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*Responsiveness Bias in 51 American Communities**

This paper is concerned with responsiveness bias, a previously uninvestigated dimension of political inequality, which refers to the degree to which governments respond unequally to the public policy preferences of various community subpopulations (e.g., blacks, whites, upper-class and lower-class citizens). An empirical examination of responsiveness bias in the 51 cities of the Permanent Community Sample reveals that responsiveness is usually biased in favor of the advantaged (upper-SES, white) segments of the population, although a few cities exhibit bias in favor of the disadvantaged. An analysis of the environmental and political factors affecting responsiveness bias shows that larger, more wealthy cities, with well-organized interest groups having little minority representation, are most likely to bias their policies in ways preferred by the advantaged.

In recent years, scholars concerned with local policy processes have increasingly turned their attention to the variability in governmental responsiveness (Prewitt and Eulau, 1970; Jennings and Zeigler, 1971; Verba and Nie, 1972: 299–343; Shaffer and Weber, 1974; and Schumaker and Loomis, 1975) and to the possible lack of equality exhibited by communities in the distribution of policy benefits (Lineberry and Welch, 1973; Levy, Meltsner, and Wildavsky, 1974; Lineberry, 1975; and Madenka, 1976). The major questions being addressed in these relatively new research areas concern the degree to which governments adopt policies which are congruent with the preferences of their citizens and the degree to which policy benefits are distributed equally among various community subpopulations.

Responsiveness and equality derive their importance as subjects of inquiry from normative democratic theory, which suggests that governments should be both responsive and equal in their treatment of citizens' policy preferences. However, because of conceptual ambiguities concerning the meaning of equality and inequality in democratic theory, cumulative research in this important area has been slow and intermittent. This paper attempts to

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overcome some of these conceptual difficulties by presenting the concept of responsiveness bias as one alternative to previous conceptions of inequality in democratic theory. Defined as the degree to which governments respond unequally to the preferences of various subpopulations in their communities, the concept of responsiveness bias addresses simultaneously the democratic theorist's concern for both responsiveness and equality.

This paper will examine the concept of responsiveness bias in three parts. In the first section, we develop the meaning of responsiveness bias as a theoretical concept, contrasting it with other conceptions of political inequality and suggesting its importance in democratic theory. In the second section, a procedure for measuring responsiveness bias is developed and utilized. In addition, the degree of responsiveness bias which is evidenced in the 51 cities comprising the Permanent Community Sample is discussed. In the third section, we present and test eight hypotheses concerning the impact of various community characteristics and formal and informal political structures on responsiveness bias.

The Concepts of Responsiveness and Responsiveness Bias

Responsiveness

Responsiveness refers to a stimulus-response relationship. Responsiveness occurs when actors react positively to an external stimulus. Unresponsiveness occurs when actors fail to react or react contrary to the way desired by those providing the stimulus. Thus, the concept of responsiveness is concerned with the degree of linkage or congruence between stimulus variables and response variables.

For scholars investigating "political responsiveness," the response behaviors of primary interest concern the activities of governmental officials (e.g., their openness to citizen contacts, their voting patterns, their policy decisions, etc.). And the stimuli presented to policymakers which are most theoretically interesting pertain to a variety of political inputs by citizens (e.g., electoral participation, individual citizen requests, articulated group demands, public opinion, etc.). Given this diversity of possible stimulus variables and response variables, it is necessary to specify precisely the stimuli and response behaviors which define the type of political responsiveness being investigated.

On the response side, we are concerned with how governmental officials distribute public resources among various service areas (e.g., to welfare, to education, to highways, etc.). These resource allocations serve as indicators of

the policy priorities of governments. The type of political stimuli which are of concern to us are the public policy preferences of citizens. In particular, we are concerned with the extent to which citizens support spending proportionately greater amounts of public resources in some service areas (e.g., education) than they do in others (e.g., recreation). By discovering the extent of public support for spending in each of a broad variety of governmental service areas, it is possible to specify the public policy priorities of citizens. Thus, in this study we are concerned with the concept of "policy responsiveness to citizen preferences," which refers to the degree of congruence between citizens' policy priorities, treated as stimulus variables, and the distribution of public resources among various service areas, treated as response variables.[1]

It should be noted that, according to this definition, there are as many ways for governments to be responsive as there are unique sets of citizen input-policy distribution linkages in communities. Citizen preferences in one community, for example, may be congruent with a policy distributing all revenues to public safety while citizen preferences in another community may be congruent with a policy distributing all revenues to social services. The concept of responsiveness is thus relative, depending upon the pattern of citizen priorities and policy distributions exhibited in specific communities. Further, according to the definition of responsiveness advanced here, there is no single, a priori distribution of policy which can be considered responsive. Rather, the determination of whether a particular distribution of policy is responsive depends upon the distribution of citizen preferences and whether there is congruence between these preferences and the policy response.

Responsiveness Bias

It is important to recognize that governments may be reasonably responsive to the policy priorities of citizens in a community, but not be *equally* responsive to the policy priorities of all types of citizens. To the extent that policymakers do not respond equally to the preferences of all

[1] This conception of responsiveness as congruence between citizen inputs and policy outputs is consistent with that of Shaffer and Weber (1974). It has sometimes been argued that responsiveness is a *unidirectional* concept in which inputs *cause* outputs while congruence is a nondirectional concept which is simply concerned with the correlation between inputs and outputs. We recognize these distinctions, but perceive them to be differences between the theoretical and operational definitions of a single concept. In other words, like other researchers, we deal with measures of congruence while making theoretical inferences regarding responsiveness.

types of citizens, a pattern of biased responsiveness exists in a community. Thus responsiveness bias refers to a community-level pattern of selective responsiveness to various subpopulations. For example, when the distribution of policy in a community is more reflective of the policy priorities of whites than nonwhites, or of the preferences of high-SES citizens more than the preferences of low-SES citizens, the governmental response is biased. Responsiveness bias may also occur where the preferences of blacks or low–SES citizens are more reflected in public policy than are the preferences of whites or upper-SES citizens. A pattern of unbiased responsiveness, or equal responsiveness, occurs in only those situations where policymakers are equally responsive to the policy priorities of all subpopulations in a community.

Responsiveness bias is perhaps best understood as a distinct form of political inequality. In the past, students of community politics have been concerned with the inequalities associated with various citizen inputs (e.g., unequal opportunities to participate) and the inequalities pertaining to the distribution of policy outputs. But the inequalities that arise when the inputs of different types of citizens are unequally reflected in policy outputs has not previously been conceptualized as a problem of inequalities in democratic theory. The concept of responsiveness bias thus is intended to complement previous conceptualizations of input inequalities and output inequalities.[2]

It is instructive to contrast the concept of responsiveness bias with other concepts of inequality defined in terms of inputs and outputs.

