CITIES, POLITICS, AND CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONS:
THE URBAN CONTEXT OF POLICE PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

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FOREWORD

Public Administration Service (PAS), under a grant from the
National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, completed
a two-year research project entitled Civil Service Systems: Their
Impact on Police Administration. The project involved an analysis of
the civil service and personnel decision-making systems in 42 large
American cities in order to determine what impact (both positive and
negative) these processes have on the ability of local officials to
manage their police resources.

One product of the research project is this monograph which
focuses on urban social and political contexts within which civil
service systems operate. During the course of the research project,
it became evident that the impact of context on civil service is a
major research concern. Consequently, Public Administration Service
asked Mr. Jeffrey Slovak of its staff to prepare an essay setting
forth additional research findings and his own views on this important
subject.

Mr. Slovak is a staff associate with Public Administration Service,
with major responsibilities including the design and execution of research
projects in the fields of urban studies, police science, and city planning.
He holds a B.A. in sociology from St. Louis University and an M.A. and a
Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Chicago. He is the author of
other papers on urban politics and planning and on police officers' work
satisfaction.

The points of view expressed by Mr. Slovak are, of course, his
own and do not necessarily represent those of PAS. It is hoped that
this monograph serves to provide a clearer understanding of the issues
and relationships between civil service systems and the cities in which
they are located.

The system of public personnel administration known as civil service has come under much criticism in recent years. At various times and by various of its critics, civil service has been labelled unwieldy and excessively bureaucratic, unresponsive to the changing needs and demands of the citizenry, and obstructive of the exercise of professional discretion by public managers.1/ To remedy these short-comings--some of which have been verified by empirical research, and some not--an equally wide variety of system changes have been proposed, ranging from marginal changes in the formal responsibilities of civil service commissions to outright abolition of the systems themselves.2/ Whether any of these changes will actually be adopted is, as of yet, an open question; what is clear is that those proposed changes, if they are taken seriously by those to whom they are directed, will be processed through decision-making systems of which civil service commissions constitute only one component. In short, proposed changes to civil service systems will become political issues which will affect the interests of many actors in the decision-making systems in which they are resolved.

The purpose of this monograph is not to assess the validity of any of the criticisms of civil service; neither is it to examine the costs and the benefits of any of the proposed changes. Rather, our goal is to locate civil service systems in their larger contexts and, in doing so, to reach a deeper appreciation for the system-wide forces to propel them to do what they do in the ways that they do it in the field of public personnel administration. In that sense, the perspective of the narrative which follows is structural-functional. While most civil service systems are born in law, they grow, mature, and age in society. Thus, our initial presumption will be that the functions of civil service systems are results of the particular configurations of the social structures in which they are located. Our aim will be to examine this notion in some detail, in hopes of isolating the structural factors which most significantly determine the actual roles of civil service systems.

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  Many have made these criticisms, although few have documented them by careful research. One notable exception to this statement can be found in Savas, E.S. and Ginsburg, Sigmund G., "The Civil Service--A Meritless System?", (The Public Interest, Number 32, Summer, 1973, pp. 80-85").

2/
  Abolition of the independent civil service commission is the formal position of the National Civil Service League, as documented in its A Model Public Personnel Administration Law, (National Civil Service League, Washington, D.C., 1970).

The level of analysis for this study is urban. More specifically, this monograph is based on data collected for 42 of the 51 cities of the Permanent Community Sample of the National Opinion Research Center.3/ Those cities constitute a random sample of the large urban areas in which Americans are most likely to reside. The data themselves are from two sources: measures of the demographic, social, and economic characteristics of the cities come from the materials collected by Professor Terry N. Clark and his associates at the University of Chicago, while those on civil service commission roles and the influence of local political actors come from the materials collected by Public Administration Service during its Civil Service Research Project.

The research conducted by Public Administration Service was specifically focused upon the impact of civil service systems on police personnel administration in the cities studied. As a result, the discussion which follows focuses upon civil service in urban policing, and not on civil service generally. There are indications from the PAS data that what a civil service system does for a police department it also does for the other government departments in the jurisdictions it serves. Nevertheless, those are only indications; in the pages which follow, the analyses performed and the inferences drawn will be limited to the narrower focus of policing.

Measuring Civil Service

Devising a measure of civil service existence or activity is a difficult undertaking. Civil service systems for local police personnel are the rule and not the exception. Among the 42 cities studied by PAS, 85% reported the existence of a civil service system which covered at least some of the police officers in the department; 83% reported systems covering at least some of the department's civilian personnel as well. A distribution so heavily skewed toward the existence of civil service precludes any serious analyses based on the simple fact of existence alone.

In the PAS study, this problem was resolved by collecting data on the kinds of roles played by civil service commissions or boards in local police personnel affairs. In each of the study sites, a number of local decision-makers active in some manner in police personnel administration

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3/

For more information on the Permanent Community Sample, see Rossi, Peter H. and Robert L. Crain, "The NORC Permanent Community Sample" (Public Opinion Quarterly, Number 32, Summer, 1968, pp. 261-272). Nine cities of the original sample declined to participate in the PAS study. Comparisons of participants with non-participants failed to produce any significant variations between the two groups. Thus the 42 can also stand as a good sample of the places of residence of urban America.

were interviewed. Each of those respondents was asked to indicate which of the following roles were played by the civil service commission in police personnel administration in his or her city:

- acts as an advisor to the city administration on personnel matters;

- administers routine personnel functions;

- acts as a regulatory body over local personnel officials;

- adjudicates employees' appeals to personnel decisions; and

- formulates personnel policies.

