

Congressional Informal Groups as Representative Responsiveness

Arturo Vega, *University of Texas, San Antonio*

Despite a proliferation of congressional groups since the mid-1970s, little attention has been devoted to the group life of Congress. This study focuses on congressional informal groups as modern extensions of representative responsiveness. Three questions are asked: (1) What are the roles and activities of congressional groups? (2) Are there differences in roles and activities by group type? and, (3) Are there patterns of activity that define a group life? Using survey data and factor analyses, this study, while discovering few distinctions among the groups, finds the group life of Congress as patterned responses to fulfilling the needs and interests of group constituencies and members of Congress.

In the waning hours of the 101st Congress, the House of Representatives took up a routine conference committee report on the 1990 Immigration Act. But before the report could be voted upon, the Hispanic Caucus mobilized an effort to defeat the measure's rule for floor consideration, killing the bill. This action sent the bill sponsors scurrying about to save the measure before adjournment. The Caucus objected to the report because it included a pilot program that created a specialized driver's license to verify citizenship for employment purposes. Caucus members feared this program would promote a national identity card and eventually increase discrimination against the civil liberties of Hispanic Americans (Biskupic 1990). While the Caucus did not want to kill the bill, they were willing to do so to remove the provision. In turn, sponsors wanted the measure badly enough that they were willing to scrap the provision. With the compromise, the bill was resurrected and passed.

The activities of this and other congressional groups¹ are more common today than ever before in the history of the U.S. Congress. For good or bad, without the Caucus's actions, the pilot program would have become part of the nation's immigration policy. Because of their actions, the policy was altered. In these activities, the members of the Hispanic Caucus were acting not only for their individual district constituents but also for Hispanic Americans nationwide.

Analyses of Congress have paid scant attention to such groups or to the implication of the institution's growing congressional caucus life, which now

ARTURO VEGA is Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Texas, San Antonio, and was a Carl Albert Congressional Research Center Fellow.

extends to some 129 groups. Despite being around now for some thirty years, we still do not have a clear understanding of their impact on the legislative process. Students of the congressional process remain uncertain whether to treat these caucuses as a sideshow or as something more important.

This study takes the latter perspective. Congressional politics is viewed here as the growing legislative story of individual alliances and congressional group influence. Moreover, it assumes that the longevity and use of congressional caucuses portend a changing nature of congressional representation. Informal groups are viewed here as a manifestation of congressional representation as responsiveness. Using survey data and factor analyses, this study extends Eulau and Karp's (1977) discussion of congressional representation as responsiveness to congressional groups. It proposes that congressional caucuses are variations and products of the modern compositional nature of representation.

Three questions focus the study: (1) what are the representative roles and activities of congressional groups? (2) are there differences in these roles and activities by group type? and, (3) are there patterns of group roles and activities that better explain congressional groups as extensions of representation?

Background

Since the mid-1970s, the Congress has been highly individualistic, often forcing party leaders to form voting majorities on an issue-by-issue basis. Characteristically, there are few incentives for party unity and an abundance of avenues for individual and collective ventures. One continually growing venture is the extensive use of congressional groups.

Modern congressional groups emerged in the late 1950s with the formation of the Democratic Study Group (DSG) in the House of Representatives. Impatient with the heavy hand of the conservative coalition, liberal and moderate Democrats formed the DSG to obtain and disseminate legislative information and create a new ideological balance in the House (Hardeman and Bacon 1987). With the DSG's successes, other partisan and ideological groups surfaced (Hammond, Stevens, and Mulhollan 1983; Richardson 1991).

Current groups range from the national constituent interests of the Black Caucus to the industrial interests of the Textile Caucus to the personal and ideological interest caucuses of the House Wednesday Group. Many run fully-staffed offices and maintain legislative and research capacities; others exist in name only, largely dormant and mobilized only when issues salient to the group emerge.

