

# Notebook CFS

Conference for  
Federal Studies

Spring 1977  
Volume 7, Number 2

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## CONFERENCE ON FEDERALISM PUBLICATIONS

On April 20 and 21, the Center for the Study of Federalism hosted a two-day conference dealing with publications that cover developments in various parts of the American federal system. Building on the symposium hosted by the Conference for Federal Studies on the media and the intergovernmental system at the 1976 APSA meetings, this most recent conference brought together journalists and academicians to discuss the technical aspects of publishing such information and to explore the need for additional contributions to the existing roster of publications. Conference participants included the publishers and editors of the four magazines currently devoted to state government and politics--California Journal, Empire State Reports (N.Y.), Illinois Issues, and New Jersey Magazine--representatives from the Congressional Quarterly, The Washington Post and other national news organizations, noted scholars such as Harold Chase from the University of Minnesota, and several individuals interested in stimulating similar publications in their respective states and regions.

The first day of the conference was devoted to an exchange of information among the state journal publishers and other individuals with an interest in developing new publications of this type. While three of the state journals have been publishing continuously for at least four years, this was the first opportunity that their publishers and editors had to meet face-to-face to compare notes and to seek solutions to common problems. Everyone involved indicated that the discussions were extremely useful. Those contemplating new publications were especially appreciative for advance warnings about potential pitfalls involved in such ventures.

On the second day of the conference, the participants turned their attention to the possibility of developing an annual report on the status of the American federal system. There was general agreement that such a report is vitally needed. While several agencies currently provide a variety of reports and data on intergovernmental affairs and the developments in state and local gov-



*CONFERENCE ON FEDERALISM PUBLICATIONS (continued from page 1)*

ernments, there is no publication which places this information in the historical and theoretical framework of American federalism. Participants spent considerable time discussing the potential audience, the content and substance, the mechanical details, and the possible funding sources for a report of this kind. A proposal for an annual report was subsequently developed at the Center and is currently being circulated to foundations and other institutions.

As a result of this conference, the Center for the Study of Federalism will serve as an informal clearing house for individuals and institutions working on or interested in publishing endeavors described above. For a list of conference participants or for answers to any questions on this matter, please contact Benjamin Schuster at the Center.

*ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE FOR FEDERAL STUDIES*

The Annual Meeting of the Conference for Federal Studies will be held at the 1977 Convention of the American Political Science Association at the Washington, D.C. Hilton in September of this year. The meeting is scheduled for Friday, September 2 from 11:45 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. The exact room number will be published in the final program available at the convention. The Center staff would like to urge all CFS members who plan to be at the convention to attend the annual meeting. We feel that the occasion provides an excellent opportunity for meeting personnel, asking questions, and suggesting projects and other cooperative activities. There is no formal agenda circulated beforehand, so members are urged to introduce any topic which they feel is appropriate for this meeting. We look forward to seeing you there.

*THE ANNUAL INVENTORY  
OF CFS RESEARCH*

The Annual Inventory of Research in Progress which provides information on the current research work of Conference for Federal Studies members will be published in the Summer 1977 edition of the NOTEBOOK. Inventory forms were sent to all Conference members two months ago. If you did not return your form or did not receive a copy, there is still time to act. However, the deadline is approaching quickly. Please contact Ellen Goldberg at the Center for additional forms or send information on your research work (topic areas, co-researchers and funding sources) directly to her.

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:CFS NOTEBOOK is published by the  
:Center for the Study of Federalism,  
:Temple University, Gladfelter Hall,  
:Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19122.  
:  
:Editor: Benjamin R. Schuster  
:  
:Production: Ellen S. Goldberg  
:  
:CFS NOTEBOOK, published on a quar-  
:terly basis, is distributed to mem-  
:bers of the Conference for Federal  
:Studies.  
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RESEARCH NOTE

Selection of Congressional Candidates:

A Case for State Leverage in a Federal System

by Gary L. Crawley

Among political scientists today it is difficult to discuss intergovernmental relations in the United States without encountering an argument stressing the trend toward centralization. Adherents of the centralization thesis usually point out that when we talk of influence of decision making, it must be conceded that the scales are tipping more and more in the direction of Washington. Michael Reagan (1972) even proposes a new label to describe intergovernmental relations in the U.S., "permissive federalism," and concedes:

"The notion that phrase conveys (I hope) is that there is a sharing of power and authority between the national and state governments, but that the states share rests upon the permission and permissiveness of the national government."<sup>1</sup>

Reagan comes to his conclusions primarily through a fiscal analysis of government revenue sources and spending. Through control of the purse strings, he argues, Washington has the ultimate leverage in a given confrontation.