The proportion of interview respondents in each city that indicated performance of a given role was adopted as the measure of civil service activity to be used for purposes of analysis.4/

There is, of course, much variation in civil service role performance from city to city; nevertheless, as the following table demonstrates, there is a general hierarchy of roles across all of the study sites. The adjudicative role is the one most often noted by the respondents; in a relatively distant second are the regulatory and policy-formulating roles; and the advisory and administrative roles occupy the bottom level of the hierarchy. To varying degrees, civil service commissions tend to become involved in all of the aspects of police personnel affairs,from the making of policy through its execution to its evaluation. Their most frequently noted roles, however, are in the last of these three.

4/
In each city, the interviews were conducted with all of the following who agreed to participate in the study:

- the mayor or the city manager
- the police chief
- the city personnel director
- the chairman, chairwoman, or executive secretary of the civil service board or commission
- the director of the office of personnel of the local police department
- the head of the local police union or similar organization

These individuals were selected for interview respondents during the PAS study because they were presumed to be the most knowledgeable informants on civil service commission activities and roles in their respective cities. Of course, wherever one of these designated a surrogate or representative, the person so designated became the subject of the interview.
There were two major reasons for using the role questions-- in both their content and format-- as major dependent variables for this analysis. First, they constitute very nearly an exact replication of a question asked of all municipal police departments by the National Planning Association in its National Manpower Survey of 1975. Secondly, analyses of responses to other questions asked about civil service commission activities during the interviews indicated that these role questions generated the most reliable indicators of commission activities across respondents within each study site.

Table 1

CIVIL SERVICE ROLE PERFORMANCE

Role	Mean Proportion of Choices per City	Standard Deviation
- advisory	.185	.249
- administrative	.190	.230
- regulatory	.350	.297
- adjudicative	.565	.419
- policy-formulating	.270	.273

Note: Cities not having commissions were included in the calculations for each of these categories, with scores of 0.0

Commission Roles in the Urban Context

Are the roles played by local civil service commissions in police personnel affairs functions of the types of cities in which they are located? To answer this question, we need to step back and examine more critically the characteristics of the 42 municipalities studied by the PAS research project. The table below provides some summary statistics toward that end.

Table 2

SUMMARY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDY SITES

	Mean	Standard Deviation
City Size (000's)	261.4	199.8
% of Population that is Black	15.8	14.4
% of Population Under 18 Yrs. Old	30.6	5.4
Per Capita Income	$4,947	$801
% of Population Change	-3.50	7.57
City Work Force (000's)	4.45	4.75
Fiscal Strain Indicator	.955	.145
(Current Revenues / Current Expenditures)		

		Number	Percent
Form of Government:	City Manager	18	42.9
	Other	24	57.1
Region:	Northeast	11	26.2
	North Central	10	23.8
	South	10	23.8
	West	11	26.2

There is, of course, a good deal of variation in these characteristics from city to city, as one might expect. Furthermore, that variation is systematic with respect to most of the characteristics studied. The larger cities tend to be poorer and blacker and to have larger municipal work forces than their smaller counterparts. Cities governed by managers tend to be richer, to be growing in population, and to have smaller urban work forces; those governed by mayors tend toward the opposite. Regional location also makes a difference. Cities of the west are richer than those in other regions; they are growing in population, where those in other regions are declining; they are more likely to be governed by city managers than by elected mayors. The table below documents these points.

Table 3

INTERRELATIONSHIPS AMONG URBAN CHARACTERISTICS

	City Size	% Black	% Young	P.C. Income	% of Change	Work Force	Strain	Mgr. Gov't.	Region
City Size	1.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
% Black	.454	1.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
% Young	.137	.054	1.0	--	--	--	--	--	--
P.C. Income	-.266	-.442	-.363	1.0	--	--	--	--	--
% of Change	.051	-.272	.206	.080	1.0	--	--	--	--
Work Force	.871	.549	-.058	-.226	-.132	1.0	--	--	--
Strain	-.053	-.026	-.036	.049	.005	.024	1.0	--	--
Manager Gov't	-.228	-.222	-.131	.484	.463	-.335	-.034	1.0	--
Region	(for significant relationships, see following)								1.0

Note: Underlined correlations are those which achieved statistical significance at p .05.

6.

