THE FOLKWAYS OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE: CONFORMITY TO GROUP NORMS AND LEGISLATIVE EFFECTIVENESS*

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The Senate of the United States, we are told, is a "club." The image, while hopelessly imprecise and occasionally quite misleading, does have at least one advantage: it underscores the fact that there are unwritten but generally accepted and informally enforced norms of conduct in the chamber. These folkways influence the behavior of senators to a degree and in directions not yet fully understood. "There is great pressure for conformity in the Senate," one member (mercifully varying the simile) has recently said. "It's just like living in a small town." And, as in small-town life, so too in the Senate there are occasional careers to be made out of deliberate nonconformity, sometimes only skin-deep, but sometimes quite thorough-going.

Political scientists know this in a general way. But, judging from the dearth of literature on the subject, they have deemed legislative folkways either unworthy of their attention or beyond their analytic powers.[1] Journalists and legislators—close observers and participants—are acutely aware of their importance, and have written about the Senate's folkways. While some of their efforts have shown real insight,[2] most such writings merely reaffirm the existence of the norms without telling us what they are about. Thus, most of the basic questions about the folkways of the Senate, and other legislative bodies, remain unanswered. What, specifically, do the unwritten rules say? Why do they exist? In what ways do they influence the behavior of senators? How, concretely, are they enforced? What kinds of senators obey the folkways? Which ones do not, and why? What are the political consequences of the folkways?

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[1] The most significant recent exceptions are R. K. Huitt, "The Morse Committee Assignment Controversy: A Study in Senate Norms," this REVIEW, Vol. 51 (June, 1957), pp. 313–329; C. Melnik and N. Leites, *The House Without Windows* (Evanston: Row, Peterson, 1958); C. E. Gilbert, *Problems of a Senator: A Study of Legislative Behavior*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Northwestern University, 1955.

[2] The best of these is W. S. White, *Citadel: The Story of the U.S. Senate* (New York, 1957) but see also the same author's *The Taft Story* (New York, 1954); Jerry Voorhis, *Confessions of a Congressman* (Garden City, 1947); John F. Kennedy, *Profiles in Courage* (New York, 1956), ch. 1; G. W. Pepper, *In the Senate* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1930).

These are difficult questions for an outsider to analyze. Only those who have served in the Senate—and perhaps not even all of them—are likely to grasp the folkways in all their complexity. Yet, if we are ever to understand the behavior of legislators, a beginning must be made in the systematic analysis of the subject. This article, based on several months of close personal observation and interviewing of senators, congressional staff members, lobbyists and Capitol Hill journalists, is such an attempt.[3]

I. APPRENTICESHIP

The first rule of Senate behavior—and the one most widely recognized off the Hill—is that new members are expected to serve an unobtrusive apprenticeship.

The freshman senator's subordinate status is impressed upon him in many ways. He receives the committee assignments the other senators do not want. The same is true of his office suite and his seat in the chamber. In committee rooms he is assigned to the end of the table. He is expected to do more than his share of the thankless and boring tasks of the Senate, such as presiding over the floor debate or serving on his party's Calendar Committee. According to the folkways of the Senate, the freshman is to accept such treatment as a matter of course.

Moreover, the new senator is expected to keep his mouth shut, not to take the lead in floor fights, to listen and to learn. "Like children," one freshman said in the Capitol Hill cliché, "we should be seen and not heard." Just how long this often painful silence must be maintained is not clear, but it is certainly wiser for a freshman to postpone his maiden efforts on the floor too long than to appear overly aggressive. Ideally perhaps, he should wait until pushed reluctantly to the fore.

[3] Most of the interviews were conducted in Washington between January and September, 1956. A few follow-up interviews were held during 1958. While the senators, staff members, lobbyists and journalists interviewed were in no sense "samples" of these groups, a strenuous and generally successful effort was made to interview rough cross sections of each. On the whole, however, high rapport was deemed more desirable, given the exploratory nature of the study, than a highly "representative" but uncommunicative group of respondents.

The interviews were of the "focused" type. No formal interview schedule was used, but standardized topics were raised in each interview as time allowed. The interviews varied in length from about 15 minutes to several hours. Notes were not taken during the course of the interview but were written up immediately thereafter as nearly verbatim as possible. All quotations not otherwise cited are from these interviews; when not otherwise indicated in the text the quotations are from an interview with a past or present member of the Senate. All respondents were assured that their remarks would not be attributed to them.

Readers of this REVIEW need not be told that these interviewing procedures are far from ideal. But even if feasible on Capitol Hill, systematic surveys, using highly structured interviews and a representative sample of respondents, are most fruitful when variables are well identified and when all types of respondents are likely to be equally cooperative. Neither condition held in this case. This suggested that greater pay-offs might be achieved by the less rigorous interviewing methods used.

I attended the floor debates and voted for a year without giving a single speech [a senior senator said with pride]. Finally, one day, a matter came up with which I had had considerable experience in the House. My part in it had gotten some publicity. ——— leaned over to me and said, "——— , are you going to speak on this?" I said, "No." "You know a great deal about this," he replied, "I think you should speak." I answered that I had not prepared a speech and that I would rather not speak on the bill. "Look," he said, "I'm going to get the floor and ask you a question about this bill. Then you will *have* to speak!" And that's how I made my first speech in the Senate.

Freshmen are also expected to show respect for their elders ("You may think you are smarter than the older fellows, but after a time you find that this is not true") and to seek their advice ("Keep on asking for advice, boy," the committee chairman told me. "That's the way to get ahead around here"). And they are encouraged to concentrate on developing an acquaintanceship in the Senate. ("Young senators should make a point of getting to know the other senators. This isn't very hard: there are only 95 of them. And if the other senators know and like you, it increases your effectiveness.")

The freshman who does not accept his lot as a temporary but very real second-class senator is met with thinly veiled hostility. For instance, one old-timer tells this story:

When I came to the Senate, I sat next to Senator Borah. A few months later, he had a birthday. A number of the older men got up and made brief, laudatory speeches about it. Borah was pleased. Then a freshman senator—one who had only been in the chamber three or four months—got to his feet and started on a similar eulogy. He was an excellent speaker. But between each of his laudatory references to Borah, Borah loudly whispered, "That son-of-a-bitch, that son-of-a-bitch." He didn't dislike the speaker, personally. He just didn't feel that he should speak so soon.

Even so, the veterans in the Senate remark, rather wistfully, that the practice of serving an apprenticeship is on the way out. And, to some extent, they are undoubtedly correct. The practice seems to have begun before the popular election of senators and the exigencies of the popularly elected official have placed it under considerable strain. As one very senior senator (whose service extends back almost to the days before popular election) ruefully explained: "A new senator today represents millions of people. He feels that he has to *do* something to make a record from the start."

But this judgment is also colored by the tendency in any group for the old-timers to feel that the younger generation is going to hell in a handbasket. To the present-day freshman in the Senate, the period of apprenticeship is very real and very confining. "It reminds me a little of Hell Week in college," one of them remarked. Indeed, the nostalgic talk of the older senators about the unhappy lot of the freshman in the good old days is one way the senior senators keep the younger men in their place. One freshman Democrat, for example, after completing a floor speech found himself sitting next to Senator George, then dean of the Senate. Thinking that he should make polite conversation, the freshman asked the Georgia patriarch what major changes had taken place in the Senate during his long service. Senator George replied, "Freshmen didn't use to talk so much."