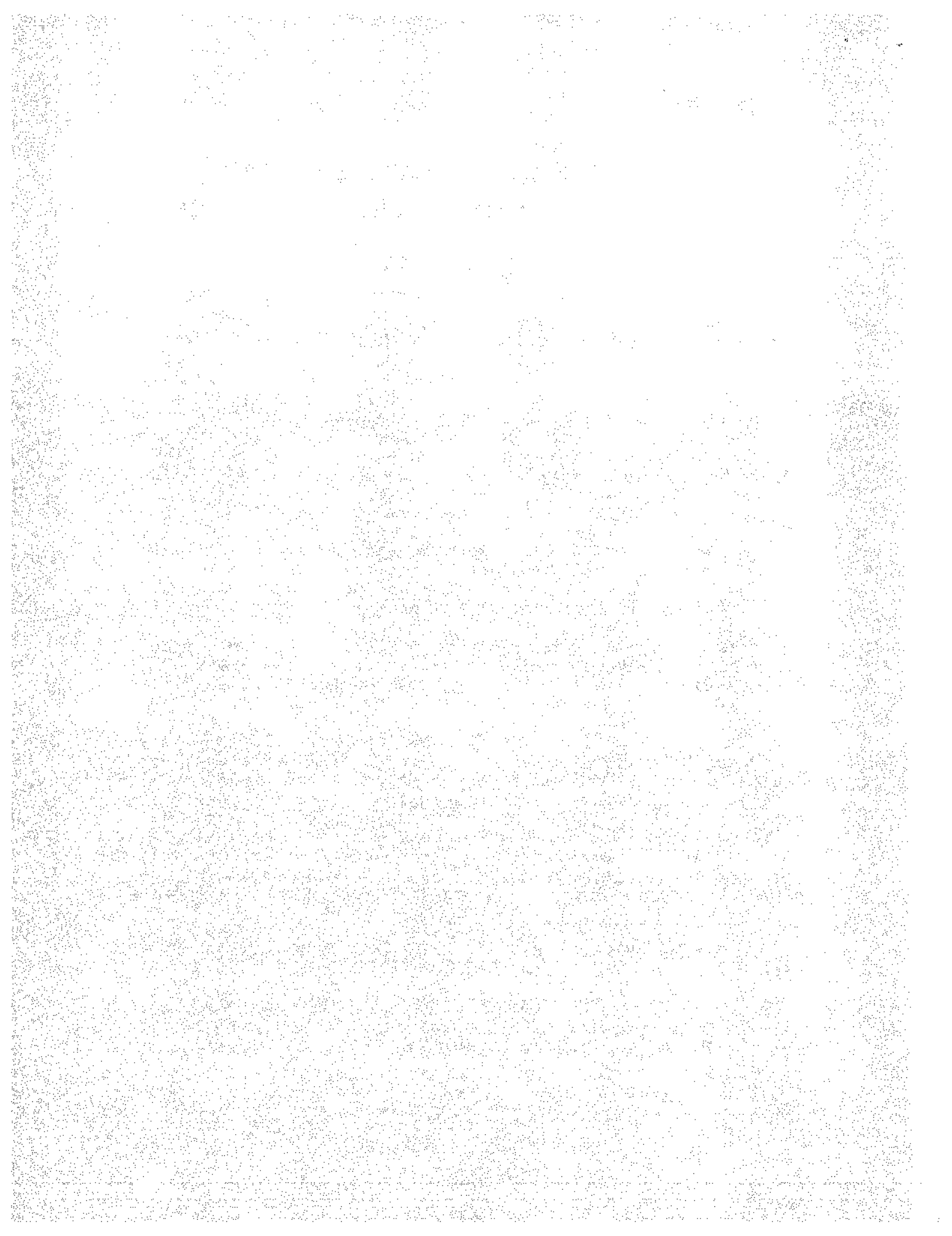
This line of reasoning largely ignores a basic source of state and local leverage, i.e., that national officeholders must seek nomination and election in state and local constituencies. Local influence on congressmen stems at least indirectly from this factor due to our decentralized party system. So long as the candidate cannot depend on a strong, highly organized national party for nomination and election, he must to some degree always consider the views of his locality. The deterioration of state and local influence should be apparent

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<sup>1</sup>Reagan, Michael D., The New Federalism, Oxford University Press, New York, 1972, p. 163.

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if it can be demonstrated that the parties are indeed becoming centralized to the point that they strongly influence the selection and election of candidates for congress.

Indications of such party centralization are difficult to come by. However, one such indicator is suggested by examining the criteria a centralized party might use in choosing its candidates. One would hypothesize that a centralized party would choose individuals who were not necessarily tied closely to their home district, thereby reducing constituency influence and increasing party influence. One measure, then, of party centralization would be the degree to which congressmen have ties in the local district.

An indicator of the strength of "home district" ties is suggested by David Truman as he notes:

"...a member of Congress is more likely than the average of the population to have been born, raised, educated and trained in the area from which he is chosen."<sup>2</sup>

If indeed, the parties are becoming more centralized, then an examination of biographical data on congressmen should reveal a trend toward less "home-grown" legislators and more representatives with out of district life experiences. The remainder of this paper is devoted to examining this proposition in one state and focuses on the following hypothesis:

There has been a trend in the election of U.S. Representatives over the past 60 years away from individuals with home district ties and toward the election of individuals with out-of-state ties.

### Research Design

To examine trends, biographical data was collected on a sample consisting of 67 U.S. Representatives from Michigan who were in office in 1911, 1923, 1935, 1947, 1959, and 1972. The data used for calculations derive from biographical accounts found in the Michigan Manual 1911-1912, 1923-1924, 1935-1936, 1947-1948, 1959-1960, and 1972-1973. Biographical information was divided into five major categories for each con-

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<sup>2</sup>Truman, David B., "Federalism and the Party System," in Arthur Macmahon, ed., Federalism, Mature and Emergent, Doubleday and Co., Garden City, New York, 1955, p. 120.





