

Introduction

- This dissertation project is a historical case study of a public library system in the Pittsburgh region, USA.
- The interpretive framework informing this project is a model called *Machtkreislauf*, or “circulation of power.”
- The purpose of this poster is to provide a summary of the project with a view to its principal features.

Background

Research Problems

- This dissertation project is motivated by 3 interdisciplinary research problems (see Table 1).
- These research problems present 3 corollary research purposes.

Research Question

- This project ties the problems and purposes together by posing the following research question: How might the *Machtkreislauf* model be used to describe a public library system in the Pittsburgh region?
- This question addresses the problems from the 3 fields:
 - In library studies, the project will apply a new public sphere paradigm to the case of libraries;
 - In the political sciences, the project will refine and test the *Machtkreislauf* model; and
 - In the field of Pittsburgh history, the project will construct a regional perspective of library development.

	Field	Problem Description	Corollary Research Purpose
RP1	Library Studies	Habermas’s <i>Machtkreislauf</i> model (see Figure 1) has been proposed as a public sphere paradigm but not tested [1].	Apply the new paradigm to a study of public libraries.
RP2	Political Science	Habermas’s <i>Machtkreislauf</i> model has been discussed and criticized conceptually but empirical support is insufficient [2].	Refine the <i>Machtkreislauf</i> model using empirical data.
RP3	Pittsburgh History	Regional public library infrastructure has been overlooked in historical accounts of Pittsburgh, USA [3].	Develop a historical account of public library infrastructure.

Table 1. Research problems, descriptions, and corollary research purposes for the dissertation project.

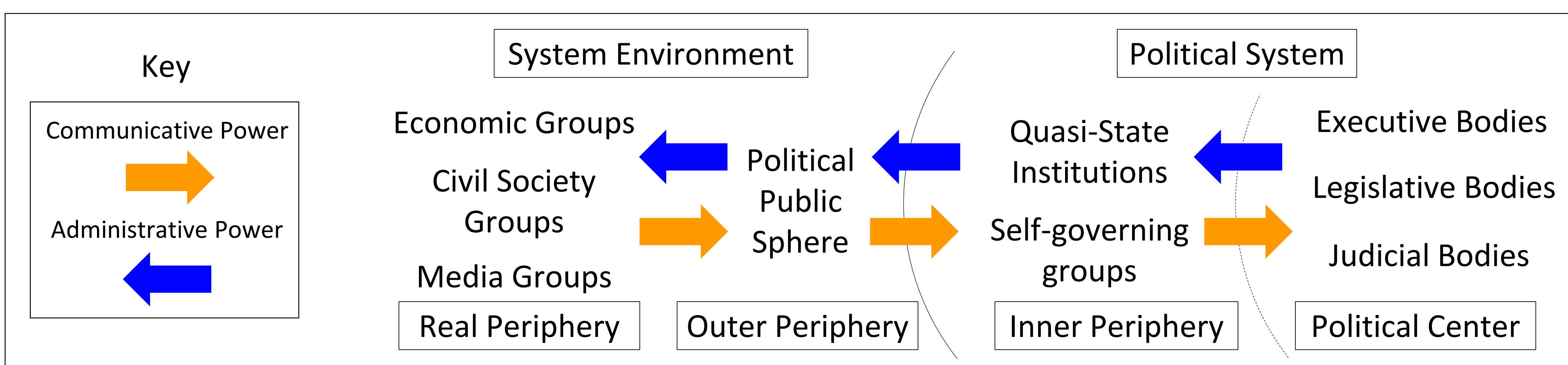


Figure 1. Habermas’s *Machtkreislauf* model [4].

Methodology

Design

- This dissertation adopts a **historical case study** approach.
- Historical case study is defined as a distinctive type of case study design that uses sources from past and present to measure changes in a case over time. It does this through periodization of the case and by applying an interpretive instrument to the source materials.
- This project uses **Qualitative Content Analysis** as the method to develop the interpretive instrument (the coding frame) and to carry out data collection and analysis [5].

Tools

- The coding process is performed using **NVivo**, a qualitative data analysis software package.
- Some results are displayed in network graphs using **Gephi**, a network visualization and analysis platform.

Results

- Results of the dissertation project are summarized below in Table 2.