II. LEGISLATIVE WORK

There are two kinds of Congressmen—show horses and work horses. If you want to get your name in the paper, be a show horse. If you want to gain the respect of your colleagues, keep quiet and be a work horse.[4]

Senator Carl Hayden of Arizona remembers being told this when he first came to the Congress many years ago. It is still true.

The great bulk of the Senate's work is highly detailed, dull and politically unrewarding. According to the folkways of the Senate, it is to these tasks that a senator *ought* to devote a major share of his time, energy and thought. Those who follow this rule are the senators most respected by their colleagues. Those who do not carry their share of the legislative burden or who appear to subordinate this responsibility to a quest for publicity and personal advancement are held in disdain.

This results in an, at first, puzzling disparity between the prestige of senators inside and outside the Senate. Some of the men most highly respected by their peers are quite unknown except on the Hill and in their own states; others whose names are household words are thought to be second-raters and slackers.[5] The words used to describe those senators who seem to slight their legislative duties are harsh—"grandstanders," "demagogues," "headline hunters," "publicity-seekers," "messiahs." They are said to do nothing but "play to the galleries," to suffer from "laziness" and "verbal diarrhea" and "not to be team players." It is even occasionally hinted that they are mentally or emotionally deranged.

But this does not mean that all publicity is undesirable. It takes publicity to get, and stay, elected. And this publicity, so long as it does not interfere with the performance of legislative duties, is considered necessary and desirable. Nor is there any objection to publicity calculated to further the cause of a program or policy; or to publicity which flows from a senator's position or performance. But the Senate folkways do prescribe that a senator place first priority upon being a *legislator*. Everything else, including his understandable desire for personal and political publicity, must be secondary to this aspect of his job.

III. SPECIALIZATION

According to the folkways of the Senate, a senator should not try to know something about every bill that comes before the chamber or try to be active on a wide variety of measures. Rather, he ought to specialize, to focus his energies and attention on the relatively few matters that come before his committees or that directly and immediately affect this state. "When you come to

[4] *Washington Post and Times Herald,* February 19, 1956.

[5] *Cf.* Harry S. Truman's comments: "I learned [upon entering the Senate] . . . that the estimates of the various members which I formed in advance were not always accurate. I soon found that, among my ninety-five colleagues, the real business of the Senate was carried on by unassuming and conscientious men, not by those who managed to get the most publicity." *New York Times,* October 3, 1955.

the Senate," one administrative assistant said, "you have to decide which street corner you are going to fight on."

In part, at least, senators *ought* to specialize because they *must:* "Thousands of bills come before the Senate each Congress. If some senator knows the fine details of more than half a dozen of them, I've never heard of him." Even Robert A. Taft, who won much of his legislative reputation by his phenomenal mastery of the details of bills on the floor could not escape the rule, and generally let foreign affairs alone. And even when a senator restricts his attention to his committee work, the job is more than one man can do.

I belong to 12 or 13 committees and subcommittees [one vigorous, young senator says]. It's physically impossible to give them all the attention I should. So I have picked out 2 or 3 subcommittees in which I am especially interested and have concentrated on them. I believe that this is the usual practice around here.

The relatively few senators who have refused to specialize agree. One of these, a relatively young man of awesome energy, says:

I'll be perfectly frank with you. Being active on as wide a range of issues as I have been is a man-killing job. In a few years, I suspect that I will be active on many fewer issues. I came down here a young man and I'm gradually petering out.

But the limits of human endurance are not the only reason why a senator should specialize. By restricting his attention to matters concerning his committee work and his home state, the senator is concentrating on the two things he should know best: "a senator should not make a speech unless he has someing to say." Only through specialization can he know more about a subject than his colleagues and thus make a positive contribution to the operation of the chamber.

Moreover, speaking too much tends to decrease a senator's legislative impact. "Look at ———," one of them said. "He came in here with his mouth open and hasn't closed it yet. After a while, people stop listening." Furthermore, a senator who is too active outside of his specialty may destroy his influence within his area of special competence.

When ———, one of my best friends in the Senate, came here he was known as an expert on ———, and they used to listen to him as such. But then he began talking on many other different issues as well. He was somehow driven to express himself on many different issues. As a result, he lost some of his effectiveness on ——— matters as well as on the other issues to which he addressed himself.

Thus, almost all the senators are agreed that:

The really effective senators are those who speak only on the subjects they have been dealing with at close quarters, not those who are on their feet on almost every subject all the time.[6]

Why this pressure for specialization? Why does this folkway exist? Two chief reasons may be suggested. The formal rules of the Senate provide for what amounts to unlimited debate. Even with the folkways limiting the activity of

[6] *Providence* (R.I.) *Evening Journal*, February 8, 1956.

freshmen, discouraging "playing the galleries," and encouraging specialization, the Senate moves with glacial speed. If many more senators took full advantage of their opportunities for debate and discussion, the tempo of action would be further slowed. The specialization folkway helps make it possible for the Senate to stop talking and act.

Moreover, modern legislation is complex and technical. It comes before the Senate in crushing quantity. The committee system and specialization—in a word, a division of labor within the chamber—increase expertise and decrease the average senator's work load to something approaching manageable proportions. When a senator refuses to "go along" with specialization, he not only challenges the existing power structure, but also decreases the expert attention which legislative measures receive.

IV. COURTESY

The Senate exists to solve problems, to grapple with conflicts. Sooner or later, the hot, emotion-laden issues of our time come before it. Moreover, senators as a group are ambitious and egocentric men, chosen through an electoral battle in which a talent for invective, righteous indignation, "mud-slinging" and "engaging in personalities" are often assets. Under these circumstances, one might reasonably expect a great deal of manifest personal conflict and competition in the Senate. Such conflict does exist, but its sharp edges are blunted by the felt need—expressed in the Senate folkways—for courtesy.

A cardinal rule of Senate behavior is that political disagreements should not influence personal feelings. This is not an easy task; for as one senator said, "It's hard not to call a man a liar when you know that he is one."

Fortunately, a number of the chamber's formal rules and conventions make it possible for the senator to approximate this ideal—at least so far as overt behavior is concerned. The selection of committee members and chairmen on the basis of their seniority neatly by-passes a potential cause of grave dissension in the Senate.[7] The rules prohibit the questioning of a colleague's motives or the criticism of another state. All remarks made on the floor are, technically, addressed to the presiding officer: "Mr. President, . . . " serves as a psychological barrier between antagonists. Senators are expected to address each other not by name but by title—Earle C. Clements does not disagree with Irving M. Ives but rather the Senior Senator from Kentucky disagrees with the Senior Senator from New York.

Sometimes the senators' efforts to achieve verbal impersonality become ludicrous in their stilted formality:

> Mr. JOHNSON of Texas. The Senator from Texas does not have any objection, and the Senator from Texas wishes the Senator from California to know that the Senator from Texas knew the Senator from California did not criticise him . . . [8]

[7] See George Goodwin, Jr., "The Seniority System in Congress," this REVIEW, Vol. 53 (June, 1959), pp. 412–436.

[8] *Congressional Record*, April 24, 1956, p. 6148. References here and herein are to the daily edition.

