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NONPARTISAN SLATING GROUPS: THE ROLE OF REFORMED PARTIES IN CITY ELECTORAL POLITICS

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NONPARTISAN SLATING GROUPS:
THE ROLE OF REFORMED PARTIES IN
CITY ELECTORAL POLITICS

by

LUIS RICARDO FRAGA

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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April, 1984
NONPARTISAN SLATING GROUPS:
The Role of Reformed Parties in
City Electoral Politics

by

LUIS RICARDO FRAGA

ABSTRACT

The nonpartisan slating group is an organization which serves the same functions as a political party, but operates in a nonpartisan electoral system. As such, it is extremely important in efforts to structure the scope of conflict in municipal electoral politics to favor identified interests. With its origins in the Municipal Reform Movement of the Progressive Era, those interests who established and most benefited from these organizations were predominantly upper and middle class and white. The nonpartisan slating group must therefore be understood as a further effort on the part of municipal structural reformers to institutionalize their domination of city politics. Their success has worked to the systematic disadvantage of working classes and ethnic and racial minorities.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. THE NONPARTISAN SLATING GROUP AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF POLITICAL INFLUENCE</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE MUNICIPAL REFORM MOVEMENT: THE HISTORICAL AND INTELLECTUAL ORIGINS OF THE NONPARTISAN SLATING GROUP</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Contemporary Effects of the Municipal Reform Movement</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE NONPARTISAN SLATING GROUP: ORIGINS, GOALS, AND STRUCTURE</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallas and the Citizens' Charter Association</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Antonio and the Good Government League</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abilene and the Citizens for Better Government</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Origins, Goals, and Structure of the Nonpartisan Slating Group</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. DIMENSIONS OF ELECTORAL DOMINATION</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electoral Success</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidate Recruitment and Representation</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financing and Campaigning</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electoral Domination and the Nonpartisan Slating Group</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. PATTERNS OF ELECTORAL SUPPORT</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for the Good Government League</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Candidates and the Good Government League</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Losses of the Good Government League</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Electoral Base of the Good Government League</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. THE NONPARTISAN SLATING GROUP AND CITY ELECTORAL POLITICS</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limits to Electoral Hegemony: Minority Rights and the National Government</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Party Activity in a Nonpartisan, At-Large Electoral System</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METHODOLOGICAL APPENDIX</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF REFERENCES</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE</td>
<td>PAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1. Population Characteristics for the Cities of Dallas, San Antonio, and Abilene</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1. The Evolution of Reform Adoption, 1934-1979</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2. Regional Distribution of Reformed Governmental Structures, 1975</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1. Races Won by Citizens' Charter Association, 1931-1975, City of Dallas</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2. Races Won by Good Government League, 1955-1975, City of San Antonio</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4. Candidate Racial/Ethnic Background, 1951-1975, City of Dallas</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5. Candidate Racial/Ethnic Background, 1955-1975, City of San Antonio</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6. Candidate Racial/Ethnic Background, 1966-1982, City of Abilene</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7. Candidate Occupational Background, 1931-1975, City of Dallas</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8. Candidate Occupational Background, 1955-1975, City of San Antonio</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9. Candidate Occupational Background, 1966-1979, City of Abilene</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.10. Minority Candidate Occupational Background, 1951-1975, City of Dallas</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11. Minority Candidate Occupational Background, 1955-1975, City of San Antonio</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.12. Minority Candidate Occupational Background, 1966-1979, City of Abilene</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.13. Candidate Census Tract of Residence, 1951-1975, City of Dallas</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>Candidate Census Tract of Residence, 1955-1975, City of San Antonio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>Minority Candidate Census Tract of Residence, 1951-1975, City of Dallas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>Minority Candidate Census Tract of Residence, 1955-1975, City of San Antonio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>Campaign Contributions and Expenditures, 1971-1975, City of Dallas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>Campaign Contributions and Expenditures, 1971-1975, City of San Antonio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>Campaign Expenditures, 1966-1978, City of Abilene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>GGL Support, Ethnicity, and Race, 1955-1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Percent GGL Support and Percent Hispanic Registered Voters, 1971-1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>Vote Polarization: Percent GGL Support, 1955-1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>First Choice Preferences of Ethnic/Racial Groups, 1955-1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>Percent GGL Support and Median Home Value, 1955-1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>Minority Candidate Success Rate, 1955-1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>Sources of Support for GGL Minority Candidates, 1955-1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>First Choice Preferences: Minority GGL Candidates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>Good Government League Defeats</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

THE NONPARTISAN SLATING GROUP AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF POLITICAL INFLUENCE

The distribution of political influence in city politics has long been studied by social scientists. Yet, one major organization in the politics of many communities, the nonpartisan slating group, has received only scant attention by them. A nonpartisan slating group is a voluntary political organization which recruits, nominates, finances, and campaigns on behalf of a "slate," i.e., group, of candidates in a nonpartisan electoral system.

Several scholars make passing reference to slating groups in more general discussions of nonpartisanship, but the only direct general reference to slating groups is contained in Banfield's and Wilson's *City Politics*.\(^1\) Banfield and Wilson characterize nonpartisan slating groups as "independent local parties" which are only "reasonably successful at the polls" and "do not last very long."\(^2\) These organizations, they continue, have their origins in the "middle class protestant ethos.\(^3\) That is, with no material inducements to offer participants, they must "rely on...the satisfaction of doing one's duty as a citizen" as sufficient incentive to promote organizational participation.\(^4\)

Banfield and Wilson identify the following cities as having had such "independent good-government parties"

Although such a characterization of nonpartisan slating groups may be accurate for some cities, there is ample evidence to justify an interpretation of the role of these organizations in other cities as one of substantial influence in, if not total domination of local electoral politics and policy making. Of paramount importance in understanding why this is so is the function that the group can serve in providing its set of candidates an organizational label which links them to one another and especially identifies them as a group to the electorate. In this fashion the nonpartisan slating group serves essentially as a political party in city electoral politics.

Political parties are organizations which structure the distribution of political influence of various segments of the community. Leon Epstein defines a political party as "...any group, however loosely organized, seeking to elect government office holders under a given label." 6 Frank J. Sorauf's functional definition of a political party includes its activities as an organization which "...select[s]
candidates and contest[s] elections,...propagandize[s] on behalf of a party ideology or program, and ...organize[s] and attempt[s] to guide the elected officeholders of government." Similarly Robert H. Blank notes that parties are simultaneously electoral organizations, governing organizations, and psychological affiliations." Lastly, Sigmund Neuman defines the political party generally

...as the articulate organization of society's active political agents, those who are concerned with the control of governmental power and who compete for popular support with another group or groups holding divergent views. As such, it is the great intermediary which links social forces and ideologies to official governmental institutions and relates them to political action within the larger political community.

Important in each of these definitions of the political party is its function as an organization which has as a primary purpose the election of candidates to office. Epstein characterizes this function as "structuring the vote":

All that is meant by the awkward word 'structuring' is the imposition of an order or pattern enabling voters to choose candidates according to their labels...the structure may be little more than that provided by the label itself and the voters' acquaintance with it... Anthony King further expands upon this idea:

...the word 'structuring'...may be used in rather different senses...[These senses] may refer simply to parties' efforts to persuade voters to respond to particular party labels, and to voters' responses to those labels. Or
they may refer to parties' efforts to persuade citizens to adopt particular opinions and to the consequences of party activity and the configuration of the party system for the structure of political opinion in a community.\textsuperscript{11}

The consequences of structuring votes for the formal representation of diverse interests in governmental legislatures is enextricably linked to the nature of the electoral system. That is, the degree to which the accumulation of votes leads to electoral success depends not only upon the number of votes received by a party's candidate, but especially upon the geographical distribution of the vote as it relates to the representational system as being either proportional or single-member district.\textsuperscript{12}

Much has been written about the representational consequences of the above described systems of election. It is generally argued that a system of proportional representation provides incentives for a number of parties to develop representing a broad spectrum of diverse opinion within a political community. A system of winner-take-all single member districts tends to restrict the development of several parties and the two parties which tend to develop usually represent conglomerations of diverse opinions united primarily only for election purposes. The formal representation of diverse interests within governmental decision making in such a system is usually less than occurs in a system of proportional representation.\textsuperscript{13} As Maurice Duverger observes:
...the party system and the electoral system are two realities that are indissolubly linked and even difficult sometimes to separate by analysis: the degree of accuracy in political representation, for example, depends upon the electoral system and the party system, considered as features of the same complex, rarely distinguishable from one another.  

E.E. Schattschneider in *The Semisovereign People* sketches a framework which is useful for integrating the above described characterizations of the role of political parties as mechanisms which can structure the distribution of influence. Crucial to his approach is the dictum that "we shall never understand politics unless we know what the struggle is about." Not surprisingly, Schattschneider provides an answer: "The crucial problem in politics is the management of conflict."  

Schattschneider, however, does not explicitly define "conflict," although he does provide an abundance of evidence which allows one to identify two fundamental dimensions to political conflict. Conflict exists when contending interests in the political arena disagree about the ends which public policy should serve. In the common parlance this is referred to as "policy differences. Conflict also exists when contending interests disagree about the decision-making mechanisms which are utilized by government and its agents to reach public policy decisions. The procedures whereby government officials decide between different policy goals can serve as the second major focus of political conflict.
Schattschneider argues that, "The most important strategy of politics is concerned with the scope of conflict." Different political actors attempt to structure the "scope of conflict" in politics to favor their specific interests. Unfortunately, he does not provide a definition of "scope of conflict." I shall define it as the sum of formal and informal political actors including individuals, groups, and organizations, who become involved in a conflict, and the political resources which each actor mobilizes in attempting to favorably affect the conflict's outcome. Political parties can certainly be primary among these political actors.

Schattschneider identifies two major ways in which political actors attempt to structure the scope of conflict. First, they try to restrict, expand, or otherwise alter the scope of conflict to favor their interests. Actors with limited resources attempt to enlarge the scope of conflict in hopes of bringing in new actors who with their resources might serve to alter the current balance of influence. Successful and dominant actors attempt to restrict the scope of conflict. Their interests are currently being addressed by government and the active participation of new actors may threaten their predominant position.

Another very effective way to alter the scope of conflict is to redefine the lines of political cleavage by introducing new issues into the political arena. "The substitution of conflicts," Schattschneider writes, "is the
most devastating kind of political strategy." The contending interests defined by an old cleavage can become irrelevant in the light of a new cleavage based upon a new issue: "every shift of the line of cleavage affects the nature of the conflict, produces a new set of winners and losers and a new kind of result."  

The second way in which political actors can attempt to structure the scope of conflict is to dominate the establishment of decision-making mechanisms used to determine whose interests will be considered by governmental decision makers and whose interests are most likely to prevail. Schattschneider notes that:

The very fact that politics deals largely with procedure rather than substance (with power, institutions, concepts of organization, rights and government, none of which is an end in itself) demonstrates its strategic character...Whoever decides what the game is about decides also who can get into the game...The rules of the game determine the requirements for success...The grand strategy of politics deals with public policy concerning conflict. This is the ultimate policy.

Political parties can serve precisely as such mechanisms which attempt to structure the scope of conflict. They can enlarge or restrict the scope of conflict, redefine the lines of political cleavage, or dominate the establishment of mechanisms of governmental decision making to favor some interests over others.

The operation of political parties at the municipal level in the United States in each of these functions has
been widely studied. Leaders of urban political machines who dominated much American city politics in the early twentieth century certainly attempted to structure the scope of conflict to serve their interests. Leaders of the Municipal Reform Movement who sought to overthrow the political machine also sought to structure the scope of conflict to their favor in municipal politics.

What role then does an organization such as the nonpartisan slating group serve in an electoral system where party labels are legally prohibited from appearing on the ballot? I hope to demonstrate that in operating as a successful political party the slating group also attempts to structure the scope of conflict to favor the interests of identifiable actors in city politics. To this end, the operation of nonpartisan slating groups in three Texas cities will be examined. In Dallas, the Citizens' Charter Association actively participated in the city's electoral politics from 1931 to 1975. In San Antonio, the Good Government League similarly participated in city politics from 1955 to 1975. And in Abilene, the Citizens for Better Government continues its involvement in city elections since its formal establishment in 1966. Table 1.1 provides basic population data for each of the three cities. In each of them substantial ethnic and racial diversity is evident.

To show how nonpartisan slating groups have structured the scope of conflict it is instructive to examine their link to the Municipal Reform Movement. I will identify the
Table 1.1
Population Characteristics for the Cities of Dallas, San Antonio, and Abilene

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Black(%)</th>
<th>Hispanic(%)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dallas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>158,976</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>260,475</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>294,734</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>434,462</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>679,684</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>844,189</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>904,078</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Antonio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>253,854</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>408,442</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>587,718</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>41.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>654,289</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>786,023</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>53.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abilene</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>45,570</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>90,368</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>89,486</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>98,315</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>12.6</td>
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</tbody>
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Table 1.1 (continued)

b In census years 1950 and 1960 Blacks were categorized as "nonwhites" which included Negroes, Indians, Japanese, Chinese, and other nonwhite races. In census years 1920, 1930, 1940, 1970, and 1980 Blacks were categorized as a unique group.

c In census years 1920, 1940, 1950, and 1960 Hispanics were categorized as whites or Caucasians. In 1930 "Mexicans" were categorized as a distinct group. In 1970 Hispanics were categorized as "Persons of Spanish Heritage." In 1980, Hispanics were categorized as "Persons of Spanish/Hispanic Origin."
origins, goals, strategies, and leaders of the Reform Movement as they relate to the class and ethnic conflict which characterized urban politics during the Progressive Era. I will argue that the Reform Movement must be largely understood as an effort by upper and middle class, predominantly white individuals with business backgrounds and interests to ensure their domination of city politics. Many of the structural reforms they proposed precisely served this end.

In so doing I will lay the foundation for the analysis of the origins, goals, strategies, and leaders of the nonpartisan slating group. It will be demonstrated that the slating group was another mechanism utilized by reformers to dominate city electoral politics. It represented a final step in their efforts to structure the scope of conflict.

The success of the slating group in serving this purpose will then be examined in detail. Each of the slating groups has been overwhelmingly successful in electing its candidates to office for eighteen to forty-five years. Patterns of decision making in candidate recruitment and the representational consequences of candidate selection will be utilized to determine the diversity of class, ethnic, and racial interests represented within the slating group. It will be argued that a clear bias favoring upper and middle class, predominantly white interests characterizes these groups.
Lastly, the patterns of support for candidates of the slating group will be examined to determine if the same bias in interest representation characterizes the slating group's sources of electoral strength. It will be argued that a consistent pattern of such a bias in electoral support exists.

The nonpartisan slating group can be an effective means for structuring the scope of conflict in city electoral politics. As such it can be the most important actor determining the distribution of influence. To the extent that a successful slating group, however, minimizes the representation of working class and non-white ethnic and racial interests in its activities, slating group domination works to the disadvantage of disfavored minorities.
Footnotes - I


2 Banfield and Wilson, p. 143.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Banfield and Wilson, 1966, p. 143.


10 Epstein, 1967, p. 77.


16 Schattschneider, 1960, p. 71.
17 Schattschneider, 1960, p. 3.
19 Schattschneider, 1960, p. 74.
20 Schattschneider, 1960, p. 63.
21 Schattschneider, 1960, pp. 48, 67, 72, 105.
CHAPTER II

THE MUNICIPAL REFORM MOVEMENT:
The Historical and Intellectual Origins
of the Nonpartisan Slating Group

The Municipal Reform Movement must be understood within the context of substantial class and ethnic conflict between its leaders and supporters and those of the urban machine. Some historians of the Progressive Era characterize reformers as the proponents of governmental professionalism in municipal politics. Such a characterization is accurate if one solely relies upon the rhetoric of these reformers to analyze their interests and activities. However, the class and ethnic components to the conflict they engendered must be recognized. Only then can the consequences of municipal reform for the distribution of influence be properly examined.

Without the slightest exaggeration we may assert that with very few exceptions, the city governments of the United States are the worst in Christendom—the most expensive, the most inefficient, and the most corrupt. No one who has any considerable knowledge of our own country and of other countries can deny this...

Such was the opinion of Andrew D. White, a leading reformer at the turn of the century, describing in 1890 the condition of American cities dominated by urban political machines. Six major results were attributed the urban machine by municipal reformers of the day: 1) corruption and graft, 2) mismanagement, 3) high taxes, 4) parochial
decision making, 5) government by ethnic politicians, and 6) partisan politics.

The first three were closely linked in the critics' minds. A primary basis of governmental decision making under the urban machine was rewarding one's supporters. Material gains through patronage such as employment, contracts, and services served as important incentives to support machine politicians.³ This decision making was criticized by reformers as exemplifying the corruption and graft of public officials. Stories were legendary of the politicians from humble origins who were able to become quite wealthy after a period of service in public office or as a supporter of the machine organization.⁴ Lord Bryce, an early student of American municipal politics, offered as one of the primary reasons for the deplorable conditions of American cities at the turn of the century was the abundant presence of incompetent corrupt officials.⁵

The reformers argued that the result of such political criteria in public decision making was governmental mismanagement. The indicator of such mismanagement was high taxes. Under machine rule, the reformers argued, there was scant concern by officials with economy and efficiency in local government. Melvin Holli in his discussion of municipal reform argues that high governmental costs served as a catalyst to the development of strong reform movements.⁶ Public concern was especially great after the Depression of 1893 when communities became concerned with
high levels of taxes and governmental expenditures. He notes that the First National Conference for Good City Government, an early reform meeting, occurred in early 1894. 7

Criticisms of parochial decision making and government by ethnic politicians can also be understood together. To the reformers, city council election by ward had the unwanted effect of providing ward representatives a very clear pork barrel incentive. The consequences of this, reformers argued, was the making of public policy without concern for its effect on "the city as a whole," and as a result, the entire city suffered. Harry A. Toulmin in The City Manager, published by the National Municipal League, succinctly stated the reformer's view on this issue:

The spirit of sectionalism had dominated the political life of every city. Ward pitted against ward, alderman against alderman, and legislation only effected by "log-rolling" put extravagant measures into operation, mulcting the city, but gratifying the greed of constituents, has too long stung the conscience of decent citizenship. This constant treaty-making of factionalism has been no less than a curse. 5

Ward representation was criticized by the reformers for another reason. Ethnicity and ethnic neighborhood identification were two primary bases of organization used by the machine to maintain voter loyalty. Not surprisingly, therefore, ward boundaries were drawn to maximize the effectiveness of ethnic block voting. The ethnic background
of an alderman thus often coincided with the dominant ethnic
group in a specific ward.

The concern of reformers with the electoral influence
of immigrant voters and their ethnic representatives is
captured in the comments of many delegates to the first
three annual Conferences for Good City Government of the
National Municipal League. A representative from New
Orleans spoke of the "thousands of immigrants from the slums
and prisons of Italy and Southern Europe who added to the
corruptible vote of the city." A representative from
Chicago stated that "...newcomers from the bogs of Ireland,
the mines of Poland, the brigand-caves of Italy, and from
the slave camps of the South but one removed from the
jungles of Africa, made poor grist for milling civic
patriots." A representative from Baltimore
characterized machine politics there as where "the saloons
and gambling houses and brothels are...nuiseries for [urban]
statesmen." Another conferee stated that "vice regions
should have no representation. Such sections are to be
governed and not to govern."

Lastly, political parties in municipal politics was
perhaps the most important target of municipal reformers.
The urban machine was clearly a partisan organization. By
building upon the local party organization the machine
maintained its cohesiveness and centralized leadership,
campaigning, and policy making under the urban boss.
Additionally, the party label served as an important cue to the primary components of the machine electoral base.

Reformers argued that political parties were inappropriate at the local level because city politics was essentially "nonpolitical." The nature of the issues which confronted city government did not lend themselves to meaningful divisions on the basis of party identification, the reformers argued. The major political parties did not offer meaningful political platforms to the city electorate. Therefore, voting on the basis of party preferences was not based upon a rational judgement which reflected policy differences between candidates. State and national party loyalties served only to misinform and confuse voters regarding municipal elections.

This view is reflected in the writings of several structural reformers of the turn of the century. Andrew D. White in an article entitled "The Government of American Cities," written in 1890, articulately expressed the argument against the evils of partisanship. He wrote,

That is this evil theory? It is simply that the city is a political body; that its interior affairs have to do with national parties and issues...as a city it has nothing to do with general political interests...party political names and duties are utterly out of place there. The questions in a city are not political questions...Under our theory that a city is a political body, a crowd of illiterate peasants, freshly raked in from the Irish bogs, or Bohemian mines, or Italian robber nests, may exercise virtual control...the idea that a city is a political body [will lead]...in the long run [to a
city]...ruled...by a city proletariat mob, obeying national party cries.  

Frank Goodnow wrote in 1900 that "City government must, to be efficient, be emancipated from the tyranny of the national and state political parties." Another reformer, Brand Whitlock, noted the anticipated consequences of the elimination of party politics from municipal affairs when he wrote in 1913,

We put forth our belief that local affairs should be separate from, and independent of party politics, and that public officers should be selected on account of their honesty and efficiency, regardless of political affiliations...  

In 1917, Robert S. Brinker, writing in the National Civic Review, the official publication of the National Municipal League, characterized the reformers' struggle against partisanship:

It has been a fight for the liberation of the mind of the American voter. You ask, liberation from what? I reply, liberation from slavish, cattle-like following of partisan leadership, which enabled our national parties to make our cities with their contracts and their treasuries, and their administrative machinery, the great feeding troughs of their organized political appetite.  

However, one argument against partisan elections clearly demonstrated the class bias of the municipal reformers. Edwin L. Godkin, editor of "The Nation" argued at the turn of the century that,

The respectable classes split into two parties on national issues and remained divided in municipal affairs. The dangerous classes, the enemies of social order did not split. The power of corruption could be
destroyed by uniting the intelligent and
educated classes under the banner of
nonpartisanship.

The Municipal Reform Movement not only identified what
it perceived to be deficiencies in the operation and
consequences of the urban machine, but also proposed a
variety of solutions which, it argued, if enacted and
implemented with the proper civic spirit could set any
municipal government on a path to the attainment of the
enlightened public interest. Corruption, mismanagement, and
high taxes, they argued, existed because decisions were
made by machine officials on a "political" basis, that is,
rewarding supporters through patronage. Reformers proposed
that the criteria offered by the private sector, and
especially the scientific study of business management
should guide city government decision making. The
principles which guided the operation of business should be
the guides by which city officials made decisions.

Reformers argued that both the weak mayor form of
government and the strong mayor form of government promoted
machine politics. The new governmental structures of
commission government and council manager government would
not only substantially limit the power of the machine boss,
but would also allow the governmental decision-making
structure to very closely approximate the decision-making
structures of major private corporate firms.

The city, after all, was a corporation, and as such,
should be run like a business, they stated. The commission
plan attempted to approximate decision making in many larger corporations by a board of directors. Legislative and executive powers were combined in the office of commissioner. Generally, five commissioners were elected at-large and each was responsible for a major administrative subdivision of city government. Sitting together, the five commissioners constituted the city's legislature. Richard S. Childs succinctly summarized the primary advantage of the commission plan as perceived by its proponents. He stated,

A single vote [of the commission] stopped talk and let action begin. The spirit of a board of directors replaced the heavy procedures of a legislative machinery [as under a mayor plan] which was right, for modern city governments are 90-odd percent administrative rather than ordinance making.  

