

Emerging Patterns of Service for Citizen Groups

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THIS ARTICLE FOCUSES on the role that citizen groups, both grass roots and nationally affiliated, play in local communities. It will examine the history of these groups, describe their activities (which are the basis for an emerging public service), present research findings, and sketch emerging library service patterns in several communities.

THE PHENOMENON

The activities of citizen groups in the political arena have undergone a quantum increase in recent years¹ at the state and national level, as well as in communities across America. This increase in political action, usually associated with problems and issues which affect citizens, has been well covered by the media. The national media of the late 1970s have covered the activities of government watchdog groups such as Common Cause, Nader public interest research groups, environmental groups like Sierra Club and Friends of the Earth, and consumer and civil rights groups, to name a few. Local newspapers note the impact of local groups as they take on such community problems and issues as battered wives, preservation of Victorian neighborhoods, redlining by banks and insurance companies, placement of nuclear power plants, or conditions in nursing homes. The results of citizen group concern include passage of the Sunshine Act, freedom of information acts and anti-redlining legisla-

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tion, as well as environmental and consumer protection action by federal, state and local governments.

THE CONDITIONS

The political and social upheavals of the 1960s helped set the stage for the increased citizen group activities of the 1970s. The movements in the 1960s raised fundamental questions and forced large segments of the population to reconsider basic values. It is important to note, however, that the predominant styles of activists in the 1960s and 1970s are different. Observers of the New Left point out that confrontation, the style of the 1960s, did not include the development of grass roots organizations.² Citizen group activity of the 1970s, on the other hand, has been characterized by citizen involvement at all levels, from neighborhood to national, and "by an increasing scope . . . [and] intensity of . . . activity."³

The conditions of government as well have set the stage for current citizen group activity. David Cohen of Common Cause describes the conditions which had developed by the late 1960s:

As government programs and machinery grew in complexity, the regulated industries and their regulators were able to manipulate the results, while citizens with consumer, environmental, and minority concerns, were left largely on the outside. Governmental institutions, particularly the Congress, were incapable of handling or were unwilling to deal with the major issues, as politicians ducked the controversial questions.⁴

Corruption in government, as evidenced by Watergate, Koreagate, and the congressional scandals of the late 1970s, has increased citizen group activity. In fact, groups like Common Cause and Ralph Nader's consumer groups were developed to deal with prevailing conditions of government. Paradoxically, these same governmental conditions also produced the anomalous political climate of the 1970s: a widespread distrust of government and politicians, and an apathetic citizenry.

CITIZEN GROUPS DEFINED

There is a need to clarify the terminology used to describe community groups and organizations. At present, several terms are in common usage among librarians. When Muriel Javelin surveyed the library (as opposed to information) service needs of community organizations in 1967, she was looking primarily at community agencies and institu-

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tions.⁵ However, when Pauline Wilson surveyed community groups “working to bring about social change,” she was looking at voluntary associations — and was careful to make that distinction.⁶ The term community groups, then, has a wide variety of meanings; it is a general term which may refer to voluntary associations, ethnic populations or social agencies.

For purposes of clarification, a distinction is made here between community groups or organizations and citizen groups, since the term *citizen group* is more specific in its meaning. Citizen group, as used in the late 1970s, is often a synonym for a specific type of voluntary association. Most commonly, a citizen group is a nonprofit, citizen-initiated, voluntary association which attempts to influence decision-makers. This definition includes such groups as “formal civic associations of a nonpartisan nature. . . . [including] taxpayers’ associations, civic improvement associations, Leagues of Women Voters, and a host of organizations whose emphasis is on civic improvement.”⁷

Governments have added another type of citizen group which functions differently from those described above because it is government-rather than citizen-initiated. This type of citizen group, the citizen advisory group, is found increasingly at federal, state and local levels of government and often is required by statute.⁸ The citizen advisory group is designed to broaden participation of citizens in public policy decision-making. Often the citizen advisory group is composed of representatives from selected citizen groups.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Stuart Langton of the Lincoln Filene Center for Citizenship and Public Affairs at Tufts University has identified four categories of citizen participation: (1) obligatory participation, (2) electoral participation, (3) citizen action, and (4) citizen involvement.⁹ The first two categories, which include voting, paying taxes, jury duty and military service, are outside the scope of this paper, but the latter two categories include activities of citizen groups — and provide a strong rationale for the provision of library service.