Few opportunities to praise a colleague publicly are missed in the Senate. Senators habitually refer to each other as "The distinguished Senator from ———" or "The able Senator from ———." Birthdays, anniversaries, reelection or retirement from the Senate, and the approach of adjournment are seized as opportunities for swapping praises. Sometimes, on these occasions, the sentiment is as thick as Senate bean soup. The following recent example was uttered on the Senate floor and duly printed in the *Record:*

Mr. JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. President, if the Senate will indulge me, I should like the attention of members of both sides of the aisle for a bipartisan announcement of considerable importance. It involves the minority leader, the distinguished Senator from California (Mr. KNOWLAND).

For many years, I have been closely associated with the Senator from California. Like every member of this chamber—on either side of the aisle—I have found him to be able, patriotic, courteous, and thoughtful.

But I wonder how many of my colleagues know that he is also a five-time winner in the contest for the proudest grandaddy in the Senate?

His fifth victory was chalked up last Monday when Harold W. Jewett II discovered America. Anybody who has found buttons lying on the floor in front of the minority leader's desk in the past few days can know now that they popped right off BILL KNOWLAND'S shirt.[9]

This kind of behavior—avoiding personal attacks on colleagues, striving for impersonality by divorcing the self from the office, "buttering-up" the opposition by extending unsolicited compliments—is thought by the senators to pay off in legislative results.[10] Personal attacks, unnecessary unpleasantness, pursuing a line of thought or action that might embarrass a colleague needlessly, are all thought to be self-defeating—"after all, your enemies on one issue may be your friends on the next." Similar considerations also suggest the undesirability of excessive partisanship.

I want to be able to pick up votes from the other side of the aisle [one Republican said]. I hope that a majority of the Republicans will vote for anything I sponsor. But always some of them are going to have special problems that impel them to vote against the party.

They also suggest, despite partisan differences, that one senator should hesitate to campaign against another.

The fellows who go around the country demagoguing and calling their fellow senators names are likely to be ineffective senators. It's just human nature that the other senators will not cooperate with them unless they have to.

In private, senators are frequently cynical about this courtesy. They say that "it doesn't mean a thing," that it is "every man for himself in the Senate," that some of their colleagues "no more should be senators than I should be Pope," that it is "just custom." Senator Barkley's advice to the freshman sena-

[9] *Ibid.*, June 13, 1956, pp. 9147–8.

[10] *Cf. ibid.*, June 11, 1956, p. 8990:

Mr. HILL. Mr. President, although I greatly love the Senator from Illinois, and although he has been very generous toward me in his remarks on the bill—

Mr. DOUGLAS. I had hoped I would soften up the Senator from Alabama. (Laughter).

tor—if you think a colleague stupid, refer to him as "the able, learned and distinguished senator," but if you *know* he is stupid, refer to him as "the *very* able, learned, and distinguished senator"—is often quoted.[11] But despite its blatant hypocrisy, the practice persists. And after serving in the Senate for a period of years most senators grow to appreciate it.

I well remember [one Republican says] that early in my service I gave a burlesque touch to this formal courtesy. A little later Senator Alben Barkley, then Democratic floor leader, came over and gently suggested that the longer I stayed in the Senate, the more I would appreciate Senatorial Courtesy. Senator Barkley was correct in his prediction.[12]

Another senator explained:

You quickly discover that political self-preservation dictates at least a semblance of friendship. And then before you know it, you really *are* friends. It is rather like the friendships that might develop within a band of outlaws. You all hang together or you all hang separately.

Courtesy, far from being a meaningless custom as some senators seem to think it is, permits competitors to cooperate. The chaos which ensues when the folkway is ignored testifies to its vital function.

V. RECIPROCITY

Every senator, at one time or another, is in a position to help out a colleague. The folkways of the Senate hold that a senator ought to provide this assistance —and that he be repaid in kind.

A man gets elected to the Senate on some kind of platform. He has made some promises or pledges that he will get this or that thing done. Then he gets down here and finds that nobody else gives a damn about his projects. What can he do? He either must back down on his promises or begin log-rolling. At first, I was pretty cynical when I found this was necessary. But then I realized that this was the kind of compromise necessary to govern a nation like this.

The most important aspect of this pattern of reciprocity is, no doubt, the trading of votes. Occasionally, this is exhibited for all to see. The following exchange, for example, took place during a 1956 debate on acreage allotments for burley tobacco:

Mr. LANGER [North Dakota]. We do not raise any tobacco in North Dakota, but we are interested in the tobacco situation in Kentucky, and I hope the Senator will support us in securing assistance for the wheat growers in our state.
Mr. CLEMENTS [Kentucky]. I think the Senator will find that my support will be 100 per cent.
Mr. BARKLEY [Kentucky]. Mr. President, will my colleague from Kentucky yield?
Mr. CLEMENTS. I yield.
Mr. BARKLEY. The colloquy just had confirms and justifies the Woodrow Wilsonian doctrine of open covenants openly arrived at. (Laughter).[13]

[11] Alben W. Barkley, *That Reminds Me* (Garden City, 1954), p. 255.

[12] Ralph E. Flanders, "What Ails the Senate?" *The New York Times Magazine*, May 9, 1954, p. 62.

[13] *Congressional Record* February 16, 1956, pp. 2300–01.

Usually, however, this kind of bargain is either made by implication or in private. Senator Douglas of Illinois, who tried unsuccessfully to combat the system, has analysed the way in which a public works appropriations bill is passed:

. . . This bill is built up out of a whole system of mutual accommodations in which the favors are widely distributed, with the implicit promise that no one will kick over the applecart; that if Senators do not object to the bill as a whole, they will "get theirs." It is a process, if I may use an inelegant expression, of mutual backscratching and mutual logrolling.

Any member who tries to buck the system is only confronted with an impossible amount of work in trying to ascertain the relative merits of a given project; and any member who does ascertain them, and who feels convinced that he is correct, is unable to get an individual project turned down because the Senators from the State in which the project is located, and thus is benefiting, naturally will oppose any objection to the project; and the other members of the Senate will feel that they must support the Senators in question, because if they do not do so, similar appropriations for their own states at some time likely will be called into question.[14]

Of course, *all* bills are not passed as the result of such implicit or explicit "deals."

On the other hand, this kind of bargaining (or "logrolling" or "backscratching" or "trading off"—phrases with pejorative connotations indicating the public's attitude toward these practices) is not confined to the trading of votes. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that reciprocity is a way of life in the Senate

My boss [one highly experienced administrative assistant says] will—if it doesn't mean anything to him—do a favor for any other senator. It doesn't matter *who* he is. It's not a matter of friendship, it's just a matter of I won't be an S.O.B. if you won't be one.

This implicit bargain explains much of the behavior of senators. Each of them has vast power under the chamber's rules. A single senator, for example, can slow the Senate almost to a halt by systematically objecting to all unanimous consent requests. A few, by exercising their right to filibuster, can block the passage of all bills. Or a single senator could sneak almost any piece of legislation through the chamber by acting when floor attendance is sparse and by taking advantage of the looseness of the chamber rules. But while these and other similar powers always exist as a potential threat, the amazing thing to the outside observer is that they are rarely utilized. The spirit of reciprocity results in much, if not most, of the senators' actual power not being exercised. For if a senator *does* push his formal powers to the limit, he has broken the implicit bargain and can expect, not cooperation from his colleagues, but only retaliation in kind.

