Self-estimate of Proficiency in Parliamentary Procedure by Members of the 1967 South Dakota State Legislature

Richard F. Whitman

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SELF-ESTIMATE OF PROFICIENCY IN PARLIAMENTARY
PROCEDURE BY MEMBERS OF THE 1967
SOUTH DAKOTA STATE
LEGISLATURE

The writer wishes to extend sincere appreciation to
Dr. James R. Heegstrand for his advice and guidance throughout the
writer's graduate work and for his help in the organization of this
study to the members of the 1967 South Dakota State Legislators
whose fine co-operation made this study possible; and to my wife
Dorothy who helped in so many ways.

BY

RICHARD F. WHITMAN

A research report submitted
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree Master of Education, Major in
Speech, South Dakota
State University

1967
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer wishes to extend his most sincere appreciation to Dr. Wayne E. Hoogestraat for his advice and guidance throughout the writer's graduate work and for his help in the organization of this study; to the members of the 1967 South Dakota State Legislature whose fine co-operation made this study possible; and to my wife Denise who helped in so many ways.
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<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Origin and Statement of the Problem

Instruction in parliamentary procedure has long been a part of the curriculum in many schools of this country. Generally, this instruction has been associated with departments of speech; consequently, speech teachers have searched for methods of evaluating the effectiveness and the extensiveness of training that students receive in parliamentary procedure. Since parliamentary procedure is the operating code of most deliberative assemblies, the South Dakota State Legislature was chosen as a logical place to measure the practical application of techniques learned in parliamentary procedure courses. Because the effectiveness of a legislator may be somewhat dependent on how well he can employ parliamentary skills, an attempt was made to determine to what extent or how effectively South Dakota's legislators feel they are prepared in the various aspects of parliamentary procedure.

The problem was sub-divided into the following questions:

A. In terms of their own judgment, how competent are the legislators in the various areas of parliamentary procedure?
1. Formal procedure?
   a. Phrasing main motions?
   b. Using subsidiary motions?
   c. Using incidental motions?
   d. Using privileged motions?

2. Committee procedure?

3. Areas other than those covered in 1 and 2 above?
   B. How does the number of terms of office correlate with the legislator's estimate of his proficiency in parliamentary procedure?
   C. How much formal instruction have the legislators had in parliamentary procedure?

Methodology and Procedure of the Study

Survey of Previous Literature

In order to discover previous research on this subject, the first step was to survey the available literature in the field. The following publications were consulted:


No previous research relating to the parliamentary needs of legislators was discovered.

Formulation of the Questionnaire

In an attempt to gather the information necessary to answer the questions raised, a questionnaire was formulated (See Appendix B). Authoritative sources on questionnaire construction were consulted. These sources were:


It is recognized that legislators may, for political or personal reasons, be hesitant to give accurate answers to questionnaires. The writer attempted to compensate for this limitation in the following ways:

A. He recognized the possible limitation.

B. He attempted to follow recommendations prescribed for the formulation of questionnaires.
C. He waited to send out the questionnaire until after the legislature had adjourned in order that the legislator would be as free of political pressure as possible.

D. He promised anonymity to the legislator. This was done in anticipation that the legislator would be less inhibited in his responses if his name were not linked with the response.

E. He placed questions about the legislator's own proficiency toward the end of the questionnaire. This was done in an attempt to utilize the "yes response" technique. It was assumed that the legislator would be less reluctant in answering questions about others than in answering questions about himself, and if he were to respond to questions about others in the first part of the questionnaire, he would be more apt to finish the questionnaire and respond to questions dealing with his own parliamentary proficiency.

After the questionnaire had been tentatively completed, it was administered to thirteen students in Speech 361--Parliamentary Procedure. This was done at the close of the fall semester of 1966. Several weaknesses concerning the clarity of directions were discovered in the questionnaire, and they were adjusted accordingly.

The completed questionnaire consisted of three basic parts. The first section asked to what degree first year legislators, veteran legislators, and the legislator filling out the questionnaire were inhibited from reaching their full capacity by lack of knowledge of parliamentary procedure. The second area of the questionnaire was
more specific and dealt with these three categories of legislators in
terms of their proficiency in phrasing main motions, using subsidiary
motions, using incidental motions, using privileged motions, and
familiarity with committee procedure. A final item in the ques-
tionnaire was designed to obtain random comments from the legislators
that might reveal problem areas which were not covered specifically
by the first two areas of the questionnaire.