To be sure congressional groups come and go. But in the modern (post-1974) Congress, caucuses are related to members' perceptions of congressional politics and their roles as legislators and representatives. In other words, congressional caucuses become products of legislators' role orientations or "(their) own expectations of the kind of behavior they ought to exhibit in the performance of their duties" (Eulau et al. 1986, 181).

Comparative designs, case studies and functional analyses characterize the literature on congressional informal groups. Susan Hammond et al. have added much with their categorization of group types (see Table 1) and their analyses of group activities (Stevens et al. 1977; Loomis 1981; Hammond 1981, 1985a, 1985b). Unfortunately, there is a tendency in these analyses to treat congressional groups homogeneously within broad categoric types against discrete roles and activities. In this sense, partisan groups are only interested in moving their party to embrace their issues, while constituent groups are only interested in representing narrow interests. While this pattern may have fit early groups, it narrowly defines their modern roles and activities and is inattentive to their multidimensionality.

Table 1. Congressional Groups by Type

Party Groups—groups that influence partisan positions. Example: Democratic Study Group.

Personal Groups—caucuses based on members' shared concerns: the environment or foreign policy. Example: The Space Caucus.

National Constituency Groups—represent national groups, within and across districts or states: Blacks, Veterans.

State/Regional Groups—work on issues of a particular interest to a state or region. Examples: Rural, Sunbelt Caucuses.

Industry-specific Groups—concerned about the problems of specific industries. Examples: Steel Textile Caucuses.

Source: Hammond et al. 1983, 275-297.

Eulau and Karps faced a similar problem in their analyses of representation. That is, they found previous analyses of congressional representation static and one-dimensional. Building from Hanna Pitkin's (1967) linguistic study of representation, Eulau and Karps advanced the view of representation as responsiveness. Here, the transactional nature of representation and the potential collective representation of the institution are emphasized. As Pitkin stressed, political representation

is primarily a public, institutionalized arrangement involving many people and groups, and operating in the complex ways of large-scale social arrangements. What makes it representation is not any single action by anyone participant, but the overall structure and the functioning of the system, the patterns emerging from the multiple activities of many people (Pitkin 1967, 221-222).

Pitkin concluded with the now familiar view of representation as “acting in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them” (Pitkin 1967, 209). Eulau and Karps specify this meaning of representation by conceptualizing responsiveness along four possible dimensions—policy, allocation, service and symbolic. They cautioned against treating each component as the sole criterion of the existence of representation and against neglecting the focus of representation, revealing the multidimensionality of responsiveness.

Extending Eulau and Karps’ representation as responsiveness to the role orientations and activities of congressional groups moves us away from discrete functional analyses and toward a broader evaluation of these groups. In turn, such an extension provides insight into the changes these groups portend for the legislative process and for congressional representation.

Methods

A mail-questionnaire survey of 102 caucuses in the 100th Congress was conducted in 1987. A 51 percent response rate was obtained, creating a sample of fifty-two cases.²

Using a five point scale, ranging from “Not Important at All” to “Very Important”, respondents evaluated roles and activities traditionally associated with congressional groups (Hammond 1985a; 1985b). *Role variables* are used here as estimates of the groups’ role orientation(s); that is, the group members’ expectations of the kind of behavior they ought to exhibit in their individual and collective legislative performance of their duties.³ *Activity variables* are those actions the groups undertake to achieve their role orientations. In addition, respondents identified the *locus of (their) activities* by estimating the amount of time and effort expended upon and with eleven political actors and activities.

Finally, to examine for correlates, all role and activity variables were examined across categorical group types as well as a measure of institutional organization.⁴ *GROUP TYPE* is operationalized by Hammond et al.’s five categorical group types: party, personal-interest, constituent, industry-specific, and state/regional (see Table 1). Each type reflects an underlying group characteristic. Industry-specific groups, for example, stress specific industrial interests or issues (e.g., agriculture, tourism, mushrooms).