A man in the Senate has just as much power as he has the sense to use. For this very reason he has to be careful to use it properly or else he will incur the wrath of his colleagues.

To play this game properly and effectively requires tolerance and an understanding of the often unique problems and divergent views of other senators.

[14] *Ibid.*, June 13, 1956, p. 9153.

No man [one highly placed staff assistant says] can really be successful in the Senate until he has adopted a *national* point of view. Learning what the other senators' problems are and working within this framework to pass legislation gives him this outlook. If he assumes that everyone thinks and feels the same way he and his constituents do, he will be an ineffective legislator.

It demands, too, an ability to calculate how much "credit" a senator builds up with a colleague by doing him a favor or "going along." For if a senator expects too little in return, he has sold himself and his constituents short. If he expects too much, he will soon find that to ask the impossible is fruitless and that "there are some things a senator just can't do in return for help from you." Finally, this mode of procedure requires that a senator live up to his end of the bargain—no matter how implicit the bargain may have been. "You don't *have* to make these commitments," one senator said, "and if you keep your mouth shut you are often better off; but if you *do* make them, you had better live up to them."

These are subtle skills. Some men do not have them in sufficient quantity to be successful at this sort of bargaining. A few take the view that these practices are immoral and refuse, with some display of righteous indignation, to play the game that way. But this, according to the Senate folkways, is the way a senator *ought* to behave.

VI. INSTITUTIONAL PATRIOTISM

Most institutions demand an emotional investment from their members. The Senate is no exception. Senators are expected to *believe* that they belong to the greatest legislative and deliberative body in the world. They are expected to be a bit suspicious of the President and the bureaucrats and just a little disdainful of the House. They are expected to revere the Senate's personnel, organization and folkways and to champion them to the outside world.

And most of them do, whether out of conviction or for the good of the order. "The most remarkable group that I have ever met anywhere," "the most able and intelligent body of men that it . . . [has] . . . been my fortune to meet," "the best men in political life today,": thus do senators typically describe their colleagues.[15] The Senate as an institution is usually described in similar superlatives.[16]

A senator whose emotional commitment to Senate ways appears to be less than total is suspect. One who brings the Senate as an institution or senators as a class into public disrepute invites his own destruction as an effective legislator. One who seems to be using the Senate for the purposes of self-advertisement and

[15] William Benton, "For Distinguished Service in Congress," *The New York Times Magazine*, July 24, 1955, p. 38; Ralph E. Flanders, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

[16] This "institutional patriotism" extends down to the staff level. For example, one staff member said in the course of an interview:

I'm an apologist for the Senate and senators. When I came here I thought just like the normal academic "liberal" that the Senate was bumbling and incompetent, that senators were strictly from Kokomo and that if you wanted something done you had to go to the Executive Branch. Well, all that is a lot of stuff. It's just not true.

advancement obviously does not belong. Senators are, as a group, fiercely protective of and highly patriotic about the Senate.

This, after all, is not a great deal different from the school spirit of P.S. 34, or the morale of a military outfit, or the "fight" of a football team. But, as we shall see, its political consequences are substantial. For some senators are in a better position than others to develop this emotional attachment.

VII. INFLUENCES ON CONFORMITY

We have seen that normative rules of conduct—called here folkways—exist in the Senate. Moreover, we have seen that they perform important functions.[17] They provide motivation for the performance of legislative duties that, perhaps, would not otherwise be performed. They discourage long-windedness in a chamber of one hundred highly verbal men, dependent upon publicity, and unrestrained by any formal limitations on debate. They encourage the development of expertise and division of labor and discourage those who would challenge it. They soften the inevitable personal conflict of a legislative body so that adversaries and competitors can meet (at the very least) in an atmosphere of antagonistic cooperation or (at best) in an atmosphere of friendship and mutual respect. They encourage senators to become "compromisers" and "bargainers" and to use their substantial powers with caution and restraint. Without these folkways the Senate could hardly operate in anything like its present form.

Yet they are not universally accepted or adhered to: indeed, there is some covert hostility toward them. If most senators do observe them, why don't all? This we shall try to explain in the following pages.

Previous Training and Experience. Senators often express pride in the fact that their chamber is "democratic."

> No matter [one senior senator says] what you were before—a rich man or a poor man, a man with a good reputation or an unknown—you've got to prove yourself *in the Senate.* It's what you do when you arrive and not what you've done before that determines the amount of respect you get from your colleagues.

Or as another has expressed it, everyone "must begin at the foot of the class and spell up."[18] But it is a great deal harder for some men than others to start at the foot of the class.

A former governor who becomes a senator is often accustomed to a higher salary, more power and perquisites, a grander office, a larger staff, and more publicity than the freshman senator enjoys. He is likely to find the pace of legislative life slow and be frustrated by the necessity of cooperating with 99

[17] That is, the folkways contribute to the survival of the system without change. For a brilliant analysis of the promise and pitfalls of functional analysis see R. K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1949), ch. 1.

[18] Tom Connally [as told to Alfred Steinberg], *My Name is Tom Connally* (New York, 1954), p. 88.

equals (most of them at first far more equal than he). To move from the governorship of one of the larger states to the role of apprentice senator is, in the short run, a demotion. The result for the one-time governors is a frequent feeling of disillusionment, depression and discouragement.

> I moved from one world to another [a former governor now in the Senate says]. Back home everything revolved, or seemed to revolve, around the Governor. I had a part in practically everything that happened. There was administration. There was policy making. But down here there was just a seat at the end of the table.[19]

At the same time, the other senators complain that the former governors " . . . are the hardest group to handle; they come down here expecting to be big shots," and that they often are unwilling to realize that "they are just one of the boys." Some governors, they feel, never make the adjustment; a larger number make it slowly and painfully.

It is possible to subject this hypothesis to a rough empirical test. Crude indices of conformity can be obtained by counting the number of speeches senators make and by determining the extent to which the bills they introduce are on similar or disparate subjects.[20] These measures of the ex-governors' floor

[19] *Providence Evening Journal*, February 8, 1956.

[20] The number of speeches made by each senator was determined by referring to the Index of the *Congressional Record* for the 83d and 84th Congresses. The number of speeches given by senators serving during the entire four-year period ranged from 28 to 1,953. All senators who gave more than 500 speeches were ranked as high in floor speaking; those who gave from 250 to 499 speeches were ranked as medium; those who gave less than 250 speeches were ranked as low. (Cutting points of 200 and 400 were used to distinguish between the low, medium and high floor speakers in individual Congresses.)

The index of specialization was computed from data in the *Congressional Quarterly Almanac* by determining the proportion of all public bills and resolutions introduced by each senator during the 83d and 84th Congresses that were referred to the two committees receiving the largest number of his bills and resolutions. (The "two highest" rule was adopted after experimenting with an index based on the proportion of public bills and resolutions referred to committees on which the senator served. This measure had the unfortunate characteristic of discriminating against members of the Appropriations Committee and was therefore abandoned.) Co-sponsors were ignored, except in the case of bills and resolutions introduced by two senators. The index numbers so obtained ranged from .295 to .95 for the members of the Senate serving during the entire 83d and 84th Congresses. Senators with scores below .50 were considered to have low indices of specialization; those from .50 to .69, medium; and those above .70, high.