Many studies on democratic systems have been concerned with various aspects of unequal citizen participation. For example, many studies have documented the unequal participation rates of various subpopulations (see, for example, Verba and Nie, 1972). In this regard, special attention has been given to pointing out the legal and extra-legal barriers preventing equal participation by various subpopulations (Matthews and Prothro, 1966; Cnudde, 1971). However, unless one values full and equal participation by all members of society because of its own intrinsic value (Bachrach, 1967), the importance of studying these inequalities in citizen participation is problematic. The most obvious justification for desiring equal participation–and thus studying the inequalities in participation which exist–is that more equal

[2] It should be noted that our usage of the terms "input equality" and "output equality" differs from that of Lineberry and Welch (1973) and Coleman (1968). These scholars are solely interested in equality of public policy and, for them, "input equality" refers to "equality of resource expenditures" while "output equality" refers to "equality of condition after receipt of services" (Lineberry and Welch, 1973: 19–20). Of course, neither of these concepts refers to equality of citizen inputs–which is denoted by our usage of the term "input equality."

participation may result in a more desirable (just or equal) distribution of policy benefits (Cohen, 1971: 215–224). However, there is little evidence that more equal levels of participation result in more equal policy benefits (Fry, 1974: 430), or that governments are equally responsive to all participants in the policy process (Rossi, Berk, and Eidson, 1974). Thus, an examination of unequal participation rates by various types of citizens, by itself, is not likely to reveal much about the inequalities existing in the distribution of policy benefits.

This difficulty has led many researchers to move beyond the issue of equal participation to the question of equally *effective* participation. It frequently has been noted, for example, that the participatory efforts of some groups, such as blacks and lower-class citizens, appear to bring fewer policy results than do the participatory efforts of other types of citizens (Parenti, 1970; Lipsky, 1970; and Bellush and David, 1971). This pattern of differential effectiveness by different types of citizens has generally been interpreted by community power theorists to mean that various types of citizens have unequal levels of political influence (Hunter, 1953).

These studies focusing on unequal effective participation and on unequal influence in community politics reflect concerns which are implied by the concept of responsiveness bias. Whether one studies the unequal influence of various subpopulations in a community or whether one studies responsiveness bias, the focus of the investigation is on how the preferences of different groups in the community are unequally reflected in public policy. However, the concepts of unequal influence and responsiveness bias are distinct. The concept of influence implies certain participatory efforts (Gamson, 1968: 59–91); when one studies unequal influence, one studies unequal governmental responsiveness to those diverse groups who participate in politics. But, as Robert Dahl (1961: 163–165) points out, when one focuses exclusively on the influence of participants, there is a tendency to overlook subtle but important kinds of nonparticipatory influence. For example, policymakers sometimes respond to the preferences of many citizens who do not directly participate in the policy process. In a sense these people have "influence"–Dahl calls this indirect influence–but such "influence" is overlooked when one focuses solely on overt participatory behavior. Because of the occurrence of "anticipated response" (see Friedrich, 1963), some groups may have their preferences reflected in policy even though they fail to organize, participate, and make overt attempts to exercise influence. Because of these difficulties the study of unequal influence–like the study of unequal participation–reveals little about whose preferences are actually reflected in the distribution of policy benefits.

It is also instructive to contrast the concept of responsiveness bias with the various conceptions of output inequality which have appeared in the literature. The first standard of output inequality to be considered is termed "market equity" by Levy, Meltsner, and Wildavsky (1974: 240). This standard suggests that governmental outputs are equally distributed when the benefits to be derived from government by various subpopulations are proportional to the burdens imposed upon them. Thus, a group that pays ten dollars in taxes receives "equitable" treatment when it receives twice as much benefit as another group that pays five dollars in taxes. A second standard of output equality often referred to in democratic theory is the notion of equal treatment by government. According to this standard everyone should share equally in the distribution of governmental benefits. When the "equal treatment" standard is applied, each citizen should receive "equal protection of the laws," and an equal share of the resources distributed by government, regardless of the level of his/her contribution. A third standard of output equality pertains to what Levy et al. (1974) refer to as "equal results," and what Lineberry and Welch (1973) call "equality of condition after receipt of services." According to this standard, policy should be compensatory to the degree necessary to make citizens equal in certain respects (e.g., educational attainment) after the delivery of policy benefits.

The concept of responsiveness bias is distinct from each of these three concepts regarding output inequalities. It is possible for governments to distribute policy benefits equally but, simultaneously, exhibit a pattern of responsiveness bias. Conversely, governments can be equally responsive to the policy priorities of various subpopulations in a community but fail to distribute policy benefits equally. Let us suppose, for example, that high-income citizens and low-income citizens favor exactly the same set of policy priorities and that government is highly responsive to both sets of preferences. Further suppose that, by some objective measure, upper-class citizens benefit more than lower-class citizens from the distribution of governmental benefits. In this hypothetical example, government has been equally responsive to both groups of citizens and yet one group of citizens has benefitted more, in an objective sense, than the other group of citizens. Thus, responsiveness equality does not, necessarily, imply an "objectively" equal distribution of benefits.

The concepts regarding output equality, while important in the broader context of all political equality, exhibit certain conceptual difficulties which are avoided by the use of the concept of responsiveness bias. For example, the researcher must define and impose standards of output equality on data pertaining to governmental outputs. And, while it may be useful to know, for

normative reasons, that a government does not distribute benefits equally according to some researcher-defined standard, it must also be recognized that a statement concerning the unequal distribution of policy vis-à-vis one standard or another does not mean that citizens in the community feel or even perceive this inequality. In fact, the use of output equality standards provides no indication regarding citizen preferences or the operation of government in responding to such preferences. As a result of these deficiencies, the output equality standards are, in our judgment, of limited usefulness in examining democratic systems. In contrast, the concept of responsiveness bias provides researchers with an analytical construct which links citizen inputs with governmental outputs and suggests the possibility of asking not only "who gets what?", but also asking the more refined question of *who gets how much of what they prefer* in "the authoritative allocation of values." The latter, we think, is the more relevant question for democratic theory.

Measuring Responsiveness Bias in 51 American Cities

In this study we have measured the degree of responsiveness bias in the 51 cities of the Permanent Community Sample (PCS). This sample was selected because it has served as a useful laboratory for many studies of urban politics; we could thus draw on the data collected by others, much of which is available through the Inter-University Consortium for Political Research. Because these data have been described extensively elsewhere (Rossi and Crain, 1968; Clark, 1971; and Clark, 1975), we shall not describe the PCS here.

In order to measure responsiveness bias, data concerning the policy adoptions of municipal governments and the policy preferences of various subpopulations in each city of the PCS were required. In this paper, data regarding the distribution of revenue-sharing funds within communities were used as measures of public policy. Specifically, we used the Actual Use Reports for the forth entitlement period (1974–75) to determine the proportion of total General Revenue-Sharing funds allocated by the 51 PCS cities to each of the various service areas shown on the Actual Use Report Forms. Variances in the distribution of these revenue-sharing funds across service areas are thus indicators of variances in the policy priorities of governments in different cities.

Data regarding the policy preferences of various subpopulations were obtained by utilizing a modification of a simulation technique initially developed for state policy analysis by Frank Munger (1969) and most fully

described by Ronald Weber (1971). This simulation model enables estimation of citizen preferences at the community level by combining census data and national survey data utilizing the following formula.

$$C_{kj} = \sum_{i=1}^{n} V_{ij} PP_{ik} \quad (1)$$

where C_{kj} = the simulated community-wide citizen preference score regarding policy k in community j,

V_{ij} = the proportion of community j's population composed of citizen-type i where there are n = 960 citizen-types (attained from analysis of census data), and

PP_{ik} = the policy preference score of citizen-type i on policy k (estimated from survey data provided by the Opinion Research Corporation, 1975), regarding citizen preferences on the distribution of revenue sharing at the local level.[3]

Equation 1 had to be modified in order to calculate policy preference scores for various subpopulations in a community. Simply put, this equation was modified so as *not* to add up the preferences of all citizen-types in each community. Instead, only those citizen-types which are defined by the subpopulation characteristic under consideration are taken into account. For example, if one wants to get a score for black preferences in a community, one would take into account only the black citizen-types defined in the model. This procedure is formalized by Equation 2.

$$B_{kj} = \sum_{i=1}^{n/2} (V_{ij})(PP_{ik}) \quad (2)$$

where B_{kj} = the stimulated preference score for blacks (B) regarding policy k in community j,

V_{ij} = the proportion of community j's population composed of black citizen-type i where there are n/2 = 480 black citizen-types.