Developed by Langton, Table 1 clearly distinguishes the characteristic features of these two major types of citizen participation. Activities initiated and controlled by citizen groups like the League of Women Voters, National Organization for Women, or local grass roots organizations, are included under the heading *Citizen Action*, while the govern-

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ment-initiated activities of groups, such as advisory committees to area councils of government, community development agencies, or mayors' or governors' councils, appear under *Citizen Involvement*.

TABLE 1. CATEGORIES OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Citizen Action</i>	<i>Citizen Involvement</i>
Major distinguishing feature	Refers to activities initiated and controlled by citizens for some purpose	Refers to activities initiated and controlled by government for administrative purposes
Major purpose	To influence decisions of government officials or voters	To improve decision-making and services and to develop consensus and support for decisions
Examples of activities	Lobbying, public education, protest, public advocacy, civil disobedience, class-action suits	Advisory committees, public hearings, goals programs, surveys, hot lines, volunteer programs
Dominant concerns	Organizing effectively, obtaining appropriate information, developing support, raising funds, making maximum political and public impact	Involving more citizens, informing citizens better, broadening the range of citizen representation, maintaining citizen interest, effective utilization of citizen involvement in decision-making, obtaining necessary funds
Typically interested groups	Neighborhood and community action groups, public interest and consumer groups, community agencies, individual citizens	Legislative committees, administrative agencies, regulatory agencies

Source: Langton, Stuart. "What is Participation?" In _____, ed. *Citizen Participation in America*. Lexington, Mass., Lexington Books, 1978, p. 22.

In recent years, government at all levels has become increasingly committed to planning for citizen participation in public policy decision-making. The federal government requires citizen participation in "virtually all programs in which Federally appropriated funds are used."¹⁰ State and local government agencies and service delivery systems increasingly include citizen participation mechanisms.¹¹ This participation takes the form of acceptance of direct citizen input through hearings, surveys, etc., or of creation of advisory committees. In spite of a great expenditure of effort, the success of citizen advisory committees has been fairly

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limited. A recent study of mandated school advisory councils revealed that the most serious problems associated with the implementation of these committees were related to: (1) lack of significant power and authority, (2) isolation of the committees within the administrative structure, and (3) absence of "adequate information, training and other support services to enable citizens to carry out their responsibilities."¹²

Whereas the major purpose of government-initiated citizen participation is to improve government decision-making and service, the major purpose of citizen group activity is to influence public policy decision-making. An extensive bibliography on the functioning of both types of groups has been prepared by Hutcheson and Shevin; the bulk of the bibliography is devoted to the roles both types of groups play in various service delivery systems, including education, criminal justice, environment/natural resources, health and housing.¹³ Whether government- or citizen-initiated, access to adequate information is one key to the viable functioning of these groups in their communities. Emphasis in this paper is given to the functioning of the most frequently occurring group, the citizen-initiated and controlled group.

CITIZEN GROUP FUNCTIONING: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Is citizen group involvement in the solving of community and public policy problems a pattern of American democracy? Americans have been noted for their disposition to unite to accomplish something at least since the 1830s, when Alexis de Tocqueville observed that Americans were a "nation of joiners" and wrote that "Americans of all ages, all conditions and all dispositions constantly form associations."¹⁴ Around the turn of the century, the British observer James Bryce wrote of Americans:

Associations are created, extended, and worked in the United States more quickly and effectively than in any other country. In nothing does the executive talent of the people better shine than in the promptitude wherewith the idea of an organization for common object is taken up, in the instinctive discipline that makes everyone who joins in starting it fall into his place, in the practical, business-like turn which the discussions forthwith take.¹⁵

In the nineteenth century, groups were formed with interests "as diverse as freedom for the slaves, . . . child labor, public baths, juvenile court

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systems, removal of billboards, playground facilities, public schools, and beautification.”¹⁶

Citizen group activity has tended toward stable growth with periodic increases such as those observed in the 1960s and 1970s, as well as in the period 1911-20. Table 2 below is adapted from a national survey conducted in 1975 by Andrew Bavas. It shows that citizen groups may remain viable for many decades.

