

There is, then, ground for regarding public opinion as an "atmosphere." Tocqueville's metaphor, that it is a "sort of enormous pressure of the mind of all upon the individual intelligence," goes far toward explaining the general contours of American political life. Legislators and judges certainly can sense this atmosphere, as can members of minority groups who find themselves up against majority sentiment. Key would probably not cavil at this notion, but he would say that if we are satisfied with theories at Tocqueville's level of generality we are too easily contented. For any atmosphere is a compound composed of many elements, and we are obliged to identify them and understand their interaction. In pursuit of this end, Key's *Public Opinion and American Democracy* is a major contribution and is bound to be the standard work in the field for many years to come. Yet even he, in his final chapter, is forced to conclude that the atmosphere of American life is not altogether healthy. Public opinion, political and social, is not what we would like it to be or what it is capable of becoming. "[T]he masses do not corrupt themselves; if they are corrupt [it is because] they have been corrupted . . . [by] . . . the stupidity and self-seeking of leadership echelons."<sup>10</sup> This is, in a nutshell, a theory. It is also a call to put things right. And in ending on a note such as this, Key is in the best tradition of Western political thought.

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WHO GOVERNS? By Robert A. Dahl. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961. Pp. xii, 355. \$7.50.

IN *Who Governs?* Professor Dahl, chairman of the Political Science Department at Yale, makes important contributions to a surprising range of subjects. Academicians who shelve their books by subject matter can give it an important place in their political theory collection, a prominent position on their methodology shelf, or put it among the few really important community studies. Non-academicians can read it for insight into New England history, acculturation of immigrants, nature of political power, or problems of urban redevelopment. And a few lowbrows will doubtless seize on it as a sort of political *Peyton Place* that "tells all" about New Haven politics. It has much to say about all these things, and more.

The study of urban government has long been one of those academic underdeveloped areas with which political science is so well endowed. But no longer can one brush the subject off with a passing reference to the law of

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been reshaped by legislation and other governmental instruments. However, in most significant instances the political system, in the United States at least, responds to the needs of dominant interests in society. Key came close to saying as much in two chapters in an early edition of his textbook. See *The Role of Force and Education as Politics, POLITICS, PARTIES, AND PRESSURE GROUPS* 619-41, 642-60 (2d ed. 1948).

10. Pp. 557-58.

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municipal corporations. Over the past decade social scientists have moved to the study of local communities as miniature "political systems", and are beginning to note that collections of governments in a metropolitan area bear some resemblance to international organizations. In 1953 Floyd Hunter's controversial book<sup>1</sup> provided both a simple method—"reputational analysis"—and a provocative thesis—the economic elite rule—for those concerned with urban politics. Fortunately the ensuing fad for "research" based on what a lawyer would term hearsay evidence, from unqualified experts, on hypothetical questions, is now yielding to solidly researched, historically based studies such as *Who Governs?*.

But why study the politics of one city? Professor Dahl suggests that, in addition to its relevance to residents of the New Haven area, readers "may gain a greater understanding of their own communities, American politics, or even democracy itself."<sup>2</sup> Hence it seems appropriate to consider the book first as an analysis of New Haven, then for the light it sheds on other American cities, and finally as a contribution to our general understanding of how "pluralistic democracy" works. This reviewer puts particular emphasis on the second of these objectives: the problem of comparing various urban political systems. By 1960 there were 130 American cities (not metropolitan areas, but legal cities) of over 100,000 population.<sup>3</sup> Over fifty million Americans live within these 130 cities, but there are only 152,048 souls accounted for by New Haven (which has slipped to 81st in size). Rightly or wrongly, many readers will be more concerned with "who governs" in some of the 129 other major cities<sup>4</sup> than in the trials and tribulations of Mayor Richard Lee.

First, then, who governs in New Haven? Dahl's answer comes in two main parts, one broadly historical and the other concentrating on the past decade. In the early nineteenth century there was little question as to who "ran" things. The old Federalist-Congregational elite combined economic, political, and social leadership. Up to 1842 the mayors were almost always "patricians," drawn from law and the professions. Voting took place under a "stand up law" such that opposition to the elite became a matter of public knowledge. As long as the city remained relatively small (barely 12,000 by 1840) and growth was moderate, the oligarchy continued in power.