This plan was adopted by many communities after 1901. But by 1916 the commission plan was recognized by reformers as no longer being the panacea to the ills of municipal government which it had previously been considered. In many cities individual commissioners established machine-type organizations centered around the favors and patronage which their administrative position offered. Decision making within the commission was characterized by substantial log-rolling and conflicts between individual commissioners often stifled much city government action.  

The reformers' proposed solution was the city manager plan. The city manager was to be a competent, professional
administrator, appointed by the council to serve as the primary administrator in city government, with the authority to appoint department heads, propose the budget, and direct all aspects of city government administration. Through such centralized coordination, it was argued, the problems caused by a fragmented administration would be eliminated.

The parallel with business practices was obvious. The city manager was the "company president," implementing the decisions of the city council, as a president implements the decisions of the board of directors.

Although the manager plan was criticized for concentrating a great deal of administrative authority and influence in the hands of an unelected official, reformers argued that this was a distinct advantage. Since the city manager was not popularly elected, he would be able to avoid political controversy. In this fashion, city government could better respond to the desires of a majority of the citizenry. As Childs explained:

The blocking power of honest disagreements is so great that the government [with a multiple executive and various independent boards and commissions] is almost incapable of that orderly, disciplined harmony which is necessary for response to mass opinion.

The municipal reformers and many community leaders came to believe that for a city to achieve "any important objective" it had to "first organize a majority to make a decision and enable that majority to protect against the obstructive tactics of the minority those who put the
decisions into effect."24 City manager government it was argued by the reformers would achieve such ends. The reformers anticipated substantial increases in the administrative efficiency of municipal government operation, which would lead to more efficient expenditure of revenues. The end result would be lower taxes.25

The solutions proposed by reformers were not only administrative. Another proposed innovation was the change from ward or single-member district election of councilmembers to election at-large. As previously mentioned, a major criticism of machine politics was "parochial" decision making. Under a single member district system, it was argued, councilmembers attempted to maximize the expenditure of public revenues for their individual districts. As a result, many decisions made by city council were not based upon the best interests of the city as a whole, but rather upon the effect a particular policy would have on neighborhood interests.

The reformers argued that if both the commission and city manager plans were to have any chance of ridding city government of the evils of machine politics, it was essential that the council be elected at-large. Bradley Robert Rice notes that reform Mayor Mathis of Des Moines, Iowa, in the early 1900's "argued that it was possible for the five best candidates to reside in the same precinct."26 John Judson Hamilton in The Dethronement of the City Boss wrote in 1910 that election at-large would
guarantee "the elimination of the merely neighborhood
candidate from public consideration. Andrew D. White,
writing in 1890 argued that at-large election of
councilmembers was necessary if parochial decision making
was to be overcome:

...I would elect the common council by a
majority of all the votes of all the
citizens; but instead of electing its members
from the wards as at present--so that wards
largely controlled by thieves and robbers can
send thieves and robbers, and so that men who
can carry their ward can control the city--I
would elect the board of aldermen on a
general ticket just as the mayor is elected
now, thus requiring candidates for the board
to have a city reputation.

Criticisms of the operation of state and national
political parties in municipal politics were to be resolved
by a simple change in election laws. The elimination of
political party activity was to be achieved through the
elimination of party labels from the ballot. A system of
nonpartisan elections, it was argued, would severely limit
the effectiveness of campaign appeals based upon the
partisan identification of voters. Party-based campaigning,
party-based slating, and party organizational activity
generally would be less effective in determining the outcome
of municipal elections. Thus, the degree to which party
activity and partisan identification served to enhance the
ability of the urban machine to dominate electoral politics
would be substantially reduced. A very important base of
the political machine's influence would be virtually
eliminated.
Additionally, it was argued, the election process would be opened to accommodate more individual candidates. As Eugene C. Lee characterized this component of the argument for nonpartisanship, individual candidates would be "[freed] from a requirement of organized support" which party activity demanded. The importance of the successful manipulation of formal nominating procedures would be reduced. Election costs would also be reduced under the nonpartisan ballot, it was argued.

Who were these structural reformers and whose interests did they pursue? Two distinct views address these issues. One view contends that reformers were merely "average" citizens representing a cross section of the urban electorate who became so disenchanted with the corruption and mismanagement of the urban machine that they sought to implement the most rational and efficient alternative available. As Samuel P. Hays argues, however, "The weakness of [this] middle-class theory of reform stems from the fact that it rests primarily upon ideological evidence, not on a thorough-going description of political practice." The alternative view posits that although many elements of the middle classes came to support reform efforts, especially in city-wide voting, the primary initiators, organizers, and promoters of municipal reform had upper class, business backgrounds. And despite the rhetoric of municipal reform which stressed economy, efficiency, responsiveness, and democracy, a primary goal of the most influential reformers
was to redistribute political influence in the municipal arena to advantage their interests.

James Weinstein's seminal study of the rise of the movements for commission and city manager government clearly identifies the upper class origins, biases, and policy goals of the reform promoters of these two major structural innovations. Weinstein argues that businessmen had long been accustomed to graft as under the political machine. "What converted businessmen into civic reformers was the increased importance of the public functions of the twentieth century city," he states. 34 Urban service amenities such as street paving, harbor dredging, electrical lighting systems, street railways, sewage disposal plants, and fire departments were of particular concern to turn of the century businessmen whose profit margins depended greatly upon the adequate provision of these services. 35 Thus, "the initiative for commission and manager government came consistently from Chambers of Commerce and other business organizations; they were the decisive element, in coalition with civic reformers, which made the movement a sweeping success." 36 As examples of such business organizations Weinstein notes the activities of the "Deepwater Committee" in Galveston, the "Board of Trade" in Lockport, the "Commercial Club" in Des Moines, and the "Chamber of Commerce" in both Sumter, South Carolina, and Dayton, Ohio. 37
Weinstein found that with the adoption of the commission and city manager plans, other structural reforms which favored middle and upper class business interests were additionally adopted. The number of elected officials was reduced at the same time the number of appointive officials increased. City councils were made smaller. In many communities the adoption of poll tax requirements for voting limited the exercise of the franchise. Additionally, at-large and nonpartisan elections were adopted for municipal officials under each plan. Thus, Weinstein observes, as a result of the adoption of this package of reform in many communities campaign costs increased for individual candidates; political, racial, and national minorities whose voting strength tended to be concentrated in specific wards lost formal representation under election at-large; and wealthy candidates were favored because of their higher name recognition in the absence of party voting cues. 38

He describes the experience of the Socialist party in Dayton, Ohio, from 1911 to 1917, to indicate how reform structures disadvantaged working class interests. In 1911, under an unreformed governmental structure, the Socialist Party received 25% of the city-wide vote and was thus able to elect two concilmembers and three assessors. In 1913, after the adoption of city manager government and at-large elections Socialist Party candidates received 35% of the city-wide vote and yet no Socialist candidate won elective
office. In 1917, the Socialist Party received 44% of the city-wide vote and yet again no Socialist candidate was elected to city office.\textsuperscript{39} Weinstein concludes:

The significance of the commission [and council] manager plan lies...not in its success, but rather in the way this movement to rationalize municipal government illuminates the goals and political ideology of businessmen in a period when America emerged as the world's leading industrial power...of the important reform movements 'inspired, staffed, and led by businessmen,' none was more peculiarly the product of business agitation than the commission and council manager movement.\textsuperscript{40}

Two years later historian Samuel P. Hays published a wide-ranging critique of the conventional wisdom which further corroborated Weinstein's analysis. He examined the origins of municipal reform in several cities. In Pittsburg there were two reform organizations in the early twentieth century, the "Civic Club" and the "Voters' League."

Sixty-five percent of the members of these organizations appeared in upper class social directories. Forty-eight percent were professionals. Fifty-two percent were bankers, corporation officials, or their wives. These individuals tended to be affiliated with newer, developing industries such as Carnegie Steel and the Heinz Company.\textsuperscript{41} As further supporting evidence Hays cites Leonard White's study of city manager governments written in 1927 where he states, "The opposition to bad government usually comes to a head in the local chamber of commerce."\textsuperscript{42} Jewell Cass Phillips in his study of the council-manager plan in Oklahoma published in 1935 states that of thirty-two cases examined, in
twenty-nine or 90.6 percent, the change to city manager
government was initiated by chambers of commerce or other
groups dominated by businessmen.43

Hays' analysis is particularly useful in pointing up
the geographical considerations which underlay business
class reform. On the one hand, the business class wanted to
protect its economic base which was often outside its
neighborhoods in working class areas. The solution to this
problem was at-large election. As Weinstein he also argues
that the business class wanted to dominate municipal policy
making to benefit from service distribution decisions
regarding flooding, traffic laws, and transportation
generally.44

Thus, Hays argues, it was what the upper class
portrayed as parochial decision making which was the essence
of their concern. This parochial decision making was
institutionalized, the reformers believed, in the system of
partisan ward representation. Ward representatives served
primarily as delegates of the interests and concerns
contained within certain neighborhoods. He states, "There
was a direct, reciprocal flow of power between wards and the
center of city affairs in which voters felt a relatively
close connection with public matters and city leaders gave
special attention to their needs."45 For example, in
Pittsburg during the period of ward representation the
backgrounds of aldermen generally reflected the social
characteristics of the wards they represented.
Councilmembers representing working class areas generally were "workingmen, labor leaders, saloonkeepers, or grocers." Middle class areas tended to be represented by small businessmen such as "druggists, undertakers, community real estate dealers, bankers, and contractors." Upper class areas tended to have "central city bankers, lawyers, doctors, and manufacturers" as councilmembers. With the change to at-large elections in 1911, individuals with upper class backgrounds tended to be the successful candidates. Accordingly, "The ward system of government especially gave representation in city affairs to lower- and middle-class groups." This drastically changed with the adoption of at-large, nonpartisan elections. Hays argues:

[The reformers]...meant that their concept of the city's welfare would be best achieved if the business community controlled city government. As one businessman told a labor audience, the businessman's slate represented labor 'better than you do yourself'... Reformers, therefore, wished not simply to replace bad men with good; they proposed to change the occupational and class origins of decision-makers. Reformers thus attempted to restructure the formal channels of representation and decision making at the local level to facilitate their domination of local politics.

Hays concludes:

The movement for reform in municipal government, therefore, constituted an attempt by upper-class, advanced professional, and large business groups to take formal political power from the previously dominant lower- and middle-class elements so that they might advance their own conceptions of desirable public policy.
Many, if not most, of the more influential municipal reformers were businessmen politicians.

Harold A. Stone, Don K. Price, and Katherine H. Stone in their 1940 study of the adoption and early operation of city manager government in several cities demonstrate the class divisions developed on these reform issues. In Janesville, Wisconsin, that segment of the community which dominated adlermanic government before 1912 and from 1918-1923 was based in the working class who resided west of Rock River. The primary source of opposition to commission government from 1912-1918, and city manager government after 1923 came from these neighborhoods. The advocates of reform were "business and professional men," Protestant church groups, and women's groups. In 1923, although the working class wards voted two to one against the city manager plan, the upper class wards provided the margin of victory.

The same upper class businessman and professional group which organized this adoption of city manager government successfully ran slates of candidates for office. As Stone, Price, and Stone state, "The men who have been nominated and elected to the council by this group have been professional men and business proprietors or executives, several of them from the city's largest industries," according to Stone, Price, and Stone. J.J. Dulin, an adlermanic leader, ran for city council in 1938 and although he won his ward, he lost election at-large. This cleavage between upper
income and working class areas of the city characterized
municipal elections there from 1910 to 1938 when this study
was concluded.\textsuperscript{56}

The 1929 referendum vote in Charolette, North Carolina,
to adopt the city manager plan lost in four of twenty-one
voting districts. These four were in "working class areas"
of the city.\textsuperscript{57} An upper class committee drafted a slate
of candidates to run for councilmanic office. Each of these
candidates was a business proprietor or executive and
"...was representative of the interests of the Chamber of
Commerce and the Manufacturer's Association."\textsuperscript{58}

Organized labor unsuccessfully opposed the 1929
adoption of the manager plan in San Diego, California. One
labor official stated:

The city manager plan has a subtle, enticing
appeal to the average businessman who has no
time for politics, believing it eliminates
politics in city government...The people are
told that a city government is simply a
business proposition...It is rank
fallacy...Corporations are for making
dividends. A city government is charged with
the welfare and happiness of human
beings.\textsuperscript{59}

In Jackson, Michigan, ward representation resulted in
the election of five Democratic working class councilmembers
and three Republican business and professional
councilmembers in 1913.\textsuperscript{60} The change to city manager
government with at-large, nonpartisan councilmanic elections
in 1915 was spearheaded by the Chamber of Commerce who
wanted to take power from the "saloon-keepers," and
Democratic, working class representatives who dominated city government under the ward system. In 1917, a labor ticket won in the five Democratic wards but lost city-wide. Similarly, in 1921, a vote to reestablish wards lost by seventy-two votes despite majorities in the five Democratic wards.

The Chamber of Commerce and service clubs pushed for the adoption of manager government in Austin, Texas. In the 1924 charter election it was the overwhelming support in "wealthier residential wards" which was instrumental in providing the 2,463 to 2,443 margin of victory for the adoption of the plan.

Other authors have also noted the business class origins of the primary leaders of reform efforts. Charles Adrian in his 1961 text on urban government argues that the Municipal Reform Movement started through local organizations such as the Municipal Voter's League in Chicago founded in 1896. However, he continues, such groups sometimes known as "voters' leagues," "citizens' leagues," "taxpayers' associations," "nonpartisan committees," and "committees of 100," were "supported by and made up chiefly of local businessmen." Edward C. Banfield and James Q. Wilson argue in their 1966 text that businessmen prospered from the practices and policies of machine government. But, having gained privileges under the machine, these businessmen now wanted to maintain them and limit their availability to others. These businessmen also wanted
greater predictability in local government decision making and lower public expenditures. The structural changes proposed by reformers could meet each of these expectations. Thus, Banfield and Wilson conclude, "generally speaking, local businesses were the chief supporters of reform."67

Historian Bradley Robert Rice in his discussion of the adoption of commission government in Galveston notes that although the commission plan was adopted in 1900 after a devastating hurricane, at-large elections had been adopted in 1895. The move for at-large election was promoted by prominent businessmen and was adopted over the objection of spokesmen for lower and working class interests. A good government slate of businessmen was elected under the at-large, nonpartisan system, thus unseating many incumbent councilmembers including longshoremen, bartenders, small businessmen, a drayman, and the city's only Black councilmember. The Black incumbent carried his ward in the first at-large election, but lost city-wide in Galveston which at the time had a 22% Black population.68

In describing the rise of the municipal reform movement in New York City, political scientist Martin Shefter demonstrates that the reformers were relatively young men who had been born into their wealth. These men had not been allowed to participate in the Tammany machine. Between 1880 and 1900 Tammany only nominated professional politicians to office. The business elite had been effectively pushed out
of electoral politics. Thus, these young men of business class origins created their own politics.

One of the most successful arguments made by the reformers in New York City was that politics under the machine needlessly split the propertied classes. Under the banner of municipal reform the members of the "propertied classes" could work together. This call for unity was made even more explicit by constant references on the part of the reformers to the imperative need to contain the political influence of the "criminal classes;" the largely poor, immigrant population which overwhelmingly supported the urban machine and its candidates. Shefter concludes that such "class" appeals were effective in convincing many elements of the native middle class that it was the reform program which best addressed their interests in municipal politics.69

It must also be recognized that reformers equally advocated the adoption of each structural change. Commission and later council manager government, at-large and nonpartisan elections, complemented one another to promote the downfall of the urban machine. It is not surprising therefore that reform structures were adopted as a package. See Table 2.1. Where successful, reform adoption tended to be complete.

The above revisionist descriptions of the origins, goals, strategies, and leadership of the Municipal Reform Movement clearly set forth the nature of class and ethnic
Table 2.1
The Evolution of Reform Adoption, 1934-1979

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Form of Gov.</th>
<th>Electoral Ballot</th>
<th>Councilmember Constituency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Part. (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>MC</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CM</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>MC</td>
<td>1,115</td>
<td>59.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CM</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>MC</td>
<td>1,160</td>
<td>58.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>24.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CM</td>
<td>492</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>MC</td>
<td>1,221</td>
<td>56.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>54.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CM</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) For cities with 30,000+ population. From The Municipal Yearbook, 1934, Clarence E. Ridley and Orin F. Nolting (eds.), (Chicago, Ill.: International City Manager's Association, 1934), pp. 107-112.
Table 2.1 (continued)

bMC=Mayor-Council; C=Commission; CM=Council-Manager.

cFor cities with 5,000+ population. From The Municipal Yearbook, 1940, Clarence E. Ridley and Orin F. Nolting (eds.), (Chicago, Ill.: The International City Manager's Association, 1940), p. 23.

dFor cities with 5,000+ population. From The Municipal Yearbook, 1950, Clarence F. Ridley and Orin F. Nolting (eds.), (Chicago, Ill.: The International City Manager's Association, 1950), p. 43.


conflict which characterized these efforts. The Municipal Reform Movement can therefore be understood as an effort by a specific segment of the urban political community to structure the scope of conflict on behalf of its own interests. The fundamental components of the reform program, alterations in the administrative structure of local government through commission and city manager government, election of councilmembers at-large, and nonpartisan elections, were intended to limit the representation of many of the interests supported by the urban machine. The adoption of these reform proposals became the new issue which altered the scope of conflict to forge a new majority "reform" electoral base. In this way reformers redistributed political influence away from machine politicians and the machine's electoral base.

Melvin Holli characterizes this development:

These new urban forms (commission government, city manager government, at-large and nonpartisan elections) were more than merely an expression of the internal dynamics of the advanced professions and new organizational structures of big business. They also facilitated a fundamental shift of urban political power. The lower classes invariably lost representatives to the business classes and their professional auxiliaries who moved into the centers of municipal power.

Under the leadership provided by businessmen politicians the upper and middle classes could become the most influential segments of the urban electorate.
The Contemporary Effects of the Municipal Reform Movement

The above discussion of the Municipal Reform Movement has been made within the context of efforts to limit the effectiveness of the urban machine. However, it must be recognized that it was in cities with strong machines that municipal reformers were least successful. The regional distribution of mayor-council and city manager cities exemplifies this point.

The mayor-council form of government, ward election of councilmembers, and partisan elections are most prevalent in cities in the Northeast, Midwest, and Border regions of the country according to the 1966 study by Raymond E. Wolfinger and John Osgood Field of 309 incorporated municipalities over 50,000 population in 1960.\(^1\) It was in these regions of the country that ethnic-based urban political machines were most prevalent. The most recent census of city government structure in *The Municipal Yearbook, 1979*, demonstrates the same basic pattern. Table 2.2 reveals that mayor-council structures, partisan elections, and councilmanic representation by wards, are more prevalent in cities in the New England, the Middle Atlantic, and the East North Central regions of the country than in cities in the Pacific, Mountain, Border, Solid South, and West North Central regions of the country.\(^2\)

Wolfinger and Field conclude that the most consistent predictor of the adoption of reform structures by municipal
Table 2.2  
Regional Distribution of  
Reformed Governmental Structures, 1975

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Council-Manager</th>
<th></th>
<th>Nonpartisan</th>
<th></th>
<th>At-large</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New England(^a)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>40.4</td>
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<td>23.1</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>58.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>East North Central</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West North Central</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>46.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solid South</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>78.5</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>75.6</td>
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<td>Border States</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>62.2</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>82.5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>67.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain States</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>79.5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>53.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific States</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>91.8</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>98.6</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>86.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^b\)Percent of all cities over 25,000 population in each region reporting form of government.

\(^c\)Percent of all cities over 25,000 population in each region reporting electoral ballot.

\(^d\)Percent of all cities over 25,000 population in each region reporting councilmember constituency.

Source: Sanders, 1979, p. 98.
governments is region. They argue that region is a surrogate measure for the differing historical experiences which communities had with ethnic and machine politics, and thus with the success of the adoption of reformed structures. 73

Samuel P. Hays argues that population size may have influenced the adoption of reform structures in many communities. He states,

In smaller cities, business professional, and elite groups could easily exercise a dominant influence. Their close ties readily enabled them to shape informal political power which they could transform into formal political power. After the mid-1890's the widespread organization of Chambers of Commerce provided a base for political action to reform municipal government, resulting in a host of smaller-city commission and city manager innovations. In the larger, more heterogeneous cities, whose subcommunities were more dispersed, such community-wide action was extremely difficult. 74

Wolfinger and Field note that "Most southwestern and western cities were villages, at best, until the early twentieth century, when the new municipal governments were all the rage." 75 Thus, it was precisely in such smaller cities, especially those in the Southwestern and Western regions of the country where reform structures were most widely adopted.

Several students of municipal politics have also noted that reform structures provided mechanisms of selective exclusion which served the purposes of those who were particularly concerned with minimizing the political
strength of Blacks and Mexican Americans in the South and
Southwest. Chandler Davidson and George Korbel note that
the commission and city manager plans both originated in the
South and that Southern "Progressivism coincided with the
peak of racial reaction." Southern historian J. Morgan
Kousser argues that,

[In the South] such 'good government' reforms
as the establishment of city commissions and
the elimination of patronage jobs cut taxes
for the rich and employment for the poor...If
Progressivism had a general theme in the
South, it was hardly 'democracy' or 'the
greatest good for the greatest number,' but
the stabilization of society, especially the
economy, in the interests of the local
established powers, at the expense of the
lower strata of society...

Similarly, Wolfinger and Field offer racial
explanations for the adoption of reform structures in the
South, including Texas. They state,

[In the South]...most municipal institutions
seem to be corollaries of the region's
traditional preoccupation with excluding
Negroes from political power. A one-party
system removes temptation to appeal to Negro
voters, as does the city manager plan. With
only one party, the partisan ballot is not
meaningful. At-large elections minimize
Negro voting strength...This southern concern
with unity may also also explain why
Mexican-Americans in Texas have been so
apolitical, in contrast to the political
environment of immigrants in the North...if
immigrants come into a political system where
the elites shun conflict with each
other...they are likely to find that the
interest of those elites is to exclude them
from politics rather than appeal for their
support.

In summary, it is evident that although the
intellectual origins of the municipal reform movement lie in
efforts to minimize the political strength of the urban machine, the successful adoption of reformed structures has been most prevalent in cities which did not directly experience machine politics which was substantially based in the mobilization of ethnic voting blocks. The reform structures themselves served the interests of business and upper class segments of communities in a variety of political contexts.

It must of course be recognized that some communities in the South and Southwest adopted reform structures after many Blacks and Mexican Americans had been effectively disenfranchised by devices such as literacy tests, understanding clauses, grandfather clauses, and the poll tax. However, reform structures were certainly consistent in their effects with such disenfranchising mechanisms. It is not surprising therefore that most students of the contemporary effects of at-large elections and the nonpartisan ballot have concluded that working classes and minority groups have been systematically disadvantaged by such structures.