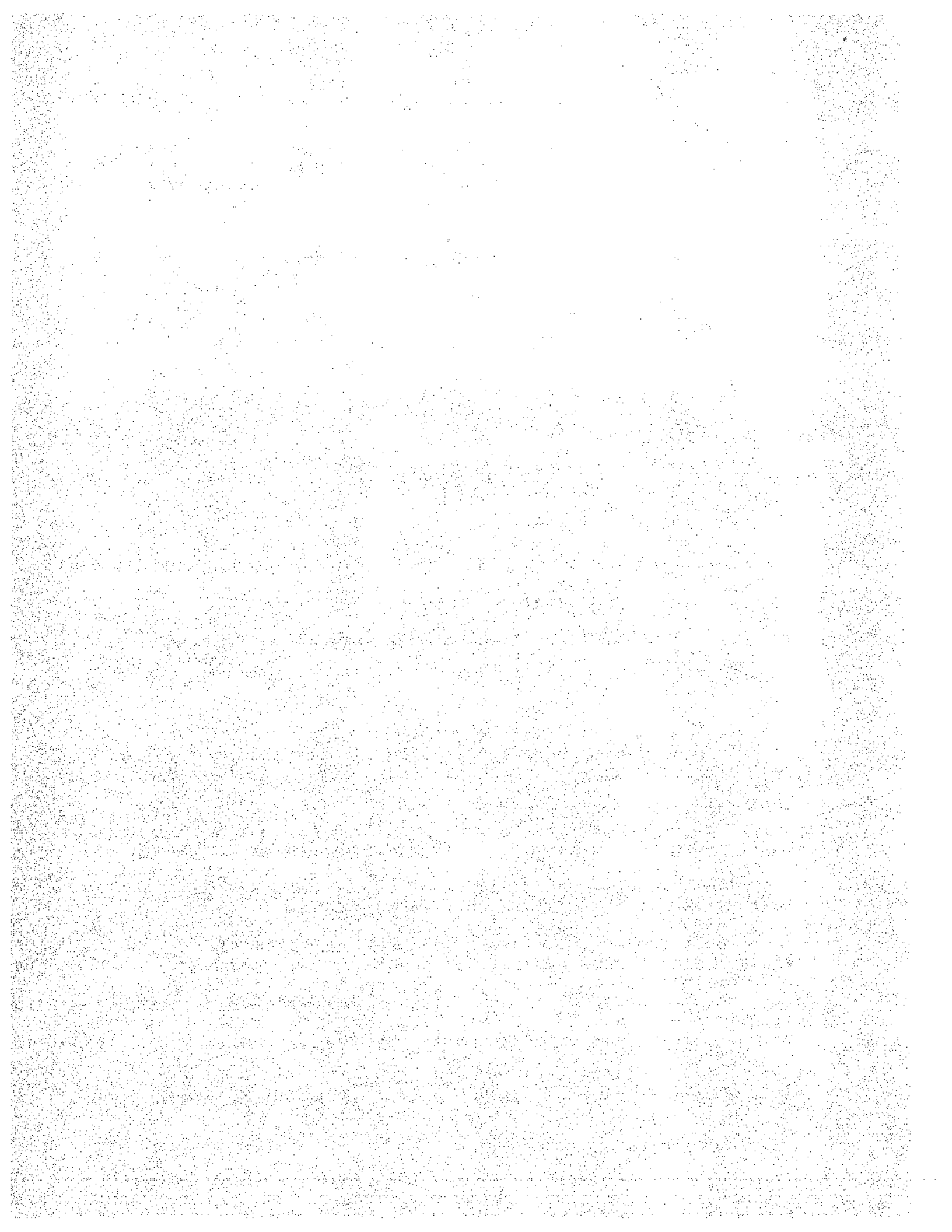
gressman, with those categories further subdivided and points allocated (in brackets) so that those with strong district ties would achieve maximum scores. The data was categorized as follows:

Weight of District Ties of Congressmen

- A) Where born:
  - (2) in district
  - (1) home state
  - (0) out of state
  
- B) Where attended high school:
  - (2) in district
  - (1) home state
  - (0) out of state
  
- C) Where received college education:
  - (1) in state
  - (2) out of state
  
- D) Where did post-graduate work (including law school):
  - (1) in state
  - (0) out of state
  
- E) Held local political office (e.g., mayor, city council, etc.):
  - (2) yes
  - (1) no

The points in each sub-category reflect a weighting procedure used in an attempt to distinguish those categories which are meaningful, a process that involves an obvious value judgement on my part. I have attempted to follow generally accepted assumptions. For example, in allotting a (2) to an individual who attended high school in the district which he or she represented and a (1) to an individual attending college in his or her home state, I have indicated high school was more indicative of local ties than college experience.

Where Truman argued that "connections" were the appropriate indicators of possible influence on congressmen by their district, I am measuring past experiences in the district or home state which would logically lead to the strengthening and proliferation of such "connection." However, this does not imply that experiences may lead only to ties with a local "power-elite," but also might include strengthening a local attitude orientation on the part of a congressman which could also influence his or her vote. Given an individual



whose total life experiences (as reflected by the data) were confined to his or her district and home state, one might assume that attitudes and voting would mirror the locality. So, in this indirect sense also, congressional decisions may be influenced by the district. Similarly, the opposite is true, a representative with a large part of his life composed of out of state experiences might be hypothesized as having more of a nation orientation, not necessarily related to his district. Based on this line of reasoning I have subdivided the sample as to their potential attitude orientation into three categories: district, mixed, and national orientation. That such orientations exist is an assumption, not a given. This study in no way tests this assumption. The results should be viewed as indicators of what might be the case, not what is.

The tabulated data are presented in Tables 1 and 2. The number of representatives for each year are listed in Table 1 along with their weighted scores for each category. Additionally, the maximum possible score for each year (assuming the life experience of all congressmen of that year was in the district) is calculated. Then an index or percentage for each category has been computed on the basis of actual over possible points. Table 2 is a reflection of the number of representatives that fall into each of the three classifications of potential attitude orientation. Figures 1, 2 and 3 are graphic illustrations of Table 1 data. Only representatives who have not been included in previous year's computations are listed in the tables. This was done to prevent overlap and bias resulting from including several times a few long-lived representatives. The only year in which this presents some difficulty is 1947, since only six new representatives are in this sample. For this reason, 1947 data should be viewed somewhat more sceptically due to a small n.

### Findings

An analysis of the data yields no support in Michigan for the original hypothesis:

There has been a trend in the election of U.S. Representatives over the past 60 years away from individuals with home district ties and toward the election of individuals with out-of-state ties.