PP_{ik} = the policy preference score of black citizen-type i on policy k.

[3] The Opinion Research Corporation (ORC) conducted a national survey of 1000 citizens during the Fall of 1974 to ascertain the public's awareness of and attitudes toward the revenue-sharing program. Our estimates of citizen preferences were based on an analysis of the following question asked of all respondents: "The way you see it, what are the main things General Revenue-Sharing funds *should be used for* by your city government?" The ORC coded the first five responses of each citizen into policy categories similar to those used on the Actual Use reports.

Using this simulation technique, it was possible to estimate for each community in the PCS the policy priorities of six types of citizens: (a) the less educated (those not having a high school degree), (b) the more educated (those having at least a high school degree), (c) those with lower incomes (families having an annual income of less than $10,000), (d) those with higher incomes (families having an annual income of more than $10,000), (e) whites, and (f) nonwhites.[4]

It should be noted that the use of revenue-sharing policy data and corresponding citizen preference data is not without limitations. First, it is reasonable to suppose that a substantial amount of measurement error is present in both our measures of public policy (see Lovell and Korey, 1975) and citizen preferences.[5] Although there is no indication that the measurement errors that exist are systematic rather than random, such difficulties can obviously reduce the accuracy of our descriptions and explanations of variations in responsiveness bias. A second limitation in using revenue-sharing policy data and corresponding citizen preference data concerns the generality of results. Certainly the representativeness of revenue-sharing as a policy area

[4] Persons interested in a further elaboration of our simulation model should write the authors at the Department of Political Science, the University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas 66045. In a paper entitled "On Simulating Public Preferences at the Community Level," we discuss, first, the modifications we have made in the Munger-Weber model. These modifications which pertain to the procedures for estimating the citizen-type composition of communities (V_{ij}) and the preferences of various citizen types (PP_{ik}), attempt to (a) address the problem that the Census Bureau provides incomplete citizen-type breakdowns at the local level (Schneider, 1972) and (b) incorporate some of the critical insights of Seidman (1975) regarding the Munger-Weber methodology.

Second, the problem of validating the simulation model is addressed. The simulation model assumes that inter-community variation in citizen preferences is a function of the demographic composition of communities. Because citizen preferences are also affected by specific, idiosyncratic conditions in communities (e.g., the editorial positions of the media, the particular concerns of community leaders, etc.), estimates of public policy preferences based solely on an analysis of a community's demographic characteristics are bound to be somewhat inaccurate. However, by comparing simulated preferences with direct measures of public preferences in the ten cities in the Urban Observatory Sample, we have concluded that the simulation model yields satisfactory approximations of public opinion.

[5] The revenue-sharing expenditure data are said to be particularly unreliable due to the fungibility of The Actual Use Reports. While recognition of this problem is important, we do not believe that the fungibility problem precludes investigations utilizing revenue sharing data. First, similar data have been used in previous research (Caputo and Cole, 1974). Second, a survey undertaken for the Congressional Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Relations suggests that most local officials have not "fudged" their Actual Use Reports to conform with Federal guidelines (Barlow, Juster, Wilensky, 1975: 210).

is open to question. Had we used data regarding the distribution of locally generated funds or data regarding regulatory policy, different results may have been obtained. Nevertheless, these data regarding the distribution of revenue-sharing policy benefits and the distribution of citizen opinion concerning their preferred patterns of revenue-sharing allocations do provide the opportunity for an exploratory investigation into an important political problem.

Our specific measures of responsiveness bias were obtained by conducting intra-community analyses within each of the 51 PCS cities. For this phase of the investigation, nine service areas were adopted as units of analysis: public safety, environmental protection, public health, social services, education, public transportation, libraries, recreation, and public housing.[6] Measures of the percentage of revenue-sharing funds allocated to each of the nine service areas and measures of the corresponding priorities of each of six subpopulations were then used to estimate the degree of responsiveness to each subpopulation in each city. These measures of responsiveness to each subpopulation were obtained by simply correlating the measures of public policy with the measures of subpopulation preferences. For purposes of illustration, it is useful to consider how responsiveness to blacks and responsiveness to whites is measured in a single city. In order to measure responsiveness to whites, we would use our measures of revenue-sharing allocations to each of the nine service areas and correlate these expenditures with the level of support by white citizens in the community for spending revenue-sharing funds in each service area. In order to measure responsiveness to blacks, we would use the same measures of revenue-sharing allocations to each service area and correlate these expenditures with the level of support by black citizens for spending revenue-sharing funds in each service area. If, on the one hand, the policy priorities of white citizens are consistent with the service priorities exhibited in the allocation of revenue-sharing funds, a high positive correlation would result indicating a high degree of responsiveness to white citizens. If, on the other hand, the policy priorities of black citizens are very inconsistent with the service priorities exhibited in the actual allocation of revenue-sharing funds in a community, a low or negative correlation would result indicating a lack of responsiveness to black citizens. By this procedure,

[6] These nine policy categories were used in this analysis for two reasons. First, the nine policy areas listed account for most of the revenue-sharing allocations in American cities (Getter and Schumaker, 1976). Second, the survey conducted by the Opinion Research Corporation, which was used to simulate public preferences, coded citizen priorities for only these nine service areas.

we thus obtained measures of responsiveness to each of six subpopulations for each city in our sample.

These measures of responsiveness to each of six subpopulations were then used to develop three measures of differential responsiveness for each city. Because our concern is with the extent to which public officials respond unequally to the preferences of different subpopulations, we sought to develop measures indicating the degree of unequal responsiveness by city officials to a subpopulation and its categorical counterpart. We thus obtained measures of differential responsiveness to diverse educational subpopulations, differential responsiveness to diverse income subpopulations, and differential responsiveness to different racial subpopulations. These measures were obtained by simply subtracting the degree of responsiveness to one subpopulation (less educated citizens, low-income citizens, or blacks) from the degree of responsiveness to its categorical counterpart (more educated citizens, high-income citizens, or whites). In order to illustrate this procedure for measuring differential responsiveness, let us consider two situations where responsiveness to black and white preferences is unequal. If the preferences of white citizens and public policy are highly correlated (e.g., r = .50) but the preferences of black citizens and public policy are not highly correlated (e.g., r = .00), our procedure for measuring differential responsiveness to racial subpopulations would result in a substantial positive coefficient (.50 − .00 = .50) indicating a substantial inequality in responsiveness and a bias toward whites. If, however, the preferences of whites and public policy are not highly correlated (e.g., r = .00), but the preferences of blacks and public policy are highly correlated (e.g., r = .50), our procedure for measuring differential responsiveness would result in a substantial negative coefficient (.00 − .50 = −.50) again indicating substantial inequality in responsiveness but, in this case, suggesting bias toward blacks. It is in those situations where the preferences of whites and the preferences of blacks are equally correlated with public policy that our measure of differential responsiveness would approach zero, thus indicating a lack of bias in responding to the preferences of either blacks or whites.