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE RESULTS BY REGION

Group Means on Urban Characteristics:

	P.C. Income	% Change	% Young	% Black	% with City Managers
Northeast	4,533	-5.09	28.27	14.36	27.3
North Central	4,945	-8.50	33.80	9.50	10.0
South	4,456	-0.80	33.30	27.60	50.0
West	5,811	0.18	27.73	12.27	81.8
F-ratio	11.467	3.421	4.665	3.781	5.383
Probability	.00	.03	.01	.02	.004

     Constructing testable hypotheses about the impact of urban charac-
teristics on civil service commission roles is no simple matter, for the
two major sources of guidance--the lessons of history and the nature of
the present situation--offer contradictory suggestions. The historical
origins of civil service lay in national and local movements for govern-
mental reform initiated during the last quarter of the nineteenth century.
In fact, many of the civil service reformers were, in subsequent
years, to lead the "good government" movement which promoted the city
manager form of government, non-partisan municipal elections, and the
elimination of the ward system of urban political representation.[5] As
a result of their similar origins, we might expect to find a strong positive
association between the city manager form of government and the different
civil service commission roles played in the cities examined. Furthermore,
since the manager form of government is not distributed randomly throughout
the nation's cities, we would also expect the two to correlate similarly
with the social, economic, and demographic characteristics of the study sites.

     Unfortunately for these hypotheses, much has changed in American
urban life since civil service systems first appeared on the scene. As

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[5]
  See Van Riper, Paul P., History of the United Sates Civil Service
  (Evanston, Illinois: Row, Peterson & Co., 1958); Vaughn, Robert,
  Principles of Civil Service Law (New York: Matthew Bender, 1977),;
  and Hawley, Willis D., Non-Partisan Elections and the Case for Party
  Politics (New York: Wiley-Interscience; 1976).

we have already noted, the "form" of civil service (embodied in the civil service board or commission) has diffused quite widely throughout urban America; the "substance," (the actual roles played by those commissions) has come to vary widely from city to city. Sufficient time has passed since the rise of the civil service movement to suggest that the impacts of urban characteristics on civil service commissions will be role-specific, and not general or all-embracing, in nature. This notion is reinforced by another of those historical changes: the development of city management as an organized profession. All professions attempt to protect their professional "turf" from incursions by outsiders.6/ In the case of city managers, it would seem quite implausible to expect them to abdicate or to share the task of professional police personnel administration with non-professional civil service commissions. And, finally, it is unarguably true that America's cities--among them, the study sites for this particular effort--have changed markedly since the beginning of the twentieth century. Many scholars posit that a process of counterurbanization is now underway, radically reshaping the structures of urban areas and the roles and responsibilities of those who would govern them.7/

All of these factors point to the need for a reformulation of the hypotheses mentioned above to take these changes into account. Accordingly, it is hypothesized here that:

1). Civil service commission roles are a response to the complexity of urban areas. As the latter come to include a wider variety of institutions and individuals, public personnel administration becomes a more formalized and institutionalized task which must be vested in a formal and responsible body. Thus, all five civil service commission roles should be positively correlated with city size and with the percentage of the urban population that is black, which will serve as indicators of complexity.8/

2). Civil service commission roles are a response to the professionalization of the municipal government. The professional ideology of city managers should propel them to retain for themselves the major responsibility

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6/
This is, of course, one of the defining characteristics of a profession.

7/
See Berry, Brian J.L. (ed.), Urbanization and Counterurbanization, (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1976).

8/
For other uses of such variables as indicators for complexity see Eulau, Heinz and Kenneth Prewitt Labyrinths of Democracy (Indianapolis: Babbs-Merrill: 1974).

in administering local police personnel operations. Thus, the manager form of government should correlate negatively with the administrative, regulatory, and policy-formulating roles of the civil service commission; it should correlate positively with the adjudicative role, reflecting an assumption that the commission will actively play the only role left to it by the professional manager in local police personnel affairs.

3). Civil service commission roles are a response to the constraints implicit in certain contemporary characteristics of the urban scene. Two of the most important and most often discussed characteristics of American urban areas are counterurbanization and fiscal strain. The former implies decreasing urban complexity, which has been discussed above. The latter, to the extent that it exists in any given city, is a direct constraint upon the ability of that city to finance an extensive police personnel operation. Thus, change in urban population, which will serve as an indicator of counterurbanization, should correlate positively with civil service commission roles. The measure of fiscal strain should correlate negatively with those roles.

The table below presents the simple correlations of each of the five civil service roles with each of the urban characteristics previously encountered. These statistics will form the basis for discussion of the hypotheses mentioned above.

Table 4

CIVIL SERVICE ROLES AND CITY CHARACTERISTICS

	Advisory	Administrative	Regulatory	Adjudicative	Policy Formulating
City Size	.064	.202	-.002	.351	.394
% Black	-.102	.015	-.030	.164	.104
% Young	.222	-.015	.050	.337	.055
P.C. Income	-.097	-.141	-.226	-.192	-.067
% Change	.171	-2.40	-.192	.154	-.057
Fiscal Strain	.073	-0.44	-.166	-.081	-.016
Manager Gov't.	-.108	-.347	-.080	.051	-.168
City Work Force	-.133	.223	-.030	.168	.328

Note: Underlined correlations are those which achieved statistical significance at P .05.

The hypothesis on urban complexity is to some degree supported by the data. The percentage of the city's population that is black is uncorrelated with any of the civil service commission roles, but the overall size of the city's population fares better in the analysis. It is especially relevant to the adjudicative and the policy-formulating roles, and in the manner hypothesized. In that blacks are not the only population group whose presence contributes to overall urban complexity, size is probably a better measure of the concept. Thus, in two important functional areas of police personnel administration, the civil service commission's activities are clearly responsive to forces in the broader urban environment.