A slight trend actually exists in the opposite direction. In 1972 all indices show the representatives as being more "home-grown" (Table 1) or "district-oriented" (Table 2) than in



Table 1. Biographical Data for 67 U.S. Representatives from Michigan; 1911-1972

	Year	1911	1923	1935	1947	1959	1972
	# of Reps.	12	11	13	6	13	12
Birthplace	In District	4	5	7	4	7	9
	In State	0	2	0	0	2	1
	Out of State	8	4	6	2	4	2
	Total Possible	24	22	26	12	26	24
	Actual Points	8	12	14	8	16	19
	% Index	.33	.54	.54	.6	.62	.79
	High School	In District	7	8	9	4	8
In State		2	3	0	0	3	2
Out of State		3	0	4	2	2	1
Total Possible		24	22	26	12	26	24
Actual Points		16	19	18	8	19	20
% Index		.67	.86	.69	.6	.73	.83
College		In State	7	10	8	2	7
	Out of State	2	0	3	2	4	3
	No College	3	1	2	2	2	-
	Total Possible	9	10	11	4	11	12
	Actual Points	7	10	8	2	7	9
	% Index	.78	1.00	.73	.5	.64	.75
Post-Graduate	In State	8	4	6	1	6	6
	Out of State	1	1	4	2	4	4
	No Post Grad Work	3	6	3	3	3	2
	Total Possible	9	5	10	3	10	10
	Actual Points	8	4	6	1	6	6
	% Index	.89	.80	.60	.33	.60	.60
Local - Off.	Held Local Off.	7	7	7	5	6	7
	Didn't Hold L.O.	5	4	6	1	7	5
	Total Possible	24	22	26	12	26	24
	Actual Points	14	14	14	10	12	14
	% Index	.58	.67	.54	.8	.46	.58
	Total Possible *	87	81	99	42	99	94
	Actual Points	53	59	60	29	59	68
	% Composite Index	.59	.73	.61	.67	.60	.72
* Total Possible points are based on the score the represent. could achieve if his prior experience were based totally on or in his state or district depending on the category.							

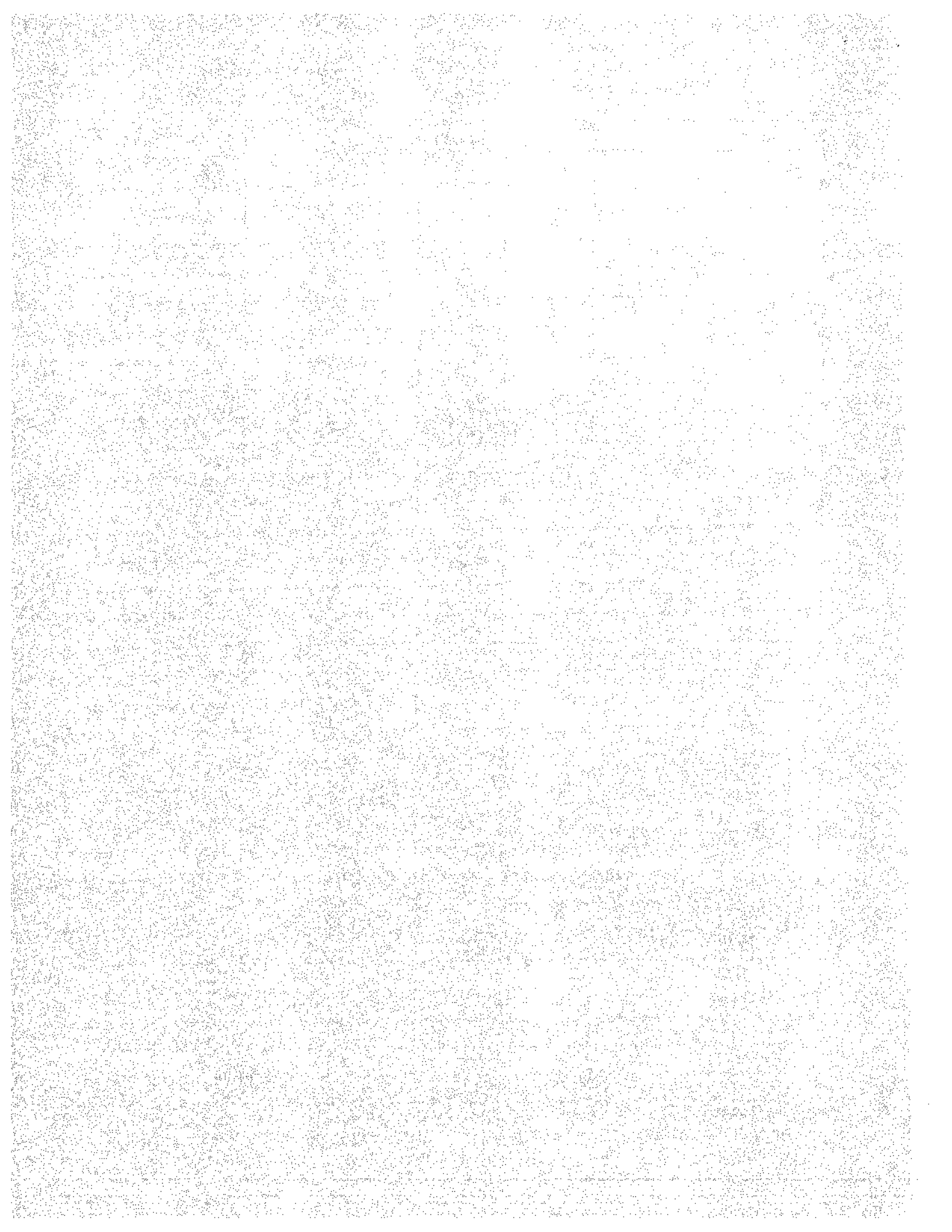
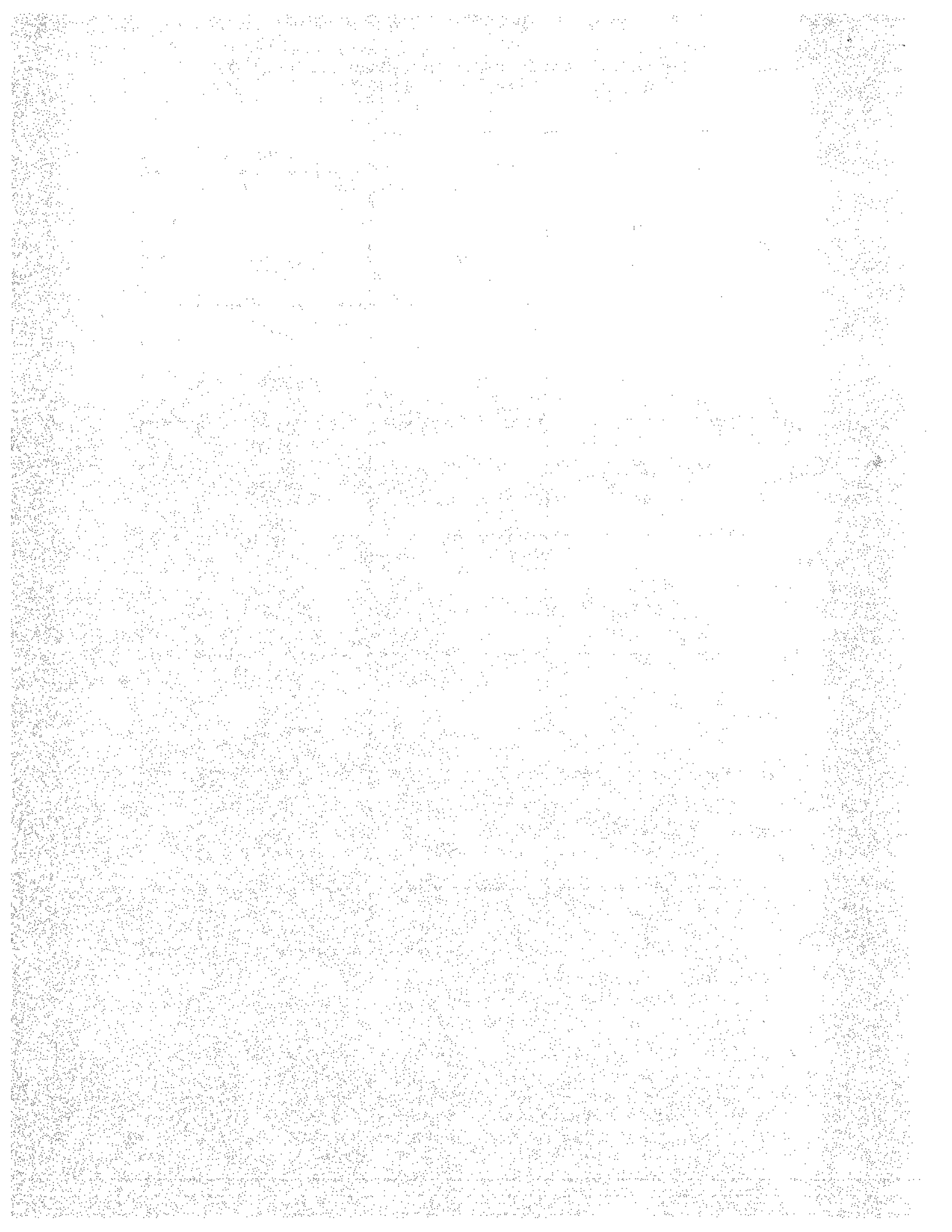