The name and address of each member of the 1967 South Dakota
State Legislature (See Appendix C) was obtained from a personal letter
from the Deputy State Auditor.¹ On the closing day of the legislative
session, March 11, 1967, the questionnaire was mailed to each member
of the House and the Senate along with an explanatory letter (See
Appendix A).

Tabulation of Results

Tabulations of the responses to the various items in the
questionnaire are reported in Chapter II. Chapter III includes a
summary of the study and an itemized list of conclusions formulated
from the legislators' responses to the items in the questionnaire.

¹Letter from Mildred Benson, Deputy State Auditor, State of South
CHAPTER II

TABULATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Responses

On March 31, 1967, twenty days after the South Dakota State Legislature adjourned, the results of the aforementioned questionnaire were tabulated. This chapter is a presentation of the results of the tabulation. Questionnaires were sent to one hundred and ten legislators. Twenty-two Senators and forty Representatives returned the questionnaire for a total return of 56.3 per cent. Not all respondents answered all questions.

Estimated Inhibitions

Questions III, IV, and V on the questionnaire asked to what degree first year legislators, veteran legislators, and the legislator answering the questionnaire were inhibited from reaching their full capacity by a lack of knowledge of parliamentary procedure (See Appendix B). Several legislators expressed difficulty in making this judgement and appended such remarks as, "It varies with individuals."

House

In the House of Representatives two respondents indicated that first year legislators were not inhibited from reaching their full capacity by a lack of knowledge of parliamentary procedure. Thirty-
one indicated that first year legislators were inhibited to some
degree, and seven indicated that first year legislators were seriously
inhibited. Fifteen indicated that veteran legislators were not
inhibited. Twenty-four responded that veteran legislators were
inhibited to some degree, and one person replied that veteran legisla-
tors were seriously inhibited from reaching their full capacity by
lack of knowledge of parliamentary procedure. When estimating their
own degree of inhibition, sixteen Representatives said they were not
inhibited, twenty-three responded that they were inhibited to some
degree, and only one said he was seriously inhibited. (These results
are presented in Table I.)

TABLE I
REPRESENTATIVES' ESTIMATE OF INHIBITIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not Inhibited</th>
<th>Inhibited To Some Degree</th>
<th>Seriously Inhibited</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Year Legislators</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran Legislators</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislator's Opinion Of Himself</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These observations by the South Dakota State Representatives indicate that most first year legislators are inhibited to some degree from reaching their full capacity by a lack of knowledge of parliamentary procedure. It also indicates that a larger number of first year legislators are more seriously inhibited than are veteran legislators.

This inhibition is not as apparent in veteran legislators since far more veteran legislators are rated as not inhibited and fewer were rated as seriously inhibited. It should also be pointed out that a majority of the respondents in each category indicated that legislators are inhibited to some degree from reaching their full capacity by a lack of knowledge of parliamentary procedure. A majority of the Representatives indicated that they were inhibited to some degree while a smaller number felt themselves to be free of inhibition. One person did, however, reply that he felt himself to be seriously inhibited from reaching his full capacity by a lack of knowledge of parliamentary procedure. From the data included in Table I, it can also be concluded that the amount of inhibition experienced by House members is reduced by experience in the House.

Senate

Similar results were reported in the South Dakota State Senate. No respondent indicated that he felt first year legislators were not
inhibited from reaching their full capacity by a lack of knowledge of parliamentary procedure. Fifteen Senators felt that first year legislators were inhibited to some degree, and seven Senators indicated that they felt first year legislators to be seriously inhibited. Eight respondents replied that veteran legislators are not inhibited. Fourteen said that veteran legislators are inhibited to some degree, and no one held that veteran legislators are seriously inhibited by lack of knowledge in parliamentary procedure. Ten Senators stated that personally they felt not inhibited. Ten indicated that they felt inhibited to some degree, and two saw themselves as seriously inhibited. (These results are expressed in Table II.)

TABLE II
SENATORS' ESTIMATE OF INHIBITIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not Inhibited</th>
<th>Inhibited To Some Degree</th>
<th>Seriously Inhibited</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Year Legislators</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran Legislators</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislator's Opinion Of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himself</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Again results seem to indicate that inhibition is relative to experience. The majority of the Senators did not judge themselves to be seriously inhibited by a lack of knowledge of parliamentary procedure. Two Senators did, however, rate themselves as seriously inhibited. Again it should also be pointed out that a very large number of legislators are considered to be either inhibited to some degree or seriously inhibited.

