. 75-84.


13 Jean-William Lapierre and Georges Noizet, "L'Information Politique des Jeunes Français en 1962", *Revue Française de Science Politique*, 14 (1964), pp. 480-504. Unfortunately, their methodology leaves something to be desired for purposes of theoretical inference. Additionally we have no comparative data, and are not likely to get any, on more "nationalistic" eras.

14 Ibid., p. 503.

15 Supra.


22 E.g. "I have greater respect for a man who is well established in his community than a man who is widely known in his field but who has no local roots." Taken from Dye, *op. cit.*

23 The classic case of the gap between adherence to cultural truisms and behavioral situations is, of course, Samuel Stouffer, *Communism, Conformity and Civil Liberties*, New York, Doubleday, 1955.


25 I do not wish to distort the central message of Mr. Damle's research. He contends that "...it is not merely the distance from or nearness to the city that facilitates communication of ideas and knowledge. The social structure also determines the qualitative and quantitative content of the communications that are assimilated." (p. 267) Other studies have also pointed to the importance of social structure in the diffusion of information. See T.L. Blair, "Social Structure and Information Exposure in Brazil", *Rural Sociology*, 25 (1960), pp. 65-76. However, these writers are merely trying to undermine the simple-minded notion that distance determines all, i.e. that geography is surely important, but not the only factor. For our purposes, knowing only that it has a significant impact in these countries is interesting, since it appears to have very little in the North American setting.

26 Adapted from Damle, *op. cit.*, p. 265.

PART III : SOME INFRASTRUCTURAL FEATURES OF THE POLITICAL SYSTEM
In one sense, communications may be thought to be the central process of all socio-political life. This is true of the social animals, no less than man. Thus, Talcott Parsons is moved to say, "It may be presumed that disruption of the communication system of a society is ultimately just as dangerous as disruption of its system of order..."

Within political systems it might be said that communications perform many useful functions, regardless of the size of the system or medium of communication. They may be the means by which the system decides (1) who will play what political roles; (2) what goals are to be pursued, and how they are to be attained; (3) its boundaries.

More specifically, we might suggest that the media of communication will (1) tell people who make up the political elite; (2) tell the political elite what it must do to maintain its position; (3) announce and legitimize goals; (4) mobilize resources for the implementation of goals; (5) transmit integrative symbols (i.e. provide more or less regular reinforcements reminding the members that a system exists).

Political Communications Media: Definitions and Hypothesis

As Marshall McLuhan has pointed out, all media are "extensions of man". It may be useful, however, to divide these extensions into two basic forms: (1) the "personal medium", by which we mean that communication which takes place between individuals in the physical
presence of one another - the spoken word, the gesture; and (2) the "non-personal media", by which we mean any "extension", or medium of communication which does not require the contiguous physical presence of the communicators, - drums, semaphore, telegraph, print, and television. Almost without exception, man is the only social animal which has made use of the "non-personal" media. And it is modern man who has developed the non-personal media into instruments by which colossal aggregates of humans can simultaneously communicate with one another. This last development has occurred as a result of the invention of the "mass media".

Among political scientists, Karl Deutsch and his students have been foremost in the study of communications and politics. Deutsch's brilliant *Nationalism and Social Communication* is a treatise in the relationship between changing social structure and changing patterns of communications. Working in the international field, Deutsch and his followers have studied the role of communications (in a cybernetic systemic framework) in the study of political integration between nations. It is a peculiarity of the Deutschian theory of communications (or, as they are more commonly known, "transactions") that it has a strong sociometric quality: it measures communications in both the personal medium and the non-personal media: tourist and student exchanges, letters, telephone calls, telegraph messages, and the like. In so doing, it consistently but implicitly de-emphasizes the role of that class of non-personal media said to constitute "mass media". Thus, Bruce Russett's study of Britain and America in the
twentieth century, one of the chief operationalizations of the Deutschian theory, analyzes tourist and student exchanges, letters, telephone calls, family ties, trade and investment patterns and so on. But he devotes only a few pages to mass media, noting condescendingly that "Communication between two nations is not confined to messages sent directly from one person to another". Thus, it seems to me that Deutschian theory, while attaining considerable sophistication in its abstract form, has failed, in operational action, to adequately interpret the role of the mass media.

There is a sense, moreover, in which these two (or three) types of communication can be considered under the same conceptual heading. As a theoretical notion encompassing both, I would propose the following dictum: that persons who are consumers of the same mass medium are in communication with each other. Wilbur Schramm, had, I think, a notion much like this in mind when he wrote about the death of President Kennedy. Americans, he says

...were weeping secretly and openly, over the sights of the national tragedy. They were participating as much as they could in memorial events. They were going to a funeral. And they were doing these things together! The enormous, unequalled focus of attention that occurred around the television sets of America ...deserves more thought than it has been given. How many...actually felt they were sitting in a congregation of 150 million Americans we do not know. Many...apparently had a sense of participating in a national act.

At first glance, such a formulation might seem to be a "return" to the early view of mass communications (and mass society)
associated with the Chicago group of sociologists. Thus two more recent students of mass communications write about the early theorists of mass society:

Their image, first of all, was of an atomistic mass of millions of readers, listeners, and movie-goers prepared to receive the message; and secondly, they pictured every message as a direct and powerful stimulus to action which would elicit immediate response. In short, the media of communication were looked upon as a new kind of unifying force - a simple kind of nervous system - reaching out to every eye and ear, in a society characterized by an amorphous social organization and a paucity of interpersonal relations.

It was, in fact, in reaction to such models and to new empirical research rising from the voting studies of the nineteen forties that the concept of the "two-step flow" of mass communication was formulated. In brief, this theory suggests that "ideas often flow from radio and print to the opinion leaders and from them to the less active sections of the population."

Two comments are in order. First of all, it must be kept in mind that the "two-step" flow theory was derived prior to the age of television before all the various media were forced to adjust to the impact of this powerful social force. But, in any case, the essential point about the "two step theory" is that it is a "two step theory". Clearly it refutes only the simple minded notion that messages flow directly from "media to mass", and merely specifies the mechanics of how that flow occurs. It does indeed put back into our theories about mass communication some feeling about the mediating importance of personal networks. But it does not do the opposite,
i.e., take the mass media out of the picture. Thus, I think there is no major theoretical barrier to retaining the distinction suggested above between "personal" and "non-personal" media ("mass media" being a variety of the latter). The reason for offering this formulation will become clearer as we attempt to account for some of the patterns we have observed so far.

How do men learn about politics? One answer is obtained under the general heading of "political socialization". Thus, as Lane observes, "The family incubates political Man". Under the same rubric we might also add schools, primary groups, organizations, and many other influences that have been found to play a role in political socialization. It seems, however, most implausible to think that political knowledge (in the widest sense) as being a "once-and-for-all" function of "socialization". (Or, at least, it becomes theoretically very clumsy to think of it entirely in socialization terms). It is, in particular, inconsistent with anything we know about learning theory to believe that, without more or less regular reinforcement, responses do not move fairly rapidly towards extinction. Moreover, it does not seem reasonable to think that, in modern polities, where issues, and personalities, may change many times within the life span of a single individual, that a constant flow of political information is not needed. Such considerations can be more fruitfully thought of under the heading of "communications".
In thinking about political communications, moreover, it becomes necessary to consider the total "media mix" which faces the individual - the sum total of political communications which bombards him. Discussing this very problem in the context of the phenomenon of "selective inattention", Herbert Hyman comments

...certainly the prime condition for such a phenomenon is that he cannot expose himself to everything available and perforce must select something. In the society with the less lavish media package, selective exposure may not be necessary at all, and the individual's need for stimulation from the media may be nowhere near satiation.18

Thus, when discussing the effect of communications in the present context that television, radio, the printed word, and "personal" messages are competing for the citizen's attention.

Finally, if we are to think about political theory in a systemic framework, it becomes important to develop the idea of media "of" the system, and perhaps, the special "mix" of media which obtains for that system. And, if we are to investigate the phenomenon of concentrically organized political systems - "systems within systems" - this question attains a special significance.

A Media-Structural Model

What determines which media will be attached to which concentrically organized systems? Intuitively, we would be probably correct to think that the answer will be a function of (1) the "gatekeepers" of the medium - who they associate with, what kinds of politics they
believe to be important, etc.; and (2) the audience of the medium - what the medium's policy-makers deem to be of interest to their watchers, listeners, and readers. Thus, in the North American setting television and radio networks characteristically deal with political events of a national or international character, as do the great national newsmagazines. Similarly, local television stations, radio stations, and metropolitan newspapers concern themselves with events of a regional significance. And, as Janowitz notes, "the community press" tries to "play up the local angle". All this, however, is not to say that the various media do not deal with events that take place at a "higher level", events and personalities of a wider significance. Schematically, this structure is represented in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Media and their concerns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Network Television</th>
<th>Local Television, Radio, and Metropolitan Newspapers</th>
<th>Local Press</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>world news</td>
<td>world news</td>
<td>world news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>national news</td>
<td>national news</td>
<td>national news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>regional news</td>
<td>regional news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>local news</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking at this model we see that national and regional mass media are media of the national and regional political systems, and are consumed directly by the citizenry in still lower systems. In this sense they may be said to "overarch" the local political system. Thus, a citizen of Burnaby or New Westminster who was a consumer only of national and regional media would be expected to possess political information about more inclusive systems. The "overarching" media,
then, ignore the local polity - the latter is served only by the local press and the personal medium.

The implications of this structure are twofold. In the first place, it is clear that, in terms of sheer volume, the number of stimuli reaching the average North American from the mass media are enormous. In the study of students in the Vancouver area, more than 90% claimed to watch television news "sometimes", and an equivalent number said they "sometimes" read The Sun, a regional newspaper. Eighty per cent claimed to read Reader's Digest "sometimes", 40 per cent were occasional readers of Time, 75% of Life, and 75% of the local press.

Secondly, if the hypothesized structure is a true representation, it is clear that political stimuli from "world" and "national" sources outnumber, across the whole range of offerings, those which emanate from local or regional sources. It becomes, then, not surprising that political information should be higher for international, national, and regional polities than for the local system.

The Personal Medium in the Local Polity

Let us now return to the earlier distinction postulated between "personal" and "non-personal" media of communication. It is not implausible to assume that, in the concentric model, both types will be operative. Thus, the labour leader may return from Washington to his local organization in, say, San Francisco, to report that
"Section 14-b of the Taft-Hartley Act has not been repealed". In practise, of course, his personal intervention in the communications flow will not be necessary, except in a clarifying capacity, since almost anyone who cared about the issue would surely have learned about it via the mass media long before he had a chance to make his report. Still, the personal role in political communications at this level, may be assumed to play a role, if only a very minor one.

Intuitively, however, we might think that where spatial relationships were more amenable to political communications of the personal type, say, in the "local community", this medium would be of greater importance.

The New Westminster data provide us with an opportunity to check this latter idea (that is, of course, if anything so intuitively obvious requires verification). There, it will be remembered, two city aldermen were on the teaching staff of the secondary school in which the test was conducted. Table XVIII represents the results to the question: "Name the members of the City Council of New Westminster."

As might be expected, Aldermen A and B are the school teachers.

Table XVIII: The Personal Medium for Political Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents Naming</th>
<th>Aldermen</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>113</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result for Alderman A is not entirely surprising: he takes many controversial positions and is frequently mentioned in the local
press. Aldermen B is, I am reliably informed however, not in any way exceptional to the remaining members of the Council - except for this population, in which he has the attribute of having above average visibility in the personal medium.

I do not, of course, think for a moment that the process is at all as simple as this stylized analysis suggests. Undoubtedly, both the personal and non-personal (in this case, chiefly of the "mass" variety) operate in close concert. In this case, personal proximity may make the students aware of Aldermen A and B in their roles as schoolteachers, while their personal knowledge of these local politicians leads them to be more attentive to mentions in the local press. Thus, once again the key point to be kept in mind is that it is a two-step process, in which, in this case, the chief relation is the personal one.

Earlier, we noted that the personal medium would probably have more scope for operation in the spatially contiguous local polity than in other systems of the concentric model. Yet, it should be remembered that, in North American communities at least, we are dealing with aggregates of people often in the many thousands. In the case of the two examples studied here, New Westminster has more than 30,000 citizens; Burnaby, about 100,000. Now the anthropologist Ward Goodenough has estimated that the limits of group size in face-to-face interaction is reached at about 1000 persons (i.e. the group in which each member "knows" every other).
This is not to say, of course, that information could not pass eventually through interpersonal networks with aggregates of the order mentioned here. There are, in fact, some rather spectacular examples of political information passed very quickly along the interpersonal grapevine (e.g. the death of Gandhi) in very large groups. Still, it seems most implausible that the modern democratic, dynamic, and participatory polity could sustain itself on internal informational nets of the personal type alone. At a minimum, we might suspect that a good deal of the informational flow would be subject to considerable distortion according to the "laws of rumour". And probably, a good deal of fairly important information would not reach many citizens simply because of the lack of motivation in many unit members to "pass it along".

Thus, if the data in Table XVII are testimony to the impact of the personal medium, they are also evidence of the limits of that medium. In that data, there is a very clear break between the knowledge of those aldermen who are personally connected with the students and those who, we might presume, are not. The relatively low level of knowledge of those local leaders C to F undoubtedly reflects the media-structural problems discussed above: the volume and distribution of political stimuli from various sources.