INSTITUTIONAL ORGANIZATION is operationalized by legislative service organization (LSO) status and represents the group's conscious effort to structure its roles and activities.⁵ Legislative service organization (LSO) status—a special status, conferred upon informal groups by the House Administration Committee—allows groups to collect dues through members' office expense accounts and maintain offices in congressional buildings. LSO designation distinguishes these groups not only from other congressional group organizations (non-LSOs) but also from paper or dormant groups.

It is not expected that specific constituent type groups will differentiate broadly from ideological or personal-interest group types by virtue of their role orientations or their subsequent activities. Congressional group types should exhibit more in common in their roles and activities than differences in general. By definition, however, LSOs and non-LSOs should exhibit broader organizational resource differences but no fewer qualitative representative differences. That is, non-LSOs should be equally as engaged in representation roles or activities as their LSO counterparts, but less organizationally resourceful in fulfilling these roles and activities.

The purpose of demonstrating associations between group type, organization, role and activities is to illustrate the breadth and width of congressional group representation. Factor analysis is employed to abstract the dimensionality of these activities and to offer an alternative interpretation of congressional group politics.

Results

An overview of the survey findings clarifies the roles and activities of congressional groups (see Tables 2 and 3). The role of information, for example, was either "Important" or "Very Important" to eighty percent of the respondents (see Table 2). The next most valued roles were representation (73.4 percent) and agenda setting (63.4 percent), while coalition-building and socialization roles were less emphasized (46.2 and 32.7 percent, respectively). While providing an information role can be considered as including elements of representation, the varying emphases placed on these roles suggest that they were viewed as separate representational expectations by the respondents. In this sense, congressional groups stress various forms of representation role orientations.

In terms of what kinds of activities congressional groups undertake, sponsoring legislation (48.5 percent) and the use of reports (46.2 percent) ranked as the most important. Meeting with party leaders (23.1 percent), using newsletters (18.8 percent) and conducting non-member seminars (15.4 percent) were regarded as less essential (see Table 2).

Table 2. Importance of Roles and Activities by Group Type

Role/Activity	Total (N=52)	Party (N=7)	Personal (N=7)	Constit. (N=15)	State/ Region (N=16)	Spec. Industry (N=7)	Sig/ Cramer's V
Roles							
Information	80.7	85.7	71.4	93.3	68.8	85.7	n/s
Agenda Setting	63.4	43.9	71.5	60.0	68.8	71.4	n/s
Representative	73.4	14.3	71.5	60.0	62.5	100.0	*(.37)
Socialization	32.7	14.3	28.6	26.7	31.3	71.5	n/s
Coalition Building	46.2	42.9	42.9	33.4	56.3	57.3	n/s
Activities							
Hold Caucus Meetings	40.4	42.9	57.1	33.4	31.3	57.3	n/s
Meeting Leaders	23.1	28.6	28.6	20.0	18.8	28.6	n/s
Sponsor Legislation	48.5	42.9	71.4	53.3	50.1	28.6	n/s
Legislative Reports	46.2	42.9	71.5	26.7	68.8	14.3	*(.36)
Representation	38.5	42.0	57.1	33.4	37.6	28.6	n/s
Use Newsletters	18.8	14.3	14.3	13.4	25.0	14.3	n/s
Oversight	36.6	28.6	42.9	26.7	37.5	57.2	n/s
Non-Member Seminars	15.4	0.0	42.9	6.7	18.8	14.3	n/s
Position Papers	32.7	42.9	57.2	20.0	37.5	14.3	n/s

*Significant at .05

Finally, in terms of where they expend their energy, Table 3 shows that informal groups, on average, spent more time with interest groups (29.2 percent) and bureaucratic agencies (20.1 percent) and the least amount of time with congressional party leaders (8.8 percent). Combined with the previous findings, these data suggest a broad range of activities previously not associated with congressional groups. That informal groups spend nearly a third of their time with interest groups and a fifth of their time with bureaucratic agencies suggests different aspects of congressional group representation.