Estimated Proficiency in Parliamentary Procedure

Questions VI, VII, and VIII on the questionnaire asked the respondent to indicate the degree of proficiency of first year legislators, veteran legislators and the respondent himself in five areas—phrasing main motions, using subsidiary motions, using incidental motions, using privileged motions, and familiarity with committee procedure (See Appendix B). The degree of proficiency was indicated on a five point semantic differential scale. The number five on the scale indicated a rating of fully proficient, and the number one indicated the rating of totally nonproficient.

Estimated Proficiency in Phrasing Main Motions

By Representatives.---In the House two respondents indicated that first year legislators were fully proficient in the phrasing of main motions, giving them a rating of five. Ten legislators replied by giving first year legislators a rating of four. Eighteen gave them a rating of three, eight a two rating; and no one rated first year legislators as totally nonproficient in the phrasing of main motions.
Eleven respondents held veteran legislators to be fully proficient in this area. Seventeen were rated four, seven three, one two; and none were rated as totally nonproficient. When rating their own proficiency in the phrasing of main motions, eleven legislators felt that they were fully proficient. Twelve rated themselves four, ten three, four two; and no one believed himself to be totally nonproficient in the phrasing of main points. (These results are summarized in Table III.)

TABLE III
ESTIMATED PROFICIENCY IN PHRASING MAIN MOTIONS-—HOUSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fully Proficient</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Year Legislators</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Veteran Legislators</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislator's Opinion Of Himself</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These results indicate that few first year Representatives are felt to be fully proficient in phrasing main motions. The results also indicate that proficiency is judged to increase with experience since far more veteran legislators are rated fully proficient in this
respect than first year legislators. The results further indicate, that a majority of the legislators filling out the questionnaire felt they had experienced relatively little difficulty in the phrasing of main motions.

By Senators.--In the Senate, one respondent felt that first year legislators were fully proficient in the phrasing of main motions. Three respondents indicated a rating of four, nine replied with a rating of three, eight indicated two; and one respondent believed that first year legislators were totally nonproficient in the phrasing of main motions. Three respondents held that veteran legislators are fully proficient. Sixteen indicated a four rating, two indicated a three rating; and no one gave a rating of two or one. Four Senators felt themselves to be fully proficient. Eleven rated themselves four, five three, one two; and no one reported himself to be totally nonproficient in the phrasing of main motions. (These results are presented in Table IV.)

From these results it can be concluded that few first year legislators are fully proficient in the phrasing of main motions; however with experience a higher degree of proficiency is achieved. A majority of the Senators responding reported that they themselves had experienced little trouble with phrasing main motions.
TABLE IV

ESTIMATED PROFICIENCY IN PHRASING MAIN MOTIONS--SENATE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fully Proficient</th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Year Legislators</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.77</td>
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<tr>
<td>Veteran Legislators</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legislator's Opinion Of Himself</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Estimated Proficiency in Using Subsidiary Motions

By Representatives.--The next item on the questionnaire dealt with the legislator's estimated proficiency in the use of subsidiary motions. From the House, two respondents replied that first year legislators were fully proficient in the use of subsidiary motions. Nine gave them a four rating, thirteen rated them three, twelve two; and one respondent indicated that first year legislators are totally nonproficient in the use of subsidiary motions. Nine respondents held veteran legislators to be fully proficient. Sixteen gave them a four rating, seven three, four two; and no one replied that veteran legislators are totally nonproficient in the use of subsidiary motions. When rating their own proficiency, three legislators rated themselves
as fully proficient. Fourteen rated themselves four, thirteen three, five two; and two legislators saw themselves as totally nonproficient in the use of subsidiary motions. (These results are presented in Table V.)

TABLE V

ESTIMATED PROFICIENCY IN USING SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS--HOUSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fully Proficient</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Mean</th>
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<td>2.98</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran</td>
<td>Legislator</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again it can be concluded that proficiency is estimated to increase with experience. First year legislators were rated low in their ability to use subsidiary motions, while veteran legislators were rated considerably higher. When rating themselves, the majority of the respondents fell in the middle of the scale, although responses at both extremes were evident.
By Senators.—No Senator rated first year legislators as fully proficient. One Senator rated them four, eight three, eleven two; and one person rated first year legislators totally nonproficient. Three respondents saw veteran legislators to be fully proficient in the use of subsidiary motions. Sixteen assigned them a four rating, two gave the rating of three; and no one rated veteran legislators below three. Four Senators judged themselves to be fully proficient. Ten gave themselves the rating of four, seven rated themselves three; and no one gave himself a rating below three. (These results are presented in Table VI.)