Qualified support for the hypothesis on form of municipal government is also offered by the data. The administrative role of the civil service commission is clearly pre-empted by a local city manager; the others are less significantly affected. While it is interesting to note that the signs of the correlations are all in the directions hypothesized, it is only in the administrative area of police personnel affairs where the findings are strongest. Furthermore, they are made a bit stronger by controlling for the correlates of manager form of government (income, population change, and municipal work force). When this procedure is followed, the only relationship to change notably is that between manager government and the adjudicative role, which rises to .347. All in all, then, civil service commission roles are also somewhat responsive to the forms of urban government.

The hypotheses on counterurbanization and fiscal strain are not supported by the data analyses; neither is significantly related to any of the roles played by local civil service commissions. Controlling the former for city size and the latter for per capita income has no effect on the results. Of course, it may be that these processes have not yet had a chance to make themselves felt in the area of police personnel affairs; nevertheless, for now they simply are unrelated to the roles of the local civil service commission.

Of all of our hypotheses, those related to urban complexity and to administrative professionalism tend to be upheld by the analyses. They lend credence to our earlier point that, whatever their genesis in the law, civil service systems do respond to th ·essures posed by the urban environments in which they operate. Looked at from the other direction, proposed changes to civil service systems will have to take into account the functional as well as the legal supports for local civil service systems.

Urban Politics, Civil Service and Police Personnel Affairs

For many social scientists, attraction to the city as an object of inquiry has been, in large measure, an attraction to its politics.

The struggles of bosses and reformers, of neighborhood organizations and city hall bureaucracies, of whites and blacks have been too significant in the history of the nation to ignore as fields for study. Thus, a voluminous literature has grown up to chronicle and analyze these events. Under the general rubric of community decision-making, much has become known about the role of political conflict in shaping urban public policy.

Civil service systems and the roles they play in police personnel affairs are one additional element that can be analyzed in the context of urban politics and community decision-making systems. As mentioned above, civil service was born in a political reform movement; its activities and responsibilities, while often formally enshrined in a body of law, are no less susceptible to attempts by urban interest groups to exert their political influence. Thus, to completely address the question of the context of civil service systems requires some attention to their positions as elements of local political systems in the 42 cities studied.

We can break down this general concern into two separate sets of questions. The first relates to the general field of police personnel affairs; the question is, basically, what kind of an issue is it in the urban political context? Who is influential in police personnel affairs in a city, and how much so? Are the influentials in that area the same actors who are influential in other urban political conflicts? In short, how does the police personnel field fit into the urban political environment, if it does at all?

The second set of questions is more specific to civil service systems. Are their roles and responsibilities shaped by local political influentials? By which ones, and to what degree? What are the implications of this influence linkage (if it exists) for the future of civil service in police personnel administration?

Sociological theory can provide some guidance in our attempts to answer the first set of questions. As mentioned above, the literature on community decision-making is quite voluminous; unfortunately, it is also rather unsystematic with regard to the approach to community issues which its component works embody. In speaking to this problem, Edward Laumann and Franz Pappi have suggested a functional approach to the categorizing and the study of community conflicts.9/ Taking their lead from the theories of social systems offered by sociologist Talcott Parsons,10/ Laumann and Pappi have characterized urban issues as being either instrumental or expressive in nature. Instrumental issues have a basic allocative character to them; they can be decided on a "more or less" basis, and

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9/
   See Laumann, Edward O. and Pappi, Franz U., Networks of Collective Action, (New York: Academic Press: 1976).

10/
   See Parsons, Talcott, The Social System (Glencoe; Free Press: 1951).

because of that are generally accompanied during their resolution by bargaining, compromise and brokering among the issue protagonists. Expressive issues are quite different; their general nature is "all or none," victory or defeat. The basic dynamic is simply whether one of the issue protagonists can muster a sufficient quantity of issue-relevant resources to his or her position to carry the day over the resources mustered by the opponent.

Electoral contests are good examples of expressive issues. While much bargaining for support characterizes campaigns for office and the mustering of electoral resources, the ultimate result is a zero-sum commodity: one side wins and the other loses. By the same token, program issues are generally instrumental in character after the initial decision to have a program has been reached. Questions related to the program itself are eminently bargainable; a given program can be funded at higher or lower levels, it can encompass many or few component activities, and it can define the recipients of its services broadly or narrowly.

During the personal interviews conducted for the PAS Civil Service Research Project, a series of questions was asked of each respondent with regard to the relative influence of selected urban individuals or groups in each of five different issue arenas. The 17 urban actors were:

a) The City Council

b) The Mayor

c) The Democratic Party

d) The Republican Party

e) Church Leaders

f) Chamber of Commerce

g) Newspapers

h) Bar Associations

i) Labor Unions

j) Ethnic Groups

k) Neighborhood Groups

l) Heads of Local Government Agencies

m) City and County Employees

n) Industrial Leaders

o) Retail Merchants

p) Bankers and Executives of Other Financial Institutions

q) Other Businessmen

and the five issue arenas were:

- winning a school board election;
- winning a mayoral election;
- starting an air pollution control program;
- passing a community development block grant proposal;
- exerting influence over police personnel programs or policies.