The Non-Personal Media in the Local Polity

It is possible, of course, that factors of selective attention will be in operation, in spite of the outnumbered status of local
stimuli. That is, it could be that consumers of these media screen out non-local stimuli and select local ones. Morris Janowitz' study of community newspapers in the Chicago area has indicated that there are very significant differences in the local press reading habits between those who score high, medium, and low on an "index of Community Integration". (Table XIX).

Table XIX: Community Integration and Readership of the Local Press

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Readership</th>
<th>Index of Community Integration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fans</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readers</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial Readers</td>
<td>39.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Readers</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

chi square test significant beyond .01

Nevertheless, Janowitz concludes, on the basis of his study of whole media patterns, that, "The amount of exposure of the non-readers of the community to the daily press, and radio, was not strikingly different from the various types of community newspaper readers." In short, attentiveness to the local media does not at all imply, in a zero-sum fashion, lack of attentiveness to non-local media.

In any case, the cognitive data presented in the last chapter "fit" much better to the media-structural model proposed above than to any model which posits selective attention to local stimuli. There, it will be remembered, we noted that knowledge of world
political figures was much greater than for national, provincial and, in particular, local elites. Using this model, we would predict that, because "overarching media" pay much more attention to world, national, or regional elites and their activities, the local political stimuli, being greatly outnumbered, would have less impact on the citizenry.25

It is important, nevertheless, to avoid making any hasty causal inferences from this model of media content and political cognition. In the first place, we may not assume that the proposed model of media-structure, even if a valid representation, will either always apply or be at root causative of the cognitive patterns. Laurence Wylie has pointed out that in a small village of southern France, the items of greatest interest in the regional newspaper (and those that filled the pages) were references to events in the many small towns served by that medium.26 We also know that broadcasting media in the developing countries divide their content so as to appeal particularistically to their diverse audiences.27 On a world scale, the great propaganda media, such as Voice of America and Radio Moscow, make careful appeals to their multi-communal audiences. These patterns are probably based on realistic assessments of the tastes of their audiences and, consequently, none of these types of media are "overarching" in the sense elaborated above. Thus, the more "universal" content of the "overarching" media may simply represent the gatekeepers' realistic knowledge of the kinds of stimuli that their audiences wish
to receive, and may not be said to be alone causative of the presence of large numbers of non-local political stimuli.

It may also be that both audiences preferences and gatekeepers' decisions operate in an interactive fashion. That is, the number of non-local stimuli may, over a number of years or even generations, be slowly raised to a threshold, past which the audience begins to prefer them to the local variety. In the last chapter, some crude relations between cognition and evaluations of systemic importance were offered. If this variable (and the attendant one, affect, which was thought to be a motive to political learning) were incorporated into the present model of media structure, we would still not know which preceded which from this type of cross-sectional research. In particular we would not know if evaluations of importance were caused by the pervasiveness of world and national political stimuli, and differential levels of cognition caused by evaluations of importance. Alternatively, it might be that attention to world and national stimuli was preceded by a belief that these were more important (and their pervasiveness simply a function of gatekeepers' assessments of audience preferences). Clearly, several causal chains might be posited, including circular and interactive ones, and the issue cannot be said to be in any sense resolved in the present context. (I am assuming here, of course, that these variables are in fact the relevant ones. This assumption may not be entirely valid).

Summary
In this chapter, I have tried to sketch a crude picture of the media structure of the concentric - "systems within systems" - model. This model takes account of the notion of "media of the system" and notes that the idea of "overarching media" should be incorporated into any model which attempts to explain the operation of "systems within systems".
Footnotes: Chapter 5


4 Thus one writer has defined mass communication in the following way: "...a nation-wide telecast of a political speech is mass communications; closed circuit television over which a group of medical students observe an operation is not." Charles R. Wright, "Functional Analysis and Mass Communications", *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 24 (1960), pp. 605-620.


8 Ibid., p. 146.


10 See, for example, Louis Wirth, "Consensus and Mass Communications", in Wilbur Schramm (ed.), *Mass Communications*, Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1949.


14 The Decatur study of Katz and Lazarsfeld began in 1945.


22 I believe, but cannot prove, that these differences in communications patterns and technology constitute one of the chief differences between the sacral-monarchical polity of antiquity and the "legal-rational" and "egalitarian" modern polity. The king or emperor had to be a God or God-appointed and surrounded with ceremony, less a person than an institution, chiefly because of slow communications and the consequent lack of immediate legitimacy for his acts. In contrast, modern elites are immensely visible to the populace, a characteristic which is more conducive to less sacral forms of government.

23 Janowitz, *op. cit.*, p. 139.


25 I think there is a sense in which the effects of the "overarching media" may be exaggerated in the present data. Canadians, and especially British Columbians, may be unique in the extent to which they are "plugged in" (to use a McLuhanesque term) to the "world" (i.e. United States) media. Thus 17 per cent of the New Westminster group of students claimed to watch only Canadian TV news, 37 per cent watched Canadian and American broadcasts, and another 37 per cent watched only American broadcasts. Many respondents wrote in (without being asked to do so) their preference for the Columbia
Broadcasting System's daily programme featuring Walter Cronkite. The study did not attempt to discover respondents' attitudes towards these various media, or the uses to which they put them in their cognitive fields. I am, however, reminded of one pre-test interview I conducted in connection with the present study. The piece of dialogue that follows is taken from an interview with a fifteen year old boy with an above average interest in, and information about, politics:

Q: You seem to know a lot about politics. Where do you get most of your information?
A: Newscasts on TV, mostly.
Q: Any ones in particular?
A: Well,..., CBC for news about Canada,...CBS for the world.


See, for example, Hyman, op. cit., pp. 143-144.
CHAPTER 6: ORGANIZATIONS OF THE SYSTEM: THE "PARAPOLITICAL APPARATUS"

It is by now widely believed that membership in voluntary organizations is closely associated with political interest, involvement and participation of all types. By this we mean that membership is taken to be indicative of (or causative of) a generalized political interest.

If, however, we wish to organize our knowledge of the political world into a systemic framework, it seems necessary to ask the question: interest "in" what? This matter becomes of considerable importance when we are dealing with the concentric model - is it interest in politics in general that we are examining? or is it interest in a particular system or systems? This is the theoretical question to which we now turn.

Organizations of the system: Some General Examples

At the plane of the national political system it is thought that armed forces are often above the average norm in their "nationalistic" attitudes. Speaking of the armed forces of the new nations of Asia and Africa, Morris Janowitz has commented on their role in political modernization.

...the army becomes a device for developing a sense of identity - a social psychological element of national unity - which is especially crucial for a nation which has suffered because of colonialism and which is struggling to incorporate diverse ethnic and tribal groups.

1
Such roles are not entirely limited to societies without a preformed "national identity". Edgar Furniss has indicated, to take one example, that the French Army is prone to see itself as the carrier of national values, the very embodiment of French civilization.²

National bureaucracies are also believed to play an important "integrative role" in the new states. Selig Harrison has reported on the function of the unilingual Indian Civil Service in maintaining unity in multi-lingual, multi-communal India.³ On the basis of studies conducted on both Europe and America, Lipset, Lazarsfeld, Barton, and Linz conclude that membership in national (and local) bureaucracies is correlated with higher voter turnout in national (and local) elections.⁴

How can we relate these facts to a systemic interpretation of the political world? One way of conceptualizing the matter is to view these organizations at the national level - armies and bureaucracies - as archetypes of organizations "of" the national system. They are oriented to the national political community in terms of goals, names, and other symbolic attributes. As such, they may be thought of as directing the attention of their members towards the national system.

Organizations of the Local System

Scott Greer and Peter Orleans have conducted research into the importance of voluntary organizations in local politics in the St. Louis metropolitan area.⁵ They conclude that these entities,
which they label the "parapolitical organizational structure" of the local polity, are closely related to citizen involvement in the politics of the local community. Using a typology of "Community Actors" ("who are members of voluntary organizations based in the local area"), "Neighbours" ("who participate in the small world of the neighbourhood"), and "Isolates" ("who are involved at neither level"), they suggest that the first named are a key element in the structure of the local political system. Findings for their suburban sample are summarized in Table XX. (Their figures for the City sample differ in no important way.)

Table XX: Per Cent Distribution of Political Involvement for Three Types of Social Participators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Involvement</th>
<th>Isolates</th>
<th>Neighbours</th>
<th>Community Actors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (1-2)</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High (3-4)</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi square = 27.8  p .001

The scale of involvement is of the Guttmann type. It includes four items: (1) voting in any one of six local elections; (2) taking a position on a local issue; (3) trying to persuade others on a local issue; (4) attending public meetings with regard to local issues. They report no coefficients of reproducibility but note that "only" 346 respondents (out of 1,604) had any error in scale scores. They apparently did not use all their data because they wished to investigate some aspects of urban sub-areas, which accounts for the differences in N between their total sample and those cases reported above.

In another analysis of similar data, Greer has related the same typology of participation to the separate items "voting in any one of six elections" and "knowing one or more local leaders". His
obtained results, summarized in Table XXI, suggest a strong relationship between both voting and cognition and participational type.

Table XXI: Per Cent Voting and Per Cent Naming Local Leaders By Participational Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Voting</th>
<th>Naming</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolates</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbours</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Actors</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 704 = 870

It would be quite legitimate to suspect, however, that these relationships might be in some sense spurious - that they are simply products of more basic, underlying variables. In view of other evidence that organizational participants tend to be better educated and of higher socio-economic status than non-participants, this suspicion could well be valid. There does appear to be some relationship between this typology and other social variables. Community Actors are somewhat older than both Neighbours and Isolates (especially the former); Neighbours are disproportionately (though not greatly so) female relative to the other types.

In particular, education has some explanatory power. Twenty-two per cent of the Community Actors, versus 34 and 32 per cent for Isolates and Neighbours respectively, have only a grade school education. Similarly, 32 per cent of the Community Actors, versus 20
per cent and 16 per cent respectively, of Isolates and Neighbours have some college. However, when age, sex, and education are controlled, participational types is an even better predictor of political behaviour. Greer's data in this regard are summarized in Table XXII.

Table XXII: Participational Type and Voting in Municipal Elections When Age, Sex, and Education are Controlled.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per Cent Voting in Each Category</th>
<th>Isolates</th>
<th>Neighbours</th>
<th>Community Actors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31+</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-8 years</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12 years</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13+ years</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ N = 208 = 153 = 343 \]

It is, then, clear that the differences between participational types are no simple functions of age, sex, or education; participational types are a strong differentiation at all values of the control variables. Greer's data on cognition ("knowing local leaders") differ from those in Table XXII only in producing even more extreme differences between participational types at every value of the control variables.

Two final points about these data should be noted. First, it is clear that all the information on the general level of voting participation and cognition of elites in completely consistent with
the data in Chapters 3 and 4 from the Vancouver area study. Thus, about 57 per cent of Greer's total sample claimed to have voted in any one of six municipal elections, and approximately 48 per cent of the total could name even one local leader (my own calculations).

Secondly, we should note that Community Actors represent a minority (but a large minority) of the populace. However, we should not be surprised to find that their proportion of the total would vary rather widely from community to community. In the Vancouver suburb examples, it would not be unlikely that the ratio of Community Actors to total population would be lower in Burnaby (a very new community) than in New Westminster (a very old community). Further, we might think that the number of commuters in a given community would be a relevant structural feature. Schaff, studying Claremont, California, (46 per cent commuter) found that 31.3 per cent of the commuter families versus 19.3 per cent of the non-commuter families had "participation scores" of zero.

Municipal Bureaucracies as Organizations of the Local System

We may further illuminate this problem with reference to quite a different type of "organization of the system" in local politics: municipal bureaucracies. Now, a number of objections might be raised to considering them as part of the "parapolitical structure". Voluntary organizations and municipal bureaucracies clearly have different goals, both collectively and on the part of individual members. The
incentives to participate in one or the other are considerably
different.

Clark and Wilson have identified three types of voluntary
associations: (1) material: which aim at tangible benefits for their members; (2) purposive: which attempt to gain symbolic rewards;
(3) solidary which fulfill affiliative needs. Clearly, municipal bureaucracies, especially when they take the form of unions or associations seeking material benefits for their members, fall into the first category of voluntary associations. In this sense, municipal bureaucracies can rather clearly be conceived of as purely local interest groups - organizations of the system - of considerable importance in the study of local politics.

In small towns in New England, the "town meeting" has been a feature of the political landscape for centuries. This institution has been based on a model of the local political system which postulated that polity as the most interesting, personal, and intimate set of political structures in which the citizen was called to participate. Yet, as Banfield and Wilson point out, this ancient institution has had to be replaced, in Massachusetts at least, by a much modified form, "primarily because self-interest town employees packed the meeting" and, in the face of widespread citizen indifference to the activities of the local political system, were able to dominate them.

Gladys Kammerer and her associates have uncovered, in the course of investigating the operation of the City Manager plan, an exaggerated,
but perhaps not entirely atypical, example of the domination of
city politics by the employee interest group.\textsuperscript{15} "Center City",
a town of 62,000 residents in central Florida. A study of their
data (mostly impressionistic and based on interviews with civic
politicians) is instructive.