Both measures have distinct limitations. The first entirely ignores the length of Senate speeches, while the second is based on the arguable assumption that the bills and resolutions introduced by a senator adequately reflect the breadth of his legislative interests. Moreover, the jurisdictions of Senate committees are sufficiently broad and overlapping so that two bills on different subjects may be referred to the same committee while two bills with similar subjects may be referred to different committees. By assigning equal weights to all speeches and bills, both indices also disregard the fact that some speeches and some bills are more "important" than others. Despite these crudities, both measures seem to be as adequate as can be constructed from published data without a prohibitively high expenditure of time and effort.

activity and legislative specialization were calculated and are compared to those of men elected from other offices in Tables I and II.[21]

TABLE I. SENATOR'S LAST PUBLIC OFFICE AND FREQUENCY OF FLOOR SPEAKING
(83d and 84th Congresses)

Last Public Office	Frequency of Floor Speaking			Total
	High %	Medium %	Low %	% N
Governor	10	35	55	100 (20)
U. S. Representative	0	52	48	100 (23)
State legislator	0	33	67	100 (6)
State executive	17	17	67	100 (6)
Local official	50	50	0	100 (6)
Judge	0	60	40	100 (5)
Federal executive	33	22	45	100 (9)
None	0	50	50	100 (4)

Note: The two floor leaders, Johnson (D., Texas) and Knowland (R., Calif.), have been omitted from this and all subsequent tables on frequency of floor speaking. A high level of floor activity is an inevitable consequence of their positions and is not considered a breach of the folkways.

TABLE II. SENATOR'S LAST PUBLIC OFFICE AND INDEX OF SPECIALIZATION
(83d and 84th Congresses)

Last Public Office	Index of Specialization			Total
	High %	Medium %	Low %	% N
Governor	35	15	50	100 (20)
U. S. Representative	8	46	46	100 (24)
State legislator	28	43	28	100 (7)
State executive	0	33	67	100 (6)
Local executive	0	50	50	100 (6)
Judge	40	40	20	100 (5)
Federal executive	0	44	56	100 (9)
None	0	25	75	100 (4)

In giving floor speeches during the 83d and 84th Congresses, the ex-governors were more vocal than the former congressmen, state legislators, ex-judges and men with no office-holding experience. The former local government officials

[21] The larger study upon which this article draws includes a full scale analysis of the social backgrounds and career lines of post-World War II senators. For a preliminary report on this analysis and a brief discussion of sources utilized see my "United States Senators and the Class Structure," in H. Eulau, S. J. Eldersveld and M. Janowitz (eds.), *Political Behavior: A Reader in Theory and Research* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1956), pp. 184–193.

and federal executives, on the other hand, gave even more floor speeches than the erstwhile governors. In legislative specialization, only the ex-judges appear to have had a narrower range of legislative interests than the governors. Indeed, of the other senators, only the former congressmen and state legislators came even close to matching them in this respect. Thus, if our indices of conformity are reliable, the governors *as a group* seem to "go along" with the Senate folkways fairly well.

But it is the governors from the larger states, coming to the Senate with national reputations, who seem to find their initial experiences in the chamber especially trying. Moreover, their record for conformity to the folkways is bad. While they do tend to specialize quite highly, they are extremely active on the floor—even when compared to other senators from similar states (Table III).

TABLE III. FREQUENCY OF FLOOR SPEAKING OF BIG STATE SENATORS, BY LAST PUBLIC OFFICE

(83d and 84th Congresses)

Last Public Office	Frequency of Floor Speaking		Total % N
	High + Medium %	Low %	
Governor	50	50	100 (6)
U. S. Representative	20	80	100 (6)
All other	38	62	100 (8)

Note: "Big state" is defined as one with more than 4,000,000 population in 1950. See note to Table I.

There is another peculiar feature about the former governors in the Senate: those with low seniority conform to the folkways more closely than those with high seniority. In Table IV, we can see that the higher the seniority of the ex-governors the more active they were in floor debate while just the opposite is true among the former representatives. Both the ex-governors and ex-representatives become more specialized as seniority increases, yet the former congressmen with high seniority specialize considerably more than the high seniority governors. While the numbers involved are too small to warrant generalization the same pattern is suggested for the former local officials and federal executives: those with high seniority conform less than the junior men. The one-time judges and state legislators, on the other hand, seem to follow the pattern of congressmen: the senior men conform more than the youngsters.

Among the present crop of senators at any rate, prolonged exposure to the folkways seems to have resulted in a high degree of conformity among the former congressmen, state legislators and judges but *not* among former governors, federal executives, and local government officials.[22]

[22] This conclusion must be treated with more than the usual scholarly caution. Only a longitudinal study or one using far more elaborate cross tabulation than is possible here can adequately isolate the effects of seniority on conformity to the folkways.

TABLE IV. LAST PUBLIC OFFICE, FREQUENCY OF FLOOR SPEAKING AND INDEX OF SPECIALIZATION OF SENATORS, BY SENIORITY LEVEL
(84th Congress)

Last Public Office	Seniority	% Low, Floor Speaking	% High, Index of Specialization	N
Governor	High	78	45	(9)
	Medium	88	25	(8)
	Low	100	20	(5)
U. S. Representative	High	100	67	(6)
	Medium	88	22	(9)
	Low	94	0	(17)
State legislator	High	66	100	(3)
	Medium	50	0	(2)
	Low	50	0	(2)
State executive	High	100	0	(1)
	Medium	50	0	(2)
	Low	100	0	(4)
Local official	High	0	0	(1)
	Medium	0	0	(2)
	Low	25	0	(4)
Judge	High	100	50	(2)
	Medium	0	33	(3)
	Low	100	0	(1)
Federal executive	High	25	0	(4)
	Medium	0	0	(2)
	Low	100	33	(3)
None	High	0	0	(1)
	Medium	0	0	(1)
	Low	100	0	(2)

Note: See note to Table I.

The amateur politicians—distinguished business and professional men who entered politics relatively late in life and became senators with little political experience—face many of the same problems as the former governors, compounded by their relative ignorance of political ways. One must learn to be a senator and the amateurs have a great deal to learn. As can be seen in Table V, they are more likely to ignore the folkways regarding floor activity and legislative specialization than are the professionals. Moreover, the amateurs usually must learn how to be legislators in less time than those who follow other career lines to the Senate: they are the oldest group of freshmen in age. A

TABLE V. PERCENTAGE OF SENATOR'S PRE-SENATE ADULT LIFE IN PUBLIC OFFICE, FREQUENCY OF FLOOR SPEAKING AND INDEX OF SPECIALIZATION
(83d and 84th Congresses)

% of Pre-Senate Adult Years in Public Office	Frequency of Floor Speaking			
	High %	Medium %	Low %	Total % N
Under 40%	21	37	42	100 (38)
40–60%	0	48	52	100 (21)
Over 60%	5	35	60	100 (20)
	Index of Specialization			
	High	Medium	Low	
Under 40%	10	31	59	100 (39)
40–60%	10	43	48	100 (21)
Over 60%	33	38	29	100 (21)

Note: See note to Table I.

relatively young man can afford to be patient, to devote two or four or six years to learning the ropes and climbing the seniority ladder. A sixty-year-old man, with sufficient vigor to win election to the Senate and a distinguished career back of him, is not so likely to take the long view. At any rate, a larger proportion of the men elected to the Senate relatively late in life tend to "talk too much" than is the case for the others (Table VI). Thus we find a curious

TABLE VI. AGE AT FIRST ELECTION/APPOINTMENT TO THE SENATE AND FREQUENCY OF FLOOR SPEAKING
(83d and 84th Congresses)

Age at First Election/ Appointment	Frequency of Floor Speaking			
	High %	Medium %	Low %	Total % N
30–39	8	54	38	100 (13)
40–49	4	46	50	100 (28)
50–59	17	33	50	100 (30)
Over 60	25	25	50	100 (8)

Note: See note to Table I.

situation in the Senate. The greater a man's pre-Senate accomplishments (either in or out of politics) and the greater his age at election, the less likely he is to conform. For these reasons, a sort of reverse snobbism is quite widespread in the Senate. As one old-timer said, "We are skeptical of men who

come to the Senate with big reputations." From the standpoint of protecting the Senate folkways, this skepticism is justified.