Table 3. Average Amount of Time Groups Spend with Congressional Actors and Activities

Actor/Activity	Average % Time*
Interest Groups	29.2
Committees	20.1
Agenda	19.6
Legislation	17.1
Constituents	16.3
Agencies	16.2
Coalitions	15.6
Research Agenda	14.3
Representation	13.4
Oversight	11.3
Party Leaders	8.8

*Average % Time = Average estimate of percent of time groups' spent on this activity/actor in any given year.

Roles and Activities by Group Type and Organization

In terms of variations of group roles and activities by type, the only significant differences found were in the importance placed on the role of representation and the use of legislative reports (see Table 2). In representation, groups with constituencies (personal, national constituency, regional and industrial groups) place heavier emphasis on this role than do partisan or ideological groups. In contrast, personal and state/regional groups place greater emphasis of the use of reports compared to other group types.

In terms of where and how groups expend their resources, the only significant differences among group types were in time devoted to working

with interest groups and bureaucratic agencies (see Appendix A: Tables A1 and A2). Here, again, constituent groups (national constituent, regional, personal and industrial groups) spend more time working with interest groups and bureaucratic agencies than do partisan or ideological groups.

Organizationally, LSOs place greater emphasis than non-LSOs on the role of information (Tau-b = .39), the use of legislative reports (Tau-b = .24), newsletters (Tau-b = .46), and less on meeting with party leaders (Tau-b = -.30), as shown in Table 4. In addition, Appendix A: Table A3 shows that LSOs, on average, spend significantly less time (5.86 percent) working with bureaucratic agencies compared to non-LSO groups (16.44 percent), and nearly triple the time (23.7 percent) spent by non-LSO groups (8.8 percent) on research agendas. As expected, LSOs represent a group structure that places heavier emphasis on an information role and information and research products, such as legislative reports and newsletters.

Table 4. Importance of Roles and Activities by Organization

Role/Activity	Non-LSOs (n=33)	LSOs (n=19)	sig.	Gamma	Tau-b
Roles					
Information	72.8	94.8	.02	.76	.39
Agenda Setting	63.7	63.1	n/s		
Representative	63.7	63.1	n/s		
Socialization	33.4	31.5	n/s		
Coalition Building	42.5	52.6	n/s		
Activities					
Hold Caucus Meetings	42.4	36.9	n/s		
Meeting Leaders	27.3	15.8	.02	-.59	-.30
Sponsor Legislation	57.3	36.8	n/s		
Legislative Reports	36.4	63.1	.09	.39	.24
Representation	30.3	52.7	n/s		
Use Newsletters	3.0	42.1	.002	.77	.46
Oversight	39.4	31.6	n/s		
Non-Member Seminars	9.1	32.4	n/s		
Position Papers	30.3	36.9	n/s		

Though more similarities than differences exist, the above findings reveal some interesting points. First, congressional groups engage in roles and activities. Second, nonpartisan, constituent-focused groups emphasize a representative role and activities such as sponsoring legislation and

working with interest groups and bureaucratic agencies. Third, partisan groups and LSOs devote more time and energy to information products and are organizationally less constituent-oriented.

To suggest, then, that all groups stress similar roles and activities exaggerates their effects and obscures their impact. While information, for example, is important to all congressional groups, how they use this information depends upon other roles and activities they choose. Sometimes, the information may be internal (caucus members only); in other cases, it may take the form of “dear colleague” letters, case work requests before bureaucratic agencies, or petitions to party leaders or committees to include or exclude legislative items. In each case, the information provides a vehicle for representing the group membership and its constituency.

Moreover, the survey findings suggest that congressional groups are dynamic, shifting their roles and activities and responding to their environment. Congressional group roles and activities, then, do not exist in a vacuum. They have role expectations and through their activities bring responsiveness to that foci.