The responses to these questions offer an opportunity to answer the first set of research queries posed above.11/

The first step in formulating those answers is to compare the influence profiles which characterize each of the five issues, as depicted in Figure 1. The relative heights of each of the bars in the figure correspond to the mean influence ranking accorded each of the 17 actors listed above in each of the issue arenas across all of the study sites.

In line with the theoretical ideas developed above, we would expect the two electoral issues to be expressive in character and thus very similar to each other in the general form of their influence profiles. By the same token, we would expect the two programmatic issues to be quite similar to each other in influence profile. Furthermore, we would expect the two pairs of issues to be notably different from each other, in line with their basic difference in issue character. Visual inspection of the figure supports our expectations. The two electoral issues exhibit much flatter profiles than the two programmatic matters, which is in line with our theory. Authoritative decision in electoral contests lies with the voters, who are divided among the various groups included in the question (as well as many that were not). Different groups of voters can exert influence proportional to or greater than their numbers in the population, and those that do must be seriously considered by the electoral candidates. In the program issues, on the other hand, there is usually one source of authoritative decision--the mayor or the city council (and in most cases it is the latter). The interests of other members of the community are usually separate pieces of the overall program; their influence over the overall program should be much less than that of those closest to the source of authoritative decision. Visual inspection of the table demonstrates this fact.

Where, in all of this, does the police personnel area fit? The answer, as suggested in Figure 2, is as an instrumental issue like the block grant and pollution control programs. The figure is based on the correlations between the levels of influence enjoyed by each of the 17 actors in one issue with their respective influence levels in every other issue.12/ It demonstrates quite well the basic instrumental-expressive dichotomy discussed above and the place of the police personnel area among issues of the former type.
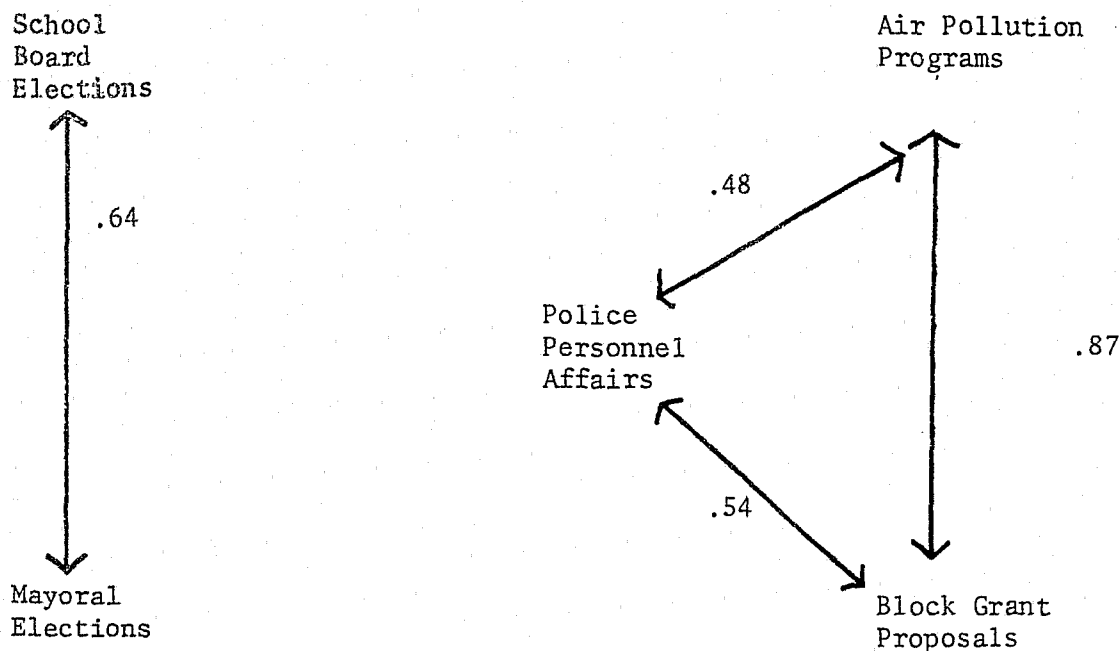

11/
The urban political actors included in the question were chosen to replicate the content and the format of the questions asked by Clark and his associates in their study of community decision-making systems. The same was true of the first four issue areas listed; the last, of course, was dictated by the particular needs of the PAS study. For more detail on Clark's use of these questions and his rise and results, see Clark, Terry Nichols, "Cities Differ--But How and Why?" (Unpublished research report-- August, 1976).

12/
The coefficients depicted are Spearman's rank-order correlation coefficients.

Figure 2

INTER-ISSUE INFLUENCE CORRELATIONS

School
Board
Elections

Air Pollution
Programs

.64

.48

Police
Personnel
Affairs

.87

.54

Mayoral
Elections

Block Grant
Proposals

(Note: No statistically significant correlations link either
electoral issue to any of the programmatic issues.)

Issue profiles speak to the distribution of political influence across
issue concerns, but they do not tell us who actually exerts political influ-
ence in each of those areas. Table 5 rectifies that situation by presenting,
for each of the five issues examined, the rank ordering of influence levels
enjoyed by each of the 17 urban actors. With regard to the police personnel
area in particular, the sources of authoritative decision--the mayor and
the city council--are the most influential actors in that matter, which is
hardly a surprising finding. It is interesting to note, however, that secon-
dary amounts of influence in this arena are distributed rather widely among
different kinds of local political actors. Newspapers, "grass roots" citizen
groups, organized labor, and organized business all play at least some role
in determining local police personnel policies and programs. Proponents of
normative pluralistic democratic theory, who would prefer to see access to
formal decision-makers distributed among a wide variety of different types
of local actors, would be pleased at these results.