But the old patricians did not adjust to the increasingly industrial times. From 1840 to 1860 the city population more than tripled, and after 1842 the mayors were usually entrepreneurs, not from the old elite but self-made men. This shift in leadership would seem to accord both with the spirit of the times (pre-Civil War Whiggery and the post-Civil War "gilded age") as well as with the era of rapid growth for the city. By 1900 New Haven had a popula-

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1. COMMUNITY POWER STRUCTURE (1953).

2. *Id.* at vii.

3. Census of Population, Supplementary Reports PC(S1)-7, June 16, 1961.

4. Fortunately, a fifth of this total city population, living in New York City and Chicago, has been well covered. See SAYRE & KAUFMAN, GOVERNING NEW YORK CITY (1960) and BANFIELD, POLITICAL INFLUENCE (1961).

tion of 108,000, which put it substantially ahead of Los Angeles, Houston, Dallas, Atlanta, Seattle, or Memphis (not to mention such villages as Miami and Phoenix).

From 1899 on the mayors of New Haven have been neither patricians nor tycoons, but what Dahl aptly terms "the ex-plebes," men from modest, lower middle-class backgrounds, and of non-Yankee stock. This shift seems to have been a much more common phenomenon in the northeast than the earlier break between patricians and entrepreneurs. In Boston, for example, the patricians seem to have taken to business (to banking, finance, and shipping rather than to manufacturing) more successfully. But the Boston of *The Late George Apley* eventually yielded to that of *The Last Hurrah*, and similar shifts have been detailed for Holyoke<sup>5</sup> and Providence.<sup>6</sup> Actually, the New Haven Yankees appear to have been singularly uninventive in the area of politics: in Boston the retreating Yankees vested substantial power over the city in a state board (which they continued to control for decades), and in Holyoke the Yankee upper-class capitalized on a scandal to regain control for a time, during which they pushed through a non-partisan election system (which tends to blunt the voting power of the lower classes).

Dahl summarizes the history of New Haven as a process of gradual dispersal of political resources. The pattern of cumulative inequalities which prevailed in the days of the patricians has been replaced by one of dispersed or non-cumulative inequalities. As one Holyoke resident phrased it in regard to that city: "The Protestants have all the money and the Catholics have all the votes."<sup>7</sup> In New Haven there is something of this plus an additional split, apparently still evident, between sheer wealth and old-line social standing.<sup>8</sup> The key problem of politics, to which Dahl returns in the last third of the book, is how one resource base (wealth, or numbers, or social standing, or what-not) can be mobilized to effect other resources.

But there is another splintering process which is strangely absent from Dahl's description. This is the obvious and seemingly important fact that the "New Haven" of 1840 or 1890 was an economic, social, and political entity in and of itself. This, of course, is no longer the case. The economic and social reality of the current generation is the "New Haven metropolitan area" of 311,681 people; the central city of New Haven is just one of a variety of legal jurisdictions. Thus the standard cliché of public administration:

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5. See Constance McLaughlin Green's brilliant but neglected book, *HOLYOKE, MASSACHUSETTS: A CASE HISTORY OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION IN AMERICA* ch. IX (1939); *UNDERWOOD, PROTESTANT AND CATHOLIC: RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL INTERACTION IN AN INDUSTRIAL COMMUNITY* (1958). Both, incidentally, were originally done as doctoral dissertations at Yale.

6. Cornwell, *Party Absorption of Ethnic Groups: The Case of Providence, Rhode Island*, 38 *SOCIAL FORCES* 205 (1960).

7. *UNDERWOOD, op. cit. supra* note 5, at 290.

8. This would seem peculiar to New England and, perhaps, the Deep South. The obvious national pattern is for wealth to be convertible into social standing in one or at most two generations.

political control is "Balkanized" and does not accord with the integrated economic and social area. One need not embrace the recommendations of the administrators to perceive the political importance of divided jurisdictions.