The Relationship Among Group Roles, Activities, and Locus of Activities

A preliminary step in understanding the dynamics of congressional groups is to explore the correlations among group roles, activities, and locus of activity variables. Discerning these associations, in turn, suggests patterns of group activities.

The role of information, for example, the highest valued role, correlated only moderately with the use of legislative reports (.31) and weakly with all other variables, suggesting a distinctive role for congressional groups (see Table 5). In contrast, the correlations among the remaining roles and activities show moderate relationships. The congressional group that attempts to bring its issues to the congressional agenda, for example, also stresses a representation role (.36), a socialization role (.42), and a coalition role (.55). These groups also sponsor legislation (.63), engage in oversight activities (.39), prepare position papers (.39) and legislative reports (.36). Sponsoring legislation, on average the most valued activity by congressional groups, was also moderately related with most other activity variables.

Correlations among the locus of activity variables reveal weak to moderate associations (see Table 6). The strongest correlations were among time spent working with coalitions and party leaders (.50), time spent with interest groups and constituents (.49), and time spent on oversight and legislation (.44). The congressional group that works with its constituents

Table 5. Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Matrix, Congressional Group Roles and Activities

	INFO	AGDA	REPR	SOCL	COAL	LEGS	RPTS	METS	REPS	PPAP	OVST	MTLD	NWLT	SEMS*
Roles														
Information	—													
Agenda Setting	.03	—												
Representative	.02	.36	—											
Socialization	.17	.42	.30	—										
Coalition Building	.02	.55	.41	.49	—									
Activities														
Sponsor Legislation	-.08	.63	.22	.24	.54	—								
Legislative Reports	.30	.33	.02	.14	.36	.38	—							
Hold Caucus Meetings	-.07	.29	.12	.36	.29	.25	.25	—						
Representation	-.01	.19	.20	.07	.17	.32	.04	.21	—					
Position Papers	.02	.36	.06	.14	.18	.28	.46	.41	-.15	—				
Oversight	.04	.39	.12	.25	.40	.57	.24	.38	.58	.19	—			
Meeting Leaders	-.14	.27	-.04	.24	.32	.36	.16	.55	.11	.41	.38	—		
Use Newsletters	.20	.20	.05	.15	.26	.02	.54	-.06	.01	.15	-.02	-.09	—	
Non-Member Seminars	.04	.15	.06	.22	.23	.04	.29	-.02	.22	.24	.23	.33	.35	—

*All column headings along the Table's x axis are abbreviations of the corresponding row-item explicated in the Table's y axis.

Table 6. Correlation Matrix, Time Spent with Congressional Actors and Activities

	INTGRPS	AGENCIES	COMMITTS	PTYLEDS	CONSTITTS	LEGISLA	REPRES	OVST	COALS	AGENDA	RESAGND*
Interest Groups	—										
Agencies	.18	—									
Committees	.21	.31	—								
Party Leaders	.03	.09	.28	—							
Constituents	.49	.19	.31	.33	—						
Legislation	.30	.14	.17	.27	.12	—					
Representation	-.14	.01	-.03	.11	.02	.19	—				
Oversight	.33	.31	.37	.35	.31	.44	.24	—			
Coalitions	.27	-.01	.29	.50	.32	.37	.26	.42	—		
Agenda	.19	.16	.29	.21	.14	.42	.33	.30	.29	—	
Research Agenda	-.16	-.01	-.01	.18	-.06	.14	.03	.11	.01	.04	—

Critical Value (1-TAIL, .05) = ±.23); (2-TAIL, .05) = ±.27)

*All column headings along the Table's x axis are abbreviations of the corresponding row-item explicated in the Table's y axis.

naturally finds oversight activities (.33), working with interest groups (.49), party leaders (.33), and coalitions (.27) advantageous. Moreover, these correlations suggest patterns of activities related to the roles congressional groups undertake.