Political Ambitions. Higher political ambitions—and for senators this means a desire to become either President or Vice-president—can also lead to nonconformity.

First of all, strong and exhalted ambitions are likely to lead to restiveness during the period of apprenticeship. A national following is seldom made by "being seen and not heard" or through faithful service on the District of Columbia Committee. In order to overcome this initial handicap, the highly ambitious freshman may resort to extreme and unsettling tactics as, for example, Senator Kefauver is thought by his colleagues to have done in his crime investigations, and Senator McCarthy certainly did in his "crusade" against Communism. His legislative duties are likely to be neglected in the ceaseless quest for publicity and personal advancement. His ears are likely to be " . . . attuned to noises outside the workaday drone of the Senate chamber."[23] And since the senator with higher ambitions is almost invariably shooting for the Presidency, he is likely to be attuned to the voices of somewhat different groups than are most senators. Close presidential elections are won and lost in the doubtful states containing large metropolitan populations. Popularity in these areas is generally a prerequisite for nomination and election to the Presidency. Yet these very groups are the ones under-represented in the Senate, the ones most often at odds with its present power structure. Thus, to the extent that ambitious senators *anticipate* the wants of possible future constituents, they find themselves challenging the Senate *status quo.*

In Table VII we see that of the most obvious presidential aspirants during the 83d and 84th Congresses all save Symington gave more floor speeches than the average Senator and all pursued a wider range of legislative interests.

It should be immediately admitted, however, that the list of presidential aspirants used here is based entirely upon common report—latent presidential ambitions smolder in the breasts of senators not included. Moreover, the list includes both floor leaders, and the folkways regarding floor speaking and specialization are necessarily and greatly relaxed for the incumbents of these specialized positions. Finally, an occasional senator is able to be both a serious presidential candidate and a highly regarded and effective senator—Senators Taft, Johnson and Knowland are the most conspicious examples within recent years. Yet Taft was never nominated, at least in part because he was a "Senate man." Knowland seems to have found the conflict between the expectations of his Senate colleagues and his presidential ambitions too much to bear. Senator Johnson's presidential chances appear to be low for somewhat the same reasons as Taft's. As a general rule, it seems that a man who entirely adheres to the Senate folkways has little chance of becoming President of the United States.

[23] Douglass Cater, "Estes Kefauver, Most Willing of the Willing," *The Reporter*, November 3, 1955, p. 16.

TABLE VII. FREQUENCY OF SPEECHMAKING AND INDEX OF SPECIALIZATION OF ACTIVE PRESIDENTIAL ASPIRANTS IN THE SENATE
(83d and 84th Congresses)

Active Presidential Aspirants	No. of Speeches	Index of Specialization
Humphrey (D., Minn.)	1528	.32
Johnson (D., Tex.)	1203	.41
Kefauver (D., Tenn.)	446	.49
Kennedy (D., Mass.)	359	.47
Knowland (R., Calif.)	1317	.37
Symington (D., Mo.)	248	.43
Median for all senators	272	.52

Constituency Problems. A third factor which encourages non-conformity to Senate folkways is a competitive two-party, or a large and complex, constituency.

The political insecurity of a senator from this kind of state is likely to result in a shortened time perspective, an eagerness to build a record quickly, an impatience with the slowness of the seniority system. The approved attitude for the new senator was voiced by a freshman:

> I want to be a *Senator.* I want to gain the respect of my colleagues so that I can represent my state better. I want to establish a reputation as a hardworking committee member who does his homework, who has integrity and good judgment rather than to get my name in the paper every morning. This is taking the long view. It takes time to establish this kind of a reputation in the Senate. It's rather like starting a law practice in a new and small town, as I did in ———, ———. You can't rush it.

A senator whose seat is in grave danger is much more likely to try to "rush it" than one who can count on re-election unless he makes a major blunder.

Table VIII seems to support this line of reasoning. The Senators from two-party states are a little more likely to be frequent floor speakers than those from modified one-party constituencies. Both are considerably more vocal than those from pure one-party states.[24] The picture of legislative specialization is a little different. One-party state senators seem to be the most specialized; those from modified one-party states, least specialized; while the senators from two-party areas fall in between.

The size and complexity of a senator's state also influence the likelihood of his conforming to Senate norms. A senator from a large state has a far greater burden of "case work" to process, errands to run, mail to answer, and speeches to give back home, than the man from a small state; and he has to do this without a proportionately larger staff. He is not likely to have as much time for legislating as a senator from Nevada, Wyoming or Delaware. The large states also tend to be the politically complex states—shot through with sectional,

[24] The typology of state party systems is from A. Ranney and W. Kendall, "The American Party System," this REVIEW, Vol. 48 (June 1954), pp. 477–85.

TABLE VIII. TYPE OF PARTY SYSTEM IN SENATOR'S STATE AND HIS FREQUENCY OF FLOOR SPEAKING AND INDEX OF SPECIALIZATION

Type of Party System	Frequency of Floor Speaking			
	High %	Medium %	Low %	Total % N
Two-party	16	35	49	100 (43)
Modified one-party	11	39	50	100 (18)
One-party	0	50	50	100 (18)
	Index of Specialization			
	High	Medium	Low	Total
Two-party	16	41	43	100 (44)
Modified one-party	6	33	61	100 (18)
One-party	26	26	47	100 (19)

Note: See note to Table I and footnote 24.

religious, economic and ethnic conflicts. As a result, a senator from one of these states is subject to greater cross-pressures than a man representing a homogeneous state with only one or two real issues, as, for example, has been the case for the Southern states. His constituents also expect him to be active on more issues than the man from the smaller and simpler state, and so he will be oftener tempted to challenge the specialization folkway. And generally he is forced to grapple with these problems without the benefit of substantial seniority, which men from closely contested, large and complex states seldom achieve.

Table IX appears to reinforce this speculation: the larger in size and the more

TABLE IX. SIZE AND COMPLEXITY OF SENATOR'S CONSTITUENCY AND FREQUENCY OF FLOOR SPEAKING
(83d and 84th Congresses)

% Urban, State Pop. (1950)	Frequency of Floor Speaking			
	High %	Medium %	Low %	Total % N
Over 80	38	12	50	100 (8)
60–79	13	33	54	100 (24)
40–59	6	48	46	100 (33)
Under 40	7	43	50	100 (14)
Size of State Pop. (1950)				
Over 4,000,000	40	13	47	100 (15)
2–4,000,000	6	54	40	100 (35)
Less than 2,000,000	10	35	55	100 (31)

Note: See note to Table I.

urban a senator's state, the more likely he is to be hyper-active on the Senate floor. Table X presents the relationships between the same two variables and legislative specialization. Urban state senators seem to specialize less than those from rural states. The size of a senator's state, however, does not seem to have any effect on the range of his legislative interests.

