1. Abstract
This narrative contributes to local library history and political theory by tracing how visions of scale were circulated and contested in 20th-century Pittsburgh prior to county amalgamation.

2. Introduction
Regional library infrastructure is a contentious issue in Pittsburgh. The purpose of this poster is therefore to sketch out a political history of this system’s development.

3. Research Problem and Question
Population, economics, and literacy are necessary but insufficient historical causes for library development. Civil society movements, public sphere activity, communicative processes, and legal power also explain infrastructural evolution. What is the political history of library infrastructure in Pittsburgh?

4. Methodology
Data was gathered at Heinz History Center Detre Library and Archives, Oliver Special Collections Room at Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh (CLP), and the University of Pittsburgh Archives Service Center. Data was analyzed according to a theory developed by Habermas (1996) and tailored to local conditions. In this model, communicative power flows to legislative bodies where it is transformed into administrative power through law, leading to developments in social services.

5. Results
- County: Contract with CLP to manage school libraries (1946); petition denied for other services
- Civil Society: Civic Club, PTA, County Federation of Women’s Clubs petition CLP, county for system
- CLP: Ralph Munn (CLP director) petitions county
- County Municipalities: County Boroughs Assoc. opposes county system (1951)
- City: City Council proposes transfer of libraries to county (1953)
- Civil Society: Library Planning Comm. of Allegheny County formed (1955)
- County: Bookmobile added as county budget line

1935-1946
- County system established as an issue
1947-1956
- CLP: Munn develops plan for county service, CLP established as county library
- CLP services expanded to bookmobile, ILL, borrowing
- Consultants: Brahm & Sandoe (1950), Metropolitan study (1955) call for county system
- County: Bookmobile added as county budget line

1957-1969
- State Library: Commissions Martin studies, proposes new code
- Consultants: Martin (1958) suggests 3-tiers, aid for county systems, Martin (1967) suggests county library mandate
- State: Library code passes (1961), strengthens state aid to county, district libraries
- CLP functions as county/district library
- PalA: Library Development Committee sponsors discussions
- CLP: Munn (1958, 1961), admins work toward unification, federation
- County: Requests study of county services

1970-1978
- Civil Society: petitions county commissioners for funding, county system
- State Library: Blasingame (1970) urges federation
- County: continues to contract with CLP for county services
- Expansion of CLP district services
- State Library: commissions Martin studies, proposes new code
- Consultants: Martin (1958, 1961), admins work toward unification, federation
- County: Requests study of county services

1979-1989
- City: begins to look for alternative funding solutions for CLP
- CLP: enters financial crisis
- County: continues to contract with CLP for county services
- County Libraries: continue informal cooperation with some assistance from CLP

6. Discussion
- Communicative power and administrative power circulated through a variety of pathways to affect regional infrastructure development
- Infrastructure solutions balanced interests of home rule (autonomy), efficiency, and cooperation
- Communicative power was translated into administrative power at the county and state levels to change or maintain the county system
- System evolution resulted from tax legislation and budget changes at county and state levels

7. References