TABLE VI

ESTIMATED PROFICIENCY IN USING SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS—SENATE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fully Proficient</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Totally Nonproficient</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Year Legislators</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.43</td>
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<tr>
<td>Veteran Legislators</td>
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<td>4.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legislator's Opinion Of Himself</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From this information it can be concluded that first year legislators are not estimated to have a high degree of proficiency.
when it comes to the use of subsidiary motions. It can also be concluded that proficiency is judged to increase with experience. Furthermore, most respondents indicated that they feel themselves to be relatively proficient in the use of subsidiary motions.

Estimated Proficiency in Using Incidental Motions

The Representatives gave the following responses concerning the proficiency of legislators in the use of incidental motions.

By Representatives.--In the House one respondent indicated that first year legislators are fully proficient. Three gave them a rating of four, fourteen a rating of three, fifteen a rating of two; and five held first year legislators to be totally nonproficient in the use of incidental motions. Five respondents saw veteran legislators as fully proficient. Sixteen gave them a rating of four, eleven a rating of three, four a rating of two; and no one saw veteran legislators as totally nonproficient in the use of incidental motions. Four respondents rated themselves as fully proficient. Thirteen gave themselves a rating of four, ten rated themselves three, nine gave themselves a rating of two; and one person responded that he was totally nonproficient. (These results are presented in Table VII.)

It can be concluded that first year legislators are not judged to have a high degree of proficiency in the use of incidental motions. The level of proficiency is judged to increase with experience. This is evident in a comparison of ratings given to first year legislators and veteran legislators. The Representatives themselves did not
express great difficulty using incidental motions; however, only a small number felt themselves to be fully proficient, and one person saw himself as totally nonproficient in this area.

**TABLE VII**

ESTIMATED PROFICIENCY IN USING INCIDENTAL MOTIONS--HOUSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fully Proficient</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
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<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Year Legislators</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran Legislators</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislator's Opinion Of Himself</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.61</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By Senators. -- In the Senate, no respondent rated first year legislators as five or four. Six respondents assigned first year legislators a three rating, eleven a two; and four rated first year legislators as totally nonproficient in the use of incidental motions. Two respondents rated veteran legislators as fully proficient. Fifteen respondents gave them a rating of four, four a rating of three; and no one gave veteran legislators a rating below three. When rating themselves, five respondents saw themselves as fully proficient. Ten gave
themselves a four rating, six a three rating; and no one rated himself as either two or one. (These results are presented in Table VIII.)

**TABLE VIII**

**ESTIMATED PROFICIENCY IN USING INCIDENTAL MOTIONS--SENATE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fully Proficient</th>
<th>Totally Nonproficient</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Year Legislators</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Veteran Legislators</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legislator's Opinion Of Himself</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First year legislators were judged as being weak in the area of using incidental motions. Improvement is judged to correspond with experience. When rating themselves, the Senators do not express great difficulty with using incidental motions, although some did indicate a low proficiency.

**Estimated Proficiency in Using Privileged Motions**

The respondents were asked to indicate the degree of proficiency of legislators in the use of privileged motions.
By Representatives.—In the House, five respondents rated first year legislators as fully proficient in the use of privileged motions. Twelve gave them a rating of four, twelve a rating of three, eight a rating of two; and no one rated first year legislators totally nonproficient in the use of privileged motions. Fifteen Representatives rated veteran legislators fully proficient. Ten rated them four, eight three, three two; and no one saw veteran legislators as totally nonproficient in the use of privileged motions. When rating themselves, ten legislators saw themselves as fully proficient. Eleven gave themselves a rating of four, eleven a rating of three, four a rating of two, and one a rating of one. (These results are presented in Table IX.)

### Table IX

**Estimated Proficiency in Using Privileged Motions—House**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<td>Veteran Legislators</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>Legislator’s Opinion Of Himself</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
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</table>
There does not appear to be a great discrepancy between the proficiency of veteran and first year legislators in this category although veteran legislators are rated somewhat higher. Again it might be concluded that observed proficiency increases with experience. A large number of Representatives saw themselves as totally proficient. The majority fell at the middle of the scale with only one person seeing himself as totally nonproficient.