TABLE X. SIZE AND COMPLEXITY OF SENATOR'S CONSTITUENCY AND INDEX OF SPECIALIZATION
(83d and 84th Congresses)

% Urban, State Pop. (1950)	Index of Specialization			
	High %	Medium %	Low %	% N
Over 80	11	33	55	100 (9)
60–79	8	32	60	100 (25)
40–59	15	42	42	100 (33)
Under 40	36	29	36	100 (14)
Size of State Pop. (1950)				
Over 4,000,000	13	33	53	100 (15)
2–4,000,000	17	40	43	100 (35)
Less than 2,000,000	16	32	52	100 (31)

Political Ideology. Senators are, of necessity, tolerant of differences of opinion. A senator's political views make less difference to his acceptance or lack of it by his colleagues than is generally realized. Yet a senator's stance on political issues *does* make it easier (or harder) for him to conform to the folkways and thus, indirectly, influences his prestige and effectiveness in the chamber.

The folkways of the Senate, as we have already seen, buttress the *status quo* in the chamber. And the distribution of power within the chamber results in generally conservative policies. Thus the liberals are more likely to challenge Senate norms than the conservatives. "A reformer's life is perhaps not easy anywhere," one close observer of the Senate has remarked. "In the Senate it can be both bitter and fruitless. . . ."[25]

A man elected to the Senate as a "liberal" or "progressive" or "reformer" is under considerable pressure to produce legislative results in a hurry. The people who voted for him are not likely to be happy with small favors—dams built, rivers dredged, roads financed—but want major national legislative policy changed. Yet as a freshman or a junior senator, and many never become anything else, the liberal is in no position to do this alone. If he gives in to the pressure for conformity coming from the folkways, he must postpone the

[25] William S. White, "Realistic Reformer from Tennessee," *The New York Times Magazine*, March 4, 1956, p. 32. On the same point, *cf.* Jerry Voorhis, *op. cit.*, esp. at p. 62.

achievement of his liberal objectives. If he presses for these objectives regardless of his junior position, he will become tabbed as a non-conformist, lose popularity with his colleagues and, in most cases, his legislative effectiveness as well.

The conservative does not face this problem. He has committed himself to fewer changes in basic policies: he finds the strategic positions in the Senate occupied by like-minded senators regardless of which party organizes it. He is able to identify more strongly with the folkways of the chamber and side more easily with the Congress in its running feud with a generally more liberal President. Nor is he, as is the liberal, so dependent on the support of broad, often unorganized groups which can be reached only through the mass media. At any rate, the liberals seem to talk considerably more and to specialize less than senators of different political persuasion (Table XI).[26] Conservatives can afford to be quiet and patient. Reformers—by definition—find it difficult to be either.

TABLE XI. SENATORS' POLITICAL IDEOLOGY AND CONFORMITY TO SENATE FOLKWAYS
(84th Congress)

Political Ideology on(domestic issues)	Frequency of Floor Speaking			
	High %	Medium %	Low %	Total % N
Liberal	12	23	65	100 (34)
Moderate	0	0	100	100 (19)
Conservative	0	8	92	100 (37)
	Index of Specialization			
	High	Medium	Low	
Liberal	20	31	49	100 (35)
Moderate	21	37	42	100 (19)
Conservative	24	42	34	100 (38)

Note: See Note to Table I and footnote 26.

[26] An index of Conservatism-Liberalism was constructed in the following manner. The roll-call voting ratings of the *New Republic*, October 15, 1956, were obtained and the total number of "liberal" votes cast by each senator on *domestic policy* issues was divided by the total number of votes cast on the eight domestic issues listed. (Senators who cast less than six votes were omitted.) This operation yields a Conservatism-Liberalism score which can, and did, vary from .00 to 1.00. All senators with scores above .67 were classified as liberals; those with scores ranging from .34 to .66, moderates; and those with scores below .33, conservatives.

An index of this sort generally tends to be multi-dimensional, *cf.* D. McRae, Jr., "Some Underlying Variables in Legislative Roll Call Votes," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 18 (Summer, 1954), pp. 191–196, although the omission of foreign policy votes may have mitigated this common failing to some degree. The labor involved in constructing a more adequate measure of roll-call voting through Guttman scaling seemed excessive for the purpose of this analysis.

VIII. CONFORMITY AND "EFFECTIVENESS"

All this would be very "interesting" but not particularly important to serious students of politics if the Senate folkways did not influence the distribution of power within the chamber.

But the senators believe, rightly or wrongly, that without the respect and confidence of their colleagues they can have little influence *in the Senate.* "You can't be effective," they said over and over again, "unless you are respected—on both sides of the aisle." And the safest way to obtain this respect is to conform to the folkways, to become a "real Senate man." Those who do not, run a serious risk. "In the Senate, if you don't conform, you don't get many favors for your state. You are never told that, but you soon learn."

In order to test this hypothesis, a crude index of "Legislative Effectiveness" was constructed for the 83d and 84th Congresses by calculating the proportion of all public bills and resolutions introduced by each senator that were passed by the Senate.[27] While such an index does not pretend to measure the overall power or influence of a senator, it does seem to reflect his efficiency as a legislator, narrowly defined. And, to the extent that the concept as used on Capitol Hill has any distinct meaning, "effectiveness" seems to mean the ability to get one's bills passed.

The "effectiveness" of the conforming and nonconforming senators is presented in Table XII. The less a senator talks on the Senate floor, and the nar-

[27] As was the case for the index of specialization, the data for this index were obtained from the *Congressional Quarterly Almanac.* Private bills were ignored, as were co-sponsorships (except in cases in which bills and resolutions were introduced jointly by two senators). The index numbers obtained by dividing the number of bills and resolutions passed by the number introduced ranged from .00 to .49 for the senators who served during the entire period of the 83d and 84th Congresses. All senators with scores below .15 were considered low in effectiveness; those with scores from .15 to .34, medium; and those with scores of .35 and above were rated as high.

This measure is, of course, based on the assumption that a senator's bill-sponsoring "batting average" is a fair index of his overall "effectiveness" in the Senate. This assumption might be disputed on a number of grounds. First, a senator might be highly "effective" in, say, his committee work but still unsuccessful in shepherding his own bills through the legislative machinery. It is the author's impression that this is a fairly rare occurrence. Second, by weighing all bills and resolutions equally, the measure gives disproportionate importance to minor legislation. It is precisely on minor matters, however, that a sponsor's standing with his colleagues is important in getting legislative results. Third, the measure ignores the fact that many bills and resolutions are not intended to pass by their sponsors. But senators who habitually introduce bills with no intention of their passing are very different kinds of senators than those who introduce bills only when they intend to see them through. The first type is concerned with the *propaganda* consequences of his actions *outside the Senate,* while the latter is concerned with direct *legislative* pay-offs. This narrowly legislative conception of the senator's role is exactly the role definition the folkways demand.