James Q. Wilson, J.T. Slater, and Oliver P. Williams and Charles Adrian have all argued that ward elections facilitate the election by Blacks and working class segments of the population of their own representatives. 79 H. Douglas Price, Everett Carl Ladd, and Howard Hamilton argue that at-large election has been used to minimize Black electoral voting strength. 80
The most succinct summary of the research which has addressed this question is provided by Chandler Davidson and George Korbel who note that the overwhelming majority of the authors of such studies have concluded that at-large elections clearly serve to inhibit the election of members from minority ethnic groups. Of the fourteen studies conducted from 1969 to 1981 that have examined the effects of at-large elections on the descriptive representation of Blacks and Hispanics, eleven demonstrated that Blacks and/or Hispanics are substantially less well represented in municipalities employing at-large election systems than in single-member district systems. The studies by Lee Sloan, Clinton Jones, Albert Karnig, Theodore Robinson and Thomas Dye, Delbert Taebel, Albert Karnig and Susan Welch, Margaret Latimer, Richard Engstrom and Michael McDonald, Arnold Vedlitz and Charles Johnson, and Davidson and Korbel, each reach this conclusion. The conclusions of the studies by Leonard Cole, Susan MacManus, and Susan Welch and Albert Karnig, are suspect due to the biases introduced into the data resulting from the selection of cities for examination. In summary, at-large elections have been shown to inhibit the election of minority group representatives.

Nonpartisanship was another major element of the reform package. As previously stated, the mechanism which was to achieve this end was nonpartisan election, that is, the elimination of party labels from the ballot. As Eugene C.
Lee notes in his seminal study of nonpartisan elections in California, it is necessary to distinguish between "the form of balloting and the political environment in which balloting takes place."\textsuperscript{85} Nonpartisan elections are no necessary guarantee against nonpartisanship, that is, the absence of any political party activity in municipal elections.

Consistent with this understanding, Charles Adrian has specified four major types of nonpartisan elections which vary according to the level of importance of major political party activity:

Type 1. Elections where only candidates who normally have any chance of being elected are those supported directly by a major political party organization.

Type 2. Elections where slates of candidates are supported by various groups, including political party organizations.

Type 3. Elections where slates of candidates are supported by various interest groups, but political party organizations have little or no part in campaigns, or are active only sporadically.

Type 4. Elections where neither political parties nor slates of candidates are important in campaigns.\textsuperscript{86}

However, where nonpartisanship is concerned, several scholars have specified important political consequences of the lack of meaningful political party activity in elections. One central conclusion is that a conservative bias of nonpartisanship emerges which advantages the upper and middle classes. Maurice Duverger in his treatise on
political parites argues that "a regime without parties is of necessity a conservative regime." Parties, he continues, are the organizations which allowed the masses to enter political life. Without them the masses are unable to select their own leaders. Similarly, V.O. Key in *Southern Politics* argues that without party organization of some sort the "have-nots" will be systematically disadvantaged relative to the "haves." He states that "organization...is essential for the promotion of a sustained program in behalf of the have-nots." Walter Dean Burnham concludes that

...political parties, with all their well-known human and structural shortcomings, are the only devices thus far invented by Western man which with some effectiveness can generate countervailing collective power on behalf of the many individually powerless against the relatively few who are individually or organizationally powerful.

Robert E. Cushman in specifying the advantages of the nonpartisan judicial ballot notes that it tends to allow conservatives to join together. He states that "the ballot without party designations enables the more conservative elements in the electorate to join regardless of party lines." Robert E. Lane in *Political Life* argues that the removal of party labels disorients lower status groups and allows them to "become the unwitting clients of the upper status press." Eugene C. Lee concludes that nonpartisanship leads to the election of candidates who are not representative of the social, racial, religious, and
economic minority groups of the community. This contributes to the lack of identity with and confidence in municipal governmental institutions within these minority groups.\textsuperscript{93}

Willis D. Hawley in his comprehensive study of nonpartisan elections argues that nonpartisanship can have policy consequences biased toward conservatism. By conservatism Hawley refers to the policy preference that governmental power and authority not be used to resolve such social problems as low-income housing, social welfare service, open housing in the suburbs, urban redevelopment, and improved employment opportunities.\textsuperscript{94} He states,

\ldots although there may be no party differences on how, technically, to pave a street, party differences related to class bias may well be reflected in decisions on which streets should be paved, or in the priorities to be placed on street maintenance as compared with other needs...nonpartisanship facilitates the election of persons with relatively conservative views.\textsuperscript{95}

This conservative bias of nonpartisanship is directly related to what several scholars have termed the partisan bias of nonpartisanship. That is, if Republicans are advantaged over Democrats in nonpartisan election systems, then the tendency toward conservatism in such systems is the result of the greater electoral success of such Republican candidates.

Oliver P. Williams and Charles R. Adrian in their study of municipal elections conclude that,

As to the impartiality of the nonpartisan ballot...in cities closely divided between Democrats and Republicans, a nonpartisan and
at-large election leads to an increased voice in local affairs for persons who normally vote Republican. 96

Thomas Dye, Leonard E. Goodall, Charles Adrian and Charles Press, and Dayton D. Mckean, each assert that nonpartisan elections advantage Republicans over Democrats. 97 Chester B. Rogers and Harold D. Arman in their study of Ohio cities found that mayors and councilmembers in nonpartisan as compared to partisan cities tended to be of higher occupational status, have higher incomes and be Republicans. 98

The most systematic effort to identify the partisan bias of nonpartisanship is Willis D. Hawley's Nonpartisan Elections and the Case for Party Politics. 99 After examining the results of partisan and nonpartisan contests in eighty-eight cities in the San Francisco Bay area during 1957-1966, Hawley concludes that a Republican bias is evident. He states,

The results of this study support the general conclusion that nonpartisanship enhances the electibility of Republicans...Had elections been partisan rather than nonpartisan, the analysis suggests that Democrats would have won approximately 7% more seats than they did. 100

Several explanations have been offered for this Republican bias of nonpartisanship. Robert H. Salisbury and Gordon Black argue that upper income groups are much more likely to turnout and vote relative to lower income groups in nonpartisan elections. 101 David Farrelly and Gerald Fox similarly contend that in California nonpartisan
elections serve to inhibit the mobilization of traditional Democratic partisans. 102 Alfred De Grazia also argues that the greater propensity of Republican partisans to belong to organizations, and to belong to those types of organizations which customarily "engage in politics," result in mechanisms of political communication which serve to compensate for the lack of formal Republican party activity in nonpartisan elections. 103 Democratic partisans are less likely to be members of organizations generally and especially less likely to be members of politically active organizations. Hawley contends that "Democrats, and persons of lower socioeconomic status generally, tend to have fewer resources with which to make the linkages [between interests and candidates]...than do Republicans." 104 Therefore, in the absence of party organization and party labels, Republican candidates tend to be advantaged over Democratic candidates. 105

Further supporting evidence to the conclusion that the absence of party organization in nonpartisan systems disadvantages the interests of working class and minority groups is provided by J. Liepert Freeman, Gerald Pomper, and Hawley. Freeman argues that the abolition of formal partisanship merely emphasizes the predominant "social divisions" in a community. 106 Although party-based cleavages are inhibited from developing, cleavages on other bases nonetheless can result. Gerald Pomper in his study of municipal elections in New Jersey concludes that "Instead of
being based on party loyalties, politics comes to emphasize more the ethnic affiliations of the voters."\textsuperscript{107} In the absence of divisions in the electorate based upon party differences, much electoral politics can be based upon ethnic and racial differences.

One of the consequences of the predominance of such divisions is the facilitation of campaigns based upon racial fears and antagonisms. Political parties can serve a mediating influence in limiting the effectiveness of such appeals.\textsuperscript{108} Nonpartisanship can thus serve to limit the electability of minority candidates, especially city-wide. Parties can provide a sense of legitimacy to minority candidates which can enhance their appeal to non-minority voters. Hawley offers the 1969 mayoral campaign of Sam Yorty in Los Angeles and the 1967 mayoral campaign of Louise Day Hicks in Boston as examples of the propensity of candidates to conduct racial campaigns in nonpartisan electoral systems.\textsuperscript{109}

In sum, nonpartisan elections, when resulting in effective nonpartisanship, have been shown to enhance the electability of Republicans, and members of middle and upper classes generally. This effect is certainly consistent with the goals of reformers in promoting nonpartisan election. The electability of Democrats, especially those representing working class and minority group interests, is inhibited.

In addition to examining the contemporary effects of at-large and nonpartisan elections, several authors have
attempted to examine the "policy effects" of reform structures as a whole. If nonpartisanship and at-large election inhibit the election of representatives of minority and working class interests as previously cited authors argue, a systematic bias in policy decisions should also be demonstrated. The research in this area has thus far been inconclusive.

One of the first studies to examine this question was conducted by Robert L. Lineberry and Edmund P. Fowler, who attempted to examine the effects of socioeconomic variables and governmental structure variables on the policy decisions of a random sample of 200 of the 309 cities in the United States with 1960 populations of at least 50,000. Their purpose was to discover whether city governments with a city manager government, at-large and nonpartisan elections, were more or less responsive in terms of tax effort and overall expenditures to heterogeneous social cleavages in the population, as compared to city governments with a mayor-council government and partisan ward, or mixed, elections.

They conclude that reform governments are less responsive to diverse segments of a city's population. The measures of responsiveness in this study, however, do not allow the specification as to the degree to which different segments of the population within any one political community benefit from governmental policy in reformed as compared to unreformed cities. Their overall
conclusion, however, is consistent with the expectations of municipal reformers who sought to minimize governmental responsiveness to what they identified as particularistic interests.

Terry N. Clark examined the effects of reform structures on the general budgetary and urban renewal expenditures in fifty-one American communities.\textsuperscript{112} His analysis suggests that his "index of reform" is negatively correlated with both general budget and urban renewal expenditures.\textsuperscript{113} In reconciling these findings with those of other studies, Clark hypothesizes that it is perhaps in noncontroversial issue areas where his findings are most appropriate. In controversial issue areas, he states, it is possible that more centralized decision-making structures, to which reformed institutions substantially contribute, general budgetary and urban renewal expenditures may be initially higher than in more decentralized, unreformed decision-making structures.\textsuperscript{114} Again however, as with Lineberry and Fowler, it is unclear as to whose interests in the community are better addressed by higher expenditures in these policy areas.

David R. Morgan and John P. Pelissero employ a quasi-experimental design to attempt "to test the policy effects of municipal reform."\textsuperscript{115} These authors examine the changes in per capita measures of 1) general revenue, 2) general expenditures, 3) police expenditures, 4) fire expenditures, 5) highway expenditures, 6) sanitation.
expenditures, and 7) parks and recreation expenditures for eight cities that changed from unreformed to reform structures and three cities that changed from reformed to unreformed structures. The changes in expenditures are then compared to changes in a control group of matched cities.\textsuperscript{116} Morgan and Pelissero conclude that "changing structure does not seem to matter much in allocating funds across different functional areas," since expenditure levels do not significantly change.\textsuperscript{117} By implication, reformed structures are no less responsive to community interests than are unreformed structures.

However, this study epitomizes the deficiencies in this area of research. Again, as with Lineberry and Fowler, and with Clark, the research design does not permit the specification as to how such structural changes may affect class, ethnic, or racial groups within a community. Overall revenue and expenditure measures are simply unable to capture changes in patterns of expenditure \textit{within} a city. Intra-community changes are much more accurate tests of the policy consequences of structural changes. Further, there is no theoretical justification offered as to why these policy areas are appropriate for examining the policy effects of structural changes. Why should one expect expenditures on highways, parks, sanitation, fire, or police to appreciably \textit{change} with changes in governmental structure? Are these issue areas sensitive to the interests of political factions which promoted structural change? Was
the structural change at all controversial? Each of these studies is unable to measure changes in the distribution of divisible goods and services among social classes and ethnic and racial groups which is the most important aspect of this debate. None of the studies specify whose policy interests have been advantaged or disadvantaged by the adoption and operation of reform structures of municipal government.

In sum, the studies which have addressed the contemporary consequences of at-large and nonpartisan elections for the nature of political cleavages in American municipalities have virtually all noted the significant middle and upper class and majority Anglo/white advantages which have resulted in representation and electoral politics generally. The conclusions reached regarding the class and ethnic and racial advantages of policy effects are much less clear.

The class, ethnic, and racial biases of the Municipal Reform Movement have been demonstrated regarding not only its origins, goals, and leadership, but also regarding significant aspects of its contemporary consequences for city politics. If a link can be drawn between the Municipal Reform Movement and the nonpartisan slating group, then the class, ethnic, and racial biases of the origins, goals, and effects of the slating group can be understood as an extension of the efforts of reformers. Such a link can be clearly identified.
1 Regarding the Municipal Reform Movement of the Progressive Era, a distinction must be made between "social reformers" and "structural reformers." These two groups had very different views of the role of businessmen in governmental affairs. "Social reformers" were critics of the capitalist system who argued that the living conditions of the urban lower class were largely the result of the irresponsibility of many industrial corporations who had developed very cozy relationships with corrupt machine politicians. To these reformers, major social change was required if such conditions were ever to improve. "Structural reformers" tended largely to be such corporate and business taxpayers themselves. They were much more concerned with making city government more efficient at serving their interests. Therefore, they recommended the change of city government structure to realize their goals. Throughout the dissertation the Municipal Reform Movement refers to only the efforts of structural reformers. See John J. Harrigan, Political Change in the Metropolis, Second Edition, (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1981), p. 92.


6 Holli, 1974, p. 151.


As quoted in Holli, 1974, p. 137.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.


Childs, 1952, p. 58.


Banfield and Wilson, 1966, p. 170.

27 As quoted in Rice, 1977, p. 77.


31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

33 Hays, 1964, p. 158.


35 Ibid.


37 Ibid.


40 Weinstein, 1962, p. 166.


44 Ibid.

45 Hays, 1969, p. 166,


47 Hays, 1975, p. 165.
49 Hays, 1969, p. 163.
50 Hays, 1969, p. 162.

52 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, pp. 6-8.
53 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 10.
54 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 11.
57 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 58.
58 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 59.
59 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 158.
60 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 214.
61 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 213.
64 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 417.

67 Banfield and Wilson, 1966, p. 158.


70. Holli, 1974, p. 142.


78. Wolfinger and Field, 1966, p. 325.


81 Davidson and Korbel, 1981, passim.


85 Lee, 1960, p. 17.


88 Ibid.


96 Williams and Adrian, 1959, p. 1063.


100 Hawley, 1973, pp. 31-33.

102 From David Farrelly and Gerald Fox, "Capricious California: A Democratic Dilemma," Frontier, V. 6 (November 1954), pp. 5-7, as cited in Lee, 1960, p. 35.


104 Hawley, 1973, p. 63.


109 Ibid.


114 Clark, 1971, pp. 306-308.


CHAPTER III

THE NONPARTISAN SLATING GROUP: ORIGINS, GOALS, STRUCTURE

Publications of the National Municipal League in 1934 and 1953 clearly demonstrate the degree to which municipal reformers advocated the establishment and utilization of nonpartisan slating groups. The establishment of slating groups in Dallas, San Antonio, and Abilene must be understood within this general context of reform adoption. These cities were not unique in their experiences. The establishment of slating groups was broadly publicized by the League.

The National Municipal League has long been the major national advocate for reform. In 1894 the first National Conference on Good Government was organized by the City Clubs of New York and Philadelphia. These organizations were the leaders of reform efforts in each city and at this meeting forty-six "local reform organizations" were present. On the basis of this meeting the League was organized in the following year to promote the cause of reform government.

Its influence soon became substantial. By 1911, it reported an annual income of $17,811.64 and a membership of over 2,453. Its leaders were well aware of their success. They stated in their annual report:

This places the League among the group of large and powerful societies of this kind.
The new quarterly (The National Municipal Review) and other publishing activities will help to make the League widely known and its membership desirable. Within a year or two the membership should run above 3,000. The increase means not only a broadening of influence but an improvement of finances which will enable the League to enter upon some of the many important investigations which are awaiting its attention.

The League exercised considerable influence among reformers through its publication of model city charters for their guidance. The first model was offered in 1898 in which a strong-mayor plan of government with at-large elections was recommended. In the early 1900's the model charter advocated the adoption of the commission plan. However, in 1915 at its annual convention in Dayton, Ohio, the new model charter recommended the adoption of the council manager plan. Since 1920 the League has accepted the responsibility for promoting the manager plan nationwide and it has done so through its pamphlets and other documents and its National Municipal Review.\(^4\) Stone, Price, and Stone state that since 1895 the National Municipal League has been "the most influential national organization for municipal reform."\(^5\)

In 1932, the League included in its annual summary of activities published in the Municipal Review that it had established a committee to draft a report on the operation of a nonpartisan slating group, the Cincinnati City Charter Committee (CCCC).\(^6\) This organization had been successful in enacting the manager plan in that city and in defending
the plan against its critics. It was hoped that the report would be widely circulated among other reformers:

The report of this committee will fill a long-felt want. It will serve as an educational booklet to stimulate the creation of such citizen's groups in other cities.

In 1934 the League published its pamphlet entitled "The Cincinnati Plan of Citizen Organization for Political Activity". It was to be published in two additional editions. The origins, goals, structure, and operations of the CCCU as it participated in Cincinnati politics from 1924 are carefully described as it is presented as a prototypical reform organization.

In 1924 a group was organized to promote the amendment of the city charter to change the form of government from a mayor-council government with thirty-two councilmembers elected "largely by wards" to a council manager form of government with nine councilmembers elected at large under a nonpartisan ballot. The adoption of such reforms was necessary, it was argued, to "keep the administration of ...[municipal] affairs out of the hands of spoilsman," that is, to prevent, once and for all, the domination of city government by a professional political machine. Since 1880, the city electorate could only choose "between two hand-picked slates, the one termed Republican and the other Democratic..." in city elections. This apparent alternation of city government decision making between the two parties did not suit the advocates of the charter
change. In 1923 public policy in Cincinnati was unacceptable according to the reformers. They stated:

Many streets were all but impassable, the police and fire departments were undermanned. The city revenues were inadequate but the public had so completely lost confidence in their elected officials that extra tax levies and bond issues were consistently defeated at the polls.12

The reformers won in 1924 by a popular vote of 92,511 to 41,105.

A "victory dinner" was subsequently organized to celebrate, and nearly a thousand supporters of council manager government attended. "A motion was made that the temporary organization [that had worked for the adoption of city manager government] be made permanent, and that preparations be made to take an active part in the first city council election under the new charter."13

The supporters of the change to city manager government in Cincinnati were not sure that it would guarantee public policies they favored. Consequently, they decided to create an organization called the Cincinnati City Charter Committee.

The CCCC was to be a permanent addition to municipal politics. "Too frequently," they argued in this pamphlet, "the purpose of a citizen uprising has been merely to institute a general house cleaning without any intention to continue the work in subsequent elections."14 The CCCC was to overcome this problem.15
The reformers also wanted the CCCC to compensate for the possible undesirable effects of nonpartisanship. According to the authors of the pamphlet:

A serious error made by political reformers is the confusion of machines with parties, and the consequent erroneous use of the term nonpartisan. Nonpartisanship, unless effectively organized, is individualism run wild. It discourages cooperation and places the many individualists who desire good government at the mercy of the small organized machine that Therefore, this new "citizen association [organized] for political purposes" was to be "organized as effectively as any political machine ever organized." The CCCC had clear organizational subdivisions. Because of the effectiveness and success of organizations such as a "chamber of commerce or a community chest," the highest level of the CCCC was to copy the highest level of these organizations. Major policy was to be set by "an unpaid board of directors." The exact procedures of election of these members are unspecified. Nonetheless, it is noted that this board was to consist of "a group interested in using the mechanism [i.e., the nonpartisan slating group] to benefit the citizens and not to serve selfish purposes." The responsibilities of the board were "to adopt the campaign platform, determine council candidates, set campaign policies, and receive reports of the executive committee, officers, special committees, and divisions." The number of the members on this board and the frequency of meetings of the board were not specified.
Below the board of directors was the executive committee, whose purpose was "to approve the plan of the campaign and supervise campaign development, to coordinate activities of officers, council candidates, committees, and divisions, and to prepare policies for submission to the board of directors." The method of appointment or election of members to this executive committee is also left unspecified.

The president of the CCCC was charged with "...[appointing], with executive committee approval, the campaign chairman and committee and division leaders." He was also "to preside at meetings of the board of directors, and to act as spokesman for the board." The method for the selection of the president was not detailed. It is important to recognize that the president nominated all committee chairmen and division leaders. His nominees were approved by the executive committee, not by the full board of directors.

A "full-time, paid" executive director was hired by the board of directors to run the day to day operations of the organization. He was "to assist the president, campaign chairman, vice president in charge of organization, council candidates, and other officers, committees, and divisions."

The other major divisions of the CCCC dealt explicitly with city council elections. The board of directors
selected the members of a "general campaign committee."\(^{26}\)

Although this committee was large, "the individuals [were] not expected to do a great deal of work."\(^{27}\) The bulk of this committee's work was to be done by a chairman, whom it elected, and the five to seven member executive committee which this chairman appointed.\(^{28}\) It must be noted that the election of this important chairman is inconsistent with the previous description of the appointive power of the CCCC president.

The board of directors also appointed a committee on nominations early in the year.\(^{29}\) This nominating committee was charged with compiling a list of candidates for city office. However, the board of directors reserved for itself the final decision as to who the association's slate of candidates would be.\(^{30}\)

Not just anyone could become a nominee of the CCCC. The following criteria were met before the CCCC nominated a candidate:

1. Only men and women who [stood] for something [were] considered for nomination.

2. It [was] immaterial whether they [had] ever taken part in politics.

3. The candidates [were] sought by the committee; they [did] not seek the nomination.\(^{31}\)

Nonetheless, utilizing these criteria adequate slates of candidates had been nominated:

It was possible to secure candidates for the Charter ticket of the highest standing in
business and professional circles and to have these candidates combine representation not only of different cross sections of society but also of different localities in the city. 32

A finance committee was appointed to attempt to secure the necessary revenues to maintain the CCCG's day to day operations and especially its election campaign needs. The exact method of appointment is unspecified. It was recommended that a finance committee chairman be selected "with courage, energy, and such personal standing in the community as to compel a hearing." 33 For the last fourteen years, the chairman of the finance committee had been "one of the city's leading citizens and insurance experts," Mr. Ralph Holterhoff. 34 A final subdivision of the finance committee was a group of 250 volunteer workers who also solicited contributions. 35

The amount of operating funds necessary varied from year to year, and especially varied according to election year needs. For example, the general organizational goal in 1940 was $16,000. Of this amount, $10,000 was to be raised in the form of gifts of $25 and over from "business" contributors by the special gifts committee. An amount of $5,000 was to be raised by the "regular Membership Campaign Committee of captains and solicitors" from individual pledges of $5 to $25. Lastly, $1,000 was to be raised in the form of mail solicitation of contributions of one, two, and five dollar amounts. 36
All other campaign work was done by a work force of volunteers organized by ward, precinct, and block:

Without an efficient ward and precinct organization, no political party can function. The City Charter Committee maintains a double system, a complete men's and a complete women's ward and precinct organization. These organizations are not strict duplicates, although each consists of similar units, with a ward chairman, captains for each of the precincts, and block workers under each precinct captain. The division of work varies in different wards and is arranged by conferences between the two ward chairmen. 37

The CCCC provided ward chairmen with "maps of the ward and precinct subdivisions, two sets of lists of the registered voters of the ward (one set for the chairman and the other set to be distributed among the precinct captains), and a list of the locations of voting places." 38 Lists of the residents of each ward and lists of organizations and institutions within each ward were also compiled and utilized. 39

"Precinct captains" assigned workers to each city block. These block workers were the backbone of the organization:

The block worker is the foundation stone upon which the success of the campaign depends. It is his and her duty to know every voter in the block, to know as far as possible every voter's political faith, to get every Charter voter and every indifferent voter to register and to vote. 40

It is also stated in this pamphlet that "there is no distinction between the framework of the ward and
precinct organization of the CCC and that of a political party.\(^4\) However, there is a major difference. It is noted that only volunteers were used, except for the paid central headquarters staff. This applied even to poll workers. Therefore, it was "much better to secure men and women as volunteers from other parts of the city who would go into the 'tough' wards and serve as witnesses and challengers than to pay persons in these localities."\(^2\) Evidently, it was difficult in Cincinnati to secure volunteers for CCC election work from these areas. One can reasonably assume that these areas were inhabited largely by working class, and ethnic or racial minorities.