TABLE 2. DATES OF ESTABLISHMENT OF GOVERNMENT WATCHDOG GROUPS

<i>Year of Establishment</i>	<i>Percentage of All Groups Surveyed</i>
1875 or before	1.3
1876-1900	1.2
1901-10	2.4
1911-20	13.4
1921-30	7.5
1931-40	7.1
1941-50	6.3
1951-60	10.9
1961-70	25.0
1971-74	19.9

Source: Bavas, Andrew L. *A National Survey of Citizen's Watchdog Organizations: A Summary Report*. Chicago, Center for Urban Studies, University of Illinois at Chicago Circle, 1976, p. 9.

Of the citizen groups included in the Bavas survey, 13.4 percent have survived since their founding in the decade 1911-20. The League of Women Voters and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) had their beginnings in that decade. Both the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Sierra Club predate 1910. There is considerable evidence that Americans will continue to form organizations to help solve problems and to influence public policy decision-making.

NUMBER OF CITIZEN GROUPS NATIONWIDE

As libraries prepare to develop information services designed to meet needs, they must know the numbers and types of groups which exist in their communities. There are a few national figures, but they have been

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prepared only within the past three or four years. The first comparative figures were compiled for the National Conference on Citizen Participation held in September 1978 in Washington, D.C. The compiler notes that:

While it is not possible to estimate accurately the number of citizen action organizations that have arisen in the past several decades, there are a few estimates that indicate the scope of this movement. For example . . . the National Commission on Neighborhoods has identified more than 8000 grass root neighborhood organizations in the United States; . . . in New York alone there are more than 10,000 block associations. In his 1972-73 study, Jeffrey Berry noted that he had identified more than 100 national public interest groups with offices in Washington, D.C. The Office of Consumer Affairs of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare has estimated that there are more than 450 consumer groups in the nation. . . . It has been estimated that there are approximately 350 environmental-action organizations and 650 cases of citizen-initiated environmental litigation. The Office of Neighborhoods, Voluntary Associations and Consumer Affairs of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has identified nearly 15,000 consumer and citizen groups.¹⁷

National statistics give an indication of the scope and number of groups, but information about local citizen group activity must be generated by a local agency; the most appropriate agency in most communities is the public library. Today many libraries are developing community information files which include local citizen group information.

DEVELOPING A FRAME OF REFERENCE FOR EXAMINATION OF CITIZEN GROUPS

FOCUS ON NEEDS

In recent years a research literature has emerged within the library field focusing on and delineating the characteristics of particular types of library users and potential users.¹⁸ Indeed, for some time public libraries have developed special services for various clientele with identified characteristics: the elderly, businessmen, the blind, etc. Edward Warner has recently expressed the necessity of building services based on studies of

needs: "To the extent possible, the demonstrated needs of a library's constituency — inferred from the measurement of scientifically-observed objective data — must constitute the primary basis upon which to establish, develop, and discontinue library collections and services."¹⁹

The National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, "charged with primary responsibility for developing and recommending overall plans for library and information services adequate to meet the needs of the people of the United States,"²⁰ in late 1973 sponsored a conference which produced a series of papers focusing on the information needs of sixteen distinct client groups. In the preface to the conference papers, Carlos A. Cuadra noted that the papers are the "first steps toward defining the needs of many special constituencies."²¹ Citizen groups were not among the client groups discussed at that conference, yet their importance to communities as a tool of democracy is widely recognized. Citizen groups are among the most important potential user groups of public library information services not only because they are consumers of information, but also because they are disseminators of information to a wide spectrum of the community on a broad range of public policy issues.

CITIZEN GROUP ROLE IN INFORMATION TRANSFER

Citizen group members *seek* information, throughout the community and beyond, on public policy issues of concern to them; they *translate* the collected information into messages which conform to organizational patterns of action; and finally, they *disseminate* information to members of their own group and to other citizen group members, to the general public, to media sources and to decision-makers, both within and outside the community. The model represented in Figure 1 demonstrates the role citizen groups play in information transfer. The activities shown in the model vary from study of an issue or problem to some form of public advocacy. The process is repeated many times a year in any medium-sized community.