The civic employees, although constituting only 900 persons
(many of them outside workers), were widely acknowledged to form the
most important interest grouping in the local polity. "Estimates of the
size of the city employee vote (employees themselves and those who
could be counted on the vote with them) ranged from 3,000 up to 6,000
in normal elections in which the total vote usually ran around 9,000."\textsuperscript{16}
One city councillor stated flatly: "The city employees control any given
election." Another considered his connections with the city employees
as his most valuable political asset. The city manager identified
the employee group as the controlling factor in Center City politics.
He asserted: "They are so secure in this city they will buck anybody."
The Kammerer group rightly argues that the influence of the city employees
was "closely linked to the size of the turnout" and identify "large
turnout" as one source of instability in the factional rivalry which
dominated the competitive politics of Center City. This point will be
returned to in later analysis.

One of the chief conclusions of the whole Kammerer study is
that, in general, the rise and fall of city managers is closely linked
to the clash of political factions. They comment on the remarkably long tenure enjoyed by Center City manager and explain it in terms of his strong support from the city employee group and the stability thus brought about in the factional struggle.

His power base was the city employee organization. While the possession of this power base gave Hill stability in a competitive political setting, that stability was not without its price. Dependence on the city employees limited his power to push for changes in the civil service system, especially provisions regarding promotion by strict seniority.17

When asked why the manager had lasted so long, one ex-councilman replied: "His employees. He kowtows to them...all of those department heads are Hill men." Another councilman noted:

...anybody running on a "beat Hill" platform would surely lose. There is a lot of slack in the system and anybody who opposes Hill would really bring out the city employees' vote in support of Hill.18

Thus, the city manager - the administrative head - had become almost independent of the politicians. Additionally, the manager himself had very nearly become the prisoner of his own political base: the "public servants" of Center City. The deviations from the classical theory of democratic political systems represented by this case are too clear.

The influence of municipal employees in the political process of local polities extends also to the larger systems of the great metropolitan cities. Although they do not specifically explore this problem, Sayre and Kaufman's massive and definitive study of the politics of New York City pays so much attention to the role of the
civic bureaucracies that it stands in silent testimony to the importance of employees and administrators in the politics of America's largest urban centre.\(^19\) There, great administrators, of which Robert Moses is surely the archetype, play a much greater role in the city's politics than classical democratic theory would lead us to suspect. Quite a different sort of civic employee, Michael Quill, for many years head of the Transport Workers' Union, was a New York City councilman from 1939 to 1948.\(^20\)

But, as Banfield and Wilson point out, the political weight of city employees "depends largely upon the nature of that city's political structure."\(^21\) Thus, they remark that Chicago's mayor, backed by the independent Democratic machine, "can afford to risk the displeasure of the city employees."\(^22\) Decentralized, non-partisan Los Angeles, however, presents quite a different picture. There, ...organized employees find it easier to organize and to exert pressure. Authority is highly decentralized and party organization is altogether lacking...The All-City Employees' Association of Los Angeles claims to represent nearly 30,000 workers, and there are many other associations representing special classes of employees, like teachers. In the average Los Angeles election district there are about 175,000 people, of whom only 25,000 to 30,000 vote in councilmanic elections. Thus, the members of the All-City Employees' Association, who are well-disciplined and fairly evenly spread among election districts...are a preponderant force. To the mayor, who is elected at large, the organized employees are a somewhat less formidable force than to the councilmen, and when the employees fail to get what they want, it is often because he vetoes a measure approved by the council.\(^23\)
There is no hard data which would lead us to think that this effect was also operative in the New Westminster and Burnaby examples. However, I am reliably informed that local politicians in both municipalities believe civic employees to be an important voting bloc, exaggerated in influence because of the normally low turnout. In one recent election in Burnaby, involving a controversy over the firing of a popular planning official, the employee vote was thought to be a decisive factor in the defeat of the governing Non-Partisan Association.

The Local Press as Part of the "Parapolitical Structure"

It should be kept in mind that, when we speak of the relationship between a community structure (voluntary organization, municipal bureaucracy, etc.) and political participation we are studying an instance of a more general effect: the relationship between membership in a structure of the system (a parapolitical structure) and a generalized socio-political involvement "in" the system. We are not, then, chiefly concerned with the predisposition to participate in a narrow political sense (this contention might be somewhat less valid in the case of municipal employees, who are clearly involved for rather tangible material reasons.)

In addition to these examples, there is a sense in which the community press can be placed in the same category as voluntary organizations and municipal bureaucracies. Readership of the local
press is clearly a "voluntary" act and, in the context of our remarks in the previous chapter about the general functions of the mass media, has a tendency to bring its "members" into a type of non-sociometric interaction with each other.

Thus, if we are willing to accept the two cited notions, we may re-interpret some of the data offered in the previous chapter as additional evidence of the relationship between structures of the system and participation in the system. There, it will be remembered, we cited data relating an "index of community integration" to intensity of community press readership. Only 6 per cent of the group ranking low on this index were classified as "fans" of the local press; 29.7 per cent of those ranking low were non-readers. Similarly, but 3.4 per cent of those ranking high on the index of community integration were non-readers, while 20 per cent were "fans" and 49.7 per cent were "regular readers" (see Table XIX). There does not appear to be, unfortunately, any literature relating specific measures of political integration - frequency of voting, cognition of elites, and the like - to readership of the community press. Thus strict comparisons of these data with that offered by Greer and Orleans, and presented in the early part of this chapter, are not possible.

However, Janowitz does report that he discovered a positive correlation (chi square, significant at the .02 level) between readership and participation and local voluntary organizations, while also finding a highly significant relationship between readership and frequency of church attendance. These correlations, together with
the Greer-Orleans data may well lead us to think that all these items (readership, membership, neighbouring, cognition, integration, and voting) are all related in an interesting and significant way.

In my own study of secondary school students' political orientations, I had hoped to make a beginning towards resolving this question by obtaining data relating exposure to the local press and cognition of local elites. However, the experiment failed to confirm or disconfirm the hypothesis because of the peculiar structure of media exposure: in one community, exposure was so widespread that there were almost no cases to speak of the non-readership category; in the other municipality, the local print media are apparently so ephemeral that only a very few respondents could be placed in a readership category, a fact which may go a long way towards explaining the very low cognition scores in this community.

Attacks on the System and the Parapolitical Structure

In any case, if what is suggested here is in some sense valid that participants in local community organizations—municipal employees, and community press readers—are much more likely to be involved in the political life of the local community, then we would expect these people to respond particularly strong to threats to the existing local government system. The fragmentary evidence from studies of metropolitan government referendums in the United States indicate that this might be so.
In both Nashville and Miami, when metropolitan government referendums were offered to the citizenry, the participation of municipal employees in anti-metropolitan activities became something of a public scandal. And Greer indicates that similar processes were at work in St. Louis and Cleveland at the time of their metropolitan referenda.

Summarizing the character of the organizational opposition to metropolitan schemes, Greer asserts:

...the opposition, in central city and suburb, was simply the status quo mobilized. The extensive network of voluntary organizations and professional communities, the "parapolitical system" of the suburbs, was a ready-made communications channel. The municipalities, with specialized personnel committed to their maintenance, dominated the public discourse in their localities. This discourse was further edited by the community newspapers.

In an earlier study, Greer accounts for the one success in United States metropolitan reform - the very new city of Miami - by pointing out that "the typically fragmented organizational structure of the metropolitan area had no chance to get set and the opposition to "Metro" was correspondingly weak."

Some Theoretical Notes

There is, then, not altogether inadequate reason for believing that the "parapolitical apparatus" of local communities constitute an important element in the structure of the local political system. Can we account for this effect in some moderately rigorous and theoretical fashion?
Two points come to mind. First, it is worth reiterating what has become one of the chief themes of this study; that spatial relationships by themselves are not necessarily good guides to the inference of politically relevant activities, perceptions, and feelings. It was noted in the last chapter that spatially defined interaction, sociometric in quality, is probably not the chief means by which political activity in the large-scale system is linked. We remarked then that non-sociometric "interaction", or that which occurs by consumption in common of the same non-personal medium, is likely to be of central importance in these modern situations.

Clearly, one of the chief functions organizations of the system can perform is to structure human relationships in such a way as to increase the probability of face-to-face (sociometric) interaction between individuals within the organization. By so doing, they increase the probability the individuals concerned will engage in politically relevant encounters (talk about local politics, encourage one another to vote, and so on). In the case of locally-based (and, in the main, spatially-defined) organizations, we may then say that such entities increase the probability of political encounters between individuals relevant to the system to which the organization relates. In hagiographic form: "A, who lives on Fifty-first Street and works on First Avenue, is more likely to engage in an encounter (of local political relevance) with B, who lives on First Street and works on Fifty-first Avenue, if they both belong to the same Rotary Club, than if they did not."
Although common readership of the same local newspaper does not necessarily enhance the probability of interaction in quite the same way, a case could be made for asserting that common consumership of the same medium does, eventually, increase the probability of chance encounters. In the main, however, I suspect that the main contribution of local mass media to local political integration will be of the non-sociometric sort discussed in the previous chapter.

Secondly, we might think that membership in local organizations of the system and readership of the local press would have an impact on the distribution of ego-involvement with the local community. At a minimum, we would expect that a member of the "Jonesville Elks Club", a reader of the "Smithtown Herald", or an employee of "Center City", would be somewhat more likely to be aware of that minimal integrative symbol: the place-name. And Crouch and Dinerman remind us, with data from the Los Angeles area, how ubiquitous the place-name organization can be, even if there is only the slightest "sense of community" or no legal justification for the existence of a separate community.30

At a maximum, however, it is not unlikely that persons in these participant categories might have greater than average exposure to more complex sets of integrative symbols. Thus, local organizations would be brought into the celebration of "Burnaby Week" and Janowitz recounts how one Chicago community newspaper marked with some ceremony the occasion of "Roseland's" one hundredth anniversary.31 I would
suggest, then, that the structures discussed in these pages, quite independently of their interactive potential, may act to increase the level of community ego-identification among persons they touch.

The "Parapoliticals" and the "Standing Core" Hypothesis

In Chapter 3, we remarked on Lawrence O'Rourke's suggestion that a "small core of citizens sustain municipal government." Recently Clarence N. Stone, while studying the influence of voter turnout on acceptance or rejection of local referenda, has put forward some hypotheses which may shed some light on the present problem. Examining plebiscites in one small town, he observes that low-turnout referendums are nearly always passed, but that the results of high-turnout referenda are very variable. He concludes that:

A low-turnout referendum is likely to consist primarily of votes cast by individuals who are active in civic activities, business and professional men. These individuals often have participated in the formulation of the proposal to be voted upon, and almost certainly their support has been sought early and strenuously. Referendum proposals thus tend to be received favourably by these civic activists, so that the outcome of low-participation elections is positive in most cases.

A high-turnout referendum necessarily involves participation by those who are usually inactive and almost always poorly informed. For these civic inactivists the local political scene is largely unstructured. Consequently their attitudes are malleable and their voting preferences are volatile.

Stone makes no specific references to the structures we have been examining in this chapter. But his hypothesis, and his supporting data, weigh strongly in support of the "standing core" hypothesis.
of municipal politics.  

And, for our present purposes, it is only necessary to observe that a standing core of civic activists is entirely consistent with a notion of a minority of citizens who participate in local voluntary organizations, are attentive to the local press, or who are members of the municipal bureaucracy - all of whom appear to exhibit a greater-than-average interest in the operation of local government. Since it is not all likely that these people will vary greatly in the short-run, it appears probable that the "standing core" of the local electorate consists largely of these "parapoliticals". Survey research techniques could be used to validate or disconfirm this hypothesis.

Summary of the Present Chapter and Its Relation to Previous Chapters

In Chapters 3 and 4 we observed that interest in the local political system - as measured by voting participation and level of political information - was lower than was the case for other systems in which the individual participates. And in this chapter it has been noted (with less definitive evidence) that individuals involved in what we have called the "parapolitical structures" - locally based organizations, the community press, municipal bureaucracies - may well have a higher level of local political interest than persons not so involved.

In the previous chapter it was pointed out that the low level of
participation in the local polity may well be related to the outnumbering of local political stimuli by non-local stimuli—a function in turn of the presence of "overarching media". Thus, it appears that local polities may have been rendered less salient because their populations have been mobilized to more inclusive political systems. A minority of the local population has, however, experienced involvement with the "parapolitical structure". This experience has directed their attention towards the local polity by increasing its salience for them. It then becomes meaningful to speak of these parapolitical structures, and the people in them, as "residuals" of the declining local polity. They are the "skeleton", as it were, from which the "flesh"—the majority of the unorganized citizenry whose chief contact with politics of any sort is through the mass media—has been stripped away.
Footnotes: Chapter 6


6 Adapted from Ibid.


8 Adapted from Greer, "The Social Structure and Political Process of Suburbia: an Empirical Test".


10 Adapted from Greer, "The Social Structure and Political Process of Suburbia: an Empirical Test".
A recent survey study in New Westminster revealed that 7 per cent of the sample belonged to voluntary locally-based organizations. Seven per cent of the adult population (20,000) equals 1400 persons. Although one should probably not read too much into the fact, it is interesting to observe that this figure is about the rock-bottom minimum that have turned out for civic elections in the last decade. The Columbian, March 1, 1966.


Ibid., p. 56.

Ibid., p. 59.

Ibid.

Wallace S. Sayre and Herbert Kaufman, Governing New York City, New York, Russel Sage Foundation, 1960, especially chapters 8,9,10,11.

Banfield and Wilson, op. cit., p. 212.

Ibid., p. 214.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 215.

Supra, Chapter 5.