Table 5

ISSUE INFLUENTIALS

Police Personnel	School Elections	Mayoral Elections	Air Pollution	Block Grants
mayor	newspapers	newspapers	city council	city council
city council	neighborhood groups	Democratic Party	mayor	mayor
newspapers	Democratic Party	mayor	newspapers	neighborhood groups
ethnic groups	ethnic groups	labor unions	industrial leaders	newspapers
neighborhood groups	labor unions	neighborhood groups	chamber of commerce	heads gov't agencies
labor unions	church leaders	ethnic groups	heads gov't agencies	ethnic groups
retailers	mayor	city council	neighborhood groups	chamber of commerce
heads gov't agencies	Republican Party	public employees	labor unions	church leaders
church leaders	chamber of commerce	Republican Party	retailers	financial leaders
public employees	public employees	chamber of commerce	financial leaders	industrial leaders
chamber of commerce	city council	financial leaders	other businessmen	retailers
other businessmen	industrial leaders	church leaders	church leaders	labor unions
industrial leaders	retailers	industrial leaders	Democratic Party	other businessmen
financial leaders	financial leaders	retailers	public employees	Democratic Party
bar association	other businessmen	other businessmen	ethnic groups	public employees
Democratic Party	heads gov't agencies	retailers	Republican Party	Republican Party
Republican Party	bar association	bar association	bar association	bar association

Noting who is and is not influential in each of the issue arenas is an interesting exercise in its own right, but our concern must be a bit broader in scope. Our categorizing of the issues derived from considerations based on sociological theory; our explanation of why certain actors are influential in certain issues, especially in that of police personnel affairs, should also relate to that theory. Otherwise, our explanations for the findings can be little more than ad hoc rationalizations.

Let us return to our categorization of issues as being either instrumental or expressive. We know from our earlier analyses that the police personnel arena is instrumental in nature; by definition, it is an allocative "more or less" type of issue. Superficially, we might expect that for each of our 17 urban political actors, influence in other instrumental issues rather than in expressive issues, might be more strongly associated with influence in police personnel affairs. However, we should qualify this expectation. Involvement in instrumental concerns presupposes a certain amount of specialization in the relevant budgetary, procedural and legal components of those issues. Furthermore, the concerns themselves vary widely in their particular contents. Specialization in one may preclude specialization in another. In fact, it may very well be that the actors who are most influential in police personnel affairs are those who enter that issue with a political base in expressive issue controversies. They, rather than the specialists in other instrumental concerns, may be the actors who have the time, the energy, and the knowledge of general community concerns necessary to engage in the task of resolving relatively specialized police personnel problems.

Table 6 summarizes our empirical findings in this regard. For each of the 17 actors, the influence score in police personnel affairs was correlated with that in each of the other four issues, across all 42 cities studied. In the table, each actor is located in accordance with whether the highest of those correlations linked police personnel influence to influence in either an instrumental or an expressive urban political issue. The actors denoted by asterisks are those who are the most influential on a relative scale in the police personnel area.

The findings in Table 6 generally support our expectation based on the limits of specialization in instrumental concerns. Six of the eight actors most influential in the police personnel context derive that influence from their abilities to maneuver in larger expressive concerns for the city as a whole. Only two actors (retailers and neighborhood groups) can directly translate specialized influence in an instrumental arena to the same status in the police personnel arena. In the latter type of issue, the field belongs primarily to those who are best able to translate generalized community concerns and values into specific police personnel program options.

Table 6

INFLUENCE LINKS TO THE POLICE PERSONNEL ARENA

Influence in Instrumental Issues	Influence in Police Personnel Affairs
Republican Party	(.468)
Church Leaders	(.468)
Chamber of Commerce	(.593)
Neighborhood Groups *	(.478)
Retailers *	(.373)
Other Businessmen	(.423)
Public Employees	(.223)

Influence in Expressive Issues	Influence in Police Personnel Affairs
City Council *	(.327)
Mayor *	(.660)
Democratic Party	(.639)
Newspapers *	(.441)
Labor Unions *	(.284)
Ethnic Groups *	(.465)
Agency Heads *	(.552)
Industrialists	(.569)
Bankers	(.451)
Bar Associations	(.240)

Political Influence and Civil Service Commissions

Influencing the general direction of police personnel affairs in a city and influencing the form and function of a local civil service commission are by no means equivalent activities. We have noted above that civil service bodies play very different roles in different types of cities; they can be quite central or quite marginal to the local system for police personnel administration. Which one is the case in any given city is, of course, an empirical question. The style of our argument to this point, however, would suggest that civil service commission roles may very well be the responses of those commissions to local political environments. It is to an empirical examination of that suggestion that we now turn.