The operation of this ward-precinct-block organization on election day rivaled the efficiency of any partisan political machine. Among the tasks performed on election day were the following:

1. Each poll was assigned a "challenger" or "witness" who checked each voter's name off a list of registrants.

2. The names of those who had not voted was given to precinct captains and block workers to remind those who were sympathetic to come and vote. Automobile transportation was offered if necessary.

3. Lawyers were kept at CCC headquarters to offer advice regarding charges of misconduct at the polls.
4. All 508 of the city precincts were covered during the entire election day by CCC workers.

5. These workers stood a hundred feet from the polls and handed each voter a card containing the names of the CCC candidates.

The effectiveness of this organizational design is clearly demonstrated by the noted success rate of the CCC. It ran slates of candidates in twelve city council elections as of 1949. "In six of the twelve, Charter candidates gained a clear majority; in three, four-four-one councils resulted, and in the remaining three the local Republican organization was victorious. In no election through 1949 had the Charter Committee failed to gain at least four of the nine seats."\(^44\) The CCC achieved a success rate enviable by any political party. As is stated, "This experiment [i.e., the CCC, was] proof that a new motive can be made the operating power behind the old forms of political organization.\(^45\)

The CCC described in this pamphlet is presented as a prototype of organizations which could further promote and even solidify the continued influence of municipal reformers in city politics. It is evident that the origins of the CCC lie in efforts to promote the adoption of an entire package of reform including council manager government, at-large, and nonpartisan council elections in Cincinnati in 1924. The same individuals who organized the community to promote reform adoption were also at the forefront of the
formal establishment of the CCCC as a nonpartisan slating group. Therefore, it is not at all surprising that the promotion of such organizations was led at the national level by the organizational leader of reform adoption, the National Municipal League. The League hoped that many other communities would adapt the Cincinnati plan to their needs. Howard P. Jones, League secretary in 1934, clearly stated this view in the introduction to the pamphlet:

The following pages tell the story of this remarkable organization in a way which makes it apparent that it can be done in any city whose inhabitants are willing to pay a small amount of attention to their public affairs. It is to be hoped that the experience of the (CCCC) will be an inspiration to hundreds of other cities in America faced with similar problems to try a similar solution.

Additionally, it is evident that both the broad policy goals of the Municipal Reform Movement and its individual structural reforms were consistent with the goals and needs of the nonpartisan slating group. It is clearly stated in this pamphlet that a primary function of a slating group was to guarantee that the spirit of reform which led to the adoption of council manager government would continue to be present in the minds of subsequently elected councilmembers. The slating group was to be a permanent addition to Cincinnati municipal politics. In this way, policy would no longer be made by professional machine politicians and spoilsmsen who allegedly desired only to favor their friends and supporters through governmental legislation.
It would also serve the very important function of compensating for the undesirable effects of nonpartisanship. The leadership and organization it provided was to allow it to be the predominant organization in city electoral politics. Its success in this role is demonstrated by the large number of candidates it elected. Structural reforms apparently enhanced its capacity to elect its slate of candidates.

Evidence suggests that the strongest and most consistent support for the slating group came from the upper and middle class. It received overwhelming financial support from the business community. The 1949 budget presented in detail anticipated that at least 62.5 percent of its operating revenues would come from business contributions. Its finance chairman for fourteen years was an important insurance executive. It also received minimum volunteer support from "tough" areas of the city during elections. The advice offered to compensate for this was to send supporters from other areas of the city rather than investing organizational resources to promote further support from these segments of the Cincinnati community. Candidates of the CCC, although marked by some social and geographical diversity, were all successful businessmen and professionals.

In 1953, the League published two additional pamphlets entitled "The Citizen Association: How to Organize and Run
It" and "The Citizen Association: How to Win Civic Campaigns." Alfred Willoughby, then executive director of the National Municipal League, wrote that these two manuals were intended to be used in conjunction with one another. Unlike the earlier pamphlets based upon the experiences of a nonpartisan slating group in one city, the information contained in these 1953 pamphlets was based primarily upon answers provided to a fifteen page questionnaire sent by the League to the officers of thirty "active citizen associations throughout the United States." These same officers were also given the opportunity to "read and criticize" the preliminary drafts of these pamphlets.

The citizen associations referred to in these publications included both the nonpartisan slating groups of the type in Cincinnati and those organizations which were organized solely to promote the adoption of reform structures of government. A "campaign" refers to an effort to enact a charter change such as council manager government and also refers to efforts to elect slates of candidates to councilmanic office once the changes have been adopted.

Much of the specific advice regarding organizational structure and financing is consistent with the characterization of the CCC. The organization should be permanent, utilize a paid staff, and depend heavily upon business contributions.
National Municipal League in the promotion and utilization of such citizen associations is again clear. Willoughby wrote in the forward to "How to Win Civic Campaigns:"

Experienced civic campaigners have long known the techniques for getting practically anything the voters want. To make this knowledge more readily available and to push the percentage of successful campaigns still higher, the National Municipal League has prepared...[these manuals].

He also noted that both of these pamphlets were available from the National Municipal League for $.75 each and were cheaper when ordered in bulk.

Several important additions to the earlier pamphlets do appear. It is stated that the need for such citizen associations is not limited to cities which have been dominated by corrupt machines:

Although citizen associations have done their most spectacular work in tussles with corrupt machines, many are quietly performing useful deeds in cities that have no counterpart of the city boss. The citizen association is first, last and always a watchdog. It should be ready to work with able officials to make local government still better. It should recognize that inactive, uninformed and unorganized citizens can impede civic growth as much as a venal political machine.

The relevance of such citizen associations was therefore substantially broadened to include all types of cities.

Additional emphasis is placed upon attempting to secure the representation of a diverse set of interests within the slating group. It is stated that:

The membership should be as broad as the city. It should include articulate spokesmen
for business, labor, women's clubs, church groups, young people, PTA's, luncheon clubs, minority groups, welfare agencies and every possible element that has a stake in the city's present and future. Diversity of experience and viewpoints will strengthen the association's program by making it more acceptable to a majority of citizens and by erasing any notion that it is tailored to fit the purposes of any single group.

Similarly, the organization's slate of candidates "should be balanced to represent the community broadly." It is recommended that the slate be diverse in terms of gender, age, cultural groups, occupation, geography, politics and religion. "Government should reflect the insights and desires of different kinds of people," it is stated. Even with regard to the board of directors it is recommended that it equally represent a "cross-section of the community."

However, this recommended openness to diverse interests was not made without caveats demanded by "prudence." It is recommended that all membership applications be accepted only "subject to approval by a membership committee." This is necessary to prevent the stacking of the membership by members of "unfriendly political organizations." "Unfriendly political organizations" are otherwise undefined.

Additionally, the specification of the most important qualifications which all of its candidates should have itself precluded the representation of diverse interests. It is stated that a potential candidate should be willing to
devote a substantial amount of time to the position despite the small salary. Such small salaries, as were recommended by municipal reformers, could in effect prevent many working class people from serving on the council. It was also recommended that only individuals who had clearly adopted anti-machine and pro-nonpartisan views be slated by such organizations. If this recommendation were followed differing views on a very important public policy issue, i.e., reformed v. unreformed municipal government, would be prevented from being represented. Most importantly, it was recommended that individuals who viewed themselves as representatives of subgroups within the population not be slated. Although slated candidates may have had different group backgrounds, they were by no means to serve as group representatives. If a diversity of interests was to be represented on a city council composed of slating group candidates, it was not by the design of the recruitment process. It is nonetheless noted that one important subgroup of the population would see its interests served by such candidates. It was anticipated that the largest segment of financial contributions to these organizations would come from the business community.

The recommended procedures for the selection of high level organizational officers also suggest that efforts to limit diversity could be useful. For example it is recommended that the board of directors serve staggered
three-year terms with one-third of the board elected each year at the annual membership meeting or by mail ballot to the general membership. Such staggered elections could limit the membership's capacity to elect a board majority consistent with its desires if it wanted a change from past practices. Additionally, even though a ten-member petition could nominate a person to the board, individual board members were also given the capacity to nominate individuals for election to the board.64

The powers of this board were to again be substantial. It would elect the president of the organization, the first vice-president, the second vice-president, the treasurer, and the executive director. However, it was also recommended that the entire board meet only once every three months. Therefore an executive committee comprised of "several" board members and five officers should meet once a month or more often as necessary to make important decisions.65 The placement of such responsibility in an even smaller group of individuals, the executive committee, could make the adequate representation of diverse interests even more difficult.

Brief accounts of the campaign experiences of citizen associations in thirteen cities are included in these 1953 pamphlets.66 Several important similarities emerge. In all thirteen cases the citizen associations were organized to promote the adoption of reform structures of government
or to maintain existing reform structures. In nine of these cases, the citizen associations were organized to promote the passage of charter changes to adopt the council manager form of government. 67 In one case a county manager plan was proposed and in another a system of nine at-large councilmembers was promoted. 68 In one a traditional party was ousted from city hall. 69 In five cases, these organizations also served as nonpartisan slating groups in that they ran candidates for city office after the adoption of the council manager plan. 70 Of special significance is the identification of the Cincinnati City Charter Committee as a "...local, nonpartisan political party..." and it again is displayed as the prototype nonpartisan slating group. 71

The experiences of the cities of Dallas, San Antonio, and Abilene will demonstrate that the origin, goals, structure, and operation of nonpartisan slating groups in these cities follow the same pattern as that just described. Despite unique circumstances in each city, the very close relationship between the Municipal Reform Movement and the nonpartisan slating group is again clearly evident. The national system of informational networking provided by the League certainly suggests that reformers in many cities knew of the usefulness of the slating group to reformers. Although one cannot definitely link the establishment of slating groups in these three Texas cities with the advice
offered by the League, it will be argued that the motivations of those establishing slating groups in these cities were consistent with the goals expressed by the League in its pamphlets.

Dallas and the Citizens' Charter Association

The origin of the Citizens' Charter Association (CCA) in Dallas can be directly linked to the adoption of city manager government by its voters in 1930. However, in this city the link between the Municipal Reform Movement and nonpartisan slating groups can be traced back at least to 1907. In that year the legislature of the state of Texas enacted a new city charter for Dallas changing a fifteen-member aldermanic council to an at-large commission form of government with four commissioners and a mayor.\textsuperscript{72}

The primary proponents of this change in city government were G.B. Dealey, publisher of the Dallas \textit{News}, and the Civic Improvement League, an organization founded by Mr. Dealey and a branch of the American League for Civic Improvement.\textsuperscript{73} The aldermanic form of government was unresponsive to the requests made since 1902 by the News and the Civic Improvement League to adopt "a five-point program of municipal public works for community development and beautification."\textsuperscript{74} The commission charter was drafted by a "citizens committee" headed by a prominent banker and the News hired an editorial writer who had worked for a
Galveston newspaper to write a series of articles "on the success of the commission form of government in Galveston." Evidently, Mr. Dealey and other proponents of municipal reform felt that a commission would be much more likely to enact their program of public works and community development than the current aldermanic form of government.

In 1907 the "Citizens' Association," a nonpartisan slating group, was successful in securing the election of the first five-member commission. The interests behind the Citizens' Association were the same as those who advocated the commission plan. In 1927, these same interests who advocated public works and economic growth again ran a slate of candidates for commission offices under the banner of the "Nonpartisan Association." The entire slate was elected to office.

The actual operation of commission government did not have its anticipated consequences. Decision making under commission government was characterized by the maximization of "individual political ambitions" by each commissioner at the sacrifice of "their collective responsibility." Each commissioner dispensed jobs as patronage to political supporters, "[and] if a new commissioner was elected, employees were quick to change their allegiance in order to keep their jobs." Additionally, "[by] alliances with gambling house proprietors, public works contractors, or
salesmen of municipal supplies and construction materials, several commissioners made useful friends or added to their bank accounts." By 1931, city government finances were far from healthy. The public works department was running a $1 million deficit and "the water department was in the red by $460,000." The health department was run inefficiently, garbage pick-up was irregular, and the enforcement of building and fire code regulations was sporadic.

As a result of this disenchantment with commission government, the Citizens' Charter Association was organized in the late 1920's to promote the council manager plan. As advocated, it would establish a council with nine members, all to be elected at-large, by place system, with a majority requirement. Six of the members were to be elected with residency requirements. The mayor was to be chosen by the council from within its membership. Council members, including the mayor were to receive a maximum annual salary of $1,040. Nonpartisan elections were to be maintained. "The city manager was to be the chief administrative and executive officer of the city" and the council was prohibited from intervening directly "with the manager's appointments or orders to his subordinates." W.D. Jones, the president of the CCA in 1935, stated in an article in the National Municipal Review that the CCA "grew out of...[a meeting of] less than a dozen men in a
downtown hotel..." who felt that government by commission was unacceptable. Stone, Price, and Stone in their study of the establishment of city manager government in Dallas note that the CCA "drew its support primarily from the same groups that had taken part in the old Citizens' Association." The leadership of the CCA was provided by its first president, Hugh Grady, "an able and personable young lawyer who had been an assistant city attorney, and its first vice-president, Mr. Louis P. Head, a reporter for the Dallas News who was hired by the newspaper in 1926 to conduct the campaign for manager government. Other influential leaders were Harry P. Lawther, G.M. Seay, Mrs. E.H. Server, and Mrs. E.P. Turner.

Consistent with the arguments advocated by other municipal reformers, the CCA hoped to rid city government decision making of "politics," which they understood to mean "patronage and self-intrigue." The council manager plan, it was argued, would facilitate the establishment of a plan of service distribution and economic growth which business interests had desired since 1907. The creation of a "levee district to prevent floods," the creation of an "industrial district on land to be salvaged by flood control," the creation of "a system of parks following the natural ravines of the city," "the elimination of railway tracks through the center of the business district," and the dredging of a canal to the Gulf of Mexico were all to be
made possible under city manager government, its proponents argued.91

Of special significance, the leaders of the CCA argued that council manager government would allow Dallas to be run by businessmen. Stone, Price, and Stone quote from an article in the News which makes this argument clearly:

Why not run Dallas itself on a business schedule by business methods under businessmen?...The city manager plan is after all only a business management plan...The city manager is the executive of a corporation under a board of directors. Dallas is the corporation. It is as simple as that...92

After all, it was further stated in the "Dallas News," "Dallas should be run by its businessmen because the biggest business in Dallas is business itself."93

Not surprisingly, the CCA received an overwhelming amount of support from Dallas' business community. The directors of the Chamber of Commerce approved the manager charter.94 Although the Chamber did not openly work in the CCA campaign for adoption of the city manager plan the Junior Chamber of Commerce was an active ally of the CCA. It distributed pamphlets and arranged for radio talks in support for the movement.95 Additionally, "O Ked Copy, the journal of the Dallas Advertising League, broke its own rule against mentioning political issues by coming out strongly for the city manager charter and arguing that it was a business...not a political issue."96 The two other major newspapers in Dallas, the Times Herald, and the
Dispatch gave the CCA full support with editorials and with very favorable treatment in their news columns.97

All industrial plants and large business firms allowed the CCA's "flying squadron" of speakers to address their employees for at least fifteen minutes on company time.98 Opponents of the plan were not given the same opportunity.99

Various service clubs, the president and secretary of the local bar association, the Dallas Pastor's Association, and other church groups also supported the CCA's efforts. As in the Cincinnati Citizens' Charter Association, women's organizations were extremely active in supporting the CCA.100

The Citizens' Charter Association established an effective "political machine" for the campaign.101 In addition to its president and vice president, a campaign manager and five clerical staff were hired. Separate divisions were established for men and women. A lieutenant was assigned to each of the city's fifty-nine voting precincts,102 and a total of $10,000 was spent on this campaign.103

The planning, resources, organization, and support of the CCA proved effective. On October 10, 1930, the voters of the city adopted the city manager plan by a margin of 8,899 to 4,239.104
The leaders of the CCA also decided that if council manager government was to work as they desired, it was crucial that councilmembers have the same values and policy preferences as themselves. As W.D. Jones put it:

...the Citizens' Charter Association [was] to provide an agency through which the forward-looking citizens of the community (a term otherwise undefined) could draft for their service a capable group of men as city councilmen, leaving to the council after its election the duty of choosing a city manager and other administrative heads of the government. 105

Louis P. Head, a leader of the CCA, wrote that it decided to run a complete slate of nine councilmanic candidates in 1931 "to exert every possible influence to prevent the political groups from gaining control under the new, [i.e., council manager] plan." 106 Only in this way, he added, could a "council free of all political influences...be elected in April." 107 Perhaps the CCA leadership learned from its experiences with commission government that structural change does not necessarily guarantee more efficient and effective government.

In order to meet the demands required of such a slating organization, the CCA structure was reorganized and "set up on a permanent basis." 108 The highest officer was the president. Six vice-presidents were also selected, one from each council residency district. A secretary-treasurer was selected. Finally, an executive committee, "composed of not less than a hundred citizens, divided equally between men
and women, [was] secured as nearly as possible on an equal basis from each council district."  

However, these officers were divided into two main categories, the "war time officers and [the] peace time officers." War time officers served from January to June of each election year. The president was also given the authority at this time to appoint a committee of fifteen individuals to nominate councilmanic candidates for the CCA slate. Final decision-making authority regarding candidate nominees however, remained with the executive committee.  

A major change occurred in the CCA with the development in 1937 of the Dallas Citizens' Council (DCC). The DCC was organized to bring the one-hundred major Dallas business firms together to promote unity of action regarding major local and statewide issues of public policy. In 1937, R.L. Thornton, founder of Mercantile National Bank, and Nate Adams, President of First National Bank, the biggest bank in Dallas, invited the corporate presidents or board chairmen of these one-hundred major Dallas firms to meet. On November 30, 1937, the Dallas Citizens' Council was formally chartered and incorporated.  

Although individual membership within the DCC has changed since 1937, up through 1980 only businessmen have gained membership. Among the membership have been bankers, land developers, utility company representatives, insurance
company executives, oil and gas men, investors and some car dealers, food merchandisers, paper company officials, newspaper executives, and manufacturing magnates. No practicing attorneys, doctors, ministers, or educators have ever been allowed membership into the DCC. This general membership meets only several times annually. However an executive committee meets at least monthly to discuss issues of concern. In 1980, all ten members of this executive committee lived in the very affluent section of far North Dallas.

Several students of Dallas city politics argue that the Citizens' Charter Association simply became a "political arm" of the DCC. It is speculated that many of the meaningful decisions as to CCA candidates were actually made by the DCC leadership. One journalist stated, "...with the arrival of the [DCC], the [Citizens' Charter Association] became the instrument through which the business leadership extended its influence into city government." Another journalist characterizes the relationship between the CCA and the DCC as one in which the "[CCA] functions to keep the city clear of partisan politics, whose disruptions and uncertainties might seriously challenge the power of the business leadership."
San Antonio and the Good Government League

As in Dallas, the origins of the Good Government League (GGL) in San Antonio can be directly linked to efforts to promote the adoption of reform structures of government. From 1837 to 1913, San Antonio elected councilmembers under a ward system. From the mid-1880's to 1893 city politics was largely dominated by the political machine of Bryan Callaghan II who had developed substantial support from "multiethnic" and "multiclass" segments of the electorate and especially from San Antonio's sizeable Mexican American community. Political factions developed from divisions within the city's political and economic elite from 1893 to 1903 and prevented Callaghan or his supporters from holding major city office during this entire period except for 1897 to 1899 when he was again elected mayor. In 1905, however, Callaghan again won election as mayor at the head of a new political organization which was even more powerful than his previous machines had been. As John A. Booth and David R. Johnson argue:

Unlike his first machine, the Boss's second organization drew its leadership from the working and small business sectors--there were plumbers, electricians, and even a barbecue stand operator. The socioeconomic elite contributed very few of its members.

One major policy position of Mayor Callaghan galvanized a collection of political interests who would cause his subsequent defeat. He "became an avowed advocate of
moderate fiscal policies and pay-as-you-go urban improvements."\textsuperscript{127} This policy position did not serve the needs of those businessmen who hoped to directly gain from San Antonio's population and economic growth.\textsuperscript{128} Real estate developers, housing contractors, bankers, and others saw such policies of fiscal and service conservatism as merely preventing them from earning further prosperity.\textsuperscript{129} As in Dallas, commission government was proposed as the solution to this dilemma.

Two major leaders in the San Antonio economic elite led the movement for commission government. Thomas L. Conroy, director of the Civic Improvement League, member of the Real Estate Commission, and director of the Publicity League of the Chamber of Commerce, founded the Commission Government League in 1911, to formally promote the adoption of commission government in San Antonio.\textsuperscript{130} Despite several referendum and electoral defeats at the hands of the Callaghan organization, pro-commission interests were successful in electing Clinton Brown, a businessman, prominent attorney, and heir of the founder of the Alamo National Bank, to the mayorship in 1913 on a platform of greater bond money and the establishment of commission government.\textsuperscript{131} In the spring of 1914, a popular referendum established commission government in San Antonio.\textsuperscript{132} Although under the San Antonio version of commission government Brown was able to allow the mayor to
maintain veto power regarding city finances, "city
government [under the Brown administration] was once more
responding to the elite's needs with policies which promoted
growth and prosperity."\(^{133}\)

However, as in Dallas, business interests soon found
that many of the vestiges of machine politics could also be
consistent with commission government. Within ten years,
professional politicians of lower status backgrounds, many
of them immigrants to the city gained control of city
government and these commissioners were much more interested
in perpetuating themselves in office, especially through
patronage jobs, rather than facilitating expanded economic
growth and development.\(^{134}\)

In 1930, disenchantment with commission government
crystallized in San Antonio's business elite and led it to
coalesce in its efforts to substitute commission government
with the council manager plan. In this same year, several
members of this business elite including Walter W.
McAllister, owner of the San Antonio Building and Loan
Association, and Maury Maverick, a real estate developer and
young attorney with populist inclinations, organized an
"informal club" known as the Wednesday Club to meet weekly
to discuss these issues.\(^{135}\) This same group of
businessmen and developers ran an entire slate of commission
candidates in the 1933 city election under the banner of the
Citizens' League and Civic Administration with the platform
of bringing council manager government to San Antonio. The Citizens' League slate lost the election.

It was not until 1939 that these same interests were successful in electing a business-backed, reform slate of candidates to city office. Maury Maverick, Sr., headed the Fusion Party and with the help of Walter McAllister was elected mayor with three additional reform candidates. Interestingly, this ticket was accused by commission incumbents of being the party of "rich boys" who would not serve the interests of the poor.

Although Maverick did place a council manager charter revision for consideration by the public in 1940, he did not support it and it was defeated. W.W. McAllister and the Wednesday Club felt betrayed by Maverick and thus were successful in working for his defeat in his reelection bid of 1941.