A description of the extent of differential responsiveness to diverse subpopulations is presented in Table 1. These data indicate that there is substantial community-to-community variation in differential responsiveness. Some communities exhibit substantial negative scores suggesting that they are more responsive to the preferences of less educated citizens, low-income citizens, and blacks. However, 88 percent of all cities exhibit positive scores of differential responsiveness to income and racial subpopulations, suggesting

TABLE 1

Measures of Differential Responsiveness to Various Subpopulations

Indices of Differential Responsiveness	Percent of Cities Biased Toward Advantaged	Mean Score	Low Value	High Value	Standard Deviation
To Educational Subpopulations	43.1	−.021	−.496	.129	.129
To Income Subpopulations	88.2	.079	−.479	.243	.145
To Racial Subpopulations	88.2	.097	−.418	.339	.163

that the vast majority of cities exhibit higher levels of responsiveness to high-income citizens and whites than to low-income citizens and blacks.

Although we have, to this point, constructed separate measures of differential responsiveness to educational, income, and racial subpopulations, it is reasonable to suppose that the inequalities in responsiveness which occur on one dimension (e.g., the differential responsiveness to racial subpopulations) are highly correlated with the inequalities in responsiveness which occur on other dimensions (e.g., the differential responsiveness to income subpopulations). In this regard Lineberry (1975: 5) has written that "race and class questions [of discrimination] are comingled like strands of the double helix and their cojoint effects can probably never be unravelled." For this reason Lineberry advances what he calls "the underclass hypothesis" which suggests that unequal treatment of blacks and low-SES citizens are highly interrelated and that both contribute to discrimination against the "underclass."

In order to determine whether the various measures of differential responsiveness used in this analysis are indeed inter-correlated as the underclass

TABLE 2

Matrix of Correlations Among Various Indices of Differential Responsiveness

Indices of Differential Responsiveness	2.	3.
1. To Educational Subpopulations	.88	.76
2. To Income Subpopulations	1.00	.80
3. To Racial Subpopulations	–	1.00

TABLE 3

The Degree of Responsiveness Bias in 51 PCS Cities

Akron, OH	.157	Hamilton, OH	.002	St. Paul, MN	.063
Albany, NY	.070	Hammond, IN	.125	St. Petersburg, FL	−.276
Amarillo, TX	−.098	Indianapolis, IN	.118	Salt Lake City, UT	.131
Atlanta, GA	.086	Irvington, NJ	.023	San Francisco, CA	−.100
Berkeley, CA	.163	Jacksonville, FL	.119	Santa Ana, CA	.191
Birmingham, AL	.078	Long Beach, Ca	−.024	San Jose, CA	.227
Bloomington, MN	.109	Malden, MA	−.019	Santa Monica, CA	.173
Boston, MA	.054	Manchester, NH	.081	Schenectady, NY	.038
Buffalo, NY	.061	Memphis, TN	.164	Seattle, WA	.090
Cambridge, MA	.089	Milwaukee, WI	.144	South Bend, IN	−.433
Charlotte, NC	.021	Minneapolis, MN	.144	Tampa, FL	.101
Clifton, NJ	.077	Newark, NJ	.041	Tyler, TX	.159
Duluth, MN	.054	Palo Alto, CA	.018	Utica, NY	.075
Euclid, OH	.007	Pasadena, CA	.076	Waco, TX	.096
Ft. Worth, IX	.169	Phoenix, AZ	.055	Warren, MI	.065
Fullerton, CA	.199	Pittsburgh, PA	.054	Waterbury, CN	.105
Gary, IN	−.434	St. Louis, MO	.024	Waukegan, IL	−.130

hypothesis would suggest, we present the data in Table 2. These data show very strong positive inter-correlations among various indices of differential responsiveness. If bias against blacks is pronounced in a community, bias against low-SES citizens (both those citizens with low educational attainment and low income levels) is also likely to be pronounced. Because of the high degree of correlation between these measures of differential responsiveness, it is possible to infer the existence of an underlying phenomenon regarding responsiveness bias toward the "underclass" or the disadvantaged generally. In other words, it appears that bias toward the less educated, toward low-income citizens, and toward blacks are all dimensions of a general pattern of bias toward what Lineberry calls the underclass. It is therefore possible to conceptualize a single variable, responsiveness bias, which is simply a composite of the inequalities which result from differential responsiveness to racial and class subpopulations.

An index of responsiveness bias was then created by simply taking the mean of the various measures of differential responsiveness in each community.[7] Table 3 reports these index scores for each of the 51 cities in our

[7] For 45 cities, this index was obtained by averaging our measures of differential responsiveness to diverse educational, income, and racial subpopulations. For six cities, this index was obtained by averaging our measures of differential responsiveness to diverse educational and income subpopulations. In these six cities, there were too few blacks to calculate meaningful scores of black preferences. Thus, measures of differential responsiveness to different racial groups were not constructed for these cities.

sample. As is the case in the measures of differential responsiveness to specific subpopulations and their categorical counterparts, the more positive the value, the greater the bias of public policy toward the preferences of "the advantaged" subpopulations in a community. And conversely, the more negative the value on our summary index of responsiveness bias, the greater is the bias toward "the disadvantaged" subpopulation in a community. Scores approaching zero on our index of responsiveness bias indicate a situation where no bias toward various subpopulations in communities is evident. The data in Table 3 reveal substantial community-to-community variation in the degree of responsiveness bias, although—on the average—communities appear to be somewhat more responsive to the preferences of the advantaged than they are responsive to the preferences of the disadvantaged (the mean responsiveness bias score is .051).

The Effects of Contextual Factors on Responsiveness Bias

In this section, it is our purpose to develop and test some hypotheses regarding the effects of various contextual factors on responsiveness bias. Our general working hypothesis is that the level of responsiveness bias is a function of various environmental and political characteristics of communities. It is our view that the many environmental variables (e.g., city size, population, wealth, etc.) and the many political variables (e.g., party competition, form of government, etc.)—which political scientists have examined in the policy process literature—have little direct impact on the distribution of public policy (for a similar view, see Hawkins, 1971:13). Nevertheless, such variables are viewed as important in the policy process because they may hinder the effective expression of preferences by some subpopulations while facilitating the effective expression of preferences by others (Schumaker, 1975). If the effective expression of demands by various subpopulations is differentially affected by contextual variables, then it is reasonable to hypothesize that these contextual factors will also affect the level of responsiveness bias.

In the following, the effects on responsiveness bias of three types of environmental factors—city size, population wealth, and demographic heterogeneity—and five types of political factors—power structure characteristics, party competition, partisanship, various citizen participation variables, and form of government—are considered. In this section, the hypothesized linkages between these eight contextual variables and responsiveness bias are discussed. Data testing these hypotheses are also presented in Tables 4

through 8. Before turning to a discussion of the effects of each contextual variable on responsiveness bias, it is useful to discuss first the data analysis techniques used in testing these hypotheses and to indicate, in general terms, the type of data which are presented in Tables 4 through 8.

Data Analysis Techniques

We first conducted bivariate cross-tabulation analyses to ascertain the zero-order relationships between various environmental and political variables and responsiveness bias. For this analysis we trichotomized our measure of responsiveness bias by drawing two cutpoints through the data. Those cities with scores less than −.10 were classified as exhibiting responsiveness bias toward the disadvantaged (N = 4). Those cities with scores greater than +.10 were classified as exhibiting responsiveness bias toward the advantaged (N = 18). And those cities with scores between −.10 and +.10 were classified as exhibiting a pattern of relatively equal responsiveness to diverse subpopulations (N = 29). We also dichotomized (at the median) the various environmental and political variables in the analysis. (The data sources and the procedures for measuring these variables are discussed in the appendix.) The bivariate relationship between responsiveness bias and various indicators and summary indices of the environmental characteristics of communities are reported in Table 4. The bivariate relationships between responsiveness bias and various components of the political structure of communities are reported in Table 5.