To examine for the continuity in the roles and activities of congressional groups, principal component factor analysis was employed, using all variables. Included in the analysis was a dichotomized Hammond group categorization, a dichotomized group size variable (0 = small groups of < 50 members, 1 = large groups of > 50 members), and a legislative service organization variable.⁶ A three factor solution was accepted as the most parsimonious (see Table 7).⁷

Overall, three modest dimensions emerged:

Guardians—groups that act on behalf of or protect the interests of others through oversight activities and sponsoring legislation;

Mediators—groups that act on behalf of others both inside and outside the legislative institution; and

Service—groups that provide members and the legislature itself legislative assistance.

The dimensions identified here are similar to other categorizations and conceptions of representation. The service dimension, for example, is similar to Eulau and Karps' (1977) service responsiveness, in that service groups provide information or legislative summaries to their members. Mediator and guardian dimensions are similar to policy allocation and symbolic responsiveness in providing avenues to substantive legislation, public projects and identification with diverse constituents.

The dimensions distinguish various aspects of representative responsiveness, related to the activities that congressional groups emphasize. The *guardian* dimension, for example, stresses sentinel-like legislative responses. The factor loading of oversight activities (.76) and sponsoring legislation (.74) dominate the dimension. Other activities include meeting with party leaders (.67) and caucus members (.65), stressing an agenda-setting role (.59), the use of position papers (.54) and representative activities (.48). The guardian dimension emphasizes activities confined within the legislative process.

The activities of the House Textile Caucus in sponsoring and nearly enacting textile legislation in the 1980s exemplify the guardian dimension. According to former Caucus Chairman Butler Derrick (D-SC),

The (Caucus's) mission is to promote the textile, apparel industries across the country . . . comprised of 87 Members from textile and apparel-producing states, the caucus is the industry's watchdog on Capitol Hill (Larussa 1989a, 1989b).

**Table 7. Three Factor Solution for Congressional Group*
Locus of Roles and Activities**

Variable	Factor 1 <i>Guardians</i>	Factor 2 <i>Mediators</i>	Factor 3 <i>Service</i>
Oversight Activity	.76		
Sponsor Legislation	.74		
Agenda Setting Role	.59**	.31**	
Meeting Party Leaders	.67		
Hold Caucus Meetings	.65		
Coalition Building Role		.56	
Representative Role		.58	
Socialization Role	.38		
Non-Member Seminars	.38		
Time with Coalitions		.68	
Time with Party Leaders		.39	.29
Time on Oversight		.60	
Time on Agenda		.56	
Time on Legislation		.54	
Time with Constituents		.59	
Use Newsletters			.71
Legislative Service Organizations (LSOs)			.70
Legislative Reports			.66
Large Groups			.53
Information Role			.51
Older Groups			.49
Time on Research Agenda			.49
Constituent Groups		.48	
Time with Interest Groups		.64	
Representation	.48		
Position Papers	.54**		.29
Time with Committees		.56	
Time with Agencies		.33	-.32
Eigenvalue	5.50	3.10	2.72
Proportion	.19	.11	.09
Cumulative	.19	.30	.39

Final Commonality Estimates Total = 39.10

*The loading size is an indication of the extent to which the variable correlates with the factor. Loadings of .3 are often used as lower bounds for meaningful loadings. Loadings below .3 are not reported.

**Indicates variable is shared with another factor.

The Textile Caucus's bills of the 1980s were the first trade measures dealing with imports since 1974. These bills and the Caucus's actions compelled the Reagan Administration to shore up some of the deficiencies in the nation's trade policies, particularly through bilateral agreements with Japan (Cline 1987).⁸ While no measure was enacted, the Textile Caucus acted on behalf of its industrial interests in offering protectionist legislation, in testifying before congressional committees, in shielding the legislation from debilitating amendments, and in negotiating with party and committee leaders.