Table 2. Potential Attitude Orientation on the Basis of Biographical Data: 1911-1972

	District Orientation*	Mixed Orientation	Non-District Orientation	# of Rep.
1911	4 (33%)	4 (33%)	4 (33%)	12
1923	4 (36%)	6 (54%)	1 (10%)	11
1935	6 (46%)	3 (23%)	4 (31%)	13
1947	4 (67%)	0 (0%)	2 (33%)	6
1959	5 (38%)	4 (31%)	4 (31%)	13
1972	8 (67%)	2 (16%)	2 (17%)	12
Total	31	19	17	67

\* District Orientation 6-8 pts.  
Mixed Orientation 4-5 pts.  
Non-District Orientation 0-3 pts.

Numbers presented reflect the total number of representatives that fell into each category on the basis of the point distribution above. For example, in 1911 there were 4 representatives who had 6 to 8 points, 4 with 4 to 5 points, and 4 with 0 to 3 points. The maximum number of points an individual could receive was 8 (ie. he was born in his district, attended high school there, went to college in his state, did post graduate work there, and held local office there).





1959. Similarly, figures for 1972 are higher than or equal to those of any previous decade year. Rather than indicating consistent change in either direction, the data are characterized by fluctuations in both directions at differing points in time. This is illustrated by Figure 1 wherein a reversal in direction from one decade to the next is the dominant pattern.

An examination of Figures 2 and 3 demonstrate a lack of consistency in trends among categories as well. College and post-graduate experiences closely parallel each other as do birthplace and high school, but neither change consistently in one direction or the other. Local office indices, both for 1911-1923 and 1959-1972, also increase or decrease in relation to the other measures. The year 1947 provides the most glaring contradiction, but because of a small sample size should be viewed with caution.

Turning to Table 2, we can see that in terms of percent of individuals falling into the three orientation categories, 1972 shows a marked increase in "district-oriented" congressmen over all previous year except for 1947. Among those with a "non-district orientation," there is some consistency in the data over much of the period. Between 31 and 33 percent are "non-district oriented" in four of the six years studied. Change that does occur seems to have stemmed from the relative instability of the categories labeled "district-orientation" and "mixed-orientation." Such change also appears to be somewhat random.

The lack of a trend toward the election of representatives with out-of-state biographical ties provides evidence that appears contradictory to the theorem that there is growing centralization of the party system in the United State today. It supports rather the notion of a decentralized party system. One would expect in such a system, a great deal of fluctuation in the district background ties of congressmen. Constraints leading to the dominance of any one category would be modified by the existence of competing influences, one stemming from the district itself and the other from the party. Neither would be able to gain the upper hand. Given a strong centralized party or its antithesis, very little national party organization, one could expect the dominance of one of the extreme orientation groups. The evidence presented here does not support this expectation.