By 1946 Walter W. McAllister, hotel owner Jack White, and Charles Harrel, president of the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce and owner of a large bookbinding company, were leaders of a new organization, the Council-Manager Association of San Antonio. Still frustrated over unsuccessful efforts to convince city government to substantially expand municipal services commensurate with past and current growth, these businessmen argued that council manager government was necessary if their hopes for economic growth for San Antonio were to be realized.
In 1949, Jack White ran for mayor as a candidate committed to council manager government with the backing of several leading businessmen. He was criticized by incumbent commissioners as a "Northside," i.e., Anglo and business-backed candidate, and incumbent mayor Alfred Callaghan, son of Bryan Callaghan II, "urged the voters to keep the city out of the hands of millionaires." Jack White was, nonetheless, elected mayor.

In 1951, San Antonio reelected Mayor White and elected three other pro-council manager commissioners. Additionally, the voters elected a charter revision commission headed by Walter W. McAllister. Not surprisingly, this commission offered a new city charter for the consideration of San Antonio voters that same year. The proposed council manager plan would establish a council of nine members to be elected at-large, on a nonpartisan ballot, and by place system. Councilmembers were to be paid only a token fee for each council meeting they attended and would elect a mayor from among themselves. The mayor was to have minimum formal authority. The city manager was to be the chief executive officer of city government.

The campaign for the adoption of council manager government was clearly headed by San Antonio's business community. Luther Lee Sanders states that:

Prominent business and financial leaders formed the power behind the council/manager movement. These men were primarily interested in growth and economic expansion
of San Antonio. They were particularly interested in creating a condition favorable to business. In order to achieve this end, they sought the efficient, economical extension of city services and the creation of an environment free of political and social conflict.  

Certain members of San Antonio's minority community were also included in the promotion of the council manager plan. One proponent of the plan stated that "It was important in our view for Latins and Negroes to have visibility and ego input."  

In October, 1951, these forces were finally successful. The council manager plan was adopted in a popular referendum by a two to one margin. Mayor White and eight other pro-council manager candidates were elected to office one month later.  

Again, however, the expectations of important elements in San Antonio's business community were not met. Mayor White soon tried to solidify his power within city government by attempting to dominate the city manager and by openly disagreeing with the plan of the council and city manager to annex eighty square miles of new land to the city. Reform proponents of council manager government accused Mayor White of attempting to build a new machine.  

In 1953, these reformers who were dissatisfied with Mayor White's actions organized a slate of candidates under the Citizens' Committee label. In response, Mayor White
organized his own slate and named it the San Antonio Ticket. Eventhough the San Antonio Ticket proposed the reinstitution of commission government, with the support of "commission machine figures" and a $100,000 campaign fund provided largely by anti-annexation supporters, the San Antonio Ticket won all offices.\textsuperscript{149}

It was clear to many of the original proponents of council manager government that a strong mayor was anomalous to the proper operation of manager government.\textsuperscript{150} Additionally Booth and Johnson surmise that reform proponents had by 1953 well learned that the adoption of reform structures of government was no guarantee that subsequently elected public officials would enact policies allowing the "maintenance of the vigorous service development necessary to promote continued [economic] growth."\textsuperscript{151}

The Good Government League (GGL) was established in 1954 to recruit, nominate, and elect slates of candidates for city office who would serve this very function. As one founder of the GGL stated, "We knew we had the best form of government and all we needed to do was to get the right people on the council."\textsuperscript{152}

On December 7, 1954, Tom L. Powell, president of the Chamber of Commerce, asked sixty influential San Antonians to his home to discuss the establishment of a nonpartisan slating group.\textsuperscript{153} Of those invited, 43% were owners of
businesses, 17% were attorneys, and 14% other professionals and clergymen. Three were heads of local business associations and the vast majority lived in the upper and upper middle class neighborhoods of the Northside. Many had been members of the Council-Manager Association or had belonged to the Citizens' League and Wednesday Club. The overwhelming degree to which the GGL was founded by proponents of municipal reform and by individuals with business backgrounds and interests is evident. The GGL soon enlarged its membership to 3,000. However, most of these members came from the city's upper class Northside, and even from the nearby upper class suburbs of Olmos Park, Alamo Heights, and Terrell Hills. Thus many members of the GGL did not even reside within the San Antonio city limits.

According to the bylaws of the GGL, its primary purpose was to "promote honest, efficient and economical government through the council manager plan and to encourage and support capable, public spirited citizens to stand for election to public office." It was to accomplish this goal in three ways. First, it was to "eliminate unnecessary conflict [in city government] and thereby find solutions to common problems." Second, it was to promote the development of an atmosphere in San Antonio politics favorable to "growth and economic expansion," especially through the expansion of certain municipal services.
Third, as previously stated, it was to recruit, nominate,
and campaign for the election of slates of candidates to
city office. Sanders states:

To these [businessmen]...the GGL was simply a
logical step in making council manager
government work. One interviewee stated: 'We
realized that you just couldn't run anyone
and expect council manager government to work.
That was our mistake in 1951 and 1953.'

He continues,

[The] goals of businessmen who were involved
in the 1951 council manager movement did not
change with the formation of the GGL. What
did change was their direct involvement in
selecting and then electing candidates
through a formal political organization.

The GGL was organized into three major subdivisions: a
board of directors, an executive committee, and a nominating
committee. Anyone who paid five dollars was eligible to
become a member. The general membership annually elected
the board of directors of between 50 and 200 members, who
met at least twice a year. The names of nominees to
this board were submitted by a nominating committee
appointed by the current president. Amazingly, all
members of the board of directors were not required to be
residents of the city. The GGL bylaws stated that only a
"majority of the members [on the board] are required to be
qualified voters of San Antonio," thus allowing residents of
Northside suburbs to participate within the GGL. The
membership of the board consisted of soically,
professionally, and financially prominent individuals,
including many leading bankers, real estate brokers, advertisers, builders, manufacturers, retailers, retired military officers, doctors, lawyers, and pastors." 165 Some Blacks and Mexican Americans also served as board members. 166

From within this board of directors an executive committee was elected to be the "policy making body of the Good Government League," according to GGL bylaws. 167 This committee convened at least once a month, and usually once a week. 168

The most important task of the executive committee was the selection of members to the nominating committee, which was charged with the task of compiling a list of possible candidates for an upcoming city election. The executive committee traditionally sought the recommendations of the board as a group, of individual board members, and of other influential groups and individuals in selecting members to the nominating committee. 169

Abilene and the Citizens for Better Government

The origins of Citizens for Better Government (CBG) in Abilene can also be directly linked to effort to enact reform structures of government. From the incorporation of the city in 1883 to 1911, Abilene was governed through a mayor-alderman system. 170 Under the leadership of city businessmen, the form of government was changed to a
commission structure in 1911 when Abilene became a home rule city. During this same charter change commission elections were established as at-large and by nonpartisan ballot.

In 1946, city government structure was changed by popular referendum to a council-manager form. A council of was established consisting of four members and a mayor. Election of all city officials continued to be at-large and by nonpartisan ballot. Councilmembers were to be elected by place system.

In 1962 a substantial charter revision was undertaken by a twenty-five member commission which was overwhelmingly composed of the city's leading bankers, lawyers, presidents of business firms, and oil men. There were no women, Blacks, or Hispanics on this commission.

The charter commission recommended increasing the size of the council from four to six. Councilmembers were to continue to be elected at-large, by nonpartisan ballot, and through the place system. However, they were to also meet a residency requirement with three councilmembers living north of the main railroad track and three living south of this division. Additionally, the terms of office of the councilmembers and mayor were to be for three years and they were to be elected to staggered terms such that two councilmembers would be elected every year with the election of the mayor every third year. The charter commission also
recommended centralizing more administrative authority in the city manager's office. The charter revisions were again adopted by popular referendum.

In 1963, many of the same members of the charter commission, and others who supported their efforts established the Citizens' Charter Committee (CCC) which recruited, nominated, and campaigned on behalf of a slate of four councilmanic candidates and a mayoral candidate. This entire slate of candidates won office.174

In the following year, 1964, the CCC again was successful in electing its two candidates to the city council. In 1965, the CCC selected two candidates to run for office. However, for the first time, the CCC was confronted by an organized opposition. A set of self-styled independents selected their own slate of candidates to run against the CCC slate.175 They criticized the CCC for being "a small group of 'king makers' whose deliberations were inaccessible to the public."176 The CCC represented the "conservative business establishment," its opponents argued, and thus did not represent the diversity of interests contained within the Abilene electorate.177 The opposition was comprised of radical right wing elements, in particular the John Birch Society who did not want the city to accept federal funds for any purpose other than the expansion or maintenance of Dyes Airforce Base. They argued that if the city were to accept urban renewal monies,
intrusion from liberal Washington bureaucrats was sure to follow. Both CCC candidates lost their elections.

In the following year, 1966, the Citizens for Better Government (CBG) was organized by many of the same individuals who had been the leaders and primary supporters of the CCC. The leaders of the CBG made a concerted effort to distinguish this organization from its predecessor to attempt to overcome previous criticism. On January 27, 1966, an open public meeting was held at which 500 people attended. According to Chandler Davidson, "The meeting separated into ten caucuses, one for each voting precinct, and through an ostensibly democratic process, a [five man] board of directors was selected..." This board of directors appointed an eleven member nominating committee which was charged with compiling a list of potential candidates for the subsequent city election. The board later approved three candidates from the list of fourteen compiled by the nominating committee.

The 1966 election allowed the CBG to again establish its interests and leaders as dominant forces in Abilene city politics. With the "radical rightists" again in opposition to the CBG, the CBG slate was elected to office in an election which saw the highest voter turnout in the city's history.

The organizational structure and procedures utilized by the CBG in subsequent years has been roughly consistent with
that of 1966. The board of directors has most often been composed of fifteen members. At a regular annual meeting held no later than December 1, a quorum of at least 50 divide into groups according to voting precinct. There were usually ten such precincts from 1966 to 1982. Each group elected a chairman, vice chairman, and a secretary to one year terms. The chairmen of each voting precinct became ten of the members on the board. If a voting precinct was not represented at this annual meeting, the overall chairman of the CBG appointed a resident of this precinct to the board. The five additional board members were appointed by the CBG chairman, with the approval of the ten elected board members.

The position of the current year CBG chairman was automatically assumed by the CBG vice-chairman for the previous year. Each year then, the board elected the current year's vice-chairman, who automatically became the CBG chairman the following year. The vice-chairman was typically nominated by the current chairman without discussion or opposition. This board also elected a CBG secretary and treasurer for the current year.

The CBG chairman appointed the organization's nominating committee, finance committee, and campaign committee. However, these appointments are again subject to approval by the board of directors, although this approval was not clearly defined in the CBG charter.
Much effective decision-making power remained, then, within the board of directors. Davidson effectively characterizes the position of the board within the organization:

The general membership—those who attended the annual meeting—had no further function, unless by chance they were asked to contribute time or money to the election campaign, or to sit on the nominating committee. For all practical purposes, then, CBG was its board of directors, and this board is responsible to no one. There was no further meetings that the general membership attended.\textsuperscript{192}

The diversity of interests represented on the CBG board has been extremely limited. The vast majority of board members have come from Abilene's business elite.\textsuperscript{193} Since 1966 the CBG chairman the board has elected has always been a white Anglo male.\textsuperscript{194}

Origins, Goals, and Structure of the Nonpartisan Slating Group

The origins of the nonpartisan slating group are directly linked to the Municipal Reform Movement. The use of nonpartisan slating groups was advocated by the National Municipal League as an effective mechanism to further institutionalize the domination of city politics by reformers. The national organization of the Municipal Reform Movement offered detailed guidance as to how to successfully utilize such organizations to enact reform structures of government and to dominate subsequent city elections.
In Dallas and San Antonio, the establishment of the CCA and the GGL respectively, closely followed the enactment of charter changes establishing council manager government with its attendant at-large, nonpartisan councilmanic elections by place system. The leaders of these charter changes were the leaders of the nonpartisan slating groups. In Abilene, although the CBG was not established until twenty years after the adoption of council manager government, its forerunner was established immediately after important changes in the city charter which further established a reformed government in that city. Many of the founders of the CBG were also important proponents of these changes. Within each of the cities of Dallas, San Antonio, and Abilene the founders of the relevant nonpartisan slating groups were themselves municipal structural reformers.

Also in Dallas and San Antonio the justifications offered for the need for such a slating group can also be directly linked to municipal reform. The policy goals of economy, efficiency, nonpolitical administration, and nonparochial decision making were clearly stated by the founders of the nonpartisan slating group. In each of these cities, the founders of the nonpartisan slating group were reacting against decisions and practices of previous public officials which did not serve the self-identified interests of municipal reformers. The slating group was to facilitate the realization of these goals through municipal public
policy. Evidence from the city of Abilene is less clear in this regard. However, it must be noted that the founders of the Abilene CBG saw the Dallas CCA and as a model for their own organization. Their needs and interests were seen as being largely consistent with those of the Dallas CCA.

It is also evident that the general membership and especially leadership of all three nonpartisan slating groups was composed mostly of individuals from upper class and middle class segments of the population, drawing largely from individuals with business interests and business backgrounds. In each of the three slating groups examined a class bias in the backgrounds of those individuals who were most prominent within the respective organizations can be identified. This evidence is most clear with regard to the Dallas CCA where in 1937 the Dallas Citizens' Council, an exclusive organization of business owners, managers, and executives, established and maintained a very close working relationship with the CCA. Evidence from San Antonio and Abilene indicates that those individuals who were most prominent in these organizations were members of upper and middle classes, especially influential businessmen and professionals. This pattern is consistent with the primary sources of leadership and membership of the Municipal Reform Movement.

This class bias is especially significant given the highly centralized and hierarchical mechanisms of decision
making established within each slating group. Much
effective decision-making power was contained within the
office of the chairman or president, the board of directors,
or the executive committee of the board of directors. In no
instance was the general membership given the opportunity to
consistently influence much organizational decision making.

In sum, the nonpartisan slating group can be accurately
categorized as another manifestation of the success of the
proponents of municipal reform. As such, many of the policy
goals and class biases which characterized the Municipal
Reform Movement also characterize the establishment and
leadership of nonpartisan slating groups in Dallas, San
Antonio, and Abilene.
Footnotes - III


3Ibid.

4Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, pp. 4-23.

5Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 3.


7Ibid.


10NML, 1949, p. 3.

11NML, 1949, p. 5.

12Ibid.

13NML, 1949, p. 7.

14NML, 1949, p. 3.

15NML, 1949, p. 20.

16NML, 1949, p. 5, emphasis added.

17NML, 1949, pp. 3-4.

18NML, 1949, p. 8.

19Ibid.
20 NML, 1949, p. 11, emphasis added.
21 Ibid.
22 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
25 NML, 1949, p. 22.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
30 NML, 1949, p. 15.
33 NML, 1949, p. 10.
34 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
37 NML, 1949, p. 11, emphasis added.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid.
40 NML, 1949, p. 12.
41 NML, 1949, p. 17.
42 NML, 1949, p. 18.
44 NML, 1949, p. 8.
45 NML, 1949, p. 20.

Ibid. p. 4.

Ibid. p. 6.


Ibid. p. 17.

Ibid. p. 16.

Ibid. pp. 43-44.

Ibid. p. 51.

Ibid. p. 62.

The cities were Bemidji, Minn.; Iowa City, Iowa; Bloomington, Ill.; Poughkeepsie, Ill.; Meridian, Miss.; Columbia, S.C.; Peoria, Ill.; Richmond, Va.; Kansas City, Mo.; Seattle, Wash.; Boston, Mass.; Philadelphia, Pa.; Cincinnati, Ohio. NML, 1953b, pp. 28-64.

Ibid.
68NML, 1953b, pp. 54-55, 60-61.
69NML, 1953b, pp. 62-64.
70Ibid.
71NML, 1953b, p. 56, emphasis added.
74Ibid.
75Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 271.
76Ibid.
79Ibid.
80Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 274.
81Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 280.
82Ibid.
84Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 283.
89 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 280.
91 Ibid.
93 As quoted in Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 287.
94 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 286.
95 Ibid.
96 Ibid.
98 Ibid.
99 Ibid.
100 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, pp. 286-287.
102 Ibid.
103 Head, 1930, p. 807.
104 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 287.
106 Head, 1930, p. 809.
107 Ibid.
110 Ibid.
111 Ibid.

Ibid.


Smith, 1964, p. 212.

DMN, 1979, p. 8A; Smith, 1964, p. 212.

Bauman, 1980, p. 94.


Bauman, 1980, p. 89.


Booth and Johnson, pp. 26-29.

Booth and Johnson, p. 29.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Booth and Johnson, p. 30.

Booth and Johnson, pp. 30-32.

Booth and Johnson, p. 33.

Booth and Johnson, pp. 33-34.
134 Booth and Johnson, pp. 35-37.
135 Booth and Johnson, p. 38.
136 Luther Lee Sanders, How to Win Elections in San Antonio the Good Government Way, 1955-1971, V. 1, Department of Urban Studies, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas, 1975, p. 3.
137 Ibid.
138 Sanders, 1975, p. 4; Booth and Johnson, p. 39.
139 Booth and Johnson, p. 39.
140 Booth and Johnson, pp. 42-43.
141 As quoted in Booth and Johnson, p. 44; Sanders, 1975, p. 5.
142 Booth and Johnson, p. 44.
143 Sanders, 1975, pp. 6-7.
145 As quoted in Sanders, 1975, p. 6.
146 Booth and Johnson, p. 44; Sanders, 1975, p. 6.
147 Booth and Johnson, p. 44.
148 Ibid.
149 Booth and Johnson, pp. 44-45; Sanders, 1975, p. 7.
150 Sanders, 1975, p. 7.
151 Booth and Johnson, p. 45.
152 As quoted in Sanders, 1975, p. 7.
153 Booth and Johnson, p. 45.
154 Ibid.
155 Ibid.
Ibid.

As quoted in Sanders, 1975, p. 9.

Sanders, 1974, p. 59.

Ibid.

As quoted in Sanders, 1974, p. 60.

Ibid.


Steen interview, 1982.

Sanders, 1975, p. 70.

Sanders, 1975, p. 12, fn. 8.

Steen interview, 1982.

As quoted in Sanders, 1975, p. 10.

Steen interview, 1982.

Sanders, 1975, p. 10.


Ibid.

Davidson a, p. 6.

Ibid.

Davidson a, p. 6.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Davidson a, p. 7.

Bedichek, 1971, pp. 36-75; Davidson a, p. 7.
179 Davidson a, p. 7.
180 Ibid.
182 Davidson a, p. 7.
183 Davidson a, p. 7; Bedichek, 1971, p. 30.
185 Davidson a, p. 8.
186 Davidson a, p. 23.
187 Ibid.
188 Ibid.
190 Davidson a, p. 23.
191 Davidson a, p. 24.
192 Ibid.
194 Davidson b, p. 13.
CHAPTER IV
DIMENSIONS OF ELECTORAL DOMINATION

As the Cincinnati City Charter Committee, each of the three slating groups in these Texas cities was able to elect the vast majority of its candidates to office. This electoral success can be understood as a measure of its influence in city politics. It has been argued that the slating group was established by largely upper and middle class segments of the population to ensure that policy decisions would serve their interests. Patterns of decision making in candidate recruitment and the representational consequences of candidate selection will demonstrate the very limited diversity in class, ethnic, and racial interests which were incorporated within the slating group. As such a pattern of bias consistent with the previous characterization of the Municipal Reform Movement can be identified.

Electoral Success

The electoral success of the CCA, the GGL, and the CBG within the respective cities has been overwhelming. Table 4.1 demonstrates the success rate of the CCA in Dallas municipal elections between 1931 and 1975. In 1931, the CCA offered a slate of nine candidates for each place within the
Table 4.1
Races won by Citizens' Charter Association, 1931-1975
City of Dallas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City Election Year</th>
<th>Seats Contested by CCA</th>
<th>Seats won by CCA</th>
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<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>1943</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>1945</td>
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<td>1953</td>
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<td>1959</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>1973&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

211                  181

<sup>a</sup> Two additional councilmembers appointed October, 1967.

<sup>b</sup> An 8-3 Plan was utilized in this election.

Source: Where not specifically noted, statistics were compiled by the author. See Methodological Appendix for further discussion.
new council manager form of government. With opposition in only five of the nine places up for election, the entire CCA slate won without the need for a runoff. Again in 1933 the entire CCA slate was victorious. However, opposition in this year took the form of three slates offered by the Socialist Party, the Home Government Association, and the Progressive Voter's League.

From 1933 to 1935, the unity of interests that had characterized Dallas' business community showed signs of weakness. This unity was threatened by council and city manager decisions which limited the special treatment some businessmen were accustomed to receiving. Stone, Price, and Stone state:

> When the business leaders of the city began to quarrel over specific issues, the cause of the [CCA] was no longer so attractive to the organizations that had been against politics and sin and in favor of good government...[As] one of the [CCA] leaders remarked, 'Support of that kind melts away when issues become specific and not general...When [CCA] candidates are running for office, they are the saviors of the city to the businessmen; when they get into office and have to decide on disagreeable questions, they become just another bunch of politicians.'"

With the agreement of the city council, city manager John N. Edy strictly enforced all laws and ordinances prohibiting gambling, prostitution, and the illegal sale of liquor. Previous supporters of the CCA found their firms and interests threatened by such strict law enforcement. For example, promoters of the Texas Centennial Celebration
who had been behind Dallas' hosting the event, argued that such a celebration would attract few people in such a "bluenose town" which would severely limit the quantity of business generated for many Dallas merchants.³

Other business interests also became disenchanted with Edy and the CCA council. Retail grocers blamed Edy for reducing their profits when he chose to operate a city commissary for the distribution of relief groceries. The grocers argued that such commissaries did not characterize the distribution of drugs and dry goods and therefore they were being unduly singled out by this practice.⁴ The Dallas Power and Light company felt that its interests were directly threatened by Edy's repeated efforts to reduce utility rates.⁵ Firms located along the Trinity River were extremely upset with the decisions by Edy and the council which limited the city's contribution to the Dallas Levee Improvement District which planned to develop the area for further industrial expansion. Even the Dallas News, a most vocal supporter of the CCA, criticized the city manager and council for their decisions since it had a substantial financial stake in further industrial development in this area.⁶

Other segments of the Dallas community also came to severely criticize Edy and the CCA council. Contrary to the city manager's recommendation, the council responded to the demands of the Real Estate Board and similar organizations in
reducing city government expenditures and tax rates. Many city employees were discharged as a result of these budget cuts and they blamed the city manager. The CCA council also chose to raise city revenues at this same time by adding a "sewer tax" to all residents connected to the city sanitary sewer system. Not surprisingly, "...lower income groups resented the new sewer tax bitterly." Efforts by Edy to control the park board and the city planning commission, somewhat autonomous entities, were severely criticized. City influentials such as E.J. Kiest, publisher of the Dallas Times Herald and member of the park board, and Joe Lawther, former mayor, president of Liberty State Bank and member of the planning commission, spoke publicly against the manager's practices.

Throughout these disagreements Edy remained a central focus of the controversy, and not surprisingly the 1935 CCA slate was opposed by interests united against "Edyism." The Citizens' Civic Association advocated a platform maintaining the council manager plan, repealing the sewer tax, cooperating more favorably with the Centennial program, and selecting a new city manager. It won all nine places on the council in that year.

This unity of the opposition did not last through the 1937 election, when the CCA was able to elect four of its nine candidates against four other slates, the Forward Dallas Party, the Utility Rate Reduction League, The Dallas
Democratic Association, and the All Dallas Association.\textsuperscript{13}

Two of the successful CCA candidates George Sargeant and P.M. Brinker, were former leaders of the Civic Association.\textsuperscript{14}

In the election of 1939, the CCA again won all nine places on the council without a runoff. Apparently, conflicting interests within the business community which had limited the success of the CCA in 1935 and 1937 had been resolved. It is appropriate to remember that the Dallas Citizens' Council was organized in 1937.