This suggests a less optimistic interpretation of the New Haven data. Perhaps the economic and social notables, far from having been worsted by the ex-plebes, have merely withdrawn to their fortified positions in legally independent suburbs (East Haven, North Haven, West Haven, Hamden, and Woodbridge—all solidly Republican). Political control of a declining city core is not an unalloyed joy. Data for the New Haven metropolitan area are not readily available, but there is some suggestive material from Boston. There, the shift in number of families listed in the *Social Register* with addresses within the legal city and in the various suburbs was as follows:<sup>9</sup>

	1894	1943
City of Boston . . . .	1,519	962
Boston Suburbs . . . .	403	1,993

The move to the suburbs has continued, and has involved not only the social elite but most of the more prosperous middle class. Something of the same process has occurred in New Haven (over the past decade its suburbs grew by 51.6 per cent while the city declined by 7.5 per cent). Except for their "downtown" property most of the notables are thus safely removed from the legal or political control of the ex-plebes.<sup>10</sup>

The difference between an optimistic and a pessimistic view of New Haven is even more evident when Dahl turns in Part II to deal with the extraordinary events of the past decade. He examines in detail the different sets of leaders and sub-leaders who have participated in decisions in three major subject areas: (1) urban redevelopment, in which New Haven has had one of the country's most ambitious programs; (2) public education, in which New Haven had been lagging;<sup>11</sup> and (3) political party nominations. A simple "power elite" theory might assume that the economic notables were making, or decisively influencing, decisions in each of these areas. But Dahl indicates that there has been relatively little overlap among participants in the three areas, and especially among the social or economic elite. The most active and consistently influential figure appears to be Mayor Richard Lee, an "ex-plebe."

9. Firey, *Sentiment and Symbolism as Ecological Variables*, 10 AM. SOCIOLOGICAL REV. 140 (1945).

10. The shift to what Dahl terms "collective benefits" (the economists' "Public Goods") involves some items which are shared within an immediate neighborhood, others shared in a whole subcommunity, and a few (*e.g.*, smog control) necessarily shared over a whole metropolitan area. Such key items as schools, most public services, and zoning do *not* have to be shared with the central city ex-plebes.

11. While the New Haven city schools were in sad shape, one wonders what the level of expenditures was in the wealthy suburbs.

Professor Dahl credits Mayor Lee with great political skill and portrays him, in almost Schumpeterian terms, as a highly successful "political entrepreneur." Obviously, Lee could not have carried out his far-reaching redevelopment program without considerable bargaining skill. But is the New Haven redevelopment story a sort of "miracle" to be attributed to a "great man" theory of political leadership, or a more simple case of massive outside funds serving as a sort of *deus ex machina*? Dahl leans to the former, but to this reviewer New Haven appears as a sort of "Potemkin village."<sup>12</sup> The more emphasis one puts on the important and unusual resource base of federal funds the less weight one need attach to the Mayor's particular talents.<sup>13</sup>

The old point of Berle and Means about separation of ownership and control would seem vital in accounting for the distribution of influence in New Haven redevelopment. Mayor Lee was an ex-plebe, drawing only \$18,000 a year as mayor, yet calling the major decisions in meetings with most of the local bankers, businessmen, and manufacturers. *But* (and I regard it as a crucial "but") the mayor had under his *control* (not, of course, ownership, but "control") almost fifty million dollars in federal redevelopment funds. The relative scope of the program is touched on in one brief paragraph,<sup>14</sup> but the amounts are never indicated, and the chapter dealing with "Cash, Credit, and Wealth" as political resources concentrates on *private* wealth with only a passing reference to "federal largesses."<sup>15</sup> The following tabulation of the specific projects, amounts granted or reserved, and dates of approval (cumulated through September, 1961), is from the *Congressional Record*:<sup>16</sup>

Community renewal program .....	\$ 247,333	
Church Street .....	13,287,842	March 1956
Dixwell .....	7,865,654	July 1956
Oak Street .....	3,675,122	February 1951
Southwest area .....	4,800,000	March 1961
State St. renewal area .....	2,317,000	February 1957
Wooster Square .....	15,514,851	December 1955
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New Haven, total .....	\$47,707,802	1951-1961

12. The physical structures in New Haven are real enough—unlike the facades put up to fool Catherine the Great—but their "costless" financing makes the situation seem highly artificial.