	Stage	Results
Excavation	Case Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discourse related to a regional library system in Pittsburgh Case begins in 1924 when a regional system was first proposed and extends to 2016.
	Source Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Archival documents: Primary and secondary sources from several archival collections. Interviews: 25 unstructured interviews with 15 individuals totaling 34 interview hours. Field observations: 14 hours of observations from 9 public meetings.
	Periodization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 periods marked by themes, actors, and events: 1) 1924–1945, 2) 1945–1961, 3) 1961–1970, 4) 1970–1979, 5) 1980–1993, 6) 1993–1994 7), 1994–1997, 8) 1998–2011, 9) 2011–2016
Data Collection and Analysis	Development of the Coding Frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 main categories: Power, Time, Actor, Actor Position, Audience, Audience Position, Issue, Legitimation, and Implementation. Innovations in the <i>Machtkreislauf</i> model: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 types of power: Communicative, Administrative, Formal Decision, Economic, and Backroom Deals. Distinctions between narrowcast/broadcast and coalesced public/diffuse public. Conceptual development of circuits, a type of relational institution [6] (see Figure 2 & 3).
	Pilot Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 pilot coding rounds with a second coder where 12 percent of total sources were coded. Inter-coder reliability score: Cohen’s kappa of 0.967.
	Main Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 988 total coded documents, 7,553 total coded pages, and 1,773 total coding segments.
Interpretation	Data Display	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data tables, network graphs (see Figure 4).
	Theorization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Libraries and civil society groups target decision-making bodies with communicative power in order to unlock economic power. Formal decision-making bodies attempt to produce legitimacy by manufacturing publics. Public sphere activity is a conjunctural cause when explaining library development.

Table 2. Results of the dissertation project.

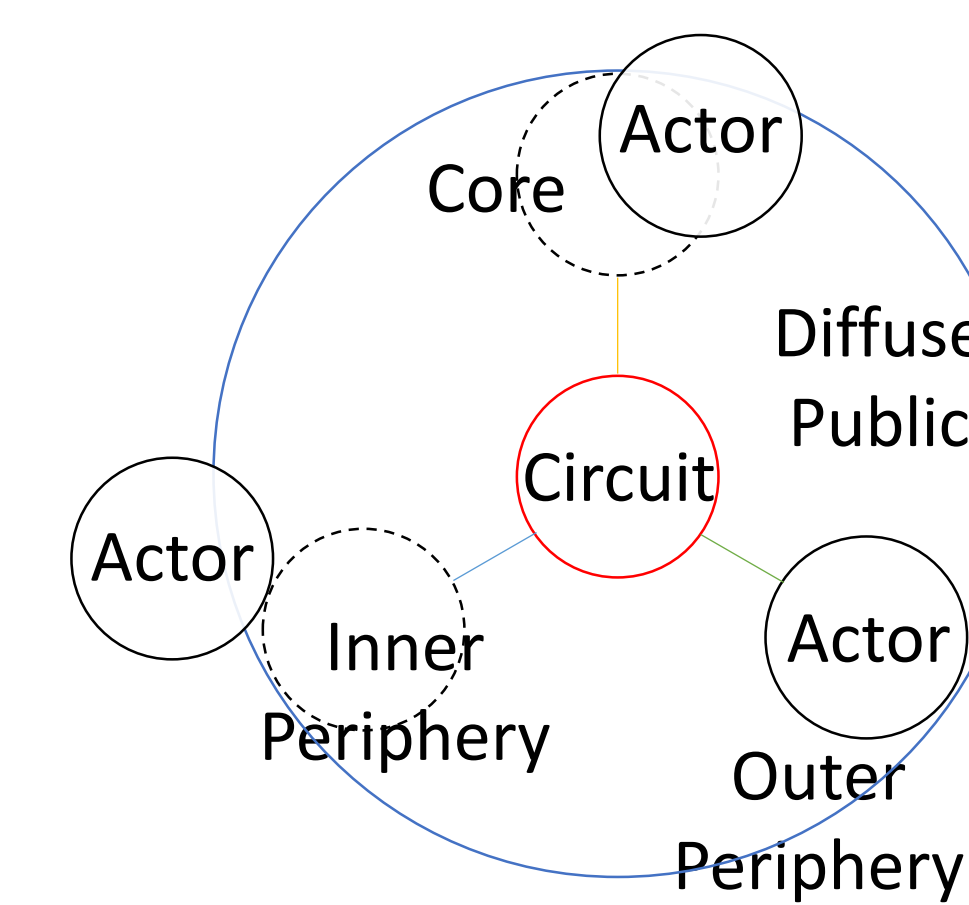


Figure 2. Circuit concept.