From 1939 to 1973 the CCA held a virtual monopoly over Dallas city council elections. As indicated in Table 4.1, during this period of time the CCA won 153 of 165 or 92.7% of all the seats it contested. It chose not to contest only three seats during this thirty-four year period. It therefore maintained a clear majority in every council since 1939. The 1975 election was unique in that the form of election changed from the previous at-large system to an eight single-member district, three at-large plan. The reasons for this change will be discussed in greater detail later. However, it is important to note that even under this system the CCA was able to successfully elect six of its ten candidates.

In summary, between 1931 and 1975, the CCA attained a success rate of 85.8%. It also maintained a clear majority
in twenty-one of the twenty-three councils elected during this forty-four year period.

The electoral success of the GGL in San Antonio city politics during the period of its active existence, 1955-1975, is equally impressive. Examination of Table 4.2 reveals that between 1955 and 1971 GGL candidates held 77 of 81 or 95.1% of the total council seats available. During this same period it achieved a success rate of 96.2% winning 77 of 80 races in which it filed candidates.

Two defeats of the GGL in 1967 and 1969 were uncharacteristic in that successful independent candidates won election on clearly anti-GGL platforms. In 1967, Pete Torres, a Mexican American attorney, defeated a GGL candidate in a runoff election by charging the GGL with being a political machine which was dominated by selfish interests and with making all important decisions in secret sessions prior to city council meetings. Torres' campaign was also unique in that he relied heavily upon an organizational base in San Antonio's Mexican American community. Despite efforts by Mayor Walter McAllister, Sr., to link Torres with "the PASO-Pena-Marchers coalition...," in the view of Mayor McAllister a radical Mexican American group, Torres was able to win the election against an Anglo GGL candidate.

In 1969 Pete Torres again defeated a GGL candidate despite an all-out effort by the GGL. The GGL offered
Table 4.2
Races won by Good Government League, 1955-1975
City of San Antonio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City Election Year</th>
<th>Seats Contested by GGL</th>
<th>Seats won by GGL</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Percent</td>
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another Mexican American, Alfred G. Vasquez, an investment banker, to run against Torres hoping that this might weaken his unified support among Mexican Americans. Once more the GGL attempted to link Torres with Mexican American "militants" and implying that violence and bloodshed would erupt in San Antonio if the GGL team were not elected. In the words of Dr. Herbert Calderon, a Mexican American dentist and GGL candidate:

[We] offer a choice between a dream and a nightmare. The nightmare isn't pleasant, but it is real...A small violence oriented group has planted the seeds of violence in this community. Torres has been the tiller of the soil and the planter of the dragon's teeth from which violence can surely erupt...The great number of citizens have not yet been swayed by Torres and the militants, but only God knows for how long our peaceful majority can tolerate such abuse.

Despite these attacks, Torres won reelection without a runoff. Additionally, independent candidate Dr. D. Ford Nielson defeated the GGL's first "youth" candidate, Milton L. Guess.

The defeats of the GGL in 1973 and 1975 will be discussed in detail subsequently since they are directly related to the demise of the GGL. However, it is important to note that one of the primary factors contributing to these defeats was the growing disunity within the business elite between suburban and downtown developers.

Throughout the twenty year period of the GGL's existence it achieved an overall success rate of 87.6%
winning 85 of 97 races in which it filed candidates. The GGL was thus able to maintain clear majorities in ten of the eleven city councils elected during this period.

Abilene's CBG was even more successful than either the CCA or the GGL. Examination of Table 4.3 reveals that the CBG has offered candidates for every councilmanic and mayoral position between 1966 and 1982. It was able to elect 37 of its 40 candidates for a success rate of 92.5%.

Two of the three defeats of the CBG can be explained by idiosyncratic factors. One of the defeats in 1968 was due to the opposition which developed against CBG candidate Jim Boykin because of his previous position as a vocal critic of the CBG. Previous supporters labelled him a turncoat. 23 In 1974 CBG candidate Dallas Strickland, president of a business, was defeated by Don Watts, a television newsman. Mr. Watts had probably achieved a level of name recognition within the public that far surpassed that of his opponent due to his popularity and years of exposure on television. 24

For the period 1966-1982 the CBG was able to maintain clear majorities on each of seventeen councils. Similar to the CCA in Dallas and the GGL in San Antonio, the CBG has been the most important political organization in Abilene municipal elections.
Table 4.3
Races won by Citizens for Better Government, 1966-1982
City of Abilene

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City Election Year</th>
<th>Seats Contested by CBG</th>
<th>Seats won by CBG</th>
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<td>3 100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

40 37
Candidate Recruitment and Representation

Among the most important operations of the nonpartisan slating group are the recruitment and nomination of its slated candidates. Examination of these processes in the cities of San Antonio and Abilene exemplify how decision making is centralized and hierarchical and thus serves to limit the access and representation of diverse interests.

Nominations to the GGL slate in San Antonio were the responsibility of the GGL nominating committee. Its members were appointed by the executive committee of the GGL after receiving recommendations from the board of directors and other individuals and groups.25 Neither the entire board of directors nor the general membership of the GGL was formally involved in the selection of members of this very important committee.

Three facts stand out in the nomination process. First, the names of the members on the nominating committee were kept anonymous. The chairman of the GGL or the chairman of the nominating committee spoke for the entire group.26 The representativeness of the individuals on the GGL nominating committee is therefore difficult to determine. Second, the deliberations and proceedings of the nominating committee were always kept secret. The primary justification offered by the GGL was that only under such conditions could meaningful debate occur regarding controversial issues and opinions.27 Therefore, "[voters]
in San Antonio [had] no way of knowing conditions and stipulations of the GGL's arbitrating procedures."²⁸

Third, the recommendations made by the committee were submitted to the board of directors for approval. Only after receiving such approval did the recommendations receive the official backing of the GGL.²⁹

The nominating committee solicited names of potential candidates from the GGL board of directors. It also relied on an organization known as the Citizens for Community Progress (CCP), an organization of Mexican American businessmen, civic leaders, and professionals. Known as the "West Side GGL," it submitted the names of Mexican Americans for GGL approval. Although formal participation of this segment of the Mexican American community was thus institutionalized within GGL procedures, subsequent evidence will demonstrate that many voters within the Mexican American community did not support GGL Mexican American candidates when opposed by more progressive minority or Anglo candidates.³⁰ The third source of recommendations for candidates was from an unofficial grouping of prominent civic, religious, political, and business leaders from the Black community who served essentially the same function within the GGL as did the CCP.³¹

Once a list of potential candidates was drawn up by the nominating committee, a three stage process of review began. Potential candidates were first screened as to their police
records, credit ratings, political involvement, membership in
civic organizations, and professional reputation. Those
who passed were then individually interviewed by the members
of the nominating committee. The interviewers tried to
determine if potential candidates were financially secure
enough to devote sufficient time to council matters, had
substantial city-wide name recognition, had no future
political ambitions, were "civic minded" (which meant a
willingness not to use the office for personal gain), and
wanted to represent the entire community which essentially
meant that a GGL candidate would not advance a particular
group's interests at the expense of other groups, especially
with regards to ethnic groups, racial groups, and political
parties.

After the interviews the nominating committee
circulated the names of potential candidates among several
groups and individuals to measure their reaction. This
group always included bankers, builders, manufacturers, real
estate brokers, and religious leaders. In the late 1960's
when the GGL formed an advisory and finance committee
composed of 200 of the city's leading businessmen, this
group, too, was always consulted about potential GGL
candidates.

Nominations to the CBG slate in Abilene were also
formally assigned to a nominating committee. According to
its by-laws, the CBG chairman was to appoint the members of
a nominating committee "with the approval of the board of directors." The nominating committee's size has varied from eleven in 1966 to thirty-five in the late 1970's. Like the GGL, the meetings of the CBG nominating committee were not open to the press or public. No minutes of its deliberations were kept. Also similar to the GGL, the nominating committee of the CBG has been formally required to submit its recommendations to the board of directors for final approval.

Although this process was not formalized as in San Antonio, some minorities have been allowed to participate on the CBG nominating committee. By their accounts the above described nominating procedures were not followed in instances where minority candidates were being considered. Two prominent Blacks in Abilene, Ken Deckard, and the Rev. T.G. Oliphant, were asked to serve on the CBG nominating committee in 1972-1973. However, they both resigned in 1973 when they determined that their recommendations of potential Black candidates had not been taken seriously. Mr. Deckard stated, "I took myself off the committee because I felt I was there just as a token." Rev. Oliphant stated, "We asked why the names of the five Blacks on the nominating committee's list that time weren't nominated. The fellow said, 'We want to nominate somebody who can win.'"

When Ken Deckard again was asked to serve on the nominating committee in 1976-1977, he was still unable to
secure the nomination of a Black woman who was the principal of an elementary school. The CBG chairman at that time, Deckard said, told him that it was impossible for her to serve on the council because she would in that circumstance be receiving two government salaries, which violated state law. This was a complete reversal, according to Deckard, of the chairman's previous approval of her consideration by the committee.\textsuperscript{42}

At this same meeting a vote was taken on the remaining candidates by the nominating committee. The CBG liaison to the committee counted the secret ballot votes and "informed the committee that its job was done, and it could go home."\textsuperscript{43} According to Deckard, it seemed as if the liaison would select the nominees and that in any case the nominating committee would not know the extent to which the CBG candidates selected would conform to its recommendation. The nominating committee demanded that the liaison inform them of the vote results. After much stalling he informed the committee that one candidate would be Leo Scott, a Black pharmacist at a local state school. When Deckard asked the CBG liaison how Scott, a state employee, could receive two government salaries, he was given no answer.\textsuperscript{44} It was later learned that Mr. Scott simply returned his $1.00 annual councilmember salary to the city.\textsuperscript{45} The CBG liaison evidently decided that Mr. Scott was an appropriate CBG
Black candidate, whereas the school principal was not.\textsuperscript{46} The liason gave no justification for this apparent decision.

Another Black member of the Abilene community, Robert English, reported similar experiences when he served on the CBG nominating committee in 1978-1979. He stated that "we were more or less forced into nominating [two white businessmen]."\textsuperscript{47} According to English, the CBG executive committee kept turning down the recommendations of the nominating committee.\textsuperscript{48} For example, it would not accept the nomination of a Mexican American public school principal because, the executive committee stated, he was not sufficiently qualified. The executive committee never explained what it meant by qualified. Finally, the executive committee submitted its own list of candidates.\textsuperscript{49}

These experiences of some minority group members with the CBG nominating process suggest that the formal rules established for candidate nomination in the CBG charter were not closely followed. At times a subgroup of the board of directors comprised of the CBG chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary, seemed to make the decisions as to who CBG candidates would be.\textsuperscript{50} At other times the CBG chairman seemed to exercise substantial discretion in narrowing a list of potential candidates.\textsuperscript{51} In still other instances the most important decisions of nomination seemed to be largely made by an influential owner of a printing business
who told the CBG executive committee that its candidate choices would not run and so he suggested alternates who were accepted by the executive committee. In each circumstance decisions about CBG candidates seemed to minimize responsiveness to a variety of interests, especially those of minority group leaders.

Influential members of the CBG have nonetheless been very clear about the kinds of candidates they want. They should not be "self-starters," in the sense of seeking CBG endorsement. Rather CBG leaders preferred to recruit candidates for office who did not plan to run. Further, the CBG leadership clearly preferred candidates with business backgrounds and interests. The chairman of the CBG in 1966 stated, "It is our feeling that this [city] is one of the biggest businesses in [the country] and it is the councilmen and mayor who set the policies of the city. They need to be proven business people." And in 1979, the CBG chairman stated that in choosing CBG candidates "you look at what a person can do, you look at their business record. Are they successful, or have they bombed out in business? If they bomb out in business, they'll probably bomb out on the city council."

An examination of the backgrounds of slating group candidates in all three cities reveals that they were homogeneous on ethnic, racial, gender, and occupational grounds, and they tended to live in the same kind of upper
and upper middle class neighborhoods. Tables 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6 demonstrate a strong tendency by the CCA in Dallas and the CBG in Abilene to nominate white candidates in preference to either Hispanic or Black ones. Between the years 1951 and 1975 the CCA nominated a total of 121 candidates. Of these candidates 91.7% were white, 4% were Hispanic, and 6% were Black. A similar pattern emerges in the city of Abilene. Of 40 total candidates nominated by the CBG between the years 1966 and 1982, 90% of them were white, 3% were Hispanic, and 2.5% were Black. The GGL in San Antonio has attained the most diverse ethnic and racial diversity within its slates of candidates, with still a clear preference for white candidates over either Hispanics or Blacks. Between the years 1955 and 1975 the GGL nominated a total of 97 candidates. Of these candidates, 67% were white, 26.8% were Hispanic, and 6.2% were Black.

Further examination of Tables 4.4, Table 4.5, and 4.6 reveals that the level of ethnic and racial diversity contained within the nonpartisan slating group slates is even below that level of diversity contained within all opposition candidates combined in each respective city. Again, the least difference appears in San Antonio.

A summary measure of the ethnic and racial diversity contained within the slates of candidates selected by nonpartisan slating groups can be computed by the development of an "equity of representation" score. This
Table 4.4
Candidate Racial/Ethnic Background, 1951-1975<sup>a</sup>
City of Dallas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>91.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=121)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CCA</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=194)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>For each of the following tables, each candidacy is counted as an individual candidate.

Source: Local Representation Project.
Table 4.5
Candidate Racial/Ethnic Background, 1955-1975
City of San Antonio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GGL</td>
<td>67.0</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=97)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-GGL</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=314)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Local Representation Project.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBG</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=40)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CBG</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=47)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6
Candidate Racial/Ethnic Background, 1966-1982
City of Abilene
statistic is simply the ratio of the percentage slating group minority candidates of all slating group candidates to the percent of the city's population represented by an ethnic or racial group. To the degree that the score approaches 1.0, the ethnic or racial diversity within slates of nonpartisan slating group candidates approaches the diversity contained within the respective city's general population. To the degree that the score approaches 0, the ethnic or racial group has not been represented at all.

Again the CCA's candidates in Dallas were most descriptively unrepresentative of minorities. Between 1951 and 1975 the equity of representation score for Hispanics is 0.41 and for Blacks it is 0.23. The CBG candidates in Abilene are similarly unrepresentative. For the period 1966-1982 the equity of representation score for Hispanics is 0.79 and for Blacks it is 0.43. The GGL in San Antonio offered the most descriptively representative slates of candidates among the three cities. For the period 1955-1975 the equity of representation score for Hispanics is 0.55 and for Blacks it is 0.85.57

Despite the different scores among the three cities a clear pattern emerges. Hispanics and Blacks have not been represented on such slates in numbers approaching their percentages of the city-wide population. A descriptive overrepresentation of Anglos is apparent.
This descriptive underrepresentation of Hispanics and Blacks among slating group candidates is even more severe when the pattern of minority representation within each city is further examined. The CCA did not include a Hispanic or a Black in any of the 19 slates it ran for office from 1931 to 1967. In each of the years 1969 and 1971 it contained one Hispanic and one Black. In 1973 and 1975 it included one Hispanic and two Blacks in each of its slates.

The pattern of descriptive minority underrepresentation within the CBG's slate of candidates is similar. Neither a Hispanic nor a Black was included within the seven slates of candidates the CBG ran in the period 1966 to 1972. The CBG slated one Hispanic in 1973 and the same individual again in 1976. Only one other Hispanic has been slated by the CBG and this was in 1981. Only one Black has ever been slated by the CBG between 1966 and 1982.

The GGL is the only slating group to have included minority candidates within its slates over its entire period of existence, 1955-1975. In the GGL's first slate in 1955 it included one Hispanic. It also chose not to contest the candidacy of a non-GGL Hispanic, Henry B. Gonzalez. Two Hispanics were included every election year between 1957 and 1967. During the years 1969 to 1973 it included three Hispanics and in 1975 it included four. The pattern of representation for Blacks is much less impressive. The GGL did not include a Black within its slate until 1965. It
included only one Black in each of the six slates it ran for office between 1965 and 1975.

Each of the slating groups has contained within its candidates only a small number of women. Of the 121 candidates slated by the CCA in Dallas between 1951 and 1975, 91.7% were male. Of the 97 candidates slated by the GGL in San Antonio between 1955 and 1975, 91.8% were male and of the 33 candidates slated by the CBG in Abilene between 1966 and 1979, 97.0% were male.

This same pattern of homogeneity in slating group candidates is apparent when one examines their occupational backgrounds. Each group demonstrates a consistent and substantial preference for candidates with business and professional backgrounds. Examination of Tables 4.7, 4.8, and 4.9 demonstrate that the overwhelming majority of slating group candidates were business owners, business managers, or business executives. The occupational backgrounds of 195 CCA candidates slated between 1931 and 1975 was determined and 75.9% of them fit into this category. In San Antonio the occupational backgrounds of 94 of 97 GGL candidates slated between 1955 and 1975 was determined and 62.8% also had business backgrounds. In Abilene the occupational backgrounds of all CBG candidates slated between 1966 and 1979 was determined and 66.7% of them were business owners, managers, or executives.
### Table 4.7
Candidate Occupational Background, 1931-1975
City of Dallas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Background</th>
<th>Business Owners, Managers, Executives</th>
<th>Professionals</th>
<th>Clerical/Sales</th>
<th>Skilled Workers</th>
<th>Laborers</th>
<th>Others&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>(N=195)</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CCA</td>
<td>(N=306)</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>"Others" includes service workers, students, and housewives.

Source: Compiled by the author and from the Local Representation Project.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Background</th>
<th>Business Owners, Managers, Executives</th>
<th>Professionals</th>
<th>Clerical Sales</th>
<th>Skilled Workers</th>
<th>Laborers</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GGL (N=94)</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-GGL (N=279)</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Local Representation Project.
Table 4.9
Candidate Occupational Background, 1966-1979
City of Abilene

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Background</th>
<th>Business Owners, Managers, Executives</th>
<th>Professionals</th>
<th>Clerical Sales</th>
<th>Skilled Workers</th>
<th>Laborers</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBG (N=33)</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CBG (N=38)</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data provided by Chandler Davidson.
When one combines the number of slated candidates whose occupations were as professionals, most of whom were lawyers, physicians, dentists, or university administrators, with those of candidates with business backgrounds, the diversity represented by slating group candidates is even less broad. Of the above described group of CCA candidates, 96.9% were either businessmen or professionals. Of GCL candidates 91.5% were either businessmen or professionals. Of CBG candidates 87.9% were either businessmen or professionals.

Further examination of Tables 4.7, 4.8, and 4.9 reveals that most non-slating group candidates also had occupational backgrounds as either businessmen or professionals. However, in each city, this group represents an occupational diversity much more heterogeneous than that of the slating groups. In Dallas 16.1% of non-CCA candidates were neither businessmen nor professionals. In San Antonio and Abilene these figures are 28.0% and 47.4% respectively.

This slating group tendency to select candidates with business or professional backgrounds holds true for slating group minority candidates as well. Table 4.10 reveals that of ten CCA minority candidates slated between 1951 and 1975, 40% were businessmen and 40% were professionals. Table 4.11 reveals that of thirty minority candidates slated by the GGL between 1955 and 1975, 46.7% were businessmen and 50% were professionals. Table 4.12 reveals that of the three
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Business Owners, Managers, Executives</th>
<th>Professionals</th>
<th>Clerical/Sales</th>
<th>Skilled Workers</th>
<th>Laborers</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Totals</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hispanics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA (N=4)</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CCA (N=6)</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blacks</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA (N=6)</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CCA (N=20)</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Local Representation Project.
### Table 4.11
Minority Candidate Occupational Background, 1955-1975
City of San Antonio

#### Occupational Background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Business Owners, Managers, Executives</th>
<th>Professionals</th>
<th>Clerical/Sales</th>
<th>Skilled Laborers</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hispanics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GGL (N=24)</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-GGL (N=84)</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blacks</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GGL (N=6)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-GGL (N=13)</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Local Representation Project.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Business Owners, Managers, Executives</th>
<th>Professionals</th>
<th>Clerical/Sales</th>
<th>Skilled Workers</th>
<th>Laborers</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td>CBCG (N=2)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-CBG (N=4)</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacks</td>
<td>CBCG (N=1)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-CBG (N=3)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistics compiled by Chandler Davidson.
minority candidates slated by the CBG between 1966 and 1979, all of them were professionals. Additionally, Tables 4.10, 4.11, and 4.12 demonstrate that the occupational backgrounds of non-slaeting group minority candidates clearly exceeds that of slaeting group minority candidates.

A similar pattern of homogeneity is evident for the residences of slaeting group candidates. Table 4.13 displays the median home value for the census tract of residence of candidates in Dallas and Table 4.14 displays this data for candidates in San Antonio. In each city a clear majority of slaeting group candidates lived in census tracts with a median home value well above the city-wide median home value. Of the candidates slated by the CCA between 1951 and 1975, 52.5% lived in census tracts with values of $20,000 and above when the city-wide value was $16,500. Of the candidates slated by the GGL between 1955 and 1975, 53.2% lived in census tracts with median home values of $15,000 and above when the city-wide median value was $11,400. Further, 82.2% of CCA candidates resided in census tracts with median home values above $15,000. In San Antonio, 76.6% of GGL candidates resided in census tracts with home values above $10,000.

The census tracts of residence of nonpartisan slaeting group minority candidates in Dallas and San Antonio again reveals a very similar pattern. Table 4.15 reveals that all four Hispanic candidates slated by the CCA resided in census
Table 4.13
Candidate Census Tract of Residence, 1951-1975
City of Dallas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median Home Value&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Under $10,000</th>
<th>$10,000-$15,000</th>
<th>$15,000-$20,000</th>
<th>$20,000 &amp; Above</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCA (N=118)</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CCA (N=184)</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>41.3</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>1970 Census tract boundaries and values.

Source: Local Representation Project.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Under $10,000</th>
<th>$10,000-$15,000</th>
<th>$15,000-$20,000</th>
<th>$20,000 &amp; Above</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GGL (N=118)</strong></td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-GGL (N=259)</strong></td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)1970 Census tract boundaries and values.

Source: Local Representation Project.
Table 4.15
Minority Candidate Census Tract of Residence, 1951-1975
City of Dallas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Under $10,000</th>
<th>$10,000-$15,000</th>
<th>$15,000-$20,000</th>
<th>$20,000 &amp; Above</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hispanics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA (N=4)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CCA (N=7)</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blacks</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCA (N=6)</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CCA (N=23)</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Local Representation Project.
tracts with median home values above $20,000. In fact two of these candidates resided in a census tract with a home value of $32,000 and two resided in a tract with a value of $41,600. Each of these values is far above the city-wide Hispanic median home value of $13,200. Additionally it is important to note that none of these candidates resided in a neighborhood with a majority Hispanic population. In 1970 these same two census tracts contained Hispanic populations of 7.5% and 0.9% respectively. The pattern for Black candidates slated by the CCA much more closely approximates an adequate representation of Dallas' Black community.

Examination of Table 4.15 demonstrates that all of the six Black candidates slated by the CCA lived in census tracts with median home values just above or just below the city-wide median of $11,300. Additionally, five of the six Black candidates resided in census tracts with Black populations of over 96.4% in 1970. The remaining Black CCA candidate resided in a census tract which was 39.8% Black.