13. Thus in Newark, New Jersey, the mayor has been of secondary importance in the redevelopment agency, and in Boston it would seem that Ed Logue (the former New Haven development specialist) carries more weight than the neophyte mayor. The latter, incidentally, seems to have won an upset victory because of the sense of alienation and powerlessness of the Boston "ex-plebes" (who have non-partisan elections in a one-party area). See LEVIN, *THE ALIENATED VOTER* (1960).

14. Pp. 121-22.

15. P. 244.

16. 108 CONG. REC. 2315 (daily ed. Feb. 20, 1962).

That Lee was able to win at least passing local fame out of such a federal bonanza (about \$323.00 per person) is hardly surprising. Even giving money away requires a certain amount of talent (as foundation executives and foreign aid administrators emphasize), but it is surely of a lesser order than negotiating a major tax increase.<sup>17</sup> Even in the school building program Lee was able to build new schools by selling the strategically located old buildings to affluent Yale (apparently at a somewhat padded price!). The tough problem facing most mayors is of financing new schools while fixing up old ones, and without benefit of Ivy League windfalls.

I would suggest two more crucial tests for "municipal statesmanship." One is the ability to do something about the inter-governmental "jungle" of separate jurisdictions; the other is the ability to meet new public needs by diverting funds from the private to the public sector.<sup>18</sup> From the local point of view federal or state aid may appear as "free goods" (in the economic sense) but this just means that the test is being met at a higher level of government (after the presumed failure of local leadership). In New Haven, Mayor Lee has not done anything to meet either of these criteria.<sup>19</sup> If he had led in the creation of a metropolitan-wide jurisdiction, with power to tax the rich Yankees in the suburbs, and thus brought the central city up by its own bootstraps, then he would indeed have proved extraordinary skill. But I find it hard to believe that spending federal funds on a program desired by the economic notables themselves is a compelling test of ability.<sup>20</sup>

But enough of New Haven. Who governs the fifty million Americans who live in *other* cities of over 100,000? In his preface Dahl notes some differences among cities, but he does not make much effort to compare New Haven with other cities. I would suggest three broad dimensions for comparing New Haven with other cities. First, and simplest, is the matter of political institutions, formal and informal. New Haven has partisan elections, between highly competitive parties, for a mayor and council. But in the size category of cities from 100,000 to 500,000 population there are fifty-one cities with the city-manager system to only forty-three with mayor-council (another sixteen—half of these in the South—have the commission system).<sup>21</sup> Even in

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17. Indeed, Dahl indicates at 205 that "the Mayor was firmly convinced that political success depended on his ability to reach his policy objectives without raising taxes."

18. The former may be a prerequisite to the latter.

19. The mayor was unable to pull off even the very modest maneuver of getting a new city charter adopted just within New Haven.

20. When a new baseball manager takes over the New York Yankees and wins a pennant is it amazing skill, or just competent management of vastly superior resources? The surprising thing about Mayor Lee is that he has not been able to parlay his happy situation into some higher office—he seems to lack the sense of timing that a Joe Clark showed when he moved from mayor of Philadelphia to the Senate.

21. See MUNICIPAL YEAR BOOK 84-87 (1961). Of the twenty-one cities with *over* 500,000 population, sixteen have the mayor-council system, four have city managers, and Washington D.C. is a special case. Politically, New Haven may be more similar to some of these larger cities—or to the national two-party system.

the minority of cities with the mayor-council system a goodly number hold non-partisan elections for one or the other, or both. And among those having partisan elections one-party domination is rather common. Effective two-party competition (maximizing the importance of the vote and the role of the lower classes) is not quite unique to New Haven, but neither is it the "average" situation.<sup>22</sup>

A second dimension on which cities can be usefully compared is in regard to their demographic and economic make-up. Lower New England (and New Haven) have received an influx of immigrants over the past two or three generations unmatched by any other major part of the country. Connecticut alone received more immigrants from 1890 to 1900 than did *all* eleven Southern states. A variety of common sense city classifications have been put forward over the past twenty years, most relying on census data relative to occupational categories.<sup>23</sup> A city composed largely of blue-collar manufacturing employees is likely, *ceteris paribus*, to differ politically from a regional center with a high proportion of white-collar employees. Data on the percentage of Negro population, major ethnic groupings, and religious affiliation are also relevant. And the question of absentee management or locally owned industry may be of some importance. Even the simple ratio of per cent of population living outside the central city to that living within should be a useful index in many areas (the larger the proportion of population living in the suburbs the greater the probability that the ex-plebes dominate—for whatever it may be worth—the core city).