In addition to these bivariate analyses, we conducted several multiple regression analyses. For these analyses we examined only those 43 cities in Table 3 having responsiveness bias scores greater than zero. A decision to examine all 51 cities would have required us to work with a variable that is, conceptually, curvilinear; for as previously indicated, both the highest and lowest values of our responsiveness bias variable indicate high degrees of responsiveness bias—albeit to different subpopulations. By dropping from the analysis those eight cities exhibiting negative responsiveness bias scores, we can analyze a variable that is conceptually linear. For these cities, a high score on our measure of responsiveness bias indicates bias toward the advantaged subpopulations of a community. And a low score on our measure of responsiveness bias indicates equality of responsiveness.

Two preliminary multiple regression analyses were performed. First we regressed the dependent variable, bias toward the advantaged, on three summary indices regarding the environmental characteristics of communities

TABLE 4

The Relationship of Environmental Factors to Responsiveness Bias

Variable Name	Category Name	Percentage Biased in Favor of the Disadvantaged	Percentage Relatively Unbiased	Percentage Biased in Favor of the Advantaged
	Small	13.3	56.7	30.0
CITY SIZE	Large	0.0	57.1	42.9
	Low	7.7	69.2	23.1
INDEX OF CITY SOCIAL RANK	High	8.0	44.0	48.0
	Few	7.7	65.4	26.9
Percent Over $10,000 Income	Many	8.0	48.0	44.0
Percent With High School Education	Few	10.7	60.7	28.6
	Many	4.3	52.2	43.5
The Ratio of Upper Income to Lower Income Population	Low	7.7	61.5	30.8
	High	8.0	52.0	40.0
	Homogeneous	4.2	45.8	50.0
INDEX OF HETEROGENEITY	Heterogeneous	11.1	66.7	22.2
	Low	9.7	58.1	32.3
Percent Nonwhite	High	5.0	55.0	40.0
	Low	12.5	41.7	45.8
Percent Foreign Stock	High	3.7	70.4	25.9
	Low	4.3	43.5	52.2
Percent Catholic Population	High	11.1	70.4	18.5

(city size, an index of population wealth, and an index of community heterogeneity). The results of this analysis are presented in Table 6. Second, we regressed the degree of responsiveness bias toward the advantaged on eight variables regarding the political characteristics of American communities; these results are presented in Table 7. The degree of relationship between responsiveness bias and each contextual variable in these analyses is indicated by the zero-order correlation coefficient and the corresponding beta weights (beta weights estimate the independent impact of each contextual variable on responsiveness bias when the effects of the other contextual variables in the model under consideration are controlled). These analyses, of course, fail to apply controls for both environmental and political characteristics simultaneously in the estimation of the independent impact of a contextual factor on responsiveness bias. Thus we performed an additional regression analysis in which responsiveness bias was regressed on those environmental and political variables that were significantly related to responsiveness bias in the separate analyses. The results of the joint consideration of these environmental and political variables are presented in Table 8.

Results

(1) City Size. We hypothesized that large cities would exhibit higher levels of responsiveness bias in favor of the advantaged than would small cities. This hypothesis is based on the notion that larger communities provide fewer opportunities than small cities for effective citizen participation. The physical and psychological distance between political officials and citizens is apparently greater in large cities than in small cities (Fischer, 1975; Verba and Nie, 1972: 229–247). However, we would not expect that all citizens would be equally isolated from officials in large communities. Relatively efficacious, high-SES citizens should be more successful than low-SES citizens at bridging the substantial distance between themselves and public officials in large cities. To the extent that advantaged citizens are more capable than disadvantaged citizens at overcoming the limited participation opportunities in large cities, governments can be expected to respond more favorably to advantaged citizens.

The data support this hypothesis. First, we note from Table 4 that all four cities exhibiting responsiveness bias toward the disadvantaged are relatively small. In addition, it is evident that as city size increases there is a tendency for responsiveness bias toward the advantaged to increase. This finding is particularly evident in Table 8; when controls for all other important environmental and political variables in the analysis have been applied, city size is the

TABLE 5

The Relationship of Political Characteristics to Responsiveness Bias

Variable Name	Category Name	Percentage Biased in Favor of the Disadvantaged	Percentage Relatively Unbiased	Percentage Biased in Favor of the Advantaged
POWER STRUCTURE CHARACTERISTICS				
	Centralized	7.7	57.7	34.6
Index of Decentralization	Decentralized	8.0	56.0	36.0
Index of Influence for	Low	4.2	50.0	45.8
Governmental Officials	High	11.1	63.0	25.9
	Low	3.4	65.5	31.0
INDEX OF PARTY COMPETITION	High	13.6	45.5	40.0
PARTISANSHIP				
Index of Democratic Party	Low	8.3	54.2	37.5
Strength	High	7.4	59.3	33.3

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION CHARACTERISTICS				
Voting Turnout	Low	12.5	43.8	43.8
	High	7.1	57.1	35.7
Extent to Which Interest Groups are Well-Organized	Low	7.4	66.7	25.9
	High	4.8	47.6	47.6
Extent to Which Blacks are Represented in Group Activity	Low	4.3	52.2	43.5
	High	8.0	64.0	28.0
INDEX OF REFORMISM	Low	13.0	60.9	26.1
	High	3.6	53.6	42.9
Council-Manager Government	Absent	9.4	59.4	31.3
	Present	5.3	52.6	42.1
Electoral System	Partisan	20.0	53.3	26.7
	Nonpartisan	2.9	60.0	37.1
Percent of Councilpersons Elected At-Large	Low	16.7	61.1	22.2
	High	3.0	54.5	42.4
Percent of City Employees Covered by Civil Service	Low	16.7	41.7	41.7
	High	0.0	70.4	29.6

TABLE 6

A Multiple Regression Analysis of the Relationship Between Responsiveness Bias in Favor of the Advantaged and Selected Environmental Indices

	Zero-Order Correlations	Beta Weights
City Size	.10	.21
Index of City Social Rank	.23	.36
Index of Heterogeneity	−.28	−.30
Coefficient of Determination, R^2		.19

contextual variable exhibiting the strongest relationship with responsiveness bias ($B = .32$).

(2) Class Composition of Community. When cities are composed of larger proportions of middle and upper-class citizens, these high-SES citizens should

TABLE 7

A Multiple Regression Analysis of the Relationship Between Responsiveness Bias in Favor of the Advantaged and Selected Political Characteristics

	Zero-Order Correlations	Beta Weights
Power Structure Characteristics		
Index of Decentralization	−.04	.07
Index of Influence for Governmental Officials	−.31	−.17
Index of Party Competition	.21	.09
Partisanship		
Index of Democratic Party Strength	− 24	−.23
Citizen Participation Characteristics		
Voting Turnout	−.16	(a)
Extent to Which Groups are Well-Organized	.23	.29
Extent to Which Blacks are Represented in Group Activity	−.22	−.18
Index of Reformism	.16	.00
Coefficient of Determination, R^2		.23

[a]Voting Turnout was not included in the multivariate analysis because we had missing data on this variable for 18 cities. Rather than excluding these 18 cities from the multivariate analysis, we omitted the voting turnout variable.