Mediators, in contrast, expend their resources on behalf of their shared interests and constituents. Here, the loadings of time working with interest groups (.64), other coalitions (.68), oversight activities (.60), and constituents (.59) dominate the dimension. The loading of representation (.58) and coalition roles (.56), complemented by the loading of constituent group types (.48), suggests a dimension oriented toward direct representative actions, as opposed to passive or symbolic actions. The weak loadings of time with party leaders (.39) and bureaucratic agencies (.33) imply that these activities also are within their realm, but not heavily relied upon. Other loadings, such as stressing coalition roles (.60) and spending time with committees (.56), on legislation (.54), and on the group's agenda (.56) suggest that mediators try to 'network' from both within and without the legislative process.

The Black Caucus's activities on anti-apartheid legislation against South Africa in the 1980s typify the mediator group dimension. For the Black Caucus, South Africa's system of apartheid represented a continued constituent battle for civil rights and an end to racism. The goal was to pressure South Africa into eliminating its apartheid system. However, with (1) the Reagan Administration's South African foreign policy of constructive engagement and (2) a reluctant congressional leadership, the responsibility for pressing this issue became the exclusive domain of the Black Caucus. As a result, in the 97th through the 100th Congresses, members of the Black Caucus introduced and successfully enacted anti-apartheid legislation. In sponsoring legislation, offering testimony before congressional committees, garnering support and personally lobbying Senators, and participating in conference committee deliberations in ironing out different versions of the bill, the Black Caucus brokered and led a reluctant Congress to enact anti-apartheid legislation.

Service groups provide legislative assistance in organization and information. The loadings of newsletters (.71), legislative service organizations (.70), the use of legislative reports (.66), large groups (.53),

information roles (.51), and time devoted to research agendas (.49) suggest a support dimension. This view, strengthened by the negative loadings of time spent with bureaucratic agencies (-.32), suggests a dimension that focuses on providing institutional needs or services. The best example of the service group dimension is the Democratic Study Group (DSG). Originally a smaller group of eighty members, the DSG began as an ideological response to the dominance of the conservative coalition of the 1950s. Today, the DSG is one of the most important, prolific, and reliable sources of information in the Congress.

The late Richard Conlon, former DSG executive, described the DSG's principal focus as "day-in and day-out, a research service," adding that its importance

lies mainly in its research activities and in giving its members an opportunity, through the exchange of information, to find a middle ground on which many of them can agree on certain issues.⁹

Conlon's comments and the group's information and research output increases in the 1980s reveal the extensiveness of the DSG's information services. By the end of the 100th Congress, for example, the DSG's services reached all but nine House Democrats and twenty-one House Republicans.¹⁰

In sum, the modern group life of congressional caucuses is identifiable along three group dimensions: guardians, mediators and service groups. Each dimension suggests patterned responses to a congressional environment and legislative process that legislators perceive as constraints upon their goals, interests, and issues.

Conclusions

This study has examined congressional group representation in three ways: (1) it has identified the importance that informal groups place on their roles and activities; (2) it has found small but significant differences among congressional groups in the roles and activities that they emphasize; and (3) it has identified dimensions that encompass congressional group representation.

Legislative bargaining—negotiations and compromises—now reflects many institutional group perspectives other than those of the two congressional parties. Rather than individual legislators introducing legislation or acting for individual congressional district constituencies, institutional groups of legislators are consistently working with interest groups, bureaucratic agencies, and party leaders for national, regional, and special interest

constituencies. As a result, modern congressional representation takes on a group representation perspective that has become integrated into the general structure and function of the legislative process and that extends to issues that traditionally have been neglected or perceived as too narrow for Congress's attention.

NOTES

¹The terms *congressional groups*, *caucuses* and *informal groups* are used interchangeably throughout this study.

²The survey focused on the groups as organizations and targeted the group's leadership or executive directors as respondents. Since respondents were anonymous, their actual status (member or staff) is unknown.

