

Lineberry R L & Fowler E P. Reformism and public policies in American cities.
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[University of Texas, TX and York University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada]

Municipal reform created institutions (chiefly manager government, nonpartisan elections, and at large constituencies) designed to change the relationship between citizens and policymaking. Using various measures, we found that the 'responsiveness' of city governments with reformed institutions to socioeconomic cleavages in the population is lower in cities with reformed than in cities with unreformed institutions. [The *Social Sciences Citation Index*[®] (SSCI[®]) indicates that this paper has been cited in over 160 publications since 1967. Of the many papers published in this journal, this one ranked 4th in the SSCI analyses covering 1969-80.]

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"In the fall of 1965 we were enrolled in a graduate seminar at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, taught by Robert Daland. Dawson and Robinson's 1963 article¹ on state spending and political climate, and Banfield and Wilson's 1963 book, *City Politics*,² had attracted our attention, and the idea of doing a quantitative analysis of urban policy 'outputs' attracted us. We asked Daland if we could do a joint paper. Daland liked the results and advised submission to *American Political Science Review*. Just before we had finalized our revision, though, *American Political Science Review* published a paper by Wolfinger and Field which traveled much similar ground.³ A little discouraged, we went back to the computer for more analysis. (Then, com-

puter based research in political science was primitive and 'turnaround times' of 36-48 hours were not uncommon.)

"The political science department at Chapel Hill was located in the old medical school; graduate student offices were in the old cadaver rooms and dog runs. Working there late one night poring over sets of multiple regressions, we noticed that 'multiple R's' between socioeconomic variables and spending-taxing levels were consistently higher in unreformed than reformed cities. One of us remarked: 'That's just the way the reformers would have wanted it.' Thus, serendipitously was born the idea that reforming local governments was associated with lessened 'responsiveness' to their populations. Rewritten, the paper went off to *American Political Science Review*.

"Three reviews came back. One reviewer simply said that it was one of the best papers he had seen in years; another wrote ten pages of detailed and bitter criticism; the third was dispassionate and recommended publication after minor revisions. Editor Austin Ranney tentatively accepted it and we went back to our revision, our job searches, and our dissertations. After the paper came out, Ranney sent us a letter from Wolfinger, critical to the core, which he planned to publish, and invited our response. 'Never fear,' his cover letter noted to these young scholars being attacked by one of the major figures in empirical political science, 'of such exchanges is fame constructed.'

"The article struck a responsive chord and (to our surprise) became a *Citation Classic* because it dealt with an important theoretical issue in the field—the impact of reformism—using the quantitative techniques which captured the imagination of, even dazzled, political scientists at the time. It melded, one might say, historicism with empiricism. The article was far from favorably received; many theoretical and methodological critiques were launched against it, some very well taken. Despite its many weaknesses, we should still be willing to argue that it was right, even if sometimes for the wrong reasons. Perhaps sometime in our careers, we might produce something else as widely cited as what came to be called in the urban politics field 'LineberryandFowler.'"

1. Dawson R E & Robinson J A. Inter-party competition, economic variables, and welfare policies in the American states. *J. Politics* 25:265-89, 1963.
2. Banfield E C & Wilson J Q. *City politics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963. 362 p.
3. Wolfinger R & Field J O. Political ethos and the structure of city government. *Amer. Polit. Sci. Rev.* 60:306-26, 1966.