TABLE 8

A Multiple Regression Analysis of the Relationship Between Responsiveness Bias and Both Environmental and Political Characteristics

	Beta Weights
City Size	
Population, 1970	.32*
Index of City Social Rank	.20
Index of Heterogeneity	−.07
Power Structure Characteristics	
Index of Influence for Governmental Officials	−.16
Partisanship	
Index of Democratic Party Strength	−.17
Citizen Participation Characteristics	
Extent to Which Interest Groups are Well-Organized	.30*
Extent to Which Blacks are Represented in Group Activity	−.24*
Coefficient of Determination, R^2	.31

*Coefficients at least 1.5 times their standard errors.

constitute the most visible and most relevant sector of the population for public officials. In such circumstances, low-income citizens and blacks are likely to be forgotten minorities whose preferences are little reflected in public policy. Thus, responsiveness bias toward the advantaged should be positively associated with measures of population wealth. When cities are composed of large numbers of low-SES citizens, this subpopulation should constitute a relevant segment of the population for public officials. Thus cities having little population wealth should exhibit either responsiveness bias toward the disadvantaged or, perhaps, a pattern of unbiased responsiveness.

This hypothesis is partially supported by the data in Tables 4, 6, and 8. The bivariate statistics in Table 4 generally suggest a weak relationship between the class composition of a community and its pattern of responsiveness bias. For example, cities having relatively large percentages of high school graduates and upper-income residents are most likely to exhibit bias toward the advantaged. This finding that responsiveness bias toward the advantaged increases as a community's class composition becomes increasingly middle and upper-class is also apparent in the multivariate analysis reported in Table 6 ($B = .36$). However, when controls for all other important environmental and political variables in the analysis are introduced in the final model (see Table 8), the relationship between our summary measure of

community class composition (the index of social rank) and responsiveness bias is reduced in strength ($B = .20$). Thus, we conclude that the data only partially confirm our hypothesis; the proposition that an upper-class community enhances responsiveness bias toward the advantaged must be treated as tentative.

(3) Population Heterogeneity. When cities are highly heterogeneous (containing large black, ethnic, and/or Catholic populations) policymakers can ill-afford to overlook the preferences of these minorities. As James Madison noted long ago in *Federalist Number Ten*, a single dominant faction (or subpopulation) is less likely to predominate when a polity is composed of a large number of distinct subpopulations, all of which are minorities. In heterogeneous communities, policymakers will have to take into account the preferences of each subpopulation in order to build governing coalitions. Thus, population heterogeneity should be associated with a pattern of relatively unbiased responsiveness in communities.

The bivariate relationships reported in Table 4 appear to support this hypothesis. Communities exhibiting responsiveness bias toward the advantaged are more homogeneous than other cities in the analysis. Communities exhibiting unbiased responsiveness are more heterogeneous and contain relatively large ethnic and Catholic subpopulations. However, the importance of population heterogeneity as a factor reducing responsiveness bias toward the advantaged is not well-substantiated in the multivariate analysis. When the relationship between heterogeneity and responsiveness bias is controlled for other environmental variables in the model (see Table 6), heterogeneity is still related, although somewhat weakly, with reduced responsiveness bias ($B = -.21$). However, when the relationship between heterogeneity and responsiveness bias is controlled for other environmental *and* political variables in the model (see Table 8), the relationship disappears altogether ($B = -.07$). This suggests, of course, that heterogeneity has no independent and direct impact on responsiveness bias, but rather is related to responsiveness bias through its effects on some political variable(s) in the model.

(4) Community Power Structure. It is typically argued that dispersed power in communities results in high responsiveness to citizen inputs—particularly to the preferences of less advantaged citizens (Dahl, 1961; Aiken, 1970; Morlock, 1974). Thus the dispersion of power in communities should result in reduced responsiveness bias toward the advantaged.

The examination of this hypothesis is complicated by the fact that there are many aspects to the concept of community power structure. For example, some theorists define dispersed power structures in terms of the number of persons who effectively participate in political decision-making;

from this perspective, the greater is the number of participants, the more dispersed is the power structure (Clark, 1971). Other theorists define dispersed power structures in terms of the characteristics of the people who are most influential in the policy process; from this perspective, the more influential are businessmen (or other private elites), the more concentrated or centralized is the power structure (Hunter, 1953; Morlock, 1974). When one makes these conceptual distinctions, it seems clear to us that variation in "who has influence," rather than variation in "how many participate," is the important aspect of the community power structure affecting responsiveness bias.

There is little reason to suppose, a priori, that a large number of participants will reduce responsiveness bias. Indeed, it can be argued that relatively advantaged citizens are most likely to possess the political skills needed to exploit the opportunities for effective citizen participation which exist when there are many participants. If such is the case, a large number of participants in the policy process should not reduce responsiveness bias toward the advantaged. However, the lack of influence of business or other private elites should be important in reducing responsiveness bias. Robert Dahl (1961) has argued, for example, that the principal feature of a dispersed power structure is that predominant influence in communities resides in the hands of public elites rather than private elites. Unlike private elites, public elites have electoral incentives which can potentially reward responsiveness to the preferences of a broad cross-section of citizens (the inactive as well as the active, the lower-class as well as the upper-class, etc.). Thus we would hypothesize that responsiveness bias is reduced by the presence of highly influential public officials in local politics.

These hypotheses are supported by the data. Our measure of the number of effective participants in the decision-making process—the Index of Decentralization (Clark, 1971)—is unrelated to responsiveness bias in either the bivariate or the multivariate analyses. Neither advantaged nor disadvantaged subpopulations are significantly benefitted, in terms of having their preferences translated into public policy, by this aspect of a dispersed power structure.

Our measure of who has predominant influence in local politics—our index of the extent of influence by public officials—appears to be a somewhat more important explanatory variable affecting responsiveness bias. As shown in Table 5, responsiveness bias toward the disadvantaged is associated with a high level of influence by public officials (mayors, councilmen, and city managers). Public officials appear to be less influential in cities exhibiting responsiveness bias toward the advantaged. Apparently, private elites (news-

paper publishers and editors, businessmen, leaders of private organizations, etc.) are most influential in cities that are biased toward the advantaged. The results of the regression analyses, shown in Tables 7 and 8, also suggest that the concentration of influence in the hands of public elites is an important factor reducing bias toward the advantaged. However, the strength of the relationship between the influence of governmental officials and responsiveness bias is reduced when controls for other environmental and political variables are introduced. While the direction of the relationship is consistent with our hypothesis, the strength of the relationship is weak ($B = -.16$). Thus our results are somewhat inconclusive regarding the impact of public officials' influence on responsiveness bias.

(5) Party Competition. Robert Dahl (1956: 132) has written that political competition "vastly increases the size, number, and variety of minorities whose preferences must be taken into account by leaders in making policy choices." This suggests, of course, that party competition should result in an unbiased pattern of responsiveness. However, V. O. Key, Jr. argued, many years ago, that organized competition "is essential for the promotion of a sustained program benefiting the have nots" (1949: 307). This suggests, of course, that party competition should result in responsiveness bias toward the disadvantaged. But in either case, the prevailing conventional wisdom regarding party competition suggests that bias toward the advantaged should be reduced by the presence of strong party competition in local communities.