Citizen groups seek to reach a variety of individuals in their communities. Three general targets of disseminated information are shown in the model: citizen group members, decision-makers (both elected officials and bureaucrats), and the general public. Citizen group leaders use a variety of channels or methods of disseminating information, such as personal and telephone contacts, meetings, letters and telegrams. In addition, groups may prepare informative materials ranging from newsletters and reports to press releases and flyers. Use of the media may

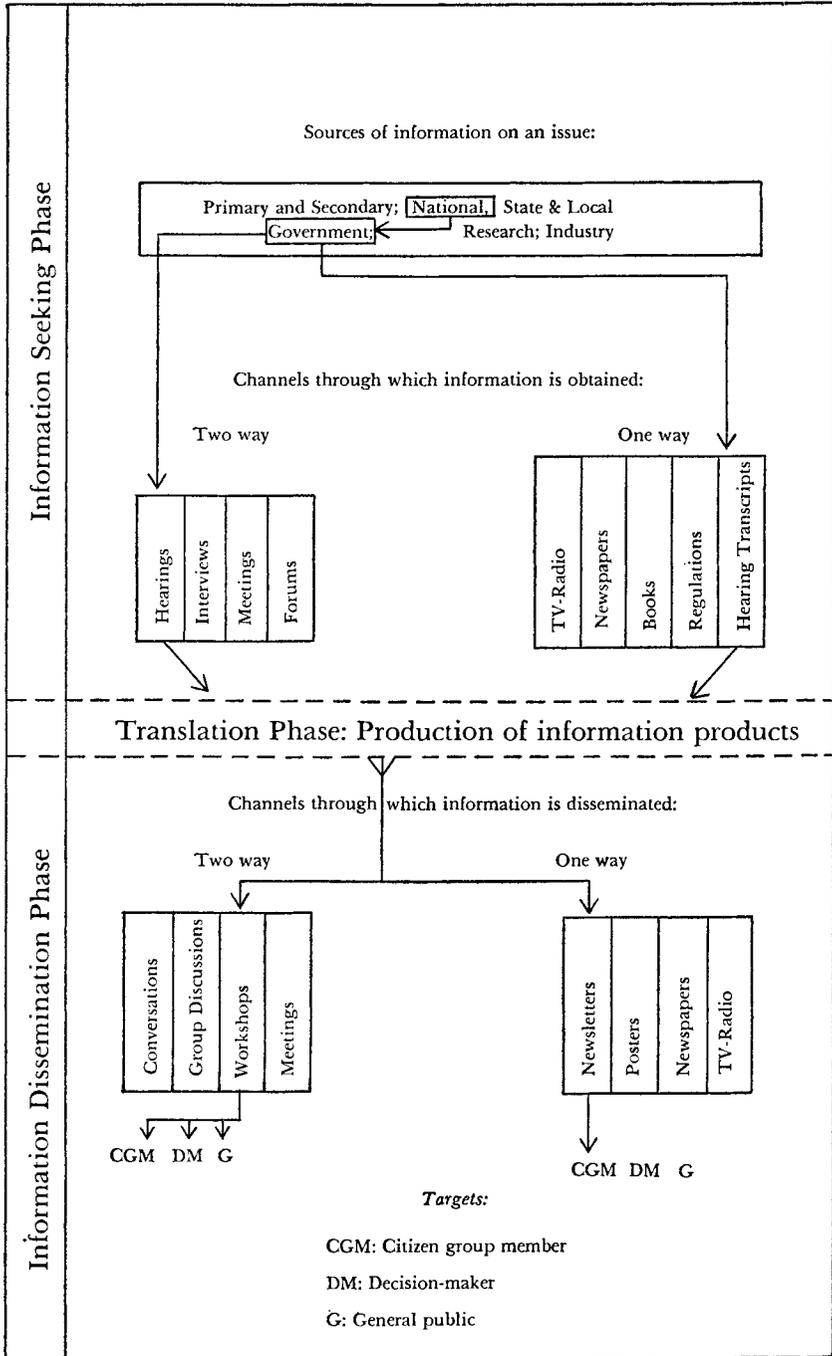


FIGURE 1. ROLE OF CITIZEN GROUPS IN INFORMATION TRANSFER

greatly increase the group's audience. Examination of citizen group activities from an information perspective provides the basis for the development of a frame of reference for library service.