By Senators.--In the Senate four respondents rated first year legislators fully proficient in the use of privileged motions. Four gave them the rating of four, six a three rating, five a two rating, and two respondents rated first year legislators totally nonproficient in the use of privileged motions. Nine respondents held veteran legislators to be proficient in the use of privileged motions. Eleven gave them a four rating, one a three rating, and no one rated veteran legislators below three. Ten respondents considered themselves fully proficient. Eight gave themselves a four rating, three a three rating, and no one rated himself below three. (These results are presented in Table X.)

These results indicate that veteran legislators are generally believed to be more proficient than first year legislators in the use of privileged motions. The Senators' opinions of themselves indicate that Senators feel quite proficient in their own use of privileged motions.
TABLE X

ESTIMATED PROFICIENCY IN USING PRIVILEGED MOTIONS—SENATE

<table>
<thead>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>Himself</td>
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</table>

Estimated Proficiency in Committee Procedure

The next item on the questionnaire asked the respondent to rate the legislators' familiarity with committee procedure.

By Representatives—In the House, five respondents saw first year legislators as fully proficient. Ten gave them a four rating, seventeen a three rating, five a two rating; and one respondent rated first year legislators totally nonproficient.

Eighteen respondents rated veteran legislators fully proficient. Thirteen gave them a four rating, four a rating of three, one gave them a two rating; and no one rated veteran legislators as totally nonproficient. Eighteen rated themselves fully proficient. Seven gave themselves a rating of four, nine gave themselves a rating of three,
two gave themselves a rating of two; and one person rated himself as totally nonproficient in committee procedure. (These results are presented in Table XI.)

**TABLE XI**

ESTIMATED FAMILIARITY WITH COMMITTEE PROCEDURE--HOUSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<td>Opinion Of</td>
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<tr>
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</table>

From this information it can be concluded that first year legislators are believed to be moderately proficient in committee procedure. This proficiency is judged to increase with experience since veteran legislators are rated considerably higher than first year legislators. When rating themselves, the Representatives do not express great difficulty with committee procedure, though three felt they had low proficiency in this area.

By Senators.--In the Senate, one respondent rated first year legislators fully proficient in committee procedure. Four gave them
a rating of four, thirteen a rating of three, three a rating of two; and no one held that they are totally nonproficient. Ten respondents rated veteran legislators as fully proficient. Ten gave them a rating of four, one respondent assigned them a rating of three; and no one gave them rating below three. When rating themselves, fourteen respondents rated themselves as fully proficient. Six gave themselves a rating of four, one a three rating; and no one gave himself a rating below three. (These results are presented in Table XII.)

TABLE XII
ESTIMATED FAMILIARITY WITH COMMITTEE PROCEDURE--SENATE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>5</th>
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<td>4.62</td>
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These results indicated that veteran legislators are far more proficient in committee procedure than first year legislators. This
might indicate that proficiency increases with experience. When rating themselves, the Senators expressed no great difficulty with committee procedure.

First year legislators. Random Comments

The last question on the questionnaire asked, "Are there any additional comments you would like to make concerning South Dakota Legislators' familiarity with parliamentary procedure?" One group of responses from the House indicated that a lack of parliamentary knowledge is not a serious problem. They noted that this inadequacy is something that can easily be overcome. Typical remarks are as follow:

You have lots of help from older members if you have any questions. I think everyone is quite well informed.

They have a two day school before the session and each one has a rule book on his desk. If he doesn't know he can look in the book.

I think that very few legislators in the House had a very good background in parliamentary procedure.

As a freshman legislator, I found it necessary to review many points of procedure, but once reviewed and used, procedures came easy.

General effective use gained by experience, observation and training and the desire to be competent.

Lack of knowledge in regard to parliamentary procedure is seldom a problem among legislators.

Responses from the Senate can also be grouped in categories. One catches on quickly— I do not feel that it is a matter of great concern—if one is not completely acquainted with all phases at once, you learn quickly or you get knocked down.

Generally very good.
The first week is very awkward, but by the second week I would say most of the young legislators have gained most of their confidence back to even debate old legislators. I believe the freshmen make sure of what they are doing more so than some old legislators. You don't see the freshmen get out of order in parliamentary procedure.

First year legislators learn parliamentary procedure quite rapidly if interested, and seek the advice of experience. Parliamentary maneuvering is not often used.