The data collected for this analysis are not very supportive of this hypothesis. The bivariate analysis reported in Table 5 does show that cities exhibiting bias towards the disadvantaged do indeed have higher levels of party competition, as one would expect on the basis of Key's argument. However, it should be noted that communities exhibiting bias toward the advantaged also exhibit fairly high levels of party competition (see Hansen, 1975: 1196, for a somewhat complementary set of findings). It is those communities having a pattern of equal responsiveness that have the lowest levels of party competition. But it is necessary to be cautious in drawing broad theoretical inferences on the basis of these bivariate data. When controls are applied for other political variables under consideration, party competition appears to have little direct impact on responsiveness bias (see Table 7, where $B = .09$).

(6) Partisanship. The notion is fairly widespread in American politics that the Democratic party is the party of the "have nots" in society. Among scholars interested in urban politics, Morlock (1974) has identified the Democratic party as an important element in a coalition of organizations

which opposes the dominant business and economic interests in communities. In a similar fashion, Willis Hawley argues that the constituencies of local Democratic parties are disproportionately lower- and working-class, and that Democratic parties therefore support policies which are beneficial to these citizens. According to Hawley (1974: 338):

> Parties may facilitate the development of formal or electoral coalitions among the poor and working class. If the Democratic party serves such a function, this presumably increases the probabilities of successful efforts at income redistribution and social change.

If these notions are correct, one would hypothesize that bias toward the advantaged would be reduced by the presence of a strong Democratic party in communities.

The bivariate analysis reported in Table 5 fails to support this hypothesis. However, when controls are applied for other political variables in the multiple regression model reported in Table 7, it appears that Democratic partisanship in a community may indeed reduce responsiveness bias toward the advantaged ($B = -.24$). Even when controlling for political and environmental factors simultaneously (Table 8), there is a relationship in the expected direction between Democratic partisanship and responsiveness bias ($B = -.17$).

(7) Citizen Participation Variables. As Verba and Nie (1972: 322–328) make clear, any analysis of the effects of citizen participation on the patterns of responsiveness in communities must first recognize the multifaceted nature of citizen participation. Thus, in this study, three different variables concerning the structure of citizen participation at the community level are considered: (1) the level of voter turnout, (2) the extent to which well-organized groups interact with governmental officials and agencies, and (3) the extent to which relatively disadvantaged citizens are represented in local political organizations.

Low voter turnout in communities should enhance bias toward the advantaged. When voting levels are low, it is primarily upper-SES citizens who vote. Realizing this, policymakers should be encouraged to be disproportionately responsive to high-SES citizens. However, when voter turnout is high, policymakers are likely to perceive that a representative cross-section of the community will appear at the polls on election day, and thus they have incentives to be equally responsive to the various subpopulations of a community.

While high levels of citizen participation at election time should reduce

responsiveness bias, high levels of citizen participation in well-organized interest groups should increase responsiveness bias toward the advantaged. When well-organized groups participate extensively in city politics, greater bias will result because policymakers will tend to be responsive to these well-organized interests. Verba and Nie (1972: 324) have argued in this regard that high levels of "communal activity" in cities brings about conditions where "leaders pay attention to the special views of activists," and activists are mostly high-SES citizens whose views "do not represent those of the rest of the citizenry."

In formulating the above hypothesis, it should be clear that it is not group activity per se which results in responsiveness bias; rather, it is the unrepresentative nature of the composition and demands of the most well-organized, permanent, and active groups in the community which results in responsiveness bias. To the extent that relatively disadvantaged citizens are among the members of the politically active groups in a community, this unrepresentative nature of group activity may be circumvented. Thus we further hypothesize that the biased nature of group activity in communities will be reduced when the number of disadvantaged persons who are members of interest groups is high. This suggests that responsiveness bias toward the advantaged will be reduced when there is a large number of blacks and low-SES citizens who are members of the politically active groups in the community.

These hypotheses regarding the structure of citizen participation in communities tend to be confirmed by the data presented in Tables 5, 7, and 8. Turning first to voting turnout, the data in Table 5 show that high levels of participation at the polls is associated with unbiased responsiveness. Moreover, the zero-order correlation relating voter turnout to responsiveness bias is in the hypothesized direction ($r = -.16$), although the relationship is not strong. Unfortunately, a more refined analysis of the effects of voter turnout on responsiveness bias is not possible in the present analysis because of a missing data problem; multivariate analyses utilizing the voter turnout variable were not performed because we had voting turnout data on only 27 of the 43 cities exhibiting bias toward the advantaged. Thus we view the hypothesis that high voter turnout reduces responsiveness bias as receiving limited support from the present data but requiring additional investigation.

The hypothesis that substantial participation in local politics by well-organized interest groups enhances responsiveness bias toward the advantaged appears to be supported in both bivariate and multivariate analyses. As evident in Table 8, the extent to which well-organized interest groups are

present in communities is one of the strongest predictors of responsiveness bias ($B = .30$). These findings, of course, support the argument of Verba and Nie (1972: 342) that organized group pressures "skew governmental policy in favor of the particular participant groups." However, our data regarding the effects of more representative group activity on responsiveness bias suggest a modification in Verba and Nie's argument. Our data indicate that the presence of blacks in the organizations involved in community politics significantly reduces responsiveness bias toward the advantaged ($B = -.24$ in Table 8). This suggests, of course, that not all group activity in city politics is undertaken by well-organized, white, high-SES interest groups. If groups are composed of relatively disadvantaged citizens or if groups represent the preferences and needs of the disadvantaged, responsiveness bias in favor of the advantaged can be reduced by the participation of such groups in community politics. Thus, if one is concerned with achieving a pattern of unbiased responsiveness in communities, the prescription is not necessarily to reduce interest group participation. Rather, the more useful prescriptions will deal with strategies for increasing the representativeness of those interest groups which are active in the policy process.

(8) Form of Government. Reformed governmental institutions in city government—the city manager system, nonpartisan elections, and at-large electoral constituencies—were proposed by middle-class citizens. Their goal was to reduce the responsiveness of local officials to the parochial interests of the working-class and ethnic groups who were among the major supporters of machine-style unreformed governments (Banfield and Wilson, 1963). If these reformed institutions have served their intended purposes, as Lineberry and Fowler (1967) argue they have, then it makes sense to hypothesize that reformism will enhance responsiveness bias toward the advantaged; for in reformed cities, the preferences of the disadvantaged will not often be reflected in public policy.

The bivariate analyses reported in Table 5 only partially support this hypothesis. Responsiveness bias toward the advantaged is slightly associated with having a city manager, nonpartisan elections, and at-large electoral constituencies. However, these characteristics are found in approximately equal proportions in those cities exhibiting a relatively unbiased pattern of responsiveness. What is striking in these bivariate analyses is the degree to which cities exhibiting bias in favor of the disadvantaged tend to have unreformed characteristics, particularly partisan elections, ward constituencies, and relatively low percentages of city employees covered by civil service. While the relatively small sample size makes it mandatory that these

results be viewed as tentative, they suggest that the goals of the reformers were indeed substantially realized; lower-SES and minority citizens do not realize as many advantages in reformed governmental structures as they do in unreformed structures. But, the evidence does not necessarily support the converse argument that reformed cities are substantially more biased toward the advantaged sectors of society. In fact, the multivariate analysis reported in Table 7 suggests that reformism has no independent and direct effect on responsiveness bias toward the advantaged (B = .00). Therefore, we conclude that reformism, to the extent that it has any effect on responsiveness bias, tends to reduce bias in favor of the disadvantaged.