The citizen group activities sketched below illustrate types of information seeking suggested by the model. Examination of a group's activities provides knowledge of the issues of concern to that group. Some of the particular information needs may be met by library resources; others may not. The library is only one source of public policy information in a community; however, it is seen increasingly by some citizen groups as an agency which has the potential to serve as an information link.

ACTIVITIES AS BASIS FOR INFORMATION NEEDS

Since the activities and projects of a citizen group serve as the basis for much of its information needs, several case studies are sketched below, along with a brief description of typical information needs associated with each activity. Case studies are drawn from interviews with citizen group leaders in Madison, Wisconsin; Ann Arbor, Michigan; and Toledo, Ohio.²²

1. *Domestic Violence Project*: A local chapter of a national women's organization developed this extensive project which included several components. The group sought to determine the extent of spouse assault and the types of assistance available to battered women, as well as to develop service to meet perceived needs. The information required included the number of assault cases reported involving spouse abuse (statistics were not kept in that form by local police departments), policies of affected agencies, the extent of agency assistance, legal definitions, descriptions of action taken in other communities, etc.

2. *Alternatives for a State Agency Transportation Plan*: A grass roots group sought to provide alternatives to a long-range transportation plan designed by a state transportation agency. The group needed information on the criteria used by the planners; knowledge of viable alternatives to highways; and economic, social and environmental information relevant to each alternative. At the local level, the group needed information about planned and proposed highways, as well as knowledge of land sales associated with highway development.

3. *Neighborhood Historic Ordinance Project*: A neighborhood association located in a well-defined area containing homes built between 1850 and 1920 fought for passage of a local historic preservation ordinance which would halt further deterioration of their neighborhood. Information needed included knowledge of the homes in the area (e.g., age, styles of

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architecture, neighboring land use, etc.); information about ordinances in other historic places; political and general information about the city government; and knowledge about period architecture.

4. *Financing State Government Services*: The League of Women Voters of one state is currently examining and revising its position statements concerning the financing of government services and has formed a committee of members from several chapters throughout the state. This committee needs to examine and distill a great deal of information about the nature of taxation in this state; constitutional requirements regarding taxation, the tax base and tax rates; tax proposals submitted as initiatives; and the roles of the legislative and executive branches in the taxation and budgeting process.

5. *Billboard Control Ordinance*: A grass roots group proposed a local billboard control ordinance. This group needed knowledge about state guidelines and local zoning ordinances, ordinances of surrounding cities, model ordinances prepared in other areas, as well as information on successful efforts in other cities.

Public libraries preparing to meet the information needs of citizen groups in their own communities may want to conduct interviews with selected group members, focusing on current activities relating to public policy issues. In addition, library staff may obtain information about current activities by reading local newspapers; attending group meetings; obtaining copies of citizen group newsletters, flyers, brochures and reports; and maintaining community information files.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The library profession has begun to describe the role citizen groups play in information transfer. Pauline Wilson studied community groups "seeking social change" almost ten years ago.²³ Wilson's study provided the library field with its earliest knowledge of the information needs of citizen groups, as well as the first statistics on their library use. She chose to exclude certain groups such as American Civil Liberties Union, Common Cause and the League of Women Voters, which may have been active in local community decision-making but whose *modus operandi* did not meet the criteria of the study. Groups included were those which focused on one of four issues: racism, peace, women's rights and the environment. Organization names were omitted from the study in the interest of confidentiality. Wilson determined that "the most active members of groups seeking social change are a 'communications elite'"; she also found that "interpersonal communication with friends and associates

constitutes an important part in the information seeking activity" of these group members.²⁴ Wilson determined that libraries were not used as information sources for the citizen group activities included in the survey.²⁵

A pilot study of citizen group information-related behavior conducted by this writer included both grass roots and nationally affiliated groups in five issue-cluster areas: the environment, civil rights, women's issues, specialized consumer interests and public affairs.²⁶ A more extensive study of the information-related behavior of citizen groups, including neighborhood groups, is currently being conducted in Toledo, Ohio, by this writer; however, complete data are not yet available. The 1979 survey seeks to describe the role of citizen groups in information transfer in communities through examination of their information seeking and disseminating activities. It will develop a typology of issues and problems which generate citizen group activity in a single community during a specified period of time. In addition, the study will develop a citizen group typology appropriate for public library use. Both the Wilson and Durrance studies are designed to collect data about information needs that are a result of a selected citizen group activity.