### Conclusion

One should be cautious in drawing generalizations from the data presented for several reasons. One should note first that examining the selection of congressional candidates as an indicator of party centralization involves a very stringent

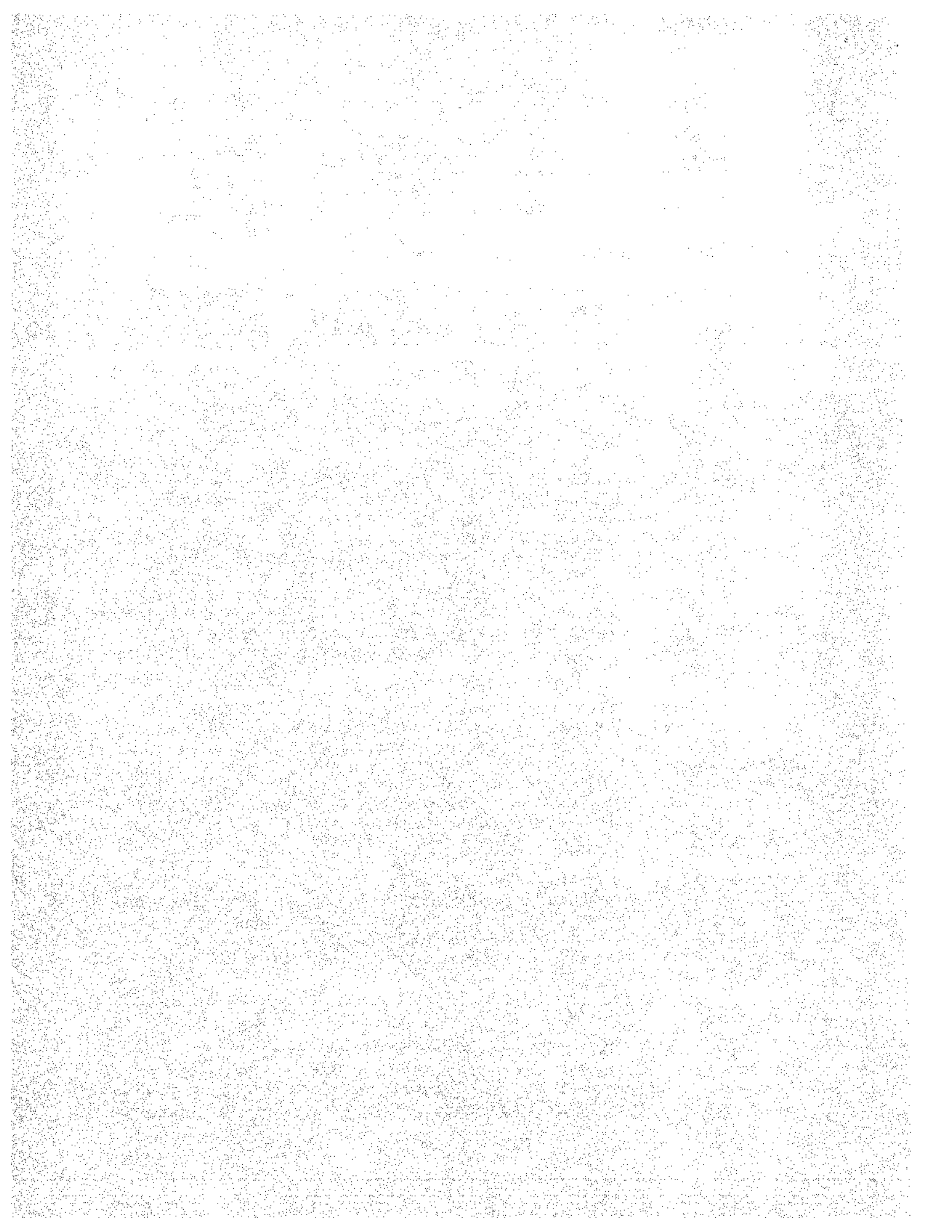


Figure 1. Graphic Illustration of Composite Biographical Index Scores: 1911-1972

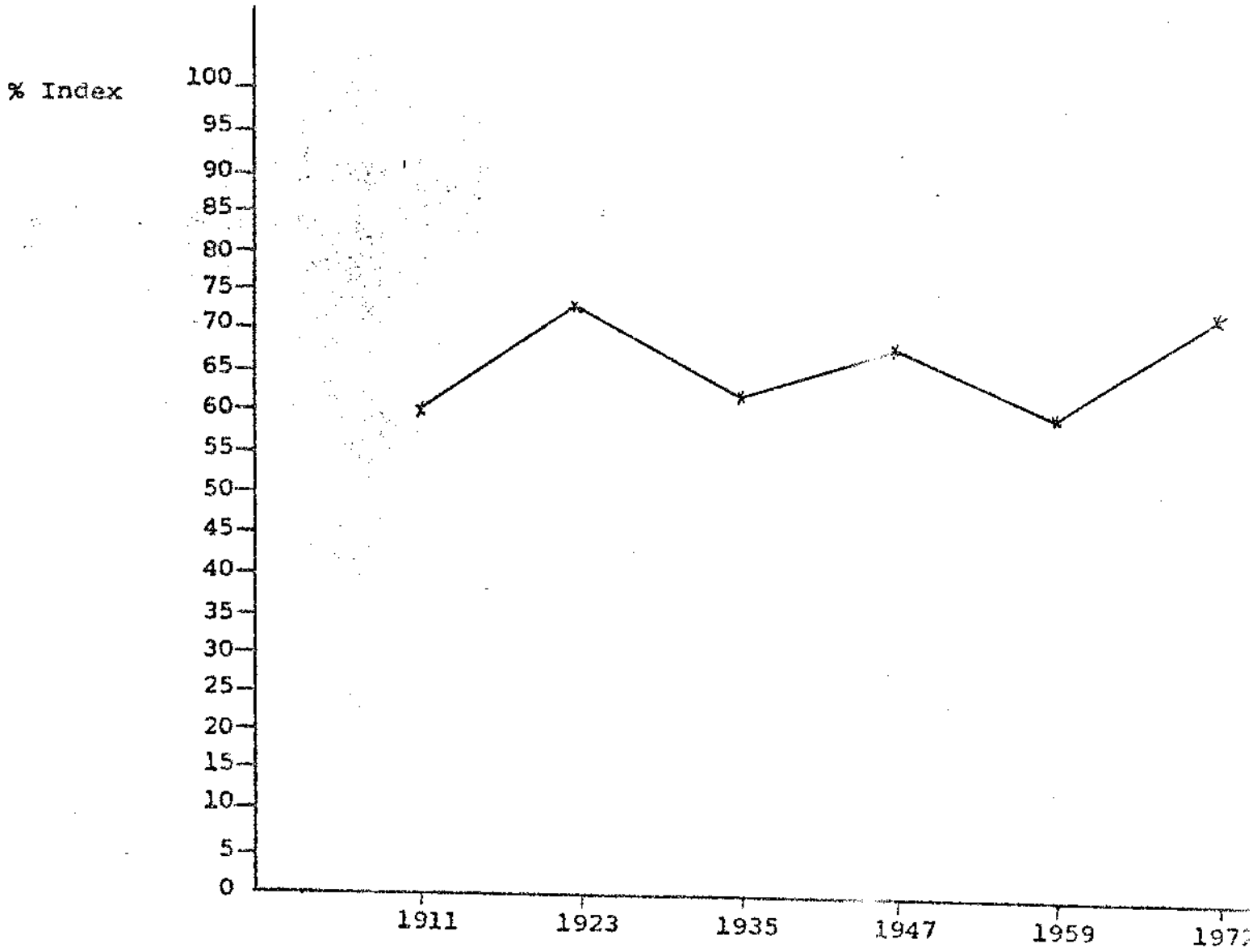




Figure 2. Graphic Illustration of Index Scores for Birthplace, High School, and Local Office Data: 1911-1972