A third, and perhaps most important point of comparison, is of urban growth rates. Bernard DeVoto once noted that "New England is a finished place." But the Whiggish enthusiasm for economic and population growth—which apparently dominated New Haven during the era of 1840 to 1900 (during which the population increased almost ten-fold)—is now abroad in much of the land. It is strong in the booming regional centers of the South, the Southwest, the Pacific Coast, and by no means dead in the Midwest. Thus from 1950 to 1960 the *average* rate of population growth for all SMSA's<sup>24</sup> in the four major census divisions of the U.S. was as follows:

West .....	48.5 per cent
South .....	36.2 per cent
North Central .....	23.5 per cent
Northeast .....	13.0 per cent

22. On the baleful effects of non-partisan elections, see the writings of Charles R. Adrian or the recent volume by LEE, *THE POLITICS OF NON-PARTISANSHIP* (1960). The classic treatment of problems of one-party dominance is by V. O. Key.

23. See, e.g., Harris, *A Functional Classification of Cities in the United States*, 33 *GEOG. REV.* 86 (1943); Nelson, *A Service Classification of American Cities*, 3 *ECON. GEOG.* 189 (1955); or classifications by Victor Jones in *MUNICIPAL YEAR BOOK* 1953 and 1959 editions.

24. Figures are for Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas, not just core cities, although speculative ethos of the former is usually reflected in the latter.

Rates of increase for *individual* SMSA's ranged as high as 297.9 per cent (Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood in Florida), with sixty-three of the 212 SMSA's showing increases of over one-third. When New Haven was booming at a comparable rate (say from 1840 to 1900) it was the businessmen who were dominant. One wonders if it is otherwise in those cities that are still in their "Whig period" and have been less inundated by low-income immigrants.

The last third of *Who Governs?* shifts from the New Haven scene to consider the general pattern of "pluralist democracy" in which "nearly every adult may vote but where knowledge, wealth, social position, access to officials, and other resources are unequally distributed. . . ." <sup>25</sup> Here Dahl evaluates such potential resources as social standing; the economic elite's access to cash, credit, and wealth; the public official's legal status, popularity, and patronage jobs; and the mass media's control over information. <sup>26</sup> By borrowing from economic theory one can discuss political resources in terms of rates and efficiency of use, ability to transform one resource base (*e.g.*, wealth) into a particular scope of influence (*e.g.*, politics), and contrast "slack" political systems (most resources unmobilized) with "tight" political systems.

The points are highly suggestive, and deserve to be worked out more fully. Economic theory gets interesting when one can move beyond the basic resources (land, labor, and capital) plus a skilled entrepreneur, and begin to consider problems of organization, industrial structure, and "theory of the firm." There are, it would seem, political analogies here as well. For large, complex political orders the institutional structure and patterns of organization probably become extremely important. This is a worthy problem for systematic political theory.

For the moment the pressing need in the study of urban politics is for middle-range theory to suggest and order hypotheses about "who governs" in various cities. There is little point in saying it would be nice to have a hundred more studies like *Who Governs?*, since we are simply not going to get them—nor should we. That would be an extremely wasteful use of scarce academic resources. What we need are a few such probing studies, dealing with the major "types" of cities. To discover the "types" prior to doing dozens of studies is the hitch. A good theorist is what is required, the ideal candidate being Robert A. Dahl.

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25. P. 1.

26. Importance of the press probably increases with non-partisan elections, one-party dominance, or in rapidly growing areas where local ties (and hence other sources of information) are weak. Thus one would expect the Miami Herald to be more influential in Dade County than a New Haven paper in New Haven (and such seems to be the case).

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