Table 4.16 reveals that 56.3% of twenty-four Hispanic candidates slated by the GGL lived in census tracts with median home values of $15,000 and above. The overwhelming majority of these GGL Hispanic candidates, 62.5%, resided in census tracts above the city-wide Hispanic median of $9,300. Similarly, 58.8% of these Hispanic GGL candidates did not reside in census tracts where a majority of the residents were Hispanic. Of the six Black candidates slated by the
Table 4.16
Minority Candidate Census Tract of Residence, 1955-1975
City of San Antonio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Under $10,000</th>
<th>$10,000-$15,000</th>
<th>$15,000-$20,000</th>
<th>$20,000 &amp; Above</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GGL (N=24)</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-GGL (N=86)</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GGL (N=6)</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-GGL (N=10)</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Local Representation Project.
GGL, 66.7% of them lived in census tracts with a median home value of at least $10,000; above the city-wide Black median value of $9,100. Of special relevance, five of the six Black candidates slated by the GGL lived in census tracts with extremely small numbers of Blacks. This 83.3% of Black GGL candidates resided in census tracts with under 3.4% Black populations.

This examination of nonpartisan slating group minority candidates in Dallas and San Antonio demonstrates that except for Black CCA candidates, slating group minority candidates did not proportionately represent the social class diversity displayed within minority populations. This analysis, therefore, points to the unrepresentativeness of minority slating group candidates.

Financing and Campaigning

A major factor contributing to the success of each of the slating groups was the capacity of the organization to secure campaign contributions on behalf of its slate of candidates. The CCA, the GGL, and the CBG each possessed separate finance committees whose primary responsibility was raising campaign revenues.

In electoral systems where traditional political parties do not actively campaign on behalf of candidates, as was the case in the three cities, candidates must raise
their own campaign revenues. This is crucial when elections are held at-large. In such a system, the candidate can rely much less upon labor intensive, door-to-door, low cost campaigning. The need for costly newspaper and television advertisements, and large mailings is apparent.

Table 4.17 displays average reported campaign contributions and expenditure data for CCA and non-CCA candidates for the years 1971 to 1975. It is evident that the CCA was able to secure much more money than its opponents when it chose to. This is especially apparent in 1971 and 1975 when the average total CCA contributions and expenditures were approximately three times that of its opponents.

A similar pattern existed in San Antonio for the years 1971 to 1975. Table 4.18 reveals that in these years the GGL was able to mobilize contributions 1.7 to 10.4 times greater than its opponents, and outspent them by a magnitude of 1.8 to 4.6.

Table 4.19 displays average expenditure data for CBG and other candidates for the years 1966 to 1978. Except for 1969 the CBG candidates, on the average, outspent their opponents each year. This spending advantage reached its highest point in 1977 when CBG candidates spent an average of $15,282 to the opposition's $325.

The importance of this advantage is even more significant when one considers that most of the campaigning
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Contributions</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total Expenditures</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>CCA</td>
<td>Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>$13,015</td>
<td>$4,005</td>
<td>$13,462</td>
<td>$4,417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>5,173</td>
<td>4,956</td>
<td>5,811</td>
<td>4,914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>27,737</td>
<td>9,728</td>
<td>31,105</td>
<td>9,676</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) Each of these amounts is an average for all candidates for whom such data was available.

\(^b\) Each of these amounts is an average for all candidates for whom such data was available.

Source: Local Representation Project.
Table 4.18
Campaign Contributions and Expenditures, 1971-1975
City of San Antonio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Contributions</th>
<th>Total Expenditures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GGL</td>
<td>Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>$13,150</td>
<td>$1,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>17,399</td>
<td>4,673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>22,153</td>
<td>13,256</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aEach of these amounts is an average for all candidates for whom such data was available.

*bEach of these amounts is an average for all candidates for whom such data was available.

Source: Local Representation Project.
Table 4.19
Campaign Expenditures, 1966-1978
City of Abilene

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CBG</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>$1,355</td>
<td>$1,291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>721</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>1,380</td>
<td>881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>2,299</td>
<td>2,356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>1,037</td>
<td>681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>703</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>2,700</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>1,791</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>2,508</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>6,961</td>
<td>3,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>6,351</td>
<td>3,637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>15,282</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>2,427</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*CBG candidates ran unopposed.

*aEach of these amounts is an average for all candidates for whom such data was available.

Source: Data compiled by Chandler Davidson under contract with West Texas Legal Services.
undertaken by slating group candidates is conducted by the organization. Most campaigning is undertaken by the slating group for the entire slate. Campaign advertisements which include the entire group of candidates cost each candidate only a fraction of the money it would cost an independent candidate to purchase the same amount of advertising. The potential financial resources available to any one slated candidate would include the total amount of revenues raised by all slated candidates. This advantage can be overwhelming. As one independent candidate in Abilene stated,

I worked over 160 hours, handed out 7,620 cards and worked 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day. I proved no independent can win a council seat unless he will spend $10,000 of his own money. (In exchange for the $1 per year for three years' community service?) This eliminates most people, minority or not, unless he is financed by some rich group, and if so, he becomes anything but an independent candidate! One person told me, "With all that money they could elect Smokey the Bear!"

Campaign finance and expenditure advantages are of course no guarantee for success as is demonstrated by the experience of CCA candidates in 1975, GGL candidates in 1973 and 1975, and CBG candidates in 1968. However, the capacity of each nonpartisan slating group to continually mobilize such overwhelming financial resources can serve as a systematic advantage for its candidates.
Electoral Domination and the Nonpartisan Slating Group

The electoral success of all three slating groups examined was overwhelming, so much so that the situation is justly described as one of electoral domination. During the forty-four year existence of the CCA in Dallas it was able to achieve an overall success rate of 85.8% and maintained a clear majority in twenty-one of the twenty-three councils elected from 1931 to 1975. During the twenty year existence of the GGL in San Antonio it was able to achieve an overall success rate of 87.6% and maintained a clear majority in ten of the eleven councils elected during this period. For the period 1966 to 1982, the CBG attained a success rate of 92.5%, surpassing that of either the CCA or the GGL, and it maintained a clear majority in fifteen of the sixteen councils convened during this period.

This success, however, did not lead to the representation of working class and minority segments of the population. Regarding candidate recruitment and nomination, mechanisms of decision making within the nonpartisan slating group were centralized and hierarchical. In San Antonio and Abilene the processes of candidate recruitment, evaluation, and selection were not open to the general public nor to the general membership. Rather, decisions made with regard to potential candidates were often subject to direct manipulation by a small number of people; at most the board
of directors, and very often its executive committee or influential officers and members.

In each of these cities minority participation was allowed in the nomination process. However, in the case of the GGL in San Antonio such participation was highly structured and was limited to minority community participants whom the GGL leadership itself selected. In the case of the CBG in Abilene, minority participants in the CBG nomination process characterized their participation as highly limited at best and as tokenism at worst. The examination of the ethnic, racial, gender, occupational, and neighborhood representation of the backgrounds of candidates chosen by the CCA, the GGL, and the CBG displayed a bias favoring upper and middle class, businessman and professional, predominantly white segments of the population.

It must be recalled that among the most active supporters and original organizers of the nonpartisan slating group were businessmen. It is not surprising to therefore find a preponderance of upper and middle class businessmen comprising slating group candidates.

Statements of slating group leaders in each city dramatically capture this preference for "businessman politicians." Regarding San Antonio, a past chairman of the GGL Nominating Committee expressed a feeling that it was unfortunate that so many of the really qualified people
lived in upper class residential suburbs around San Antonio. He said, "It is a real problem to find good men who live within San Antonio city limits with a desire to run for public office." The first chairman of the CBG in Abilene stated:

If a man is to adequately serve on council he needs a business background. Even a college professor with a business degree—if he hasn't had business experience—he won't be able to do the job. The city, after all, is a business, and the council is its board of directors.

Mayor Eric Jonnson, CCA mayor in Dallas, similarly stated in 1975:

With one or two exceptions, the CCA candidates have all been successful in some kind of business. They are proven decision makers. And a large part of the job of running this city is a business job, it's just management. The city budget is now up to a quarter of a billion dollars, and that ain't hay. If you were in charge of picking a candidate to manage that kind of money, would you pick one who'd never even managed a $100,000 deal successfully?

Of special significance is the evidence examined with regard to the backgrounds of slating group minority candidates. A pattern emerges which suggests that except for Black slating group candidates in Dallas, a majority of such candidates neither resided in a predominantly minority nor predominantly working class neighborhood. This same pattern emerged in Abilene between 1973 and 1979 where neither minority candidate resided in a predominantly minority neighborhood. Additionally, an overwhelming
majority of these minority candidates, 80% in Dallas, 96.7% in San Antonio, and 100% in Abilene, were either businessmen and businesswomen or professionals. The degree to which such candidates were chosen to effectively represent minority community interests is minimal at best and certainly consistent with the limited diversity contained within all slating group candidates.

The evidence examined with regard to nonpartisan slating group electoral financing and campaigning suggests that nonpartisan slating group candidates had a consistent advantage over their opposition. Centralized procedures of revenue raising and campaign expenditure gave each slating group candidate the capacity to individually benefit from all organizational activities. Again, upper and middle class predominantly white segments of the population were advantaged by slating group success.
Footnotes - IV

1 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 326.
2 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 313.
3 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 314.
4 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 315.
6 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, pp. 315-316.
7 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 318.
8 Ibid.
9 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 319.
10 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, pp. 319-120.
12 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 328.
13 Stone, Price, and Stone, 1940, p. 341.
14 Ibid.
15 Sanders, 1975, pp. 41-42.
16 Sanders, 1975, p. 42.
17 Sanders, 1975, p. 43.
18 Sanders, 1975, p. 44.
19 Ibid.
20 As quoted in Sanders, 1975, p. 44.
21 Sanders, 1975, p. 45.
Politicial Culture of San Antonio in the 1970's, " in Booth, Johnson, and Stevens, p. 172.

23 Davidson and Fraga, p. 7.
24 Ibid.
25 Sanders, 1975, p. 10.
26 This practice of anonymity was changed in the 1970's; Sanders, 1975, pp. 10-11.
27 Sanders, 1975, p. 11.
28 Ibid.
29 Sanders, 1975, p. 12.
30 Ibid.
32 Sanders, 1975, p. 17.
33 Ibid.
34 Sanders, 1975, pp. 14-17.
36 As quoted in Davidson a, p. 32.
37 Davidson a, p. 33.
38 Davidson and Fraga, p. 12.
39 Davidson a, p. 33.
40 As quoted in Davidson a, p. 38.
41 Davidson a, p. 43.
42 Davidson a, p. 40.
43 Davidson a, p. 44.
44 Davidson a, pp. 44-45.
45 Davidson a, p. 48.
46 Ibid.
An average percentage of a city's population represented by Hispanics and Blacks was computed for each city utilizing the figures in Table 3.1. For the city of Dallas an average Hispanic percent of the population for the period 1960-1980 was computed at 8.1%. No figures are available for Hispanics in the 1950 Census. An average Black percent of the population for the period 1950-1980 was computed at 21.6%. For the city of Abilene an average Hispanic percent of the population for the period 1960-1980 was computed at 9.2%. An average Black percent of the population for the same period was computed at 5.8%. For the city of San Antonio an average Hispanic percent of the population for the period 1960-1980 was computed at 49.1%. An average Black percent of the population for the period 1950-1980 was computed at 7.3%.

As quoted in Davidson a, p. 14.

Sanders, 1975, p. 17.

As quoted in Davidson a, p. 54.

As quoted in Molly Ivins, "Is Dallas Falling Apart?," The Texas Observer, February 14, 1975, p. 3.

Davidson a, pp. 19, 64.
CHAPTER V
PATTERNS OF ELECTORAL SUPPORT

As previously described, slating group influence in municipal politics was largely due to its electoral success, and this success worked to underrepresent working class and minority group interests. This same pattern of bias can be identified for the primary source of the slating group's electoral support. Examination of GGL victories in San Antonio reveals that upper and middle class, predominantly white segments of the electorate consistently provided its largest number of votes. The same groups that backed the Municipal Reform Movement are also the same groups that backed the nonpartisan slating group.

An examination of the Good Government League is especially appropriate because it included minority candidates in its slates every election year since its inception. It has also nominated the largest number of minority candidates of the three slating groups, and it has traditionally allowed the participation of some members in minority communities within its nomination processes. As such, it is reasonable to expect that its electoral base of support might be substantially diverse in relation to class, ethnicity, and race.
Support for the Good Government League

Table 5.1 reveals that predominantly anglo precincts gave the GGL slate its highest levels of support compared to predominantly Hispanic or predominantly Black precincts for the entire 1955 to 1975 period. Table 5.2 reveals this same pattern in 1971-1975 for all precincts in the city. In each election there was a negative relationship between GGL support and the percentage of Hispanic registered voters.

A further examination of this relationship is demonstrated in Table 5.3. Vote polarization scores are calculated for each election and voters in Anglo precincts consistently supported the GGL slate at higher levels than either voters in predominantly Hispanic or predominantly Black precincts. The mean polarization score between Anglos and Hispanics is 18.86 and ranges from a low of 0.70 to a high of 37.67. The mean polarization score between Anglos and Blacks for the period 1955-1963 is 23.85 and ranges from a low of 8.01 to a high of 49.64. Table 5.3 further reveals that Hispanic voters supported the GGL slate at higher levels than Black voters in five out of nine elections. The mean polarization score between Hispanics and Blacks was 6.72 ranging from a low of -2.19 to a high of 31.46. Hispanics and Blacks supported GGL slates at lower levels than Anglos.

The difference between the GGL support from Anglos as opposed to Hispanics and Blacks is further displayed in Table 5.4. Examination of the data in this table indicates that of 92 individual GGL candidates in contested races
Table 5.1  
GGL Support, Ethnicity, and Race  
City of San Antonio  
1955-1975

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percent GGL Support</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>Ethnic</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>68.96</td>
<td>46.33</td>
<td>51.88</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>71.95</td>
<td>60.57</td>
<td>63.94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957R</td>
<td>73.05</td>
<td>68.80</td>
<td>55.96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>55.53</td>
<td>31.58</td>
<td>23.51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959R</td>
<td>73.10</td>
<td>40.05</td>
<td>49.44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>44.56</td>
<td>37.30</td>
<td>20.09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961R</td>
<td>61.82</td>
<td>42.42</td>
<td>31.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>73.65</td>
<td>55.47</td>
<td>24.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963R</td>
<td>80.92</td>
<td>66.91</td>
<td>69.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>70.54</td>
<td>45.01</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>55.40</td>
<td>32.50</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967R</td>
<td>59.23</td>
<td>32.50</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>55.70</td>
<td>22.57</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969R</td>
<td>55.35</td>
<td>31.90</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>69.03</td>
<td>31.36</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>49.89</td>
<td>49.19</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973R</td>
<td>48.77</td>
<td>46.19</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>41.13</td>
<td>23.50</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975R</td>
<td>50.26</td>
<td>36.32</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data not available.

"Percent GGL Support" is the percent of all votes cast for the GGL's entire slate of candidates in contested races.

Table 5.1 (continued)

^c^"Hispanic" refers to precincts with 75%+ Hispanic population, 1955-1969, and 75%+ Spanish surname registration, 1971-1975.

^d^"Black" refers to precincts with 75%+ Black population, 1955-1963.

^e^"R" refers to runoff elections.

^f^A runoff election in one place was held in 1971, however no ethnicity or race data is available for this election.
Table 5.2
Percent GGL Support and Percent Hispanic Registered Voters<sup>a</sup>
City of San Antonio
1971-1975

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>Slope</th>
<th>Significance</th>
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<td>.02</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.045</td>
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<td>.40</td>
<td>-.24</td>
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<td>-.51</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>.001</td>
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<sup>a</sup>"Percent Hispanic Registered Voters" refers to the percent of all registered voters in a precinct with Spanish surnames.
Table 5.3
Vote Polarization\(^a\): Percent GGL Support
City of San Antonio
1955-1975

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Anglo-Hispanic</th>
<th>Anglo-Black</th>
<th>Hispanic-Black</th>
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<td>-3.37</td>
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<td>8.07</td>
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<td>-9.39</td>
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<td>17.21</td>
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<td>-2.19</td>
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<td>1967R</td>
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<tr>
<td>1975R</td>
<td>13.94</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

* Data not available.

\(^a\)"Vote Polarization" is calculated with the following formula:

\[ \text{ZGGL Support} - \text{ZGGL Support} = \text{Vote Polarization Score} \]

Group 1 \hspace{1cm} Group 2
Table 5.3 (continued)

A positive score indicates that Group 1 supported the GGL slate at a higher level than Group 2. A negative score indicates that Group 1 supported the GGL slate at a lower level than Group 2. Means and standard deviations are provided in the Methodological Appendix Table A.1.
Table 5.4
First Choice Preferences of Ethnic/Racial Groups<sup>a</sup>
City of San Antonio General Elections
1955-1975

First Choice Preferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GGL Candidates</th>
<th>Non-GGL Candidates</th>
<th>Totals</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voters</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglos (N=92)</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>5.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanics (N=92)</td>
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<td>12.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacks&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt; (N=40)</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*No Black candidates were slated by the GGL between 1955 and 1963.

<sup>a</sup>"First Choice Preference" refers to that candidate who received the highest percentage of support issued by an ethnic or racial group in a contested race.

<sup>b</sup>Only includes races between 1955 and 1963.
between 1955-1975, 77 or 83.7% represented the first choice of Anglos. However, the pattern of support from Hispanics and Blacks is significantly lower. Of the same 92 individual GGL candidates, only 25 or 27.2% represented the first choice of Hispanic voters. Of the forty individual GGL candidates slated in contested races between 1955 and 1963, only 9 or 22.5% represented the first choice of Blacks.

The class basis of GGL support is examined in Table 5.5. Median home value is utilized as a measure of the class background of voters in each of the city's precincts in 1951, the year of the referendum on council manager government, and from 1955 to 1975. Although such a measure of class status is imprecise for the voters in any one precinct, the identification of a city-wide pattern of class support for GGL candidates over the entire twenty year period lends greater credibility to the use of median home value as a measure of class status. In each of the twelve general elections examined there is a clear and significant positive relationship between percent GGL support and class status. The magnitude of the correlations ranges from a low of 0.34 to a high of 0.80 with a median correlation for the period at 0.69. This consistent pattern demonstrates that the charter plan in 1951 and the GGL slates of 1955 to 1975 received their highest levels of city-wide support from voters residing in upper income areas.
Table 5.5  
Percent GGL support and Median Home Value$^a$  
City of San Antonio General Elections  
1951-1975

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>Slope$^c$</th>
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<tr>
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<td>.003</td>
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<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>.69</td>
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<td>1975</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.001</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

$^a$"Median Home Value" refers to the median housing value in each precinct for the relevant census year.

$^b$This 1951 election refers to the charter referendum changing city government from commission government to council manager government.

$^c$All values are significant at the .001 level.
Minority Candidates and the Good Government League

The Good Government League was the only sitting group to include minority candidates since its entry into politics in 1955. Did these GGL minority candidates represent the first choice of minority communities? If so, this suggests that the GGL tried to ensure that the minority community was fairly represented, not with tokens, but with candidates who had standing in that community.

Table 5.6 demonstrates that GGL minority candidates, as opposed to non-GGL minority candidates won almost all slot they contested. The GGL slated 25 Hispanics and six Blacks over a twenty year period, electing 21 or 84.0% and five or 83.3% of the latter. Only three of 99 or 3.0% of non-GGL Hispanic candidates won by contrast, and only one of thirteen or 7.7% of non-GGL Black candidates did so. In sum, of the 30 minorities who served on the council from 1955 to 1975, 87.5% of the Hispanic councilmembers and 83.3% of the Black councilmembers were GGL candidates.

Nonetheless, Tables 5.7 and 5.8 reveal that these GGL minority candidates were more likely to be the first choices of Anglo voters than of Hispanics or Blacks. Of the 31 minority candidates slated by the GGL, 74.2% represented the first choice of Anglos whereas only 35.5% represented the first choice of Hispanics. Of the eight minority candidates slated by the GGL between 1955 and 1963 only 25% represented the first choice of Blacks.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ethnicity/Race</th>
<th>GGL Candidates</th>
<th>Non-GGL Candidates</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

*No Black candidates ran for office.
### Table 5.7
Sources of Support for GGL Minority Candidates
City of San Antonio General Elections
1955-1975

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Ethnic/Racial Group</th>
<th>GGL Candidates</th>
<th>Non-GGL Candidates</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Place</td>
<td>Ethnic/Racial Group</td>
<td>GGL Candidates</td>
<td>Non-GGL Candidates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
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<td>39.25</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Anglo</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>38.08 (^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>28.95 (^a)</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>16.56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>46.15 (^a)</td>
<td>*</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>49.68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*No such candidate ran.

\(^a\)GGL lost this race.
Table 5.8  
First Choice Preferences: Minority GGL Candidates  
City of San Antonio General Elections  
1955-1975

First Choice Preferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minority GGL Candidates</th>
<th>Non-GGL Candidates</th>
<th>Totals</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anglos (N=31)</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics (N=31)</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacks a (N=8)</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data not available.

a Only for the period 1955 to 1963.
Similarly, of 25 Hispanic GGL candidates slated between 1955–1975, 72% were the first choice of Anglos, 44% were the first choice of Hispanics, and for the period 1955–1963, of 8 Hispanic candidates, 25% were the first choice of Blacks. Additionally, of the six Black candidates slated by the GGL between 1955–1975, 83% were the first choice of Anglos and none were the first choice of Hispanics.

Non-GGL Hispanic candidates were more often the first choice of Hispanic voters than were GGL Hispanics. Of 20 Hispanic GGL candidates who were opposed by non-GGL Hispanics, only 35% were the first choice of Hispanics. Non-GGL Hispanic candidates were the first choice in 50% of such races and non-GGL Anglo candidates were the first choice of these voters in 15% of such instances.

Minority voters were even less enthusiastic about Anglo GGL candidates. Sixty-one Anglo GGL candidates were slated between 1955–1975; 88.5% were the first choice of Anglo voters. However, of these same candidates only 23% were the first choice of Hispanic voters. For the period 1955–1963, only 21.9% of Anglo GGL candidates were the first choice of Blacks.

Losses of the Good Government League

I have shown that the GGL electoral base was, by and large, predominantly Anglo and upper and middle class. This pattern of support is again demonstrated by the losses of
the GGL. These losses were due largely to the breakdown of the above described electoral base.

Table 5.9 reveals that in four of the twelve races lost, the non-GGL candidate received an overwhelmingly greater level of support from Hispanic voters than the GGL candidate, ranging from a difference of 27.98% to 64.16%. In the other eight races, GGL candidates received less support from Anglo voters than did the opposition candidate. That is, two-thirds of the losses suffered by the GGL, all of its losses in 1973 and five of the six losses in 1975, were largely due to the breakdown of the traditional GGL electoral base.