30 Winston W. Crouch and Beatrice Dinerman, *Southern California Metropolis*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1963, p. 278. "Voluntary organizations with community orientation pervade every sector of the Los Angeles metropolitan area. If one can visualize a map of the county denoting the location of each Chamber of Commerce, coordinating council, and related service organizations, one would see a distinct clustering of such community associations within the numerous local, place-name areas that comprise this political entity. Virtually every local-name community in the county, irrespective of legal boundary lines has, within its border, an independent community coordinating council, chamber of commerce, Kiwanis Club, Rotary, or similar voluntary organization."

31 Janowitz, *op. cit.*;, p. 83.


34 It should be pointed out that a "standing core" hypothesis is not at all identical with an "elite-mass" formulation. Although the two are undoubtedly similar phenomena, it should be kept in mind that we are here dealing with something like 10 to 25 per cent of the total population.
Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba have rightly identified political "affect" (or emotion) as one of the central variables in the study of comparative politics. And, in their study of five nonoverlapping political systems, some of their most interesting findings concern the differential levels of affect to be found within these systems. In the study of the concentric arrangement of political systems, political affect can be no less an important variable. Some of the questions that might be raised in this connection are: does affect accrue differentially to different systemic "levels"? or is there a generalized affective orientation towards political processes at all levels? This chapter will attempt to answer these queries.

Some Conceptual Difficulties

Almond and Verba operationally define political affect as the responses to a set of questions - that is, a political attitude. It might also be said, however, that affect is an attitude in reality, as well as operationally. Thus, when we speak about affect in a political system, we mean the presence of affectively clothed political attitudes.

But what, exactly, do we mean by an "affectively-clothed political attitude" or, for that matter, by a "political attitude"? The controversy over the definition of an attitude is by no means settled, but, for the present purpose, the Hovland, Janis, and Kelley
formulation will suffice: an attitude is an "implicit response". A political attitude, therefore, is an implicit response to a political (or public) object (or person).

Daniel Katz has offered an extremely useful conceptual framework. According to the Katz formulation, all attitudes may be classified into four categories, depending on their motivational bases, or the functions they perform within the personality.

The first type is related to the "instrumental, adjustive, or utilitarian function". Attitudes which fulfill this function are directly related to need satisfaction, even when they have a mild affective component. By way of example, Katz cites "The attitudes of the worker favoring a political party which will advance his economic lot."

The second function which attitudes may fill is that of "ego-defense". Thus, "when we cannot admit to ourselves that we have deep feelings of inferiority we project those feelings onto some convenient minority group...". The central point is that the attitudes of this type are "not created by the target but by the individual's emotional conflicts." He contrasts this type of attitude with the aforementioned utilitarian type which "are formed with specific reference to the nature of the attitudinal object."

Attitudes may also play a third, or "value-expressive" function. In contrast to the defensive nature of the second type of attitudes, these are positive expressions of the individual's central values and the "type of person he conceives himself to be".
Clearly, it was attitudes of the second and third types that Lasswell spoke of when he formulated, more than thirty years ago, his famous dictum that "private needs are projected onto public objects."  

The fourth, or "knowledge function" may be played by attitudes which satisfy the "need to know" and give stability and consistency to the individual's cognitive universe.

Distinctions very like these have been proposed by other students of social attitudes. Smith, Bruner, and White have proposed that attitudes must be differentiated according to the functions they serve on the "economy of the personality". In particular, they suggest the following functions: (1) "object appraisal": the person may develop attitudes that are a creative solution to the problems posed by internal and external demands. (2) "social adjustment": Opinions serving here are those that express a "need to be autonomous of others" or those in which we "indulge hostility toward others". (3) "externalization": Here attitudes serve in the Lasswellian sense of relieving an "unresolved inner problem." The similarities with the Katz formulations are obvious.

Other psychologists, however, have found both of these schemes to be operationally clumsy (or, rather, that operational techniques are too clumsy to make refined use of them). Thus, more frequently distinctions have been simply confined to attitudes which are either (1) ego-involved; or (2) not ego-involved. The former category clearly includes both the first and the fourth of Katz' categories,
while the latter subsumes the second and third.

Political scientists have long observed analogous distinctions. The authors of *Voting*, for example, have distinguished between "position issues" and "style issues". The former has as its presumed motivational appeal "self-interest of a relatively direct kind"; the latter, "self-expression of a rather indirect, projective kind." Sidney Verba has commented that political systems have inputs and outputs of both the "instrumental" and "affective" variety, and laments that the latter have not been studied more thoroughly. Lewis Froman Jr. has used the "style-position" dichotomy to wider generality. He has theorized that "style issues" are chiefly associated with "the distribution of symbolic rewards and punishments."; "position issues", with "the distribution of material rewards and punishments." Some such distinction, furthermore, seems to be strongly present in the recent writings of Murray Edelman on political symbolism. In particular, Professor Edelman seems also to think there is a sort of "zero-sum" quality to these types, the one implying "not-the-other". Thus, he observes that

The most intensive dissemination of symbols commonly attends the enactment of legislation which is most meaningless in its impact on resource allocation. It is proposed in the discussion that follows to use this double dimension evident in the studies mentioned so far, and, moreover, to treat the varying definitions of this phenomenon as essentially unified or equivalent. That is, we shall treat an "affective political attitude" as one which falls into Katz' "ego-defensive"
or "value-expressive" categories, assume that its more general form is an ego-involved-attitude, and assert that it is characteristically associated with symbolic gratification. Conversely, attitudes which are not affectively-clothed are thought to fall into Katz' utilitarian" and "knowledge function" categories, assumed to be not-ego-involved, and believed to be associated with material gratification. It is further assumed throughout, of course, that these distinctions are of the classical "ideal type" form.

Let us now return to the formulations about political affect contained in Almond and Verba's study of five nation-state political systems. There, the authors divide their conceptual categories into three. The first is "system affect", meaning "generalized attitudes about the system as a whole". The second is "input affect", and the third, "output affect". I, for one, have some reservations about the distinction, either operationally or in reality, between the latter two - in particular I am not sure that the two concepts are not the same phenomenon looked at slightly differently. Nor am I at all convinced that our analytic models have reached anything like the theoretical rigour which would allow us to use such refined categories. Because of these reservations, I find it preferable to amalgamate these two - output and input affect - into one notion, which I propose to call "internal affect" or "intrasystemic affect". This type of affect will be thought of consisting of affective attitudes towards political issues and combatants within the system. Thus, in the discussion that follows we shall examine the existence of
differential levels of political affect (following Almond and Verba and, I think, "common sense" and intuition as well) for politics concentrically arranged, in two analytic categories: (1) system affect; (2) internal affect.

Almond and Verba treat system affect as, essentially, "pride in political and governmental institutions". There are, however, a number of difficulties with this formulation. In particular, we should note that it treats system affect as an attribute of the specialized goal-attainment structures. This, of course, is consistent with David Easton's notion of the "system" as being at a position intermediate between "community" and "regime". It seems to me, however, that no definition of system affect can ignore the component part that relates to affect at the level of the community (to use Easton's term). Conceptually, this type of general affect towards the community may be handled by a model of the social system of the Parsons-Mitchell type and thinking of this type of system affect as being a "sub-systemic exchange" between the polity and the "integrative system". This is tantamount to saying that the polity assists in the societal problem of integration by the production of "we-group", ego-involving symbols. This schema, upon which the discussion is based, is thus somewhat different from that employed by Almond and Verba.

Some Measures of "System Affect"

As with all variables involving ego-involvement and affect, an operational measure is a central difficulty. One such, however, may
be the extent to which the respondent expects and desires to live his life within the community in question. Table XXIII summarizes the results of a question on preferred place to live posed to the secondary school students in my Vancouver area study.

Table XXIII: "When you finish your education, where do you think you would like to live?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burnaby/New Westminster</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In this general area, but outside Burnaby/New Westminster</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another part of B.C.</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another part of Canada</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside Canada</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td><strong>230</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It may not be assumed from the responses to this question that some sets of responses are necessarily included within another. That is, it is not methodologically legitimate, without a lengthy test with, say, paired comparisons of each item with every other item, to infer that an individual whose first choice is "Burnaby" will not prefer "Italy" next, then "another part of Canada", and so on randomly. On the other hand, there is, I think, a certain surface validity to believing that there are certain implications to each of these choices, which were undoubtedly clear to these respondents. Thus, it is not implausible to argue that a preference for Burnaby almost certainly implies a preference for not leaving Canada.

With these caveats in mind, we may interpret the table as having at least two fairly clear implications for the present research purpose. One is that more than 75% do not express a preference for living in their present municipality. The other point is that 80% of the respondents indicated a preference for remaining within Canada, further
testimony to the relative importance of the nation-state frame of reference. Now, to some extent, these results may be artifacts of the study: the options given (it was a closed, multiple choice question), and the "external anchorages" of those options. It would be interesting to offer this same question in a variety of forms - open, closed, few, and many options. However, the present findings are certainly in accord with what we believe to be a high rate of inter-community and intra-national mobility of persons.

Now it will be remembered from Chapter 4 that level of information about the local polity was slightly greater for those who, on this question, preferred to live in the municipality of their present residence. And, in the last chapter, it was observed that persons caught up in the ego-involving parapolicical apparatus also seem to have greater levels of political interest in the local polity. Thus, it may be thought that those who are the recipients of local political integrative symbols also tend to have a greater local political interest. Two warnings are, however, in order: (1) the tendency is slight and is met by the counter-tendency for high levels of local political information to be simple functions of generally high political knowledge. (2) Those receiving local political integrative symbols are clearly a minority of the total citizenry.

Another piece of data which may be relevant to this problem comes from the somewhat puzzling responses to the question, "Who is the most important person in this area?" The most prominent feature of these data is the very large "no response" category - more than one-third of the total group - a tribute to the ambiguity
of that question. The results are summarized in Table XXIV. The explanations for this pattern of responses is clearly not a simple one.

Table XXIV: "Who is the most important person in this area?"

| Mayor, Reeve, or other local figure | 6%  |
| Prime Minister                   | 34% |
| Premier                          | 46% |
| Others                           | 14% |
| **100%**                         |     |
| N = 150                          |     |
| "No response", N = 86            |     |

It might be that the respondents reason that "the Prime Minister (or the Premier) is the most important person in Canada (or B.C.), therefore he is the most important figure in this area." A more likely inference is that the responses tell us something about what the stimulus "this area" means to the great majority of the respondents; it appears to mean British Columbia and Canada. It decidedly does not seem to mean the local community.

An interesting sidelight on these data is revealed by the structure of the questionnaire involved. It was constructed so as to avoid artificially raising the salience of any reference group, or even any special pattern of thought, before it was necessary. Thus, these respondents were asked the question discussed above before they were asked to answer questions about the relative ranking of individual political leaders, or before any idea of the "local community" was introduced. At the end of the questionnaire, they were again asked "Who is the most important person in this community?" A goodly (though not a great) number moved into the "local figure" category after the salience of these affiliations had (presumably) been raised.
What do these data mean in terms of the systemic framework being used here. One interpretation could be that local polities, as compared with broader political systems, produce few integrative and ego-involving symbols. This is tantamount to saying that most citizens do not feel strongly and affectively about their local communities. Such an hypothesis would be consistent with all of the data presented here on political participation, political cognition, preferences as to place of living, as well as our general beliefs about the individual's readiness to leave any one community and settle down somewhere else. In terms of the Parsons-Mitchell model mentioned earlier, this hypothesis would be equivalent to stating that the polity, at the local level, does not deeply intrude into the integrative subsystem. This point would however, contradict what appears to be intuitively obvious at the nation-state level at least: that polities do in fact help to fulfill the integrative function of the social system.

"Internal Affect"

It has been suggested that local polities produce little system affect. Does the same hold true for our second category of political affect: "internal affect"? There do not appear to be any studies which examine explicitly this point and the data collected in the Vancouver area did not deal with it. Indeed, it is very difficult to see how hypotheses relating to this notion could be tested empirically at all. Therefore, most of what is said here will be very impressionistic and speculative.
The first specific hypothesis that I propose is this: that political attitudes concerning the local political system will characteristically be of the "utilitarian" and "knowledge function" variety, rather than of the more ego-involving type, and that political issues of the local political system will consequently tend to be of the "position" rather than "style" kind. This point is suggested by the observable fact that referenda on issues usually experience even lower voting participation than elections called to fill vacancies in elected positions. One exception to this rule might be the "fluoridation" controversy, which has been observed to draw much greater citizen interest than most local issues but it is characteristic that it is one issue that is consistently framed in essentially non-local terms.

Operationalization of this or any other notion is exceedingly difficult - chiefly because measurement of emotional arousal is no simple task. I have an impression, however, that in our culture the stimulus "politics" and "Political issues" have an emotional "style" connotation. Thus, in Chapter 4, we saw that the student responses to the question "Name some people who are involved in politics or government" tended strongly towards mentioning provincial, national, and international figures, and away from naming local figures. The reading that was put on this result then was a dominant feeling that local politics were not "really politics".
And, prior to the questionnaire testing, I conducted a series of fairly long pre-test interviews in which one question was "What political issues have you noticed lately?" In one set of five interviews, thirty-one different issues were mentioned. Two were not recognizable issues to this interviewer (e.g. "the riots in Central America"), three more were events rather than issues (e.g. the death of Nehru), two were not strictly political (e.g. the flight of Gemini VI). The remaining were divided thus: nineteen were issues more or less pertaining to the national of the international system; five were more or less provincial issues. Not one mention was made of a local issue.