At my suggestion Warren H. Hollinshead, *A Study of Influence Within the United States Senate* (unpublished AB thesis, Amherst College, 1957), checked this index of legislative effectiveness against "influence" rankings obtained through interviews with a panel of Senate legislative assistants. The correlation between the two measures was very high.

rower a senator's area of legislative interest and activity, the greater is his "effectiveness." Moreover, the types of senators who, as we have already seen, tend not to conform have considerably less impact on the chamber's legislative output than the conformists (Table XIII). Conformity to the Senate folkways does, therefore, seem to "pay off" in concrete legislative results.

TABLE XII. SENATOR'S LEVEL OF FLOOR SPEAKING ACTIVITY, INDEX OF SPECIALIZATION, AND LEGISLATIVE EFFECTIVENESS
(83d and 84th Congresses)

Level of Floor Speaking	Index of Legislative Effectiveness			
	High %	Medium %	Low %	Total % N
High	0	33	67	100 (9)
Medium	3	68	29	100 (31)
Low	15	59	26	100 (39)
Index of Specialization				
High	23	69	8	100 (13)
Medium	10	62	28	100 (29)
Low	8	51	41	100 (39)

Note: See note to Table I.

IX. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

There are unwritten rules of behavior, which we have called folkways, in the Senate. These rules are *normative*, that is, they define how a senator ought to behave. Nonconformity is met with moral condemnation, while senators who conform to the folkways are rewarded with high esteem by their colleagues. And partly because of this fact, the conformists tend to be the most influential and effective members of the Senate.

These folkways, we have suggested, are highly functional to the Senate social system since they provide motivation for the performance of vital duties and essential modes of behavior which, otherwise, would go unrewarded. They discourage frequent and lengthy speechmaking in a chamber without any other effective limitation on debate, encourage the development of expertise and a division of labor in a group of overworked laymen facing unbelievably complex problems, soften the inevitable personal conflicts of a problem-solving body, encourage bargaining and the cautious use of awesome formal powers. Without these folkways, the Senate could hardly operate with its present organization and rules.

Nonetheless, the folkways are no more perfectly obeyed than the traffic laws. Abstractly stated, the reasons for non-conformity seem to be three:

TABLE XIII. SOME FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE "LEGISLATIVE EFFECTIVENESS" OF SENATORS
(83d and 84th Congresses)

	Index of Legislative Effectiveness			
	High %	Medium %	Low %	Total % N
Last Public Office				
Governor	10	70	20	100 (20)
U. S. Representative	13	62	25	100 (24)
State legislator	29	43	29	100 (7)
State executive	0	67	33	100 (6)
Local official	0	67	33	100 (6)
Judge	20	20	60	100 (5)
Federal executive	11	44	44	100 (9)
None	0	50	50	100 (4)
Pre-Senate Adult Years in Public Office				
Under 40%	8	51	41	100 (39)
40–60%	5	67	29	100 (21)
Over 60%	24	62	14	100 (21)
Age at First Entrance to Senate				
30–39	14	64	21	100 (14)
40–49	17	48	35	100 (29)
50–59	7	63	30	100 (30)
Over 60	0	63	37	100 (8)
Political Ambitions*				
Presidential Aspirants	0	33	67	100 (6)
Others	10	62	28	100 (73)
Party System in Senator's State				
Two-party	7	59	34	100 (44)
Modified one-party	6	67	28	100 (18)
One-party	26	47	26	100 (19)
% Urban, Senator's State Pop. (1950)				
Over 80%	11	67	22	100 (9)
60–79	8	44	48	100 (25)
40–59	12	67	21	100 (33)
Less than 40%	14	57	29	100 (14)
Size of Senator's State Pop. (1950)				
4 million plus	13	64	33	100 (15)
2–4 million	6	60	34	100 (35)
Less than 2 million	16	58	26	100 (31)
Ideology				
Liberals	3	32	65	100 (31)
Moderates	60	0	40	100 (10)
Conservatives	31	40	29	100 (45)

* Senators Johnson and Knowland omitted.

1. Men become senators at different stages in life after varying kinds of careers. The ease and frequency with which they conform is affected by these differences in their recruitment. Senators elected relatively early in life with considerable political experience seem to conform most readily and often. Not all professional politicians find the adjustment equally easy, however. Former legislators and judges seem to adjust most easily while governors from the larger states and federal executives often find the Senate a psychological demotion, their administrative skills irrelevant, their perceptions of the political process at odds with Senate realities. Amateur politicians, men who have entered politics relatively late in life after distinguished business and professional careers, have the hardest time of all.

2. The senators differ, too, in the level of their political aspirations. Most of them think of Senate service as the climax to their political lives. A minority, however, have their eyes firmly focused on an even bigger prize, the Presidency. Not only does this weaken their identification with the chamber and its ways: it also causes them to identify with a national constituency demanding modes of behavior which are sometimes subversive to the folkways.

3. All senators belong to, or identify with, many other groups in addition to the Senate and the expectations and demands of these other groups sometimes conflict with the folkways. The most powerful of these groups is undoubtedly the senator's constituents—both present and potential. But the ability of a senator's constituents to employ their ultimate sanction varies considerably. For example, incumbent senators are rarely defeated in one-party states. Men from this kind of state need be less responsive to their constituents and thus are able to conform to the folkways more often and thoroughly than men from competitive two-party areas. Moreover, some senators are far less likely than others to be caught in the middle of cross-pressures from constituency and legislative peers. The Senate is organized in a way that greatly exaggerates the power of rural, conservative interests. The folkways justify and buttress the *status quo* in the chamber. Thus rural conservatives are less often caught in the squeeze of conflicting constituency-folkway demands than are the liberal senators from urban states. When confronted with such a conflict situation, a senator must choose between conforming to the folkways and thus appearing to "sell out," or gaining popularity back home at the expense of goodwill, esteem and effectiveness in the Senate—a course which diminishes his long run ability to achieve what his constituents demand. For this reason, conflicts between the immediate demands of constituents and peers are by no means automatically resolved in favor of constituents.

It would be a mistake to assume that the folkways of the Senate are unchangeable. Their origins are obscure, but sparse evidence scattered throughout senatorial memoirs suggests that they have changed little since the late 18th or early 19th century.[28] Certainly the chamber's small membership and gradual

[28] "Should the new legislator wish to be heard," George Washington advised his favorite nephew upon his election to the Virginia House of Delegates in 1787, "the way to

turnover is conducive to the transmission of such rules virtually unchanged from one generation to the next. Yet the trend in American politics seems to be toward more competitive two-party politics; a greater political role for the mass media of communications and those skilled in their use; larger, more urban constituencies. All these are factors which presently encourage departure from the norms of Senate behavior. Thus nonconformity to the folkways may increase in the future, if the folkways remain unchanged. Moreover, the major forces which presently push senators toward nonconformity tend to converge upon a relatively small group of senators. This is a far more unstable situation than the random distribution of such influences—and hence of nonconforming behavior—among the entire membership of the Senate.

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command attention of the House is to speak seldom, but to important subjects, except such as relate to your constituents and, in the former case, make yourself perfectly master of the subject. Never exceed a decent warmth, and submit your sentiments with diffidence. A dictatorial style, though it may carry conviction, is always accompanied with disgust." J. A. Carroll and M. W. Ashworth [continuing D. S. Freeman's biography], *George Washington*, (New York, 1957), Vol. VII, p. 591.