In doing so, however, we should note one potential pitfall facing our interpretations of the research findings. We can (and will) correlate political influence scores with civil service role scores to search for

the impacts mentioned above, but we must adopt standards for interpreting those correlation coefficients. Negative coefficients are not especially problematic but positive ones might be interpreted in either of two ways. On the one hand, we might conclude that the more influence a particular actor has, the more he or she uses it to support and encourage performance of a given role by a civil service commission. Alternatively, we might view this as a situation of "countervailing power" in which commissions more actively pursue certain functions in order to counteract the influence of particular urban actors. Given the type of data at hand, we cannot with certainty distinguish which is the best interpretation. We will adopt the former in the paragraphs to follow. That may not be appropriate to certain individual cases, but it is plausible to believe that, over the long-term, balances of countervailing power in most types of systems do not endure.

Table 7 presents the correlations between levels of influence enjoyed in police personnel affairs by each of our 17 urban actors and the role scores for civil service commissions in those actors' respective cities. The significance probabilities for each coefficient are included in the table parenthetically.

Table 7 provides much information of different types, depending on the analytic perspective we choose to adopt. Consider first the rows of the table. The mayor and the labor unions emerge as the most decisive actors in the operating context of the local civil service commission; the influence each possesses has a functional impact on three of the five civil service roles being examined. At the opposite extreme stand five other actors: church leaders, the chamber of commerce, government agency heads, bankers and financial lenders, and other businessmen. Each of these is irrelevant to the roles played by the local civil service commission. The remainder of our urban actors stand nearer the center of the continuum, influencing some but not others of the local commission's roles.

When we turn to the columns of Table 7, another notable finding emerges. By far, the policy-formulating role is the one most responsive to local influentials; the advisory role is the one least responsive. The latter is not particularly surprising, given the relatively mild input on public policy which is usually the result of advisory committees. The former is an interesting finding , from two perspectives. Once again, normative theorists of democracy would applaud it as being a reflection of the way things "ought" to be. Before we join in the applause, however, we should note that a large element of rational calculation probably enters the picture. The PAS research project demonstrated that policy-formulating commissions appeared to promote a number of police programmatic responses, among them more female and minority police officers, more extensive police recruiting procedures, and more leniency on recruits' prior criminal records. These departmental outputs are

Table 7

CIVIL SERVICE ROLES AND POLITICAL INFLUENCE

	Advisory	Administrative	Regulatory	Adjudicative	Policy Formulating
City Council	...	-.258 (.05)	...	...	...
Mayor	...	.281 (.04)	.213 (.09)	...	.239 (.06)
Democratic Party	...	...	...	-.307 (.02)	...
Republican Party	...	...	...	...	.210 (.09)
Church Leaders	...	...	...	...	...
Chamber of Commerce	...	...	...	...	...
Newspapers	...	.210 (.04)	...	...	...
Bar Associations	-.255 (.05)	...	...	...	.246 (.06)
Labor Unions	...	.272 (.04)	...	.219 (.08)	.345 (.01)
Ethnic Groups	...	...	...	...	.331 (.02)
Neighborhood Groups	...	...	...	...	.246 (.06)
Heads of Local Gov't Agencies	...	...	...	...	...
City and County Employees	.326 (.02)	...	...	.271 (.04)	...
Industrial Leaders	...	...	.232 (.07)	...	...
Retail Merchants	...	...	.203 (.10)	...	...
Bankers, Financial Executives	...	...	...	...	...
Other Businessmen	...	...	...	...	...

clearly congruent with the interests of many of these urban actors whose influence levels show positive correlations with the policy formulating role in the last column of Table 7.

Perhaps most interesting of all is the fact that of the 18 notable correlation coefficients depicted in Table 7, 15 are positive and only three negative. In general, the tendency appears to be that the influence in police personnel affairs possessed by most urban community actors becomes translated into more elaborate civil service commissions, into commissions that perform more functional roles more often. If the interpretive convictions we adopted earlier are at all feasible, they suggest that there is little demand emanating from the local political context for a contraciton of civil service commission activity. To the contrary, the general trend is more toward demanding expansion.

Putting the Pieces Together

To this point, we have considered the urban environmental indicators and the political influence measures as separable and separate influences on local civil service commissions. The time has now come to round out the discussion by conceiving of those independent variables as simultaneous forces, so as to identify the net effects of each when the others are held constant. In other words, we seek in this concluding section to discover which of the independent effects on civil service commissions are the strongest--the urban environmental indicators or the political influence constraints.

One could plausibly argue for either position and build reasonable hypotheses as a result of that argument. Rather than attempt to do so, and thus perhaps to enter an unnecessary theoretical debate, we will proceed inductively. That is, we will select those variables-- environmental and political alike--whose simple correlations with the civil service roles achieved statistical significance, and then examine the higher-order correlations resulting when either environmental or political factors are controlled. The changes in the relationships yielded by this procedure (if any, in fact, are yielded) should provide us with sufficient evidence to assess the separate impacts of each factor on each civil service role.

The regulatory role can be dispensed with quite easily because unfortunately noneof our test variables correlated with it at conventional levels of statistical significance. It may well be that this role, where it is actually performed by a civil service commission, is dictated by law and thus impervious to environmental or political constraint. Whatever the reason, the finding remains the same: neither features of

the general urban environment nor features of the local political struc-
ture relate to the regulatory role to any notable degree.