The second hypothesis is closely related to the first: that political "rewards and punishments" (to use the Froman terminology) in the local political system will be chiefly of the material rather than the symbolic sort: they tend to deal with allocation of resources and objects rather than the less tangible, but more symbolic and affective items. This proposition is borne out, in a crude sort of way by the stress which students of community decision-making lay on issues of a very tangible quality. The general impression left by studies such as Robert Dahl's and Agger and Goldrich's is that they deal with decisions nothing like the highly symbolic and affect-laden "style" issues we associate with the national polity.
A third proposition is: that local polities, being less affect-laden, will tend to a style of goal-attainment that is characteristically "administrative" rather than "political"; "rational", rather than "emotive". This point is suggested by the widespread faith in the "City Manager" plan; it is indicated also, once again in a gross manner, by the relative stress that academic works on local government lay on administration as opposed to "politics": it is "local government" rather than "local politics", the semantic difference in the two usages perhaps reflecting the underlying orientation toward the object.

It is, then, argued here that the local polity is a low-affect political system. It appears to be, relative to "higher" levels, low on generalized system affect and low on "internal" or issue affect. We may then speak of it as being a polity having the attribute of the primacy of pure, material goal-attainment. To say this is, of course, not to deny that some people will be deeply involved personally and hence emotionally in the local political system, nor that a few "style" issues, in a few places, may not arouse considerable public awareness and interest. But it does argue that, in the long run, in general, the net level of affect in the local political system will be lower than that which obtains in "higher" polities.

Some Theoretical Implications of the Low-Affect System

The points raised here have many ramifications for the structure
and process of politics at the local level, not the least of which are the theoretical and normative interpretations made by students of "community power". These will be taken up in Chapter 9. There are, however, a few implications which it might be wise to explore in the present context.

I refer in particular to the psychological theories of attitude change. As Katz observes, the conditions for change of a given attitude will vary depending on the function it serves within the personality. Thus, attitudes serving the "need to know" will change in the face of simple addition of information to the cognitive field, and utilitarian attitudes require only a change in the perceived path of need satisfaction. But ego-defensive and value-expressive attitudes probably require substantial changes in the personality itself rather than alterations of the environment.

Muzafer Sherif and Carl Hovland, studying the effects of persuasive communications on attitude change, and using the simpler operational dichotomy of ego-involved and not-ego-involved attitudes, state:

...it is our conclusion that a strong stand on an issue which is personally involving for the individual functions as an anchor in his judgments and renders him less likely to be affected by highly discrepant persuasive communication on the issue. And Hovland and Pritzker find that attitudes on issues regarded as "factual questions" changed in a direct relation with the amount of change advocated by the communication. Attitudes on issues not
so regarded (i.e. in our context, more "matters of opinion" and thus ego-involving), "contrast" effects were observed - the more the amount of change advocated, the more the message was seen as a personal assault; less, even negative, change was the result.

All of this suggests that the non-ego-involved, utilitarian, or "knowledge function" attitudes of the local political system may be much less resistant to change, and much more inchoate and subject to relatively slight social cues. All of which in turn implies a considerable degree of instability on the part of those attitudes when they are expressed. This point is, of course, precisely that made in Clarence Stone's study of local referenda.

This question can be analyzed in terms of any of the models of attitude change which use concepts of "congruity", "balance" or "dissonance". Briefly stated, and at the risk of grave oversimplification, all these models use some notion of attitudinal consistency. That is: A likes B, B likes C, A dislikes C. This situation is said to be "unbalanced" "incongruous" or "dissonant", with a tendency to change towards "balance", "congruity", or "consonance". A variety of solutions to this situation are possible, according to which model is being used. A may change his opinion of B, of C, or he may "partition" his thoughts about these two figures.

But if one of these bonds is stronger than the other, it could be predicted that it will resist change and the weakest bond will be the one that "snaps". One of these models, the congruity model, does predict that something very like this will occur: a person or object
about which one has only mild feelings will respond much more than one which one feels strongly about.

These theories have a number of implications for the present purpose. They suggest, for example, that - ceteris paribus - local governments become embroiled with quarrels with "higher" levels of government at their own peril, not just because of the rewards and punishments that these bodies can bestow, but because their own constituents are likely to have strong feelings about the local government's opponent, and if they are favourable, the local government is likely to lose much with its own citizens. This implies that if City government A, about which citizens have mild feelings, publicly and bitterly attacks provincial, state, or federal government B, about which citizens have strong positive feelings, they will lose standing on the "home front". This result, it should be noted, would not be predicted from models which implicitly postulate a model of local government as being "close to the people"; this last model would probably predict the "we-them" resolution associated with traditional models of, say, the international system.

In summary: local political systems are low-affect polities, relative to "higher" polities. This generalization may hold true for both "system affect" and "internal affect" dimension of this variable. This phenomenon has implications for the formation and change of attitudes about local issues and about even local governments.
Footnotes: Chapter 7


2 Ibid., p. 102.


8 See, for example, Carl I. Hovland and Muzafef Sherif, Social Judgment, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1961.


12 Ibid., pp. 67-79.


16 Ibid., p. 102.


20 Had this chain of reasoning been the case, then we might expect that, since so many respondents ranked the United States President as "more important" than the Prime Minister or the Premier, that there would be at least some who would reply to this question with "the President". In fact, there were none who so replied.

21 Some psychologists have found that by manipulating the salience of a given reference group, they can cause experimental subjects to respond differently under high and low salience conditions. See Hovland, Janis, and Kelley, *op. cit.*, pp. 157-163.


26 Katz, *op. cit.*

27 Hovland and Sherif, *op. cit.*, p. 171.


PART IV : A THEORY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS
In the last chapter, we observed that traditional ways of handling the problem of system-within-systems are in large measure inadequate and unable to organize effectively most of the observed facts about a special type of system-within-a-system: local governments. Here, an attempt will be made to construct a model which is more in accord with this observed reality, and which makes some verifiable predictions about other aspects of political structures and processes at the local level.

The perceptive reader will by now have observed that some of the phenomena dealt with in this study have a certain similarity to the "mass society controversy" in sociology. The mass society theorists reasoned that the conditions of modern life had certain implications: (1) society would become atomized, with each atom having direct relations with mass communicators; (2) there would be a decline of "warm" interpersonal relations within the spatially-defined community. Recent empirical research has indicated that the mass society theorists greatly overstated the case. As has been true with the early theories of mass communication, and its impact, the interpersonal element has been restored to a place in our understanding of how societies operate.

I want to stress that the present study is not directed towards re-opening the mass society controversy. It is clearly
recognized that the subject at hand is the political relevance of the local community - perceptions of the political system, feelings about it, participation in it. It is not denied that the local community may have substantially more meaning in other spheres of life: friendships, cultural and religious, and so on. The gap between involvement insofar as these two aspects - the political and the non-political - are concerned may well be exaggerated in the case of the Vancouver area secondary school students. Most of these subjects are not at a truly "political age" - they do not yet participate fully in any of these political systems. This fact is especially pertinent where the local community is concerned: they are not yet taxpayers, are not "settled down", etc. And they may well be fairly high on participation in other spheres of community life: the school, young peoples' church groups, sports organizations, and so on. Thus, there are important limitations on the generality of the survey data offered in this study.

Still, it should be remembered that, even for these non-political spheres of life, the attack on mass society theory has not completely invalidated that model, but only restored some idea of the importance of spatially-defined communities. As Morris Janowitz has succinctly put it:

.... the generalized description of the urban residential community implied by this research is a community of "limited liability". In varying degrees, the local community resident has a current psychological and social investment in his local community. In varying
degrees, use of local facilities is accompanied by community orientations... But, in all cases, these attachments are limited in the amount of psychological and social investment they represent... his relation to the community is such - his investment is such - that when the community fails to serve his needs, he will withdraw. Seldom is the investment so great that the individual is permanently committed to a community...

The "Partiality" Dimension

It is here proposed that political systems can be placed on a "partiality" dimension possessing two limiting cases. The first limiting case - or end point of the dimension - is the "total" political system. It is defined as a system which contains within itself all the life-experiences - and especially political life-experiences - of all of its member individuals. It is similar in concept to Parsons' "total social system", thought to be "an aggregate of persons as total individuals... a completely selfsubsistent society." In my own formulation, "life-experiences" will be defined as any elements within the individual's cognitive or memory fields; these will include not only actual experiences but expectations, aspirations, and other forms of vicarious experience. So conceived, the only "total" polity for modern man would be "the world".

The other extreme limiting case would be the political system which contained within it none of the life-experiences of its members, the "irrelevant" political system. Hypothetical examples would be the "polity" of a group of unrelated individuals - fellow
travellers on a subway train or persons in a theatre queue. Between these two limiting cases fall the "partial political system".

So defined, all known polities would surely be in varying degrees "partial", i.e. fall between the limiting cases on a continuous dimension. These are thought to be similar to Parsons' notion of the "partial social system" alluded to in Chapter 1. It is thought likely, however, that this continuous dimension of partiality possesses a "threshold", systems falling above or below this point having fairly distinctive attributes. This notion transforms for analytical purposes the continuous variable of partiality into a dichotomous one. The model that will be developed in this Chapter will concern political systems which fall below that threshold and the name "partial political system" will be reserved in this context for that stylized model.

The utility of the partial model for the study of local politics in modernized countries is obvious. These are, to begin with, not the only systems which have an impact on the citizen, nor are they the only ones in which he is legally entitled to

* In this chapter, there will be at least three different usages of the word "partial". I will attempt to signal to the reader as clearly as possible when I am changing the usage. In the present section, it is treated as a dichotomous variable.
participate, i.e. they encompass only part of his political life-experiences. But there are also factors of personal mobility, suburbanization (i.e. the separation of work and residence), the presence of overarching media, and other possibilities for non-local vicarious experience. All of these combine to make the local system archtypical of the partial model although, as we shall see, some other types of polities are amenable to analysis by this model.

**Attributes of the Partial Political System**

Three propositions are basic to an understanding of the partial political system. First, the partial political system is a low-affect system. As we saw in Chapter 7, this is thought to be true for both "integrative" and "internal" affect. Why this should be so is not entirely clear. It may be related to perceptions of political stimuli. Those stimuli which are received most often, and related to each other in some coherent and systematic fashion, may be more likely to be clothed with affect by the perceiver. Or they may be the ones to which the most "importance" is attributed, and affect attached in that way. Alternatively, it may be thought that affect has a zero-sum quality and adheres most characteristically to the most inclusive (i.e. most "total") perceived polity.

Second, the partial political system is a low-visibility polity. Thus the citizenry will normally know less about partial than about total political systems. Part of this effect may be
attributed to attention factors. As we have seen the number of political stimuli bombarding the member of the partial polity is very large, and the stimuli from outside the system (by definition) greatly outnumber those originating from sources within the partial system. Although selective factors may be at work, they are clearly not strong enough to avoid the swamping of the outnumbered stimuli. Motivational factors may also be relevant. As we have suggested, the partial system is a "community of limited liability", having low levels of integrative and internal affect. Since emotional arousal is an important element in learning - via motivation - we might expect that motivation to select facts and learn about the partial system is relatively low.

Third, the partial political system has a low motivational base. That is, the incentives to participate in it and learn about it are relatively few. Thus, voting turnout in elections of the democratic partial system, one type of participatory behaviour, is typically low.

The structural and processual ramifications of these propositions are many, and concern both "elite" and "mass" aspects. Some of these have been discussed extensively in other chapters, and follow rather directly from the three propositions (low cognition, low participation, material rather than symbolic rewards, etc.). Consequently, they will not be examined here. Other features of the partial system, however, require more complex chains of reasoning.
The propositions may be related to the frequently noted phenomenon of "issue-overlap" among elite participants. This observation points out that, in local political systems, the same decision-makers are seldom present in more than one issue-area. But if the partial model is a valid interpretation of community politics, this effect should not be surprising. Since material rewards are paramount in this system (rather than symbolic ones), and since the incentives to sustained elite participation are few, it would be expected that specialized "issue-elites" would "raid" the goal-attainment apparatus, obtain whatever particular material goal they sought, then retire from local political life until some new material goal acted as an incentive for their participation at the elite level.

An interesting sidelight on this question is shed by Robert Presthus' observation that the degree of issue-overlap tends to vary crudely with size of community. He notes that Dahl's study of New Haven, a large, almost metropolitan city, shows the least overlap, while, in the main, smaller cities have higher rates of overlap. To account for this phenomenon, Presthus suggests the proposition than an "inverse association" exists between "size of community and the degree of overlap on decisions among its leaders". But this postulate suggests that minimum overlap would be reached in the case of the largest known political community - the nation-state. While this hypothesis might not be entirely untenable, it has not been tested empirically and does not
really accord with what we intuitively feel about decision-making in these large polities.