³While role orientations may be viewed broadly as the groups' goal or principal objective, such an interpretation neglects the possible multidimensionality of the groups' representational expectations. For this reason, *role orientation* is used for representational expectation rather than goal or objective.

⁴Contingency analysis, analysis of variance, and simple regression were used to examine for variations among these categories of groups. Kruskal-Wallis nonparametric tests, one-way analysis of variance with ranks, also were utilized for analysis of variance.

⁵Of 114 congressional groups identified by the Congressional Research Service in 1989, only 30 were certified as legislative service organizations (LSOs). The term LSOs refers to a particular category of House and bicameral congressional group organizations that meet certain criteria set by the House Administration Committee in 1981. The primary advantage of LSO-status is that it facilitates the operations of congressional groups that decide to have dues assessments or similar fees (research fees, membership fees) or decide to hire a separate staff with its own office space. Most non-LSOs operate from a member's office, whose staff handles the work of the organization as part of their regular duties.

⁶A modified Hammond categorization was used to demonstrate the effect of constituent groups in the analyses, dichotomized with party-personal groups as the excluded value. The original Hammond categorization proved less helpful in defining the dimensions, loading poorly on the analyses.

⁷The principal components factor analysis method extracts as many factors as there are variables. All factor solutions with less than one eigenvalue were eliminated. The rule of thumb is to retain factors to the point where an additional factor would account for less variance than a typical variable; that is, less than one eigenvalue. See Kachigan (1982, 236-260).

⁸William R. Cline (1987) argues that the ambience of the MFA III negotiations was "one of intense pressure . . . [brought on by Congress's passage of] legislation mandating sharp cutbacks in imports of apparel and textiles."

⁹Two interviews with Richard Conlon were conducted in the Spring of 1987. Survey responses are also used.

¹⁰The DSG increased its information products by one-third, from 195 in 1982 to 259 in 1988. Among these products were weekly legislative updates, whip notices, and issue reports. These data were compiled from Legislative Service Organization Quarterly Reports, 1982-1988, filed with the Clerk of the United States House of Representatives.

APPENDIX A

Table A1. Analysis of Variance, Time with Interest Groups by Group Types

Group	Mean	N
Party	7.86	7
State/Regional	22.86	7
Industry	37.93	15
Constituent	28.75	16
Personal	33.57	7
Grand Mean	28.44	52

Source	Sum of Sqs	D.F.	Mean Sq	F Ratio	Prob.
Between	4,721.46	4	1,180.37	2.08	.10
Within	26,663.36	47	567.31		
Total	31,384.83	51			

Eta Sq = .15

Table A2. Analysis of Variance, Time with Bureaucratic Agencies by Group Types

Group	Mean	N
Party	3.57	7
State/Regional	17.14	7
Industry	22.33	15
Constituent	13.45	16
Personal	22.86	7
Grand Mean	16.44	52

Source	Sum of Sqs	D.F.	Mean Sq.	F Ratio	Prob.
Between	2,116.13	4	529.03	2.30	.07
Within	10,800.70	47	229.80		
Total	12,916.83	51			

Eta Sq. = .20

**Table A3. Regression Analysis,
Time Spent with Actors and Activities by LSO Groups**

Actor/Activity	c	b	B	Prob	R ²
Interest Groups	28.44	- 8.63	-.02	.90	.00
Committees	16.44	-10.57	-.32	.02*	.10
Agenda	21.52	- 2.30	-.07	.64	.00
Legislation	13.79	9.11	.24	.08	.06
Constituents	16.89	- .56	-.01	.93	.00
Party Leaders	7.67	3.12	.13	.35	.02
Oversight	11.98	- 1.71	-.05	.73	.00
Representation	12.56	2.45	.06	.69	.00
Coalitions	15.00	1.58	.04	.78	.00
Agencies	20.27	- 1.85	-.04	.76	.00
Research Agenda	8.79	14.90	.32	.02*	.10

*Significant at .05 level

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