Summary

The 51 cities in the PCS exhibit widely varying patterns of responsiveness to the differing subpopulations in their midst. Three types of communities are identified: (1) those biasing their response in favor of the public policy preferences of more disadvantaged (low-SES, and/or black) subpopulations, (2) those biasing their response in favor of the policy preferences of more advantaged (upper-SES, and/or white) subpopulations, and (3) those exhibiting relatively unbiased responsiveness to various community subpopulations. Overall, communities are much more likely to bias their policy responses in favor of the advantaged than in favor of the disadvantaged, thus suggesting that in most cities upper-SES and white citizens receive more of what they prefer in public policy than do lower-SES and black citizens.

In examining the factors that affect responsiveness bias, we adopted the theoretical view that various characteristics of the socioeconomic, demographic, and political environment of cities can enhance or retard the effectiveness of various types of citizens in articulating their policy preferences to public officials. Therefore, we examined the relationships between responsiveness bias and three types of socioeconomic and demographic variables—city size, community class composition, and heterogeneity—and five types of political variables—power structure characteristics, party competition, strength of the Democratic party, various aspects of citizen participation, and reformed governmental structures.

The analysis in this paper suggests the difficulty of making linear generalizations regarding the relationships between responsiveness bias and its independent predictor variables. In other words, those contextual variables that are related to bias toward the advantaged are not, necessarily, related in a direct way, to bias toward the disadvantaged. For example, the bivariate

analysis shows that cities exhibiting bias toward the advantaged as well as cities exhibiting bias toward the disadvantaged both tend to have higher levels of party competition than cities that are relatively unbiased in their policy responses. This suggests the possibility that the concept of responsiveness bias encompasses two conceptually and empirically distinct dimensions of bias: one dimension referring to bias toward the advantaged and another dimension referring to bias toward the disadvantaged.

Because of the relatively few cities exhibiting bias toward the disadvantaged, a multivariate analysis of the factors affecting this dimension of bias was not possible. Nevertheless, the relationships revealed in the bivariate analysis provide several hypotheses for future study. For the most part, cities exhibiting bias toward the disadvantaged appear to possess the following environmental and political characteristics: (1) smaller population size, (2) relatively few persons with extensive education, (3) a heterogeneous population, (4) informal power structures in which predominant influence is in the hands of governmental officials, (5) higher levels of party competition, (6) organized interest groups with more black representation in them, and (7) unreformed governmental structures.

The analysis of factors affecting bias toward the advantaged, on the other hand, suggests that these cities tend to have the following characteristics: (1) larger population size, (2) greater levels of population wealth, (3) power structures in which governmental officials have comparatively lower levels of influence than private elites in matters of public affairs, (4) lower levels of Democratic party strength, and (5) interest groups which are well-organized, and which exhibit low levels of black representation.

For several reasons, the results of this exploratory investigation of responsiveness bias should be viewed with some degree of caution. First, the governmental policy responses being analyzed are revenue-sharing decisions rather than decisions covering the totality of governmental activity. If revenue-sharing decisions are substantially different from the more general policy decisions in communities, then the results reported here may be valid only for a limited range of governmental activity. Second, in this research the policy priorities of citizens have been estimated using a simulation model. Because this model does not account for many idiosyncratic factors in each community which can shape citizen preferences, our measures of the policy priorities of various subpopulations are not as accurate as we would like. Third, the low number of cities in the PCS effectively prevented us from performing multivariate analyses of the factors affecting responsiveness bias toward the disadvantaged segments of community populations. Despite these

limitations, this research should open the way for more full-scale investigations of responsiveness bias.

Such investigations seem warranted because of the importance of responsiveness bias in democratic theory. For if we value both responsiveness and equality as democratic norms, it is imperative that we discern the inequalities which arise when governmental officials response unequally to the preferences of both advantaged and disadvantaged citizens.

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APPENDIX

In this appendix, the procedures used to measure many of the contextual variables used in the analysis are discussed; those environmental variables (e.g., city population, percent nonwhite, etc.) which are not discussed below are common census statistics reported in the *County and City Data Book.*

1. Index of Population Wealth (Social Rank). This variable indicates the degree to which a community is composed of high-SES citizens. The measure is a combination of three census variables: (a) percent of all persons over 25 years old having high school degrees, (b) percent of residents having family incomes over $10,000, and (c) percent of residents having incomes over $3000.

2. Ratio of Upper Income to Lower Income Population. This variable is simply a ratio of two census statistics: (a) percent over $10,000 family income, and (b) percent less than $5000 family income.

3. Percent Catholic Population. These scores were obtained from *Churches and Church Membership in the United States* (1956).

4. Index of Heterogeneity. This index was created by simply adding the following three measures in each city: (a) percent nonwhite, (b) percent foreign stock, and (c) percent Catholic.

5. The Index of Decentralization. This variable indicates the extent to which decisions in a number of policy areas are influenced by a large rather than small number of actors. For a discussion of the "ersatz method" used to create this measure and for the scores for the 51 PCS cities, see Clark (1971).

6. Index of Influence by Public Officials. This variable indicates the extent to which mayors, managers, or city councilmen are "the most influential persons in the city." Data used to measure this variable were reported in the original PCS data set. Here informants made judgments regarding the most

influential person in each of five issue areas. The index used here is simply the number of issue areas in which a public official was judged to be "most influential."

7. The Index of Party Competition. Party competition was measured utilizing several variables reported in the original PCS data set: (a) the degree to which neither party historically dominates the mayor's office; (b) the degree to which control of the mayor's office and the city council was split between the parties in 1966; (c) the degree of equality of influence between the Republican and Democratic Parties.

8. The Index of Democratic Party Strength. This measure was based on three variables reported in the original PCS data set: (a) the reputed influence of the Democratic Party; (b) whether the Democratic Party was ranked as either the first or second most influential group in the community; (c) the degree to which the Democratic Party controlled elected offices in 1966.

9. Voter Turnout. This measure was obtained from a mail questionnaire sent to second-level city administrators in 1975 (see Hunt, 1976). These administrators were simply asked to indicate the percentage of population over 18 years who voted in the previous local election. This variable is measured in 33 cities in the PCS.

10. Extent to Which Groups are Well-Organized. This variable measures the extent to which the active groups in a city are well-organized, permanent organizations. This measure of group structure was obtained from a 1975 mail survey of agency officials in the 51 cities. These officials served as informants regarding the activities of a wide variety of groups who were viewed as being potentially active in community politics. Approximately 190 of the 350 agency officials who were contacted responded to the questionnaire. Specifically, informants were asked to indicate, on a five-point scale, the degree to which each of a variety of active groups were well-organized. The average score for all groups by all informants is the community-level measure used here.

11. The Extent to Which Blacks are Represented in Community Groups. This measure was also taken from the 1975 mail survey. In order to measure this variable, informants were asked to indicate, on a five-point scale, the percentage of blacks in each of a variety of political groups. The average score for all groups by all informants is the community-level measure used in the analysis of this paper.

12. The Index of Reformism. Governmental reformism is measured in this paper using a modification of a similar index created by Lineberry and Fowler (1967). Data were obtained from the *Municipal Yearbook, 1965*

regarding form of government (mayor, manager, or commission), type of municipal elections (partisan or nonpartisan), nature of councilmen's constituency (ward, mixed, or at-large), and the civil service practices of a community (the percentage of municipal employees covered by civil service). The index of increasing reformism was created by simply adding the extent to which a city had reformed characteristics of these institutions.

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