My hunch about this effect is, however, that it is related in some complex way to several other variables, of which partiality is certainly one. Above, we have treated, for model-building purposes, partiality as a dichotomous attribute; but it should be remembered that in reality this dimension is thought to be continuous. It therefore becomes possible to speak of one system as being "more" or "less" partial than another. In the case of the North American setting, I would argue that - ceteris paribus - a system would become more partial with increasing size up to a point. That point would occur when non-personal mass media systems began to fill the gap left by the numerical limitations on the personal medium as a vehicle for political communications. After this point, the system would become less partial and more total. Salience would be restored to the enlarged polity, motivation to sustained participation would rise, and issue-overlap would begin to increase. Thus, the final relationship between issue-overlap and size would be a curvilinear one. (See Figure 5).
Figure 5: **Size and Issue-Overlap as a Function of Partiality**

```
less
issue-overlap
more
```

size of political system

However, it is important to remember that this effect is conceived largely in terms of the relationship between size and issue-overlap, without specifying whether or not the systems concerned are "local" polities. In the North American setting, the appearance of these new media systems has not in general worked to restore completely the totality of large local polities. Rather the new media have tended to be media of quite another system: the national or international one. Only if the new mass media were specifically media of the local system would complete totality be restored to the local system and issue-overlap decrease dramatically.

Because of the low motivational base of the partial system, the natural level of "slack" in the use of political resources should be accentuated in the partial model. About New Haven, Dahl comments:

...most citizens use their resources for purposes other than gaining influence over government decisions. There is a great gap between their actual influence and their potential influence. Their political resources are, so to speak, slack in the system. 11
But if the partial model is a valid interpretation of local community politics, we would expect this would be more the case in this system than with other political systems in which the individual also participates. The partial model being one in which the citizen is only "partially involved" (has only a "limited investment") is, almost by definition, one with a great deal of slack.

This slack is a source of great potential instability in the partial system. As long as political involvement is minimal, mass political behaviour is fairly predictable. But, when, for some reason, the citizens are motivated to mass action, the results are highly unpredictable. The earlier quoted comments of Stone and Kammerer's informant are, in this context, highly relevant.

Closely related to the idea of a resource slack is the notion of a widespread dispersion of political resources. Thus, Dahl comments:

> In the political system of today, inequalities in political resources remain, but they tend to be noncumulative. The political system of New Haven is one of dispersed inequalities. (underscoring his)

By this he means, of course, that the several societal "values" - wealth, power, knowledge, etc. - tend to remain apart. It is largely in these terms that Dahl interprets the political history of New Haven:

> Within a century a political system dominated by one cohesive set of leaders had given way to a system dominated by many different sets of leaders, each having access to a different combination of political resources. It was in short, a pluralist system.... An elite no longer rules in New Haven.
On the face of it, these points seem to be contradictory to Lasswell and Kaplan's dictum:

The positions of a person or group in different value patterns tend to approximate one another...The phenomenon described in this hypothesis can be termed value agglutination. (underscoring theirs). 16

Both propositions make much common sense. Lasswell and Kaplan's is in accord with what we believe to be true about politics: those who are wealthy, or who possess some other important value, while not necessarily wielders of political power, tend to have an advantage in the pursuit of power.

Similarly, those who are powerful in the political sense, seldom have financial worries, and appear to gain other values as well. Yet, Dahl's data on New Haven points unmistakably in the direction he hypothesizes. And, it is clear intuitively that values at the local level are not likely to be cumulative.

The difficulty can, however, be resolved if we are willing to assert that both propositions are true, but under specified conditions. These conditions are: (1) Lasswell and Kaplan's proposition is true in the "total" polity - that of a nation-state or equivalent entity. (2) Dahl's hypothesis is true in the partial political system - local communities like New Haven, Burnaby, and New Westminster.

This model may also be applied historically and developmentally. Dahl looks at the political history of New Haven and concludes that it has been characterized by the progressive withdrawal of the
"patricians"; no explanation, beyond the "impact of industrial society", etc., are suggested. But the partial model points to a phenomenon which has occurred between the "withdrawal of the Patricians" and the "rise of the ex-Plebes": the gradual "partialling out" of the New Haven social and political system. The local political system ceased to have as much salience as it once did, and the motivation to participate on the part of those possessing other values has declined.

Finally, it should be noted that the partial political system has a distinctive problem of elite recruitment. This process being dependent on the frail motivational base of the partial model, is much more selective than is the case with more "total" systems. At a minimum we would expect that some persons who would otherwise be involved in the politics of the partial system would be involved in the activities of more inclusive systems. At a maximum, it may be that the partial system has so few motivational incentives, and provides so little access to other values than limited power over local goal-attainment decisions, that elite recruitment would be very difficult. As Birch has commented about Glossop:

"Today the prestige conferred by Council Membership is valued less highly, because business and professional people are rarely attached to their local community in the way that used to be common....this has been one of the main reasons for the decline in the number of people wishing to stand for election." 18

Similarly, we are sometimes led to question, and with good reason, the "quality" of persons in local politics - more often, at least, than is the case with more "total" systems. 19
Voluntary Organizations as an Analogue to Local Polities

The reader will undoubtedly have noticed that many of the traits of the partial political system discussed in the previous section are similar to those attributes of the political process in voluntary organizations noted by Robert Michels and discussed by other writers. Since organizations are partial collectivities in the Parsonian sense, and do not contain within themselves all the life experiences of their members, this should not be surprising.

Michels' study of the German social democratic party, and its tendencies to oligarchy, identifies as one of the key variables the political indifference of the masses:

...among the citizens who enjoy political rights, the number of those who have a lively interest in public affairs is insignificant....It is only a minority which participates in party decisions, and sometimes that minority is ludicrously small. The most important resolutions taken by the most democratic of all parties, the socialist party, always emanate from a handful of members.

Seymour Lipset, while studying the political systems of trade unions, clarifies this point:

Only a small minority find the rewards of participation in union affairs and politics great enough to sustain a high level of interest and activity...Participation in any organization appears to be related to the number and saliency of the functions which it performs for its members and the extent to which they require personal involvement.
He also points out that geographical isolation may accentuate participation in union affairs:

This frequent interaction of union members in all spheres of life...translates itself into high participation in local organizations...\(^2\)

Organizations, then, constitute another archetypical example of the partial political system - the inability to contain within themselves all the life experiences of the members brings about certain unique characteristics of the political process in the organization. All of this suggests that there are many fruitful points of comparison between organizations and local governments and, further, perhaps, that neither should be seen as necessary microcosms of larger polities.

The "Residual Structure" of the Local Polity

The chief points of Chapters 5 and 6 were that local political systems may well have greater significance for members of voluntary organizations explicitly "of" the local system, members of municipal bureaucracies, and, possibly, consumers of the local press. These were thought to provide opportunities for political communications of the personal and non-personal types and thus act to increase the general salience of the local community.

The partial model can be structured so as to take account of these observations.

It is perhaps useful to think of these "parapolitical" elements as a sort of "sieve" or "filter" which, being oriented to
the local political system, act to "catch" many individuals while they are being mobilized to more inclusive polities. Diagrammatically, this process may be represented as in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Schematic Representation of the "Filtering" Role of "Residual" Structures

These parapolitical structures act, then, to direct the attention towards the local polity for persons "caught" by them. The net effect, for these individuals, is to increase "totality", reduce "partiality", and to augment the salience of the local polity. This has the effect in systemic terms of decreasing the overall partiality of the system. It could therefore be asserted that an extensive parapolitical structure will have the effect of reducing overall partiality, i.e. of moving the system more towards the "total" end of this hypothetical dimension.

How can this hypothesis be operationalized? First, it would be necessary to obtain consistent and definitive evidence that membership (or readership) of the parapolitical structures does add to the political salience of the local community. Second, it would be necessary to test the proposition with several local communities which have widely varying parapolitical structures, and to discover if the relationship holds for all types. Finally, it would be useful
to observe a single community over time - from its genesis to the present - to see if the relationship holds in a dynamic process.

Precursors of the Present Theory

The general phenomenon which has been investigated here has not, to say, the least, gone entirely unnoticed. As is the case with so much modern social analysis, the present conceptual framework owes an intellectual debt to Emile Durkheim. Working with concepts like "social volume" and "density", he attributed many social changes to the consequences of the increasing division of labour in modern society.

The division of labour varies directly with the volume and density of societies, and if it progresses in a continuous manner in the course of social development, it is because societies become regularly denser and more voluminous. Durkheim does not, however, systematically explore the consequences of this increasing volume and division of labour on the small-scale societies it has made obsolete.

More recently, the anthropologists Godfrey and Monica Wilson, studying social change in Central Africa, interpreted that change in terms of the Durkheimesque concept of increasing social scale. By scale, they meant both the number of people in relation to one another and the intensity of those relations. "In comparing the scale of societies....we compare the relative size of groups with relations of similar intensity." Intensity, in the Wilson schema, is identified with (1) proportion of economic cooperation within
the group to that without it; (2) proportion of communication of fact in speech and writing within the group to that without it; (3) the proportion of emotional expression communicated within the group to that without it. The relationship between their categories and those that have been investigated in this essay is clear.

Another of the Wilson measures of intensity has, however, not been examined here. This item is the extension of generational continuity within the group. "By continuity we mean both the volume of material cooperation and communication with the past, and the non-material unity that exists when a people act, speak, and feel, as if it were a reality." Thus, an increase in societal scale means extension in both space and time. This point has several ramifications for our present study. It could suggest for instance, that the partial political system is very much a system of the "here-and-now" - that it has little meaningful "history" in the sense in which that term has meaning for more inclusive systems. In the context of the study of the local community, this would be in accord with many common-sense impressions. The history that is taught in schools, for example, is not the history of the local community, and rarely of the region, but rather of the nation-state.

In the case of Canada, it might not be true that the history of the nation-state formed the "residual" category. In the schools
system of British Columbia, only one-third of the history curriculum
is devoted to Canadian history, the remaining being devoted to
"world" history, ancient, medieval, and modern, and I am told
that this proportion is not atypical of other Canadian provinces.

In Chapter 4 of this study, it was observed that knowledge
about contemporary world political figures was somewhat higher
than for national figures. It might well be that this difference
would be extended to the past; that is, it might reveal itself
in a greater knowledge of "world" - other nations' - history
than of Canada's own. Is it implausible to think that Washington,
Bonaparte, and Lenin might be better known among the Canadian
populations than, say, Sir John A. MacDonald? This effect would
be expected not only from originally more attention to non-
Canadian history, but also from the greater continuing reinforcement
given to non-Canadian symbols by the "overarching media".

The "Total-Partial Dimension" and the Theory of Comparative Politics

One of the major tasks of the science of comparative politics
should be the discovery and verification of dimensions on which
political systems may be placed. A number of such dimensions
have been suggested, explicitly or implicitly in the literature:
democratic-hierarchic; primitive-modern; "diffuse-diffracted",
and so on. This suggests that polities may be ranked on many
dimensions and that one of the tasks of comparative politics is
the location of political systems in multi-dimensional space.
It would be necessary, of course, to be first certain that each dimension used was more or less independent of the others - that dimensions A and B were not simply different ways of observing the same attribute. It is not likely, however, that any of these dimensions would be entirely independent of each other; even the conventionally "independent" dimensions of height and weight in the measurement of men are independent of each other only within certain limits, there being a small tendency for increasing height to be associated with increasing weight. Thus, when placing polities on any of several dimensions it would be necessary, theoretically, to specify in some fairly rigorous fashion their interrelations. For example:

Dimension A = \( x + 2y(z) \)

Dimension B = \( x + z \)

Clearly, the two dimensions are not "really" independent. We are then in all probability, dealing with a sort of "bent" multi-dimensional space. But such difficulties should not deter us from the task at hand.

The above discussion has been placed in this context in order to demonstrate the utility of the "total-partial" dimension: it can be a tool for the classification and comparison of polities and, by introducing sub-nation-state political systems, can extend considerably the objects of our study and comparison. Let us consider the placement of political systems along the total-partial dimension, together with their placement along another, fairly simple
dimension: size (number of participants). As our previous
discussion on issue-elites indicated, the two will probably bear
some relation to one another: the middle-size system without
its own mass media will tend towards partiality. However, let us
assume that they may be arranged orthogonally, as in Figure 7.

**Figure 7: Locating Political Systems in Two-Dimensional Space**

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(Quadrant 1)</th>
<th>(Quadrant 2)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>a.</td>
<td>c.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>small</td>
<td>Irrelevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Quadrant 3)</td>
<td>(Quadrant 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d.</td>
<td>e.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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In this diagram, the horizontal line is the "totality" or
"partiality" dimension; at the far left is the limiting case of
the completely "total" (or completely inclusive) polity; at the
far right, the completely irrelevant one. Most political systems,
falling between the two extreme points, will be "more" or "less"
partial; the point of origin (where the "size dimension" crosses
it) may be thought of as representing the "threshold" of partiality
mentioned earlier. Polities falling to the left of it may be
thought of as being "more" total (and "less" partial); those to the
right, "less" total, and "more" partial. These latter are generally
those having the attributes of the partial model.
There are four quadrants: (1) Large-Total; (2) Large-Partial; (3) Small-Total; (4) Small-Partial. The points a, b, c, d, and e represent hypothetical and real examples. Point a represents the characteristic and familiar nation-state; it is large and has considerable political salience for the individual. Point b represents the characteristic location of the partial political system which has been the major theme of this study; it is fairly large but only partially relevant for the individual. Point c represents the location on this surface of a less common entity; a large political system, but with poorly developed media "of" the system - thus being even more partial than most of the local communities studied here. Real examples might be county political systems in Great Britain and the United States, or the polity of metropolitan Paris. This last forms a political system which has been deliberately stripped of powers by higher authorities for reasons of state and is, once again with some deliberateness, ignored by the media which could increase its salience for its citizens.