Another group of responses from the House indicated that legislators had a need for more parliamentary training. Typical responses are as follow:

I felt very inadequate the first two or three weeks. I certainly could have made use of a better understanding of the entire parliamentary process.

I attended South Dakota State College and took several speech courses but never had any training in parliamentary procedure. It is very important. Please stress this to any student that is at all interested in politics.

Legislators familiarize themselves with only the main procedures and are seldom up on technicalities.

I think that very few legislators in the House had a very good knowledge of the rules and were able to use them effectively.

Most of them, even veteran legislators, are unfamiliar with parliamentary procedure.

It is difficult to rate new legislators as a group as a few had little difficulty, but many were extremely handicapped.

Responses from the Senate can also be grouped in categories. One group of the random comments was stressing the need for more training in parliamentary procedure. These responses are as follow:

I think all, or most, could make good use of additional training.
I think a special school or class should be conducted the first few days of the session. In this manner some of the new legislators could be oriented in parliamentary procedure.

Nothing replaces experience and confidence in this field in my estimation; however, we all need more training and study.

Another group of responses indicate that legislators have no need for additional training in parliamentary procedure. These remarks are as follows:

School for legislative procedure for freshmen members—of questionable value—observation, asking questions, and studying handbook, most valuable.

Those who need help can usually get it from someone who has been in the legislature and is experienced such as a party leader, etc. Only about ten per cent in my opinion become completely proficient even after years of experience.

Orderly legislative procedures and excellent decorum.

As most of the legislation is determined in the committees the parliamentary procedure is not always of real importance.

From these random comments, it can be concluded that legislators are quite evenly divided in their opinions concerning the adequacies of legislators in parliamentary procedure. One group of respondents maintained that a lack of parliamentary knowledge is not a serious problem while an almost equal number maintained that a lack of parliamentary knowledge was a serious problem.

Responses from item IX (See Appendix B) of the questionnaire were so diverse and incomplete that they could not be formulated into a meaningful statement.
CHAPTER III

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

This study was undertaken in an attempt to determine to what extent or how effectively South Dakota's legislators feel they are prepared in the various aspects of parliamentary procedure. In order to determine this a questionnaire was formulated and sent to the members of the 1967 South Dakota State Legislature. Responses were received from forty Representatives and twenty-two Senators for a total return of 56.3 per cent. The returns were tabulated in terms of twelve categories dealt with in Chapter II and led to the conclusions which follow.

Conclusions

(1) The majority of all legislators are felt to be inhibited to some degree from reaching their full capacity by a lack of parliamentary knowledge. This inhibition is recorded as more serious among first year legislators than among veteran legislators. This leads to the possible conclusion that--(2) A lack of parliamentary knowledge is something that can be overcome to a degree with experience.

(3) Both in the House and Senate first year legislators are believed to be strongest in the areas of phrasing main motions and using privileged motions.
(4) Both Senators and Representatives judge first year legislators to be weakest in the use of incidental and subsidiary motions.

(5) In all categories veteran legislators are judged to have a higher degree of proficiency than first year legislators.

The legislators' ratings of themselves indicate the following:

(6) Senators believe themselves to be more proficient than the Representatives judge themselves to be; (7) Both Senators and Representatives feel themselves to be quite proficient in committee procedure, phrasing main motions and using privileged motions; (8) Representatives indicate that they feel most inadequate in the use of incidental motions with the use of subsidiary motions close behind; (9) If Senators have a weak area, it is in the use of subsidiary motions.

(10) From the number of legislators rated less than fully proficient, it can be concluded that most legislators could profit from additional instruction in parliamentary procedure.

(11) If further instruction were given, it should be concentrated more on the areas of using incidental and subsidiary motions and less on phrasing main motions, using privileged motions, and committee procedure.

Implications For Further Study

Combining the results of this study with additional research could well result in formulation of a representative spectrum of the
needs of legislators and prospective legislators regarding instruction in parliamentary procedure. If such inquiries were undertaken, they might be along the lines that follow.

(1) This study could be repeated to establish a correlation between the 1967 South Dakota State Legislature and another South Dakota Legislature.

(2) This study could also be tried in other states to determine the parliamentary needs of legislators in states other than South Dakota.

(3) Trained observers could attend the sessions of the House and Senate and judge the Senators and Representatives concerning their proficiency in parliamentary procedure.