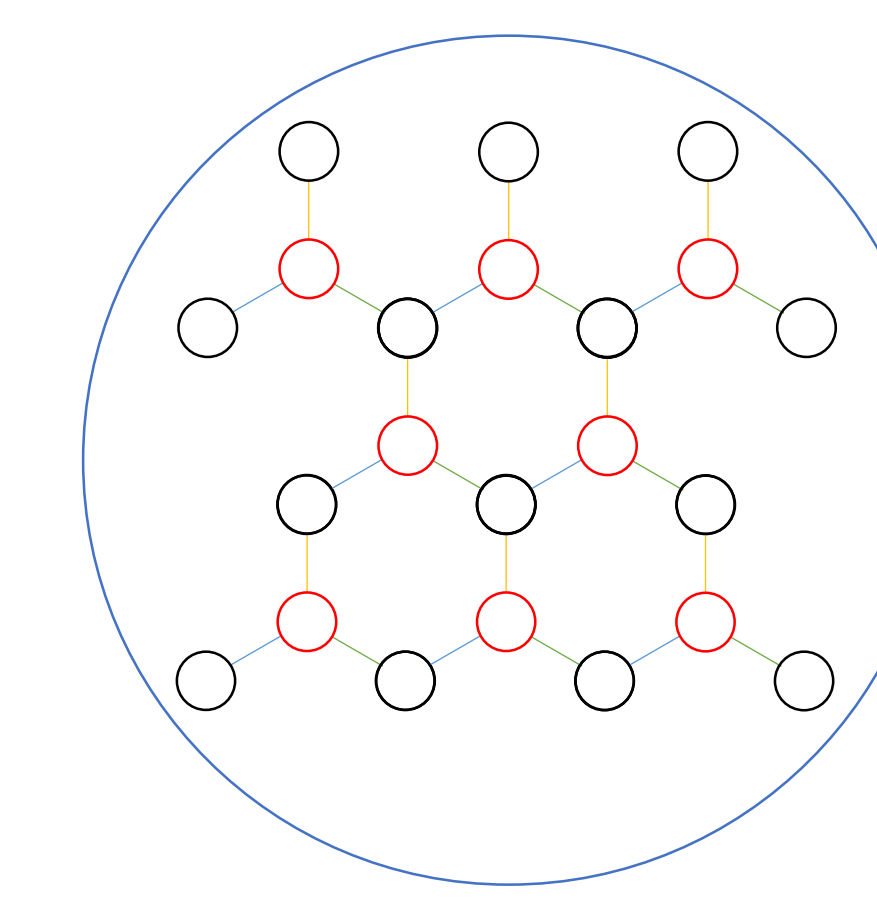


Figure 3. A tessellation of circuits.