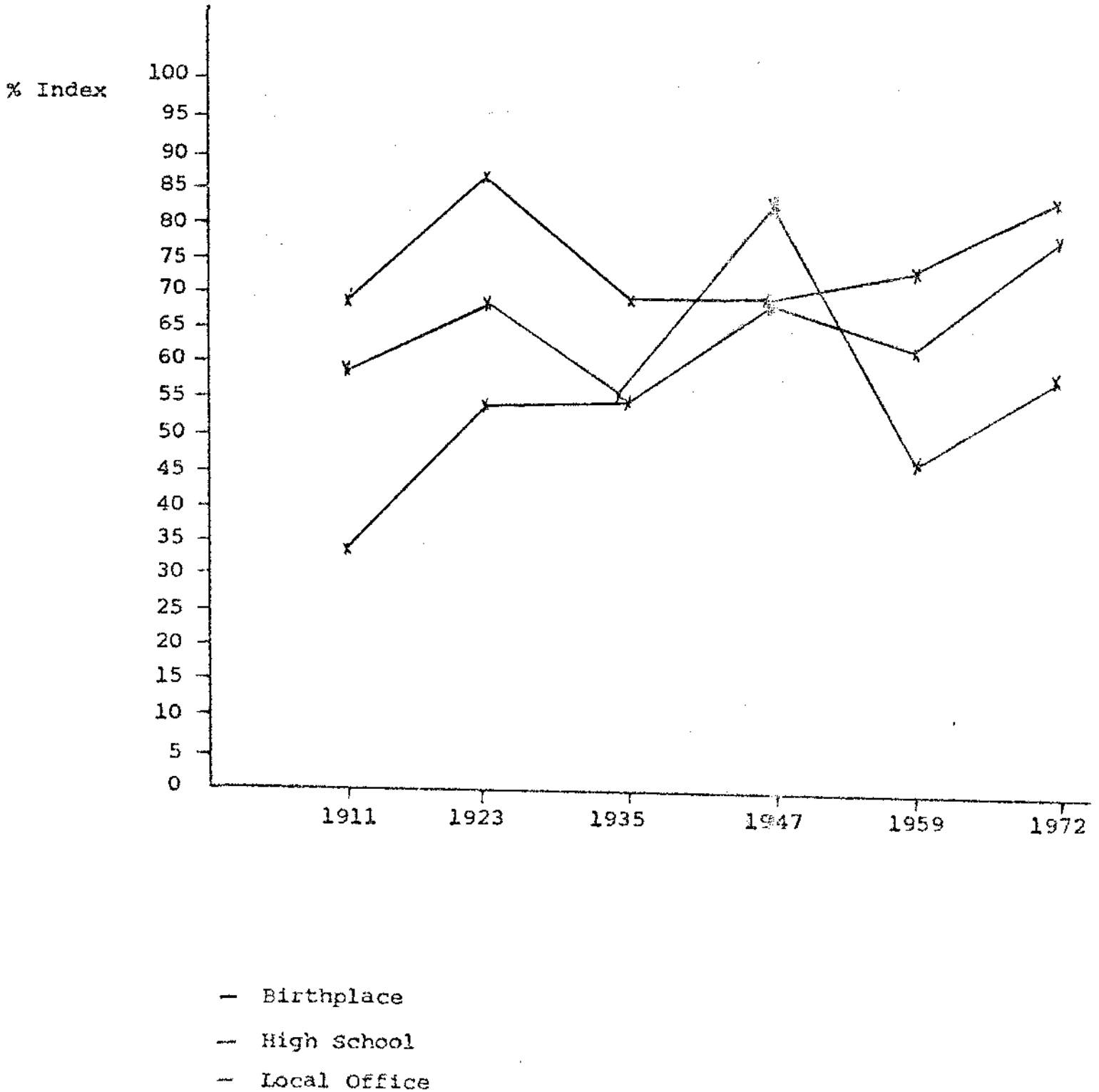
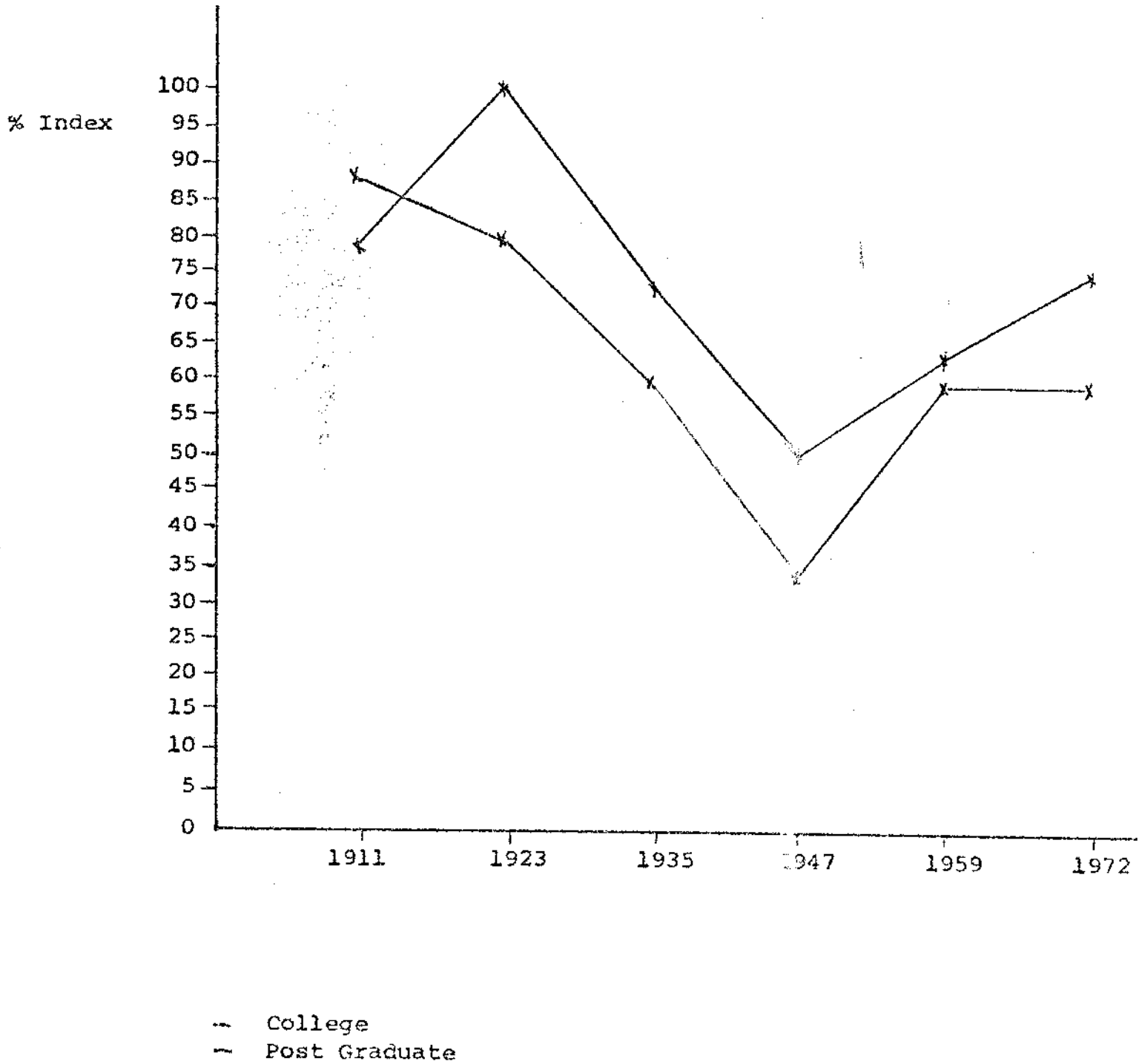




Figure 3. Graphic Illustration of Index Scores for College and Post Graduate Experience: 1911-1972







test. Perhaps centralized selection procedures would occur only in the final states of the centralization process. Second, in attempting to examine the basis for influencing decisions and thereby the distribution of power in our federal system, biographical information is an indicator and not a direct measure of party centralization. Third, there is no reason to assume that one measure will adequately reflect what is a very complicated process, that of determining constituency influence on a representative. Fourth, the data are not sophisticated enough to establish a complete biographical profile of the representative. Finally, in no way should Michigan be thought of as typical of all states. It is a state more likely to be influenced by national than local trends.

Despite these limitations, however, the data can be used as an indicator of party centralization-decentralization trends in America. As an indicator, the data do little to support the contention that there has been a move toward party centralization to the point of strong influence over local selection of candidates. In fact, it appears our party system in this regard in Michigan has remained to a large degree unchanged over sixty years, as is evidenced by fluctuations in the degree to which out-of-state congressmen were elected.

If I am correct in asserting that the states' share of power in our federal system is maintained, at least in part, by the existence of a decentralized party system, then little evidence is offered by this study to demonstrate the deterioration of this maintenance function. Of course, as is often the case in political science research, more questions have been raised than answered as a result of this study. Can we assume that a federal balance of power rests on the nature of the party system? What are other alternative measures of party centralization-decentralization and do they offer the same support for state influence? Is state-local influence necessary as a constraint on Washington's leverage? Regardless of the answers to these and other questions, I would argue that it is unrealistic to examine the balance of power in our federal system without including the political process underlying it. To this end, a study such as this one of indices of party system organization in American appears to be a fruitful endeavor.