(4) A comprehensive examination in parliamentary procedure might be constructed and administered to legislators. This might constitute an objective indicator of the proficiency of South Dakota Legislators.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Richard F. Whitman
Assistant to Speaker
COVER LETTER OF QUESTIONNAIRE

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY
College Of Arts and Science
Department of Speech
Brookings, South Dakota 57006
March 11, 1967

Dear Senator (or Representative):

Your co-operation is urgently solicited in a research project which we have undertaken here at South Dakota State University. The Department of Speech has long been concerned with most closely meeting the specific needs of the citizens of South Dakota. This particular study is an attempt to gather information as to how we can most effectively meet our responsibilities in one of the areas of instruction offered in our department—parliamentary procedure. There is no way we can complete this study without your co-operation.

Please complete the enclosed questionnaire as soon as possible and return it in the self-addressed envelope. Do not sign your name at any place on the questionnaire. Your responses will be kept completely anonymous.

Thank you very much for your co-operation.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Richard F. Whitman

Richard F. Whitman
Assistant in Speech
APPENDIX B

FINAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Department of Speech
South Dakota State University
Brookings, South Dakota

PLEASE DO NOT SIGN THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

I. To which legislative body do you belong? (Please check appropriate response)

_____ S. D. House

_____ S. D. Senate

II. How many terms have you served? _____

III. Based on your observations, to what degree are first year legislators inhibited from reaching their full capacity by lack of knowledge of parliamentary procedure? (Check appropriate square)

NOT INHIBITED INHIBITED TO SOME DEGREE SERIOUSLY INHIBITED

IV. Based on your observations, to what degree are veteran legislators inhibited from reaching their full capacity by lack of knowledge of parliamentary procedure?

NOT INHIBITED INHIBITED TO SOME DEGREE SERIOUSLY INHIBITED

V. To what degree do you feel that you are inhibited from reaching your full capacity by lack of knowledge of parliamentary procedure?

NOT INHIBITED INHIBITED TO SOME DEGREE SERIOUSLY INHIBITED
VI. Please rate the first year legislators that you have observed concerning their proficiency in each of the following areas. (Indicate your rating by circling the appropriate number on the scale.)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Rating</th>
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<th>Totally Nonproficient</th>
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</table>

A. **Phrasing Main Motions.**

B. **Use of Subsidiary Motions** (e.g., table close debate, limit debate, postpone definitely, refer to committee, amend, postpone indefinitely).

C. **Use of Incidental Motions** (e.g., appeal, division, objection to consideration, parliamentary inquiry, point of order, suspend the rules, withdraw).

D. **Use of Privileged Motions** (e.g., adjourn, recess, question of privilege).

E. **Familiarity with Committee Procedure.**

(VI. one ended here on the original questionnaire.)

VII. Please rate the veteran legislators that you have observed concerning their proficiency in each of the following areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
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<th>Totally Nonproficient</th>
</tr>
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A. **Phrasing Main Motions.**

B. **Use of Subsidiary Motions.**
### VIII. Using the same scale, please estimate your own personal current proficiency in each of the following areas.

<table>
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<th>Scale</th>
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</table>

#### A. Phrasing main motions.

#### B. Use of subsidiary motions.

#### C. Use of incidental motions.

#### D. Use of privileged motions.

#### E. Familiarity with committee procedure.

### IX. What formal training have you had in parliamentary procedure? (Please check those areas that are applicable.)

- **A.** Instruction as part of a High School class.
- **B.** Instruction as part of a college class.
- **C.** Occupational experience (specify).
D. Experience in organizations. (Specify the organization).

E. Other training or experience. (Specify)

X. Are there any additional comments you would like to make concerning South Dakota Legislators' familiarity with parliamentary procedure?
## APPENDIX C

### MEMBERS OF THE 1967 SOUTH DAKOTA STATE LEGISLATURE

**Senate**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Abdnor, James</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anderson, Art B.</td>
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<td>Bartron, G. Robert</td>
<td>1206 W. 7th St.: Sioux Falls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burgess, Carl T.</td>
<td>5012 N. Cliff Ave.: Sioux Falls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burke, Alfred J.</td>
<td>320 7th St. SE: Watertown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clark, Harland C.</td>
<td>1809 Eisenhower Cir.: Aberdeen</td>
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<td>Dupper, Ervin E.</td>
<td>Mobridge</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elwood, Clell D.</td>
<td>619 Custer Ave.: Custer</td>
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<td>Fillbach, George W.</td>
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<td>Fischer, Carl T.</td>
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<td>Gibbs, Frank</td>
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<td>Grams, N. L.</td>
<td>912 Edwards Dr.: Sioux Falls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gullickson, Norval</td>
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<td>Jones, Arthur L.</td>
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<td>Salem</td>
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<td>Mydland, Gordon</td>
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<td>Nordstrom, Walter V.</td>
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<td>Steele, Leland L.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Willrodt, Harold B.</td>
<td>415 W. Second: Mitchell</td>
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</table>