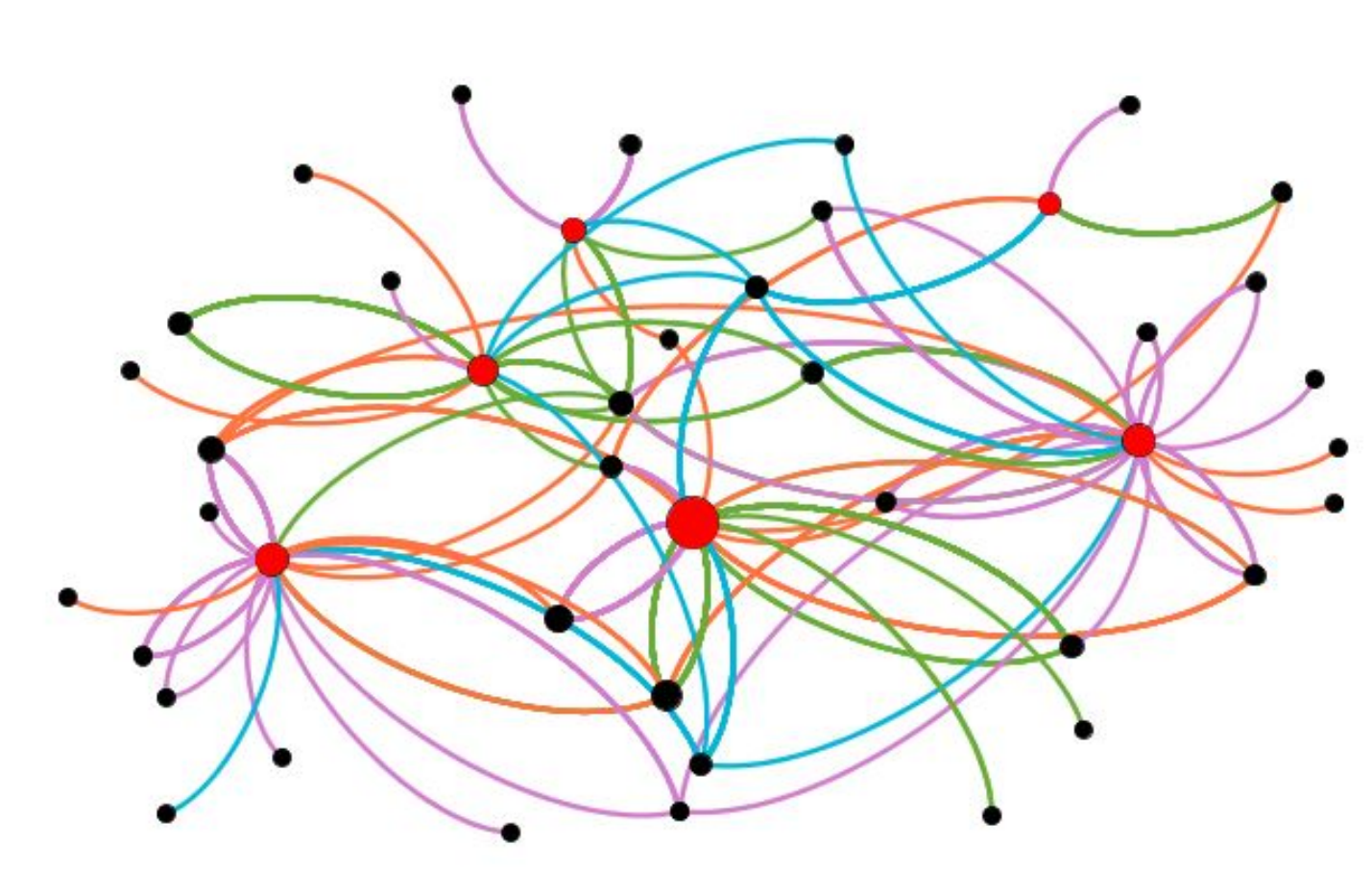


Figure 4. A tessellation using Gephi.

Conclusion

- There are 3 research implications from this dissertation project that correspond to its 3 problems and purposes:
 - In library studies, a new paradigm was successfully applied and new insights were generated.
 - In the political sciences, the *Machtkreislauf* model was revised and tested, leading to new concepts.
 - In Pittsburgh history, there is a fuller understanding of library development on a regional scale.
- Future work will consider approaches using path dependency, sequence analysis, and inferential statistics.

References

- [1] Widdersheim, Michael M. "Late, Lost, or Renewed? A Search for the Public Sphere in Public Libraries." In *CoLIS 9*. Uppsala, Sweden, 2016; Widdersheim, Michael M., and Masanori Koizumi. "Methodological Frameworks for Developing a Model of the Public Sphere in Public Libraries." In *CoLIS 9*. Uppsala, Sweden, 2016. [2] Baxter, Hugh. *Habermas: The Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Law Books, 2011; Flynn, Jeffrey. "Communicative Power in Habermas's Theory of Democracy." *European Journal of Political Theory* 3, no. 4 (October 1, 2004 2004): 433-54; Forbath, William. "Short-Circuit: A Critique of Habermas's Understanding of Law, Politics, and Economic Life." In *Habermas on Law and Democracy*, edited by Michel Rosenfeld and Andrew Arato, 272-86. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998. [3] Lubove, Roy. *Twentieth-Century Pittsburgh: Government, Business, and Environmental Change*. Vol. 1, Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995; Tarr, Joel. "Infrastructure and City-Building in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries." In *City at the Point: Essays on the Social History of Pittsburgh*, edited by Samuel P. Hays. Pittsburgh Series in Social and Labor History, 213-63. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1989. [4] Habermas, Jürgen. *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*. Translated by William Rehg. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996. [5] Schreier, Margrit. *Qualitative Content Analysis in Practice*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage, 2013; Altheide, David L. *Qualitative Media Analysis*. Qualitative Research Methods. Vol. 38, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1996. [6] Parsons, Talcott. *The Social System*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1951.