One element of both studies that deserves comment is library use. Wilson found that although the public library was not used in conjunction with organization activities, fully 82 percent of those surveyed had used the public library within the past year, while 41 percent had used it within the past month.²⁷ This is in sharp contrast to the findings of a recent Gallup Poll, which determined that only 51 percent of the general public had visited the library within the past year, and only 9 percent used it once or twice a month.²⁸ It appears from this data, and from preliminary findings of the 1979 Durrance survey, that many citizen group information seekers may have developed a pattern of library use, although this pattern may not normally include organization-related information seeking. Evidence of limited use of libraries for information is seen frequently in library use studies. The 1978 Gallup Poll determined that only 25 percent of those surveyed had telephoned or visited the library to obtain an answer to a question; 59 percent of those considered to be library users did not use a library to answer questions.²⁹ Moreover, the figures from a study of information needs of urban residents in Baltimore showed that only 3 percent of the respondents used libraries to obtain information on their most important problems.³⁰

These initial research findings suggest that citizen group members, unlike the general public, already use libraries for some purposes. Wilson

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called them a "communications elite."³¹ Nonuse of libraries for organization-related research may result from: (1) failure to identify the library as an information source, (2) general lack of knowledge of library information services and potential, (3) lack of appropriate information services for these groups, or (4) poor or nonexistent communication between libraries and citizen group leadership.

EMERGING LIBRARY SERVICES

PRELUDES TO SERVICE

Services designed to meet the information needs of community groups have begun to develop in public libraries. The models of development vary, but some common elements may be seen. Before information services per se are developed, current information about citizen groups is provided in library-developed community information files. Potential users of information services in the public policy area are among the most readily identifiable in the community. The library which maintains community information files at both the main library and its branches has already identified many leaders of community organizations like the ACLU, League of Women Voters, NAACP, Sierra Club, neighborhood organizations and block clubs. Methods used by several libraries to identify community groups include: (1) interviews with citizen group leaders, (2) development of community information files, (3) use of data compiled by other community agencies, (4) monitoring news media coverage of citizen group activity, and — most often — (5) staff involvement in community organization activity.³²

Citizen group files generated by libraries are products of the 1970s. The information collected by the Toledo-Lucas County (Ohio) Public Library for its Community Information Project is illustrative: each citizen group identified fills out an information sheet which includes names, addresses and telephone numbers of contact person and officers; purpose of the group; date, place and time of meetings; dues; membership requirements; dates of elections of officers; and term of office.³³ Developing and maintaining contacts with citizen groups is the first phase of information service development.

THREE SERVICE MODELS

Jerry Kidd noted in 1976 that public libraries have shown a "historical indifference" to organized groups. He pointed out that one problem

associated with this indifference is that no service models had been developed to meet the information needs of community groups, and as a result, none could be recommended to public librarianship.³⁴ Only since that was written have a few models been developed which seek to meet the information needs of citizen groups. These experimental models may be the first steps in erasing indifference to this potentially strong client group.

Comparison of three recently developed (1977-78) citizen group information services shows both divergent and common features. The divergent features are seen in varying service delivery patterns, which may reflect the differences of each community and the circumstances of development. Services provided by the Public Interest Information Network (PIIN) at Dallas Public Library center around its three computerized files: (1) a file of "papers which examine the historical, ethical or socio-cultural implications inherent in public policy issues"; (2) a community information source file; and (3) a national information retrieval service which provides citations, abstracts and, as needed, copies of "journal articles on a wide variety of topics related to public policy."³⁵