House of Representatives

Adams, Harold G.
Anderson, Eunice M.
Barkley, Edwin K.
Barnett, Joseph H.
Bibby, John E.
Bliss, Ellen E.
Clark, Raymond E.
Clay, Charles E.
Clayton, William F.
Collingwood, R. T.
Dahl, Oscar P.
Droz, Charles
Dunmire, Joe R.
Elwood, Ira
Engel, John A.
Ericson, L. F.
Graff, E. Klein
Groth, Joe M.
Gunderson, Albert B.
Gunderson, Dexter H.
Hallock, Morris G.
Hart, Glenn
Haufschild, Fred H.
Hawley, Woodrow K.
Hillgren, Ralph O.
Huber, Oscar E.
Jelbert, James D.
Jensen, William M.
Johnson, Walter W.
Kaufman, Fred S.
Kime, Allan
Knudson, Loyd G.
Knuston, Tom
Lacey, Charles
Larkin, Charles A.
Liljedahl, George H.
Lyon, J. F.
McKenzie, Frank
Mehlhauff, Dean O.
Miller, Walter D.
Mills, G. W.
Mills, Tom
Mortimer, G. F.
Murray, E. C.
Nepstad, Axel A.
Oehlken, Donald
Paulson, Herman

Chamberlain
2117 S. Minn.: Sioux Falls
Box 745: Edgemont
1422 N. 1st St.: Aberdeen
822 8th Ave.: Brookings
520 N. Menlo Ave.: Sioux Falls
Twin Brooks
Hot Springs
510 E. 21st St.: Sioux Falls
Elk Point
Volga
Miller
705 Glendale Dr.: Lead
Batesland
Avon
212 NE 8: Madison
622 S. Western Ave.: Sioux Falls
Centerville
Lester
Irene
Sturgis
Gettysburg P. O. 245
Arlington
Brandt
2021 S. Phillips: Sioux Falls
Bowdle
1421 Canyon: Spearfish
White River
Frankfort
Delmont
Burke
McLaughlin
Webster
1004 E. 35th St.: Sioux Falls
Clark
Salem
Meadow
Winner
Eureka
New Underwood
Wall
2601 Arcadia Road: Sioux Falls
Belle Fourche
P. O. Box 1886: Rapid City
409 E. 5th: Mitchell
1311 Crestview Drive: Watertown
Hudson
Pomer, Merle C.
Renny, Thomas P.
Renning, George
Review, Lloyd E.
Rist, Albert R.
Robert, Kenneth L.
Rogers, Jack K.
Rothstein, James L.
Sampson, Wilfred F.
Schapler, Fred
Schroeder, William
Schumacher, Robert J.
Scribner, G. E.
Shoemaker, Robert J.
Snyder, Floyd
Sorensen, Dean
Stenberg, David
Stephens, E. W.
Stern, Otto
Stoddard, Leland K.
Swenson, Duaine
Swisher, Jay C.
Varilek, Elvern
Whipple, Frank W.
Whitehead, Emery L.
Willoughby, Herbert A.
Wood, Royal J.
Young, Don

Castlewood
3016 Middlebrook Dr.: Rapid City
Kadoka
Veblen
Corson
312 Main St.: Rapid City
551 Kansas Ave. SE: Huron
1414 Kennedy Drive: Mobridge
Cavour
1313 Mitchell Blvd.: Mitchell
Wessington Springs
2426 Maple St.: Rapid City
2716 S. Duluth Ave.: Sioux Falls
1221 Douglas: Yankton
1217 2nd St. NW: Watertown
1108 N. Huron: Pierre
Colman
500 N. Grand: Pierre
Freeman
Parker
Box 158: Monsocket
Putney
Geddes
Wilmot
P. O. Box 745: Rapid City
Howard
Warner
Warner
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Periodicals


Personal Letter