This breakdown was largely due to the dissolution of consensus within the business leadership of San Antonio, a situation that had not existed since 1955. In late 1972 and early 1973, real estate developers led by Charles Becker, a GGL councilmember elected in 1971, were members of a young organization within San Antonio's business community, the Northside Chamber of Commerce.¹ These Northside businessmen were concerned with apparent policy preferences of the traditional leadership of the GGL as represented in the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce headed by former GGL mayor Walter W. McAllister.² The Northside developers wanted a clear commitment by the city government to invest greater resources in Northside suburban development, as opposed to the investment of resources in the downtown area as was the preference of the downtown Chamber.³ In the
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Votes Received(%)</th>
<th>Anglo Support</th>
<th>Hispanic Support</th>
<th>Campaign Expenditures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>9a</td>
<td>Bremmer (GGL)</td>
<td>45.86</td>
<td>57.34</td>
<td>42.66</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Torres</td>
<td>54.14</td>
<td>16.10</td>
<td>83.90</td>
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<td>1969</td>
<td>9b</td>
<td>Vasquez (GGL)</td>
<td>39.40</td>
<td>51.23</td>
<td>14.60</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Torres</td>
<td>52.07</td>
<td>39.06</td>
<td>78.76</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6a</td>
<td>Guess (GGL)</td>
<td>46.87</td>
<td>53.41</td>
<td>29.56</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nielsen</td>
<td>53.13</td>
<td>46.59</td>
<td>70.49</td>
<td>*</td>
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<tr>
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<td>5a</td>
<td>Guess (GGL)</td>
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<td>53.72</td>
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<td>Place</td>
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<td>Votes Received (%)</td>
<td>Anglo Support</td>
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<td>Campaign Expenditures</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Morton</td>
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<td>41.10</td>
<td>44.16</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rhode</td>
<td>56.95</td>
<td>58.90</td>
<td>55.84</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>35.51</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>53.64</td>
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Table 5.9 (continued)

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Votes Received(%)</th>
<th>Anglo Support</th>
<th>Hispanic Support</th>
<th>Campaign Expenditures</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Beldon (GGL)</td>
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<td>63.99</td>
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<td>Mora (GGL)</td>
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<td>$30,380</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) Data not available.

\(^a\) Runoff election.

\(^b\) General election.
1973 election Becker was refused the GGL nomination as its mayoral candidate. He nonetheless chose to run as an independent with the support of the previous executive director of the GGL and other GGL partisans. He won election to the council against GGL mayoral candidate Roy Barrera, a Mexican American, by securing the strong support of northside and southeast predominantly Anglo precincts and a few Black precincts. Despite the GGL majority of five on the council, Becker was chosen mayor from among his fellow councilmembers.

The 1975 council election further demonstrated the important split which had developed within the San Antonio business elite. Again the Northside Chamber of Commerce served as the most important source of opposition to the GGL. The Northside businessmen were joined in the effort to unseat the GGL once and for all by a loose coalition of disenchanted former GGL councilmembers, Southside businessmen, and reform-minded Anglos, who also served as opposition candidates. Dubbed the "Independent Team," they defeated the GGL in six of nine council races, receiving strong support from both Anglo and Hispanic segments of the electorate.

Examination of Table 5.9 also reveals that in seven of the nine losses suffered by the GGL in 1973 and 1975, successful opposition candidates had campaign expenditures greater than or comparable to the expenditures of individual GGL candidates. These campaign resources when combined with
greater Anglo support cut at the heart of the traditional advantage held by GGL candidates over their opposition.

The Electoral Base of the Good Government League

The evidence presented regarding the Good Government League in San Antonio demonstrates that the segment of the electorate which most consistently and most strongly supported the GGL slate was predominately Anglo, middle and upper class. Hispanics and Blacks gave the GGL substantially lower levels of support. This pattern was virtually unchanged from 1955 to 1971. Of special significance, through the GGL Anglos were able to elect their first choices of candidates in 95.1% of the races held during this time.

The examination of the losses suffered by the GGL in 1973 and 1975 further demonstrates the importance of the Anglo middle and upper class to GGL success. In eight of the nine losses suffered by the GGL in these two election years, this segment of the electorate supported opposition candidates against the GGL nominees.

The Good Government League clearly served as a mechanism through which the successful structuring of electoral choices was realized in an at-large system. It must be recalled that Hispanics represented less than forty percent of the registered voters city-wide in 1971, 1973, and 1975. In 1971 Hispanics represented 37.40% of all
registered voters in the city and in 1973 and 1975 they represented 35.89% and 36.66% respectively. A solid Anglo voting block more appropriately represented a majority of the votes necessary to win election at-large. GGL nomination was tantamount to election in that with it came the support of that segment of the San Antonio electorate which was predominantly upper and middle class and Anglo and was most crucial to electoral victory. The GGL thus served as an organizational mechanism through which this segment of the population could dominate municipal elections. Such success also served to directly inhibit the capacity of San Antonio's minority communities to elect their most preferred candidates. The electoral success of the Good Government League did not benefit all segments of the San Antonio electorate equally.
Footnotes - V


2Ibid.

3Gibson and Ashcroft, 1977, p. 25.


5Gibson, p. 316.

6Ibid.

7Gibson, p. 305.

8Brischetto, Cottrell, and Stevens, p. 169.

9Ibid.
CHAPTER VI

THE NONPARTISAN SLATING GROUP AND CITY ELECTORAL POLITICS

This examination of nonpartisan slating groups demonstrates that in Dallas, San Antonio, and Abilene these organizations operated as effective political parties. Their previous characterizations as temporary bands of middle class civic-minded advocates is proven wrong. J. Liepert Freeman argues that the designation of political party activity should not be restricted to the activity of traditional political parties. After functionally defining a political party as "a group which coheres for electoral purposes," he includes the activity of "good government" type slating organizations as party activity.¹ He states:

They (municipal reformers) do not always accept the image of the typical 'Citizens Good Government Association' as a political party. Yet any such association which backs candidates, raises money for and conducts a campaign, and espouses a platform functions as a party in the local political arena.²

The experiences of the CCA, the GGL, and the CBG justify Freeman's interpretation.

But in functioning as a political party the nonpartisan slating group structured the scope of conflict to advantage the interests of identifiable segments of the electorate in each city. On the basis of class, ethnicity, and race, it was middle and upper class, predominantly white, business interests which most benefited from slating group activity.
This conclusion must be understood within the historical context of the efforts of the Municipal Reform Movement to alter the structures of representation and decision making in municipal politics to favor these interests. In these Texas cities municipal reformers were able to define the lines of political cleavage in city politics by enacting a system of city manager government with its attendant at-large, nonpartisan system of councilmanic election. With such a system, a reform electoral base composed of middle and upper class predominantly white voters, when voting as a block, could dominate all councilmember elections.

The slating group must therefore be understood as a final strategic step in the efforts to further enhance the influence of this segment of the electorate. The Municipal Reform Movement well recognized this function, as its national organization, the National Municipal League, actively promoted its establishment in all cities. One should not be misguided by the rhetoric of municipal reformers regarding the larger public interest which was offered to justify these efforts. Their views of the larger public interest were also consistent with their particularistic gains and advantages.

The evidence examined regarding patterns of bias in candidate recruitment and selection in each city which limited the class, racial, and ethnic diversity of interest
representation on slating group dominated councils demonstrates how these particularistic gains were realized. Further, evidence examined regarding the patterns of electoral support in San Antonio demonstrate that the slating group was able to effectively structure the vote in an at-large, nonpartisan system to virtually guarantee the success of middle and upper class, predominantly white voters in city elections. Their first choice candidates were elected with overwhelming regularity. Through the nonpartisan slating group, the reform electoral base was institutionalized as a dominant actor in contemporary city electoral politics.

Limits to Electoral Hegemony: Minority Rights and the National Government

Despite the overwhelming successes of these nonpartisan slating groups, the GGL in San Antonio and the CCA in Dallas ceased their active offering of slates of candidates for municipal elective office after 1975. In each of these cases the role of the national government was an important contributor to their demise.

As previously stated the elections of 1973 and 1975 in San Antonio were anomalous in that the GGL suffered substantial defeats at the polls. These defeats were largely due to the breakdown of its traditional electoral base.
However, another very important factor contributing to the demise of the GGL was the decision made by the Justice Department in 1976 that the 1972 annexations by the city of sixty-six square miles of land representing an increase in the city population of 51,400 residents was illegal under the Voting Rights Act.\(^3\) Section 5 of the Act gave the Attorney General, or the Federal District Court of the District of Columbia, the capacity to object to changes within covered jurisdictions of any practices which might discriminate against the voting rights of Blacks or language minorities.\(^4\) The entire state of Texas was covered under the 1975 extension and expansion of the Act.

Attorneys for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund argued to the Attorney General that these annexations diluted the votes of San Antonio's minority communities. In his letter dated April 2, 1976, to the city of San Antonio, he stated that because the annexed areas contained a population of 75% Anglos and 23% Mexican Americans, the expansion in the size of the eligible electorate in city elections did dilute the voting strength of the Mexican American and Black communities by making them a smaller percentage of the city-wide electorate. The Attorney General stated,

...However, with regard to the other 13 annexations, we cannot conclude, as we must under the Voting Rights Act that they, when coupled with an at-large, majority vote, numbered post system, of city elections, in which racial-ethnic block voting exists, do
not have the effect of abridging the right to vote of affected minorities in San Antonio.5

The Attorney General further suggested a possible remedy to the situation. He continued in this letter:

...one way to remedy this situation would be to adopt a system of fairly drawn single member wards. Should that occur, the Attorney General will reconsider the matter upon receipt of that information.6

The Attorney General had thus ruled that decisions made by a GGL dominated city council regarding the annexation of predominantly Anglo geographical areas under an electoral system of at-large elections by place system and with a majority requirement violated the 1975 Voting Rights Act. In response to this objection the city council offered a 10-1 plan, 10 single-member districts and an at-large, popularly elected mayor, for a referendum vote by the electorate on January 15, 1977. Under this plan five of the councilmanic districts would have total Hispanic populations of 54.4% to 91.4%; four would have Anglo populations of 66.6% to 86.6%; and one would have a Black population of 46.8%.

By a narrow margin of 51.4% to 48.6% of 61,387 total votes cast, the 10-1 plan was approved.7 The city-wide vote displayed a similar pattern to that of many past GGL campaigns. Predominantly Hispanic and Black areas voted overwhelmingly in favor of the plan and Northside predominantly Anglo areas largely voted against it.8
It is within the context of these two major changes in San Antonio city politics, the defeats of the GGL in 1973 and especially 1975, and the clear indication that the city would have to adopt a single-member district plan of councilmanic election, that the chairman of the GGL announced its dissolution in December of 1976. The 1973 and 1975 elections clearly demonstrated that the electoral base which had previously provided the GGL with its enviable success rate was no longer at the sole control of the GGL leadership. The 1976 objection by the Attorney General to the city's 1972 annexations and the apparent inevitability of the adoption of some type of single-member district plan would make even more difficult the successful participation of the GGL in councilmanic elections since such a plan would require some of their candidates to secure a majority of the votes cast in geographical areas which had at best given their past candidates sporadic support. Since 1976 the GGL has made no effort to re-enter San Antonio city electoral politics.

The demise of the CCA in Dallas is also partly due to a major change in the city's electoral system imposed by the national government. In the city of Dallas the system of at-large election itself had been the focus of court litigation since 1967. In that year Max Goldblatt, a hardware store owner, lost his at-large council race despite winning a majority of the votes cast from his residency
district. He filed suit in U.S. district court charging that the at-large system of election was discriminatory in that it denied adequate representation to the citizens of Dallas. The district court found against Mr. Goldblatt and the Supreme Court refused to hear the case for want of jurisdiction.10

In 1971, Albert Lipscomb, an unsuccessful Black candidate for city council, filed suit against the city charging that the at-large system of councilmanic election violated his Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendment rights as guaranteed under the Constitution. After four years of legal maneuvering, on March 25, 1975, Judge John Mahon found that the at-large system of councilmanic election was discriminatory against Blacks because of the existence of several supporting conditions. The conditions included:
1) a history of racial segregation, 2) a history of discrimination which inhibited current participation in the electoral process, 3) a history of racial vote polarization, and 4) a history by Blacks of unequal access to the slating process.11

In his decision Judge Mahon also accepted the council's adoption of an 8-3 plan as a remedy to the situation. Under this plan, eight councilmembers would be elected from single-member districts and three, including the mayor, would be elected at-large. Two of the eight districts contained Black populations of 87.3% and 73.6%, and one
contained a predominantly minority population of 25.9% Blacks and 20% Hispanics. The other five districts were predominantly Anglo ranging from 87.0% to 94.6% of the district population. 12

It was in the city council election of 1975, under the 8-3 plan, that the CCA suffered its largest defeat since 1937. It lost two of the eight district races and the two at-large races, including the mayor's race, in which it filed candidates. Interestingly, the two Black candidates who were elected from predominantly Black districts were CCA candidates. Nonetheless, the CCA has not formally run a slate of candidates for office since 1975. Perhaps the likelihood of successfully putting together a coalition of diverse geographical, ethnic, and racial interests under an 8-3 plan of councilmanic election was deemed too small to merit further CCA activity. The diversity of interests which could be elected under such an 8-3 plan had never characterized a previous CCA slate of candidates.

Unlike the GGL in San Antonio and the CCA in Dallas, the CBG in Abilene, as of 1982, was still active and extremely successful in city electoral politics. As in Dallas however, a lawsuit was filed against the city of Abilene charging that its system of at-large election diluted the votes of the Hispanic and Black communities in the city under conditions of a history of discrimination which inhibited current minority participation rates, a history of
ethnic and racial vote polarization in municipal voting, a pattern of unresponsiveness by city government to minority community needs, and a history and current practice of unequal access to the decision-making processes of the most important organization in city electoral politics, the CBG. The plaintiffs in the case hoped that the court would determine the at-large system of election in Abilene dilutionary and therefore in violation of their Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendment rights and in violation of the Voting Rights Act. Plaintiffs also hoped that the court would impose or recommend the adoption of a single-member district plan of councilmanic election as a remedy.

The Abilene case is distinct from the San Antonio and Dallas cases in that the plaintiffs gave special importance to the role of the CBG as a mechanism of minority vote dilution. The plaintiffs' attorneys and expert witness argued that access by minority group leaders to effective decision making within the CBG was minimal and therefore that the three minority candidates who had been elected to office with CBG backing simply served as tokens, and not effective representatives of minority community interests.

As previously demonstrated the domination by the CBG of Abilene city electoral politics had been clear and it thus should have been possible to show how this organization only minimally, if at all, represented the interests of Abilene's minority communities. On October 22, 1982, U.S. District
Judge Halbert O. Woodward issued his opinion in favor of the defendants. He disagreed with the major claims made by the plaintiffs and ruled that the operation of the at-large system in Abilene was not dilutionary and therefore was not discriminatory against the rights of minorities.¹⁴

Of special relevance was the decision made by Judge Woodward that the domination of electoral politics by the CBG did not contribute to minority vote dilution. He stated that the recruitment and nomination processes of the CBG were equally open to all segments of the Abilene community. To justify this position he pointed to the minority candidates that had been slated by the CBG and implied that the recruitment, nomination, and election of such candidates was overwhelming evidence to indicate that the CBG made a conscious effort to "represent" the interests of Abilene's minority communities.¹⁵

What is instructive about Judge Woodward's decision is that the same predominance in Abilene city politics that allowed the CBG to effectively control the election of minority candidates, also gave it the capacity to allow some "safe" minorities to be elected. This gave the CBG at least initial evidence to argue that they had been receptive to minority community needs. On March 2, 1984, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals remanded the case back to the district court for further findings of fact. Of special note, the judges requested that Judge Woodward further
justify his determination that the minority candidates slated by the CBG were "true representatives" of minority communities. The Circuit Court was unconvinced that the mere election of minority candidates provided minority community representation. Judge Woodward has yet to issue his decision.16

The experiences of the GGL, the CCA, and the CBG each demonstrate the vulnerability of such nonpartisan slating groups to charges of contributing to ethnic and racial minority vote dilution. This vulnerability should not be surprising given the previous analysis of the origins, goals, and operations of these slating groups in city politics.

Political Party Activity in a Nonpartisan, At-Large Electoral System

The experiences herein described of nonpartisan slating group activity in three Texas cities has demonstrated how such organizations operating in a nonpartisan, at-large system can be among the most important political actors structuring the scope of conflict to determine the distribution of political influence in city electoral politics. Leon Epstein hypothesizes that nonpartisanship can represent a further stage in the evolution of modern democratic institutions bringing the rulers even closer to the control of the electorate. He states:
...nonpartisanship may be an attempt to take a political step beyond parties, to ask voters even in a mass electorate to choose candidates as individuals or as members of groups more narrowly defined than parties, and to break what are seen as artificial cleavages imposed by parties.

However, the evidence presented from the cities of Dallas, San Antonio, and Abilene demonstrates that the evolution of nonpartisan elections and the call for nonpartisanship generally in American municipal politics must be understood together with other structural reforms proposed by the Municipal Reform Movement, especially at-large elections. These reforms were proposed to advantage the interests of upper and middle class, predominantly white segments of the population in municipal politics. Frank J. Sorauf states:

The removal of the political party as an organizer and a symbol in our present nonpartisan elections help upper SES elites, both of the right and the left, to dominate those politics. The political party, in other words, is the political organization of the masses who lack the cues and information—as well as the political resources of status, skills, and money—to make a major impact on public decisions via other means.

The development and operation of nonpartisan slating groups in these three reformed cities suggests that the call for nonpartisan elections by no means inhibited upper and middle class, predominantly white segments of the electorate from establishing a political party organization to promote its interests under the guise of nonpartisanship. Indeed,
the package of structural reforms provided a social-political context within which such business-dominated nonpartisan slating groups were highly successful. The demise of the CCA in Dallas and the GGL in San Antonio in light of the transformations in the electoral system imposed by changes to single-member district councilmanic election further suggests the importance of the reformed system to the success of the nonpartisan slating group in structuring the scope of conflict in municipal electoral politics.

Inevitably, several areas of subsequent research are suggested by the above analysis and conclusions. Three issues are of particular relevance. As stated at the outset the historical and contemporary prevalence of nonpartisan slating groups is unknown. Nonetheless, their importance to understanding the political development and political representation of diverse segments of the American electorate can be substantial. The identification and analysis of nonpartisan slating groups in other political jurisdictions can prove useful to determining the degree to which conclusions reached regarding the experiences of these three Texas cities can be generalized to other political arenas.

Secondly, the role of the nonpartisan slating group in public policy making merits systematic analysis. The experiences of slating groups in these Texas cities
indicates that their chosen candidates dominated municipal public policy making for as much as just over four decades. It should be possible to determine whose interests were favored or disfavored by public policy decision making under such slating group dominated city councils. Although difficult to determine since it is not possible to measure what public policy would have been absent a successful slating group, a reasonable hypothesis to test would be that those segments of the electorate who consistently gave the slating group its highest levels of support were also the most consistent beneficiaries of municipal public policy. In considering this issue it should also be determined whether public policy decisions addressing the needs and interests of the least consistent supporters of the group, such as minority group segments of the electorate, are the result of tokenism or self-determination. Important implications for determining the policy consequences of unequal access to governmental decision making are suggested.

Lastly, the relevance of this analysis to discussions of the implications of the decline of formal partisanship at state and national levels of government for political participation and effective representation must be recognized. Electoral and governmental decision making has been undertaken in many American municipalities for decades without the active participation of traditional political
parties. As such, the experiences of many municipal
governments regarding the consequences for equal access in
effective political participation and the difficulties of
achieving meaningful legislative consensus can serve as a
guide for the study of state and national politics in an era
of the decline of traditional political parties. Although
the evolution of organizations similar to slating groups
seems unlikely at this point, the unequal advantages
attained by segments of the population as a result of the
decline of traditional political party activity in municipal
politics should also be expected at state and national
levels.

Perhaps the most important questions that can be
addressed in political science analysis are "Who wins?" and
"Who loses?" It is hoped that this examination of
nonpartisan slating groups has made a further contribution
to the identification and understanding of the answers to
these questions within the context of the municipal
political arena.
Footnotes - VI

1 Freeman, 1958, p. 283.

2 Ibid.


4 Cottrell and Stevens, 1978, pp. 81-82.

5 As quoted in Cottrell and Stevens, 1978, p. 85.

6 Ibid.

7 Gibson and Ashcroft, 1977, p. 31.

8 Ibid.

9 Gibson, p. 318.


12 Ibid.

13 Maria Velasquez, et. al., v. The City of Abilene, Texas, et. al., (N.D., Texas, 1982).

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 Maria Velasquez, et. al., v. The City of Abilene, et. al., (United States Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit, March 2, 1984).


18 Sorauf, 1972, p. 420.
METHODOLOGICAL APPENDIX

Information on candidate backgrounds and residences was partially compiled from data supplied by the research project "Local Representation and the Quality of Urban Life," funded by the National Institute of Mental Health under grant 5 R01 MH 33128-02. Thanks to Dr. Peggy Heilig of the University of Illinois for providing a tape of the data.

Information on San Antonio elections came from several sources. Election returns for each precinct were taken from official tally sheets maintained by the San Antonio City Clerk. Precinct registration data were available from the Bexar County Tax Assessor-Collector. Most of these data were provided in machine-readable form by Dr. L. Tucker Gibson, Dept. of Political Science, Trinity University. Dr. Gibson's data did not include the 1951, 1955, and 1967 city council elections, which were keypunched from the original tally sheets. The remainder of Dr. Gibson's data was proofread and corrected for keypunch errors and omissions.

Spanish-surname registration data for 1971-1975 were furnished by Dr. Robert Brischetto, Research Director, Southwest Voter Registration Education Project. The figures were calculated by cross-indexing computerized lists of registered voters with a master list of Spanish surnames compiled by the United States Bureau of the Census.
No agency compiled socioeconomic data on precincts for the period covered by this study. The only data that can be aggregated to the precinct level is home value, which is used here as a measure of social class. The Census Bureau reports a frequency distribution of these values for city blocks. The median home value for each precinct was calculated by laying the precinct map for that election atop the Census Bureau block map, and computing the median home value for the group of blocks that fell within the precinct. Since census data can become outdated by the end of a decade, home values were calculated for decades with census years as their midpoints. Thus, values for 1945-54 were taken from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1950 Housing Census Report, V. 5, Part 169, 1952. The 1955-1964 calculations were taken from U.S. Census of Housing:1960, V. 3, Series HC(3), No. 389, 1961. The housing values for 1971-1977 were obtained from the Local Representation Project.

Table A.1 reports the means and standard deviations for GGL support calculations utilized in the identification of vote polarizations scores in Table 5.3.
Table A.1
Variance of Group GGL Support Scores
City of San Antonio
1955-1975

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Anglos</th>
<th></th>
<th>Hispanics</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>St.Dev.</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>St.Dev.</td>
<td>Mean</td>
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<td>1955</td>
<td>68.96</td>
<td>13.39</td>
<td>46.33</td>
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<td>5.94</td>
<td>60.56</td>
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<td>1957R</td>
<td>73.00</td>
<td>10.50</td>
<td>68.80</td>
<td>9.60</td>
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<td>1959</td>
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<td>15.39</td>
<td>31.58</td>
<td>5.25</td>
<td>23.51</td>
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<tr>
<td>1959R</td>
<td>73.10</td>
<td>16.20</td>
<td>40.05</td>
<td>7.68</td>
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<td>1961</td>
<td>44.56</td>
<td>17.95</td>
<td>37.30</td>
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<td>20.09</td>
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<td>1961R</td>
<td>61.82</td>
<td>14.40</td>
<td>42.43</td>
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<td>31.00</td>
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<td>1963</td>
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<td>8.48</td>
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<td>1963R</td>
<td>80.92</td>
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<td>8.52</td>
<td>69.10</td>
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<td>16.04</td>
<td>45.00</td>
<td>3.96</td>
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<td>1967</td>
<td>55.40</td>
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<td>32.51</td>
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<td>1967R</td>
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<td>3.22</td>
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<td>12.00</td>
<td>36.32</td>
<td>3.95</td>
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</table>

*Data not available.
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