Tulsa's Citizen Information Service (CIS) draws from the same types of information sources as the Dallas Public Library; a major difference is that CIS is not a computerized information service. CIS combines information and referral functions with public policy information services. In addition, Junior League members play an important role in some aspects of the service, such as presentation of "skills" workshops.³⁶ The role which the library has developed for CIS is twofold: (1) as a "conveyor, [it] takes information from expert sources and passes it on to users," and (2) as a "consultant [or] facilitator . . . [it provides expertise] on how to diagnose information needs, identify resources, and retrieve from expert sources."³⁷

Seattle's Neighborhood Resource Centers (NRCs) reflect the selection of another service model. NRCs are located in each of the twenty-two branches of Seattle Public Library and in its Mobile-Outreach. Clients of NRCs have access to the Community Resource Center (CRC) at Seattle University's Institute of Public Service. The CRC maintains a library of public policy information; it also provides technical assistance to community groups through consulting services, and graduate students who assist groups in their research of local problems and issues. NRCs maintain files for the local community councils ("voluntary organizations of citizens concerned about the quality of life in the neighborhood") on topics of interest, such as land use, transportation, housing rehabilitation,

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city government and crime prevention.³⁸ In addition, NRCs provide maps of the neighborhoods they serve which indicate locations of interest to the community. Local documents of particular concern to community groups are available at each NRC; specifically included are city government hearings and notices of hearings, news releases from the city council and the mayor's office, and a list of applicable rulings.

The CRC/NRC functions are similar to those of the Urbanarium in Rochester, New York. The Urbanarium is "an independent, not-for-profit corporation, sponsored by several local, educational, research and communications institutions, including several area colleges and universities, the Center for Governmental Research, a local radio-television station, the Rochester Public Library and the Rochester Museum and Science Center."³⁹ The mission of the Urbanarium is similar to that of the three library public policy services sketched above: "to assist in the development of a greater Rochester community by improving the competence of its citizens to make well-informed policy choices in selected priority issues."⁴⁰

The common features of these three service models are far more striking than their divergences; they include markedly similar goals and objectives, and a distinctive name which reflects the service objectives and provides a recognition factor for its clientele. Dallas Public Library's PIIN "has been specifically designed to meet the informational needs of governmental agencies and citizens' advocacy groups faced with local public policy decisions."⁴¹ Seattle's NRCs, which grew out of a project of Seattle University's Institute of Public Service, are designed:

to help community groups solve community problems; to aid communications between community groups; to collect and make available information on community projects, problems and solutions, here and across the country; to bring human skills and monetary resources to bear on community problems, . . . to help community groups understand and deal with issues more effectively, and to increase . . . the ability [of community groups] to affect government policy.⁴²

The objectives of the Tulsa City-County Library's CIS are to provide "the information people need to make decisions on issues that affect their personal lives and/or their community [and to provide] a reference file on persons with knowledge and/or skills related to the issues," as well as "to communicate to the public the functions and resources of existing groups, coalitions and boards throughout the community."⁴³

These objectives suggest another area of commonality: a focus on topics of a public policy nature, thus linking these services to municipal reference services which have existed in some libraries since the turn of the century.⁴⁴ Although public policy issues may be similar from one community to the next, they are likely to be approached differently in various regions, states and local areas. Common public policy issues include: the criminal justice system, energy, land use, transportation, employment, the aging, housing, and delivery of health and other public services. Citizen group projects, as noted earlier, are concerned with particular aspects of these issues, such as housing abandonment, stopping or encouraging the development of particular roads or highways, provision of specific services or benefits for the aging, etc.

Although not expressly stated by each new public policy information service, the targets for these emerging services include community leadership and those who seek to influence community leaders and public policy decision-making. Dallas Public Library limits the use of PIIN to "groups and agencies who are involved with public policy";⁴⁵ PIIN suggests that its potential users might include "members of the following bodies: city councils, city departments, regional planning bodies, commissioners courts, citizen advocacy groups, school boards, and neighborhood groups."⁴⁶ Seattle's NRCs are designed to increase the ability of neighborhood improvement groups to affect government policy.⁴⁷

The several libraries contacted in conjunction with research for this article use various methods to communicate with the potential users of community information services. Brochures, articles in local newspapers and direct mailings have been used to explain particular services and aspects of the services. Presentations at group meetings and workshops designed for citizen groups are ways to develop and maintain contact with public policy decision-makers. Workshops and demonstrations are considered important elements of these new services.