Point d represents the typical small-scale tribal or village polity, whose extinction was studied by the Wilsons. In the examples presented in this essay, this point would be represented by the Indian villages in which political knowledge of the outside world was extremely limited.
Point e, in the "Small-Partial" quadrant would be the location of almost any small group within the modern setting: a club, voluntary organization, or other face-to-face group. It would also be the location of most of the experimental "small group" studies. Thus we see that the generalization about cohesiveness of small groups, and conflict between them, would be limited to political systems in this quadrant. This point would be particularly relevant to the several studies of "all-man" simulation. Use of this conceptual schema, then, points out that the generality of experimental findings about group behaviour is, for the moment, limited to systems of this type.

A Different Interpretation of the Partial Political System

Hitherto, we have discussed the attribute of partiality in a strictly Parsonian sense; a partial system has been defined as one which does not contain within it all the life-experience of its members. In this section, a slightly different definition of partiality, and its ramifications, shall be offered.

Let us think of a political system as being composed of a set of political roles. Let us further think of a political system as possessing, infrastructurally, three major nets of roles: (1) a net composed of political roles which derive from affective relationships between persons and objects ("an affective net"); (2) a net composed of roles derived from simple perceptual relationships between persons ("a cognitive net"); (3) a net
derived from **behavioural** relationships ("a behavioural net").

Let us further differentiate this last category (the behavioural net) into (a) participatory behaviours (voting, contacting public officials, etc.); (b) administrative behaviour (administration of public activities by officials). Let us now re-interpret some of our earlier data on local community political systems in terms of this framework.

From the earlier data we can see that cognition and affect in the local community system are low; we also see that participatory behaviours are largely lacking. Only administrative behaviours carry on as usual. If we think that a "complete" polity contains all these role nets, then we may say that the local system is "partial" or "incomplete" in the sense that it lacks some important infrastructural features.

Conversely, it is possible to think of this very inclusive "world polity" as also being "partial" or "incomplete". This is so because while it has an affective net (people feel strongly about world politics) and a cognitive net (people know much about world politics), it lacks nets of roles in the behavioural sphere. That is, there are no regularized manner in which persons cognitively and affectively involved in the world political system can engage in satisfying participatory behaviours in that system. Similarly, those who are "seen to be" the world governors and "felt to be" the world governors, have no regularized administrative
system by which they can mobilize world political resources, dispense political favours, and so on.

This situation is fraught with danger for the incipient world polity. For without the outlet of regularized participation, the desire to participate in the polity which one sees and feels about, manifests itself in anomic outbursts of mob behaviour. Thus the politics of many developing countries often seem to depend less on issues and personalities within the country concerned than on the great issues of the world polity. One Jakarta mob attacks the Chinese Embassy with the battle cry "Long Live America!" while another burns the USIA library with shouts of "Down with Imperialism!"

Research Implications of the General Theory

Let us now return to the explicitly Parsonian notion of the partial system used in previous sections. The theory of the partial political system has several research implications for both the study of local community political systems and for the science of comparative politics.

One of these is, that, in making cross-systemic comparisons, we should, so to speak, "hold partiality constant". What I mean by this assertion may be illustrated with reference to the other simple classificatory dimension used in an earlier section: size. Thus, in comparing the polities of Belgium and India, we note immediately that one is a "developed" nation, the other
"undeveloped"; but we implicitly take into account the factor of size, implicitly holding size constant. That we do not do so normally is indicative only of the fact that both are large enough so that size does not form an important differentiating variable.

Partiality does, however, appear to make considerable difference in the internal functioning of polities. Thus, when we compare, say, New Haven, to the United States, we should say explicitly that "the New Haven political system looks a bit like that of the United States, but it should be remembered that one (New Haven) is considerably more partial than the other, and the generality of the New Haven findings are limited thereby". Thus, in a very crude way, we take account of differential levels of partiality.

The general theory also implies something about studies which purport to examine the "power structure" of local communities. It is very clear, for example, that the "power structure" of our Indian village is quite a different sort of political phenomenon than the "power structure" of most communities in the modern setting. But, even in this modern setting it is probably true that some communities will be more partial than others; the "bed-room suburb" polity would probably be more partial than the polity of a much more isolated and self-contained community. It therefore, becomes important, when comparing these, to specify the degree of partiality in a given local polity - to indicate crudely, at least, its location on the totality dimension. As
we have indicated, such a specification might well be relevant to the question of "issue overlap" in local polities.

In summary, then, the research significance of the general theory is that we should avoid thinking of the local community in the modern setting as a sort of "microcosm" of the larger polity. The local political system may not be - is not - the same type of structure at all. Rather, having the attribute of considerable partiality, they are quite different entities from more inclusive systems.
Footnotes: Chapter 8


2 See Scott Greer and Ella Kube, "Urbanism and Social Structure; A Los Angeles Study", in Marvin B. Sussman (ed.), Community Structure and Analysis, New York, Crowell, 1959, pp. 93-112.

3 Supra, Chapter 5.

4 Thus Janowitz observes: "...children...lead their parents to neighbourhood community participation and orientation...

5 Indeed it would be surprising if this sample did not generally exaggerate the low level of political information we would expect to find with adults. It is difficult to see how the local polity could continue to operate if these low levels of information among students were not slightly atypical. Still, we do have information from United States studies indicating even lower levels of local cognition among adults. See Supra, Chapter 6.

6 Janowitz, op. cit., pp. 223-224.


10 Ibid.

11 Dahl, op. cit., p. 305.

12 Supra, Chapter 6.

13 Supra, Chapter 6.

14 Dahl, op. cit., p. 85.
15 Ibid., p. 86.


17 Dahl, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-86.


19 I mean by this, of course, that, given a similar type of cultural prescription about the value of politics generally, that "better" people will enter on careers in the most inclusive system.


21 Ibid., pp. 54-55.


23 Ibid., p. 408.


25 Ibid., p. 262.


27 Ibid., p. 25.

28 Ibid., p. 27.

29 I am indebted to Professor J. A. Laponce for most of the basic ideas on which this part of the analysis is founded. However, the use I have made of these insights is entirely my own doing.
CHAPTER 9: FURTHER IMPLICATIONS OF THE GENERAL THEORY

The general theory of the partial political system, outlined in the previous chapter, has a number of implications for fields somewhat removed from comparative politics. Two of these are normative political theory and international relations theory.

Implications for Normative Political Theory

Sociologists who have studied "community power structures" have frequently brought to light what appear to be disturbing facts about the democratic nature of local political systems in the American setting. Presumably, much of what they say about these structures in the United States would probably hold true for other modernized countries.

The tone of these studies was set earlier in this century by Robert and Helen Lynd's observations about "Middletown". Their chief theme was that Middletown was dominated by a "business control group" whose power was based upon the "long fingers of capitalist ownership", and their tools, the "political lieutenants" of the dominant class. One group, the "X family" was said to be a "reigning royal family". Looking at "Elmtown", August Hollingshead saw an "inner circle of top aristocrats", while Lloyd Warner's study of Yankee City found similar indications of a community "ruling class".

Closer to the present, Floyd Hunter, studying "Regional City" with the much-disputed "reputational" method of discovering power-holders, found a covert group of business leaders who "really ran"
the city. Using the same techniques on "Pacific City" Delbert Miller finds a group of "Key Influentials" and another of "Top 5 Influentials". Miller concludes that "Businessmen do exert a predominant influence in community decision-making in Pacific City". C. Wright Mills draws on data like these when he asserts:

> In every town and small city of America an upper set of families stands above the middle classes and towers over the underlying population of clerks and wage-workers....they hold the keys to local decision.... Mingling closely with one another, they are quite conscious of the fact that they belong to the leading class of the leading families.

That Mills should declare this might seem surprising, in view of the fact that his chief contribution to social science has been his observation of the nationalization of the power elite. However, his resolution of this apparent conflict comes about by claiming that

> ...the prestige and the power systems are no longer made up of decentralized little hierarchies...

The world of the local upper-class person is simply larger than it was in 1900 and larger than the worlds of the middle and lower classes today.

Thus, local elites have merged with one another, the corporate chieftains, the political directorate, and the warlords, into a single power system. The masses appear not to have participated in this process.

Nelson Polsby has rightly characterized this literature as part of a "stratification theory" of community power.
summarizes the postulates of stratification theory as: (1) The upper class rules in local community life. (2) Political and civic leaders are subordinate to the upper class. (3) A single "power elite" rules in the community. (4) The upper-class power elite rules in its own interests. Such assumptions do not accord with what we normally take to be "democracy" and, if true, would be a condemnation of community political life in modern America.

The counter-attack on stratification studies has been led by Robert A. Dahl and his associates in the New Haven study, Nelson Polsby and Raymond Wolfinger. Their criticisms have been several in number and interwoven with one another; only a few of the issues they raise will be dealt with here.

The first major criticism raised by the New Haven group is that the stratification theorists have "discovered" a non-existent "power elite". They have done this for a number of reasons:

11 (1) They expected and, perhaps, wanted to find one. (2) They have used a mistaken methodology, which always supplies them with a "power elite" whether one exists or not: the "reputational" method. As Polsby points out, the question posed to local informants should not be "Who runs this community?" but, instead, "Does anyone at all run this community?" (3) The stratification theorists have mistaken potential for actual power.

The second chief criticism of stratification theory concerns the transitivity of power relations and the scope of influence.
The New Haven researchers believe community power is much more diffused than might be expected and that many different people have limited amounts of power over different issue-areas. This is not in accord with "ruling elite" theorists who hold that power is concentrated and that power relations have wide scope. The New Haven group maintain that this mistake has occurred because of the failure to study a variety of policy outcomes over time. By examining these policy outcomes, they have evolved the "pluralist" or "polyarchal" model of the community political system.

A good deal of the conflict in this controversy can, perhaps, be chalked up simply to the differing intellectual heritages of the two sets of combatants. The "ruling elite" theorists have been chiefly sociologists, many avowed radicals, while the critical "pluralists" have been, of course, political scientists; the former are heirs to a much more "liberal" tradition than are the latter. This disciplinary division has also made for a slight difference in the object of study. Thus, the political scientists have chiefly concentrated on studying purely political power and explicitly political decisions. The sociologists, while certainly emphasizing the political, have tended to interpret their object of study more generally, examining power, status, and prestige in all aspects of community life.
Finally, it should be noted that the rhetoric of the dispute has contributed to some misunderstanding. The very terminology of the "power elite" theorists - "power", "elite", "dominant", "ruling circles", "business control group", etc. - surely contributes to an imagery which, at the intellectual level anyway, is certainly not always meant by them.

The model of the partial political system can, I think, make a contribution towards clarifying this dispute. The model, it will be remembered, is characterized by a low level of citizen involvement, as measured by voting and cognition; a low level of affect, both integrative and internal; great resource slack; few incentives for elite recruitment; the primacy of material rewards and punishments, rather than symbolic ones. In short it is a polity of low involvement and low salience for the citizenry; this is so not because of "alienation" but probably because of indifference and disengagement, of greater interest in "higher" political systems which are deemed to have more "importance". The local community political system is thought to be an archtypical form of the partial polity.

This general lack of involvement and salience means that, the populace having abandoned political responsibility at the local level, political power will fall to whoever can whip up the motivation to participate in it. And who will these be? Characteristically, they will be those who do have a minimal material and
psychic investment in the community: the local merchants, the local press, the real-estate agents, the Chambers of Commerce, the municipal bureaucrats - in short, the "power elite", the "business control group" and their "tools". But surely the whole point is that they have not "seized" or "inherited" this power in some "undemocratic" way; they have this "power" largely because nobody else wants it. Michels' "iron law of oligarchy" is operative in local communities just as surely as it is in voluntary organizations.

But what sort of "power" is it that these people exercise? The imagery of the power elite theorists implies that it is some total sort of power over the populace - that Middletown and its "X family" represents some broad analogy to the polities of medieval Italian city states dominated by merchant princes. Upon reflection, none of them would, I am sure, claim that their generalizations were this sweeping. At the very least, I am confident that most of them would admit that the authority of the local elite was limited by the narrow scope of powers assigned to local governments, and by the extent to which the local area is viewed by the populace as a "community of limited liability". Still the evidence presented in this study - and here I want to stress the voting participation data rather than the questionnaire responses, because of the clear limits on the generality of the latter - suggest that the local community qua political system has even less salience and relevance for the citizens than the power elite theorists had supposed.
In the case of one of the Vancouver area communities in which questionnaire data was collected, I have not the slightest impressionistic doubt that a ruling elite theorist could discover a sinister "control group". All the elements for such a study are present: merchants, businessmen, "old families", and so on. But, from the information on voting participation, the questionnaire data, and impressionistic knowledge, I believe these facts are essentially irrelevant to an understanding of democracy in this community - the citizenry, insofar as they are politically interested at all, simply do not care who "rules" them in this minor civic capacity. Thus, the appropriate riposte to the ruling elite theorists is not the formulation of Polsby's "pluralist alternative", but rather a resounding: so what?