The situation is quite different with regard to the administra-
tive role, for in this case it appears that environmental and political
factors work together to magnify what are much smaller, independent
efforts. As the table below demonstrates, the effects on the administra-
tive role of the manager form of government and of mayoral influence in
the police personnel arena virtually disappear when their respective
covariates are held constant. The effects of city council and labor
union influence do not disappear, but they do decline when form of govern-
ment is held constant. Thus, while council influence and union influence
do make their own respective contributions to the administrative role, the
largest role correlates are attributable to the combined effects pro-
duced by the manager form of government and its associated mayoral
level of influence in police personnel affairs. In short, the system
combines to make the whole greater than the sum of the parts.

Table 8

CORRELATIONS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE ROLE
with

	Simple	Partial [13]
City Manager Government	-.347	-.067
Mayoral Influence in Police Personnel Matters	.281	.076
City Council Influence in Police Personnel Matters	-.258	-.246
Labor Union Influence in Police Personnel Matters	.272	.219

[13]
In this and the tables that follow, the controlling procedure was as
follows: correlations of urban environmental characteristics and
civil service roles were computed controlling for all relevant
influence variables simultaneously, while those of influence variables
and roles were computed controlling for all environmental characteris-
tics simultaneously.

The story is largely the same, although the specific variables differ, when we turn to the policy-making role of the civil service commission. As the table below demonstrates, all of the simple correlations decline in magnitude when independent variables are held constant. None disappear entirely; each makes some independent contributions to the degree to which a policy-making role is played in police personnel affairs by the local civil service commission. However, the impact of each is magnified in the context of the system as a whole.

Table 9

CORRELATIONS OF THE POLICY-MAKING ROLE
with

	Simple	Partial
City Size	.394	.262
Labor Union Influence in Police Personnel Matters	.345	.244
Ethnic Group Influence in Police Personnel Matters	.331	.221

With both the adjudicative and the advisory roles, the situation is different. With one exception in each case, the general pattern is the reverse of that discovered above; controlling for the other independent variables magnifies the relationships with both of these roles. In these two areas, the urban environment and the local political structure tend to moderate each other's simple impacts on civil service commissions' roles. This is best illustrated with the adjudicative role by the civil service commission. However, because those two factors vary negatively (public employees have more influence over police personnel matters in smaller cities, and vice versa) they tend to suppress each other's impacts. The degree of suppression is not complete, but it is notable.

Table 10

CORRELATIONS OF THE ADJUDICATIVE ROLE
with

	Simple	Partial
City Size	.351	.418
% City Population Under 18	.337	.301
Democratic Party Influence in Police Personnel Matters	-.307	-.329
Public Employees' Influence in Police Personnel Matters	.271	.361

Table 11

CORRELATIONS OF THE ADVISORY ROLE
with

	Simple	Partial
% City Population Under 18	.222	.259
Public Employees Influence in Police Personnel Matters	.326	.318
Bar Association Influence in Police Personnel Matters	-.255	-.288

* * * * * * *

Conclusion

While our analyses have ranged rather widely across a number of topics, their findings can be brought together around a few basic points to provide us with some guidance for the future. First, "civil service" is not the unidimensional subject often implied in popular dialogue and political debate. Civil service commissions can play many or few roles in police personnel administration from city to city. Furthermore, the degree to which any given role is played is a function of many factors. Some roles-- particularly the regulatory role -- are relatively impervious to local variations in the urban environment or the local political structure. Others -- the administrative, advisory, adjudicative and policy-formulating roles -- are the results of specific combinations of external factors.

From our analyses, we can inductively separate these last four into two groups of roles. In the first, composed of the advisory and adjudicative roles, environmental factors like urban complexity and administrative professionalism seem to moderate the influences of local political actors like public employee organizations. In the second group, composed of the administrative and the policy-formulating roles, general urban characteristics and political influences magnify each other in determining the degree of role performance by the commission. In the first group, the directions of political influences are divided; some influentials promote more role performance, others less. In the second group; all (or almost all) of the influentials promote more performance. Finally, in the first group labor (both public and private sector) seems to be particularly prominent as a directing political force; in the second, influence is distributed across a number of local political actors, most of whom are of general prominence in the larger police personnel issue arena.

All of these variations between the two groups, when taken together, suggest that the first set might be more malleable than the second. That is, they suggest that civil service reforms might stand their best chance of acceptance and implementation if they are directed toward changes in either the advisory or the adjudicative roles of the civil service commission. In these two areas, politics modifies environmental factors, divergent interests in civil service commission roles are apparent, and the politically influential actors constitute a rather narrow interest group. The obverse of each of these conditions holds true with regard to the administrative and policy-formulating roles, where change is faced with a much thornier path. In the short term at least, civil service reformers might more profitably address their situation and their efforts to the advisory and especially the

adjudicative functions of their local civil service commission.

That these systematic variations between civil service commission roles should exist is quite consonant with the notion with which we began this paper. Civil service commissions, while born in the law, grow or decline in society. Because of this, they are constrained by social forces and social relationships often not envisioned by the drafters of the enabling legislation. Those who would change the handling of police personnel affairs in their cities and those who would change or eliminate civil service commissions would do well to recall these variations.

END