The users of this type of community information are quite different from the users of the most widely developed community information service — information and referral services. Demographic analysis of the users of the Neighborhood Information Center project showed that the average user belonged to 1.1 organizations.⁴⁸ Citizen group information seekers interviewed by Wilson belonged to an average of seven organizations.⁴⁹ Almond and Verba have noted the importance of voluntary association membership to the adequate functioning of a citizen in society:

The organization member, compared with the nonmember, is likely to consider himself more competent as a citizen, to be a

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more active participant in politics, and to know and care more about politics. He is, therefore, more likely to be close to the model of the democratic citizen. . . . Membership in some association, even if the individual does not consider the membership politically relevant and even if it does not involve his active participation, does lead to a more competent citizenry.⁵⁰

Funding for emerging services in the late 1970s and presumably in the 1980s must be developed within the context of austerity budgets. In spite of the cutbacks they have suffered, libraries today are developing needed community information services — first, information and referral services, and, quite recently, public policy information services designed to meet the information needs of citizen groups. Each of the three service models outlined in this article has used outside funding sources — both federal and local — in its developmental stages.

Since each of these services is collaborative in nature, it is likely that the libraries will continue to seek joint funding. The Seattle information service combined funding from Seattle University (which initiated the project), Seattle Public Library and a federal demonstration grant, and employed the expertise of area college and university faculty. Tulsa combined federal funding with grant funds obtained through the Junior League of Tulsa, which also provided the time and expertise of its members. Dallas's PIIN utilizes the expertise of scholars from local colleges and universities to develop single-issue papers "which examine the historical, ethical, or sociocultural implications inherent in public policy issues [such as] urban growth, the role of local government in child care, [and] neighborhood revitalization."⁵¹

The collaboration shown in the emergence of these services in the area of public policy is particularly appropriate; the library is but one source of information in a community and can bring only certain strengths to such a service. A collaborative effort may not only link the library to other sources in a community, but can also bring together skills which have not been associated with the library profession, such as those provided by researchers in public policy. Such collaboration will utilize well the skills of the information professional in finding and organizing information in the community.

It is too soon to make evaluative statements about these services. Only one of these experimental models — Tulsa's — has been in operation for more than six months. Each of the services has an internal evaluation built into the project, but they have not been evaluated compara-

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13. Hutcheson and Shevin, op. cit.
14. de Tocqueville, Alexis. Quoted in Constance Smith and Anne Freedman. *Voluntary Associations: Perspectives on the Literature*. Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1972, p. 34.
15. Bryce, James. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 35.
16. Zabrosky, Frank A. "The Records of Urban Society," *Drexel Library Quarterly* 13:29, Oct. 1977.
17. Langton, "Citizen Participation . . .," op. cit., p. 2.
18. Reviews of user studies may be found in Marcia J. Bates. *User Studies: A Review for Librarians and Information Scientists*. Arlington, Va., ERIC Document Reproduction Service, March 1971. (ED 047 738); John M. Brittain. *Information and its Users: A Review with Special Reference to the Social Sciences*. Bath, England, Bath University Press, 1970; and Douglas L. Zweizig. "Predicting Amount of Library Use: An Empirical Study of the Role of the Public Library in the Life of the Adult Public." Ph.D. diss., Syracuse University, 1973.
19. Warner, Edward S. "Constituency Needs as Determinants of Library Collection and Service Configurations: An Approach to Measurement," *Drexel Library Quarterly* 13:47, July 1977.
20. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science. *Library and Information Service Needs of the Nation: Proceedings of a Conference on the Needs of Occupational, Ethnic, and Other Groups in the United States*. Washington, D.C., USGPO, 1974, p. iii.
21. *Ibid.*
22. Interviews were conducted in Madison, Wis., in June-July 1975; in Ann Arbor, Mich., in Oct.-Nov. 1978; and in Toledo, Ohio, in Feb.-March 1979. A series of sketches of activities of groups seeking social change is included in Wilson, op. cit., pp. 123-35.
23. Wilson, op. cit., p. 58.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 145.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 146.
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