But if the partial model sheds some light on this question of normative theory, it does so at the expense of raising another which would not otherwise be salient. What meaningful definition of democracy can be applied in a situation where the citizenry has in the main disengaged itself from political involvement? In short: what is democracy without a demos? In particular, the present data and normative suppositions would appear to lead towards a recommendation that autonomous local governments be abolished and replaced with units more clearly representing subjective feelings about politics. This point would imply that government be centralized in the nation-state or, at the very least, at the regional level.
I do not think the partial model of local polities necessarily leads to this conclusion. For, even if local jurisdictions no longer correspond to "real" (i.e. total) political systems, the present structure does provide a system of relatively decentralized decision-making - a feature which, optimally applied, I think most theorists would concede to be a democratic virtue. And, if local governments are not "close to the people" in any sense meant by the traditional models discussed in Chapter 2, they are at least physically close at hand, and are physically more accessible than are more "distant" governments. Although the partial model would not lead us to think that very many of the citizens would seek attainment of personal goals through local government, those that do take up their option should have no difficulty in physically presenting their case. Finally, it is important to remember that, most local governments, being sustained by what appears to be a small band of regulars, should be highly sensitive to any signs of mass disaffection on the part of persons not normally participating. Thus, if low voter turnout works to the advantage of narrow interest groups like civic bureaucracies, it also works to the advantage of other interest groups at the local level that happen to be momentarily disenchanted with their local administration. From the standpoint of the normative democratic theorist, this
situation is preferable to working for the dismissal of a local official by a physically distant government.

Implications for International Relations Theory

It may seem strange at first glance to suggest that the subject of this study - the partial model of the community political system - might have some relevance for so weighty a subject as international relations and world politics. However, when we remember that relations between nations are simply cases of the more general phenomenon of inter-systemic relations, the association becomes clearer.

The relevance is particularly clear when we also recall that international relations theory has most often been of the "closed system" type. That is, it has frequently assumed that the "international system" is composed of interacting "total" systems. Thus, Morton Kaplan has asserted: "In the present international system, the nation states have political systems, but the international system itself lacks one."19 For him, the international system is composed of a "set of actors", of which there are two types, "National actors" and "supranational actors". The pioneer in "simulation" studies, Harold Guetzkow, has indicated his belief that international relations is essentially a problem in "intergroup relations".20 In his remarkable study of international stratification, Gustavo Lagos makes the basic assumption "...that the nations of the world can be considered a great system
composed of different groups interacting and that these national
groups occupy various positions within that social system."
And some implicit model of this type almost certainly lies behind
the formulations of Quincy Wright and Richard Snyder.

The assumption of this model, then, is that which was
referred to in Chapter 1 of this essay: the assumption of the
universal existence of relatively discrete and discontinuous
political systems. It presupposes a world social and political
system composed of a limited number of more or less closed and
total collectivities.

It is important to remember, however, that there are some
important exceptions to the general use of this implicit model.
In particular, Karl Deutsch and his epigoni have stressed the
importance of inter-personal "transactions". Lamentably, their
theoretical point of view has so far found its chief use in the
study of political integration and has not been elaborated into a
general model of world politics. Urban Whitaker Jr. has proposed
that "The individual is ... the central actor in international
relations, and the study of that subject logically begins with
the individual." And in a penetrating statement from outside
the political science discipline, Talcott Parsons has pointed out:

What now of the nation-state itself? The essential
point...is that it is by no means such a monolithic
either-or unit as it has often been held to be.
Just as there are many internal private groups with
interests which cut across national lines, so the
idea of the absolute sovereignty of governments is at
best only an approximation of the truth... The broad conclusion seems to be that... a pluralistic international system has been developing. This means that the most significant nearly "ultimate" units do not function simply as "individual units, or as a "mass", but are involved in a complex network of solidary associations which, however, are not completely monolithic but cross-cut each other in significant respects. 27

It is also important to keep in mind that this model is, in very many cases, an accurate representation of reality. There will be many instances in world politics in which the image of closed, total collectivities functioning as national actors is extremely useful. But it is also clear that there will be many occasions of inter-systemic relations in which some other model would be appropriate. And it is certain that neither model, by itself, will lead to a general and true science of world politics.

In this section, we will consider what contributions to the theory of international or inter-systemic relations can be made by the theory of the partial political system. Two cases shall be considered: (1) relations between equivalently partial systems; and (2) relations between systems which are not equivalently partial (i.e. in terms of partiality as a dichotomous attribute: relations between a total system and a partial one).

In connection with the first case, two hypotheses about relations between partial systems are offered. The first is that violence in inter-systemic relations is relevant only - ceteris paribus - to conflict between total systems - nation states and the like. This is so because (1) the members of a partial
system are in the main disengaged from it; and (2) the partial system is low in affect, and violence is associated with emotional arousal. At root, all this hypothesis says is that nations sometimes go to war with one another, while cities, municipalities, and organizations seldom do so.

The second hypothesis is that conflict between partial political systems has very much the quality of pure elite conflict. That is, when we say that Jonesville and Smithton disagree with one another, we mean to say that "the leaders of Jonesville disagree with the leaders of Smithton. This proposition follows naturally from the earlier postulate of considerable citizen disengagement from the partial political community. Of course, this notion of elite conflict is also true of more total polities, like the nation-state. But in the latter case, the conflict seems to have a way of feeding back to the citizenry and becoming relevant to them. Because of the frail media systems of the partial polity, the low level of affect, and citizen disengagement, this effect would not normally be expected to occur in partial systems. Thus, when Simmel says:

A state of conflict...pulls the members so tightly together and subjects them to such uniform impulse, that they must either get completely along with, or completely repel one another. 28

and when Coser states:

Conflict with another group leads to the mobilization of the energy of group members and hence to increased cohesion of the group. 29
We may feel certain that the groups to which they refer are, in the present terminology, total groups, like nation-states, rather than partial ones, like municipalities and trade unions. This hypothesis also predicts, furthermore, that purely personal and idiosyncratic origins of conflict will be relatively more common in relations between partial polities. This is true, once again, because of the lack of mass citizen involvement in the partial political system.

A number of implications flow from these two hypotheses. One concerns the idea that there are important commonalities between international relations and relations between local governments. In this connection, no less an authority than W.T.R. Fox has declared: "The only theory that can describe intergovernmental relations in a metropolitan community is a theory of international politics." But if the partial model is a valid way of interpreting the local polity, and if the above hypotheses about relations between partial polities are correct, then it is not necessarily the case that relations between local governments are like relations between nations. In the first place, conflict between partial polities will be much less intense; there is neither the capability nor the will for the use of violence. In the second place, relations between partial polities will take much more of a purely elite (and even personal, or idiosyncratic) quality than is the case between more total political systems.
The study of relations between partial political systems is not at all developed in the political science literature. One interesting arena which could be explored in this connection would be the strange world of international student politics. The chief systemic actors in this "international system" are the many "national unions of students", organizations which have so little salience for their individual members that they can without hesitation be classified as partial political systems. These constitute a world where wild swings in "national" policy occur with minor changes in "national" leadership, where Latin American students leave the non-Communist International Student Conference because that body refused to recognize the clandestine Puerto Rican Students for Independence ("FUPI") as a "legitimate national union", where the British national union seriously considers joining the Communist-controlled International Union of Students, where the Canadian national union "breaks off relations" with its United States counterpart chiefly because of personal affronts administered to officials of the former by leaders of the latter. In short, this is a bizarre universe which the analyst equipped only with international models using only total systems as systemic actors simply cannot understand. The assumption of partiality helps to provide a conceptual framework.

But there may be cases in the "real" international system in which the assumption of total systemic actors is less useful than the assumption of partiality. In the Canadian case, the
questionnaire data from the Vancouver area study revealed that knowledge of world political figures - preeminently American - was greater than knowledge of strictly national figures, even as the latter was greater than knowledge of regional or local figures. It will also be recalled that, in response to the question "Who is the most important person in these parts?", a common answer was "Prime Minister Pearson" (implying, of course, that he was the chief figure in this area - less than the whole). Would it be implausible to conclude that the Canadian polity was subjectively viewed as being partial in relation to a more inclusive (total) political system? One cannot live long in this country without gaining the impression that the political issues and loyalties which stir Canadians' hearts, far from being exclusively Canadian, are those which concern the continuing confrontation between the American President and his "helpers", on the one hand, and the Communist "opposition" on the other.

The present state system of Western Europe may also be amenable to analysis with the partial model. It is not at all implausible to think that, for many Europeans, the concept of a united Europe has superceded the idea of the nation-state as the "ultimate" community. To put the matter another way, the several nation-states of Western Europe may have become more partial (in relation to the "European Community") than they once were.
These last two examples lead us to consider the second of the suggested cases of inter-systemic relations: those which occur between a partial system and a more total system. In an earlier chapter it was observed that, if affect tends to accrue to more total political systems than to partial ones, then attitudes towards the partial system should be more fragile, less resistant to change, than attitudes towards the more inclusive system. Thus, we might expect, in the European case, that General De Gaulle's attack on Europe and the Atlantic community alienates some of his constituents. Similarly, it might be that a Canadian government that took a hostile stance towards the more inclusive - more total - system of which Canada is viewed a part, would antagonize rather than unite the Canadian citizenry. Neither result would be especially surprising; there are examples of both occurrences and it verges on the trivial to say that the partiality assumption "predicts" such situations. But the essential point is that these results are not predictable from conflict models which assume totality; they may only be predictable when assumptions of partiality are incorporated into the model.

All of this suggests that the partial model has something to say about political integration. Toscano, using the Deutschian transactions theory, examines several adjoining municipalities and comes to the astounding conclusion that "it may be hypothesized that the potential for political integration of any kind between
the various sub-areas will not be very good...." But this conclusion ignores the obvious fact that these communities are already integrated within the state and nation. And being fairly typical of North American communities, these are almost certainly highly partial in relation to the more inclusive polities.

It may then be that the political integration of two or more systems is closely related to the process of "partialling out" of the integrating collectivities and the evolution of a more total political system incorporating the integrators. Of course, we must be careful about inferring such a process from the study of North American community political systems. Obviously questions of temporal sequence are of great importance: most local systems were established after the creation of the nation-state and did not in any sense "grow together". In the case of political integration at the international level, it should be remembered that the integrating polities always pre-exist the more inclusive community.

In summary: the theory of the partial political system is a model of a political system which does not contain within itself all the political life-experiences of its members. This element gives the partial system a number of unique qualities. The theory has implications, not only for the comparison of political systems, but also for (1) normative democratic theory; (2) the general theory of international relations, or world politics; (3) the particular problem of political integration at the international level.
Footnotes: Chapter 9


6 Miller, "Industry and Community Power Structure".


8 Ibid., p. 45.

9 Ibid., pp. 41-42.


11 Ibid., p. 107.


15 Ibid.

16 Ibid; Polsby, *Community Power and Political Theory*, pp. 69-95. Polsby, "Three Problems".

18 As Polsby comments, "...it is undeniably the case that in large measure, each of the social sciences is a relatively independent boundary-maintaining system, each with its own venerated ancestors, literature, training procedures, professional journals, and standards of relevance. Thus the chances are very much greater that subsequent research in community power will be influenced by the stratification theory if the researcher is a sociologist, and by pluralist theory if he is a political scientist." *Community Power and Political Theory*, p. 13.


Supra, Chapter 7.

Thus, George Grant believes that the Canadian "ruling class" turned against John Diefenbaker because of his "nationalism" and implicit anti-Americanism. There may be something in what he says. See George Grant, Lament for a Nation, Toronto McClelland and Stewart, 1965, pp. 3-24.

Toscano, op. cit., p. 111.
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Appendix: METHODOLOGY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE STUDY

The Sample

The sample consisted of 236 secondary school students in two schools in suburban Vancouver, one in the Municipality of Burnaby, one in the City of New Westminster. The latter group totalled 120 and was 45% male; the former numbered 116 and was 69% male. The model age category for both groups was seventeen.

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed to move from the general to the particular. That is, questions relating to generalized attitudes toward authority and leadership were placed before questions dealing with more specific aspects of politics. Respondents were not told the subject of the questionnaire before beginning it.

Cognitive Indices

Indices of political cognition at several systemic levels consisted entirely of the ability to identify political figures.

For the Burnaby group, the Index of Local Cognition consisted of Reeve Allan Emmott and two Municipal councillors, Russell Hicks and Douglas Drummond. For the New Westminster group, the Index was made up of Mayor Stuart Gifford and two City Aldermen, Maude Corrigan and Jack Allison. For both groups, a second Index of Local Cognition consisted of the responses to the question "Name some members of the Burnaby(New Westminster) Municipal (City) Council".
For both groups, the Index of Provincial Cognition consisted of Premier W.A.C. Bennett, Attorney-General Robert Bonner, and Liberal Leader Ray Perrault.

For the Burnaby group, the Index of National Cognition consisted of Prime Minister Pearson, Opposition Leader Diefenbaker, former Trade Minister George Hees, former Finance Minister Walter Gordon, New Democratic Leader T.C. Douglas, and External Affairs Minister Paul Martin. For the New Westminster group the same Index was made up of Martin, Hees, Gordon, Douglas and Diefenbaker.

The Index of International Cognition was made up of former President John Kennedy, President Lyndon Johnson, President Charles de Gaulle, U.N. Secretary-General U Thant, for the New Westminster group. For the Burnaby group, it consisted of Kennedy, Johnson, de Gaulle, Thant, and Secretary of State Dean Rusk.

**Comparison of the Indices**

The indices were compared with each other in two ways: (1) simple comparison; (2) "weighted comparison". In both cases, some difficulty was presented because of the different numbers of items composing each Index.
For simple comparison, the following Table was used:

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<td>Medium-High</td>
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The entry in each cell means the number of items correctly named on each Index.

For weighted comparison, the following Table was used:

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The entry in each cell means the number of items correctly named on each Index. Thus, the weighted comparison makes it "more difficult" to obtain a